

First images of spotted leopard captured in Malaysia

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This undated handout photo received from the Johor National Parks Corporation via Wildlife Conservation Society-Malaysia Program shows the first image of a spotted leopard in the Endau-Rompin national park in southern Johor state, Malaysia. Researchers said they have captured the first images of a spotted leopard in Malaysia, putting to rest a debate over the existence of the cat in the country.

Researchers said Sunday they have captured the first images of a spotted leopard in Malaysia, putting to rest a decades-old debate over the existence of the endangered cat in the country.

The images were taken by camera traps set up in the Endau-Rompin national park as part of a 10-year project in southern Johor state, Wildlife Conservation Society [Malaysia](#) programme director Melvin Gumal told AFP.

"Out of the 11,500 images taken on the ground, only three were of the spotted leopard and this goes to prove that the spotted leopard does exist in Malaysia," he said.

"It now gives the impetus for greater conservation in the Endau-Rompin area and greater collaboration to protect this extremely biodiverse site."

The spotted leopard has a prominent rosette pattern on its skin, unlike the black leopards, which make up the majority of such cats in Malaysia.

Gumal said the leopard was one of six species of big cats documented along with tigers and marbled cats from the 70 camera traps set up under the project.

Leopards are found in much of Africa, across the Middle East and in Asia. Several of its subspecies, like the spotted [leopard](#), are considered endangered.

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