

Bangladesh leopard renews hopes for species survival

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A leopard sits at India's Jaldapara Wild Life Sanctuary on July 4. Bangladeshi conservationists said Thursday the discovery of a rare leopard captured by villagers in the southeast of the country renewed hopes for the survival of the critically endangered species.

Bangladeshi conservationists said Thursday the discovery of a rare leopard captured by villagers in the southeast of the country renewed hopes for the survival of the critically endangered species.

Professor Anwarul Islam, chief executive of Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh, said the three-month-old clouded leopard cub had been released back into the wild.

It had been caged by villagers in the remote Chittagong Hill Tracts region, which borders Myanmar and Mizoram state in India, for the past three weeks, he said.

"Locals stumbled upon two cubs and their mother eating a monkey in the district of Rangimati three weeks ago. They were only able to capture one cub," he said

"It was tremendous news because many conservationists thought the animal was extinct from Bangladesh due to habitat loss."

He said in most cases where a rare species is captured, villagers sell the animal, but in this case [conservationists](#) had convinced them to release it back into the wild.

The species is timid and nocturnal and little is known about it, he added.

The clouded [leopard](#) is listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, with 100,000 of the species believed to still be living worldwide.

It is mainly found in South and Southeast Asian countries, and the last reported sightings of the animal in Bangladesh were in 1992 and 2005.

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