

# Borneo rainbow toad seen for 1st time in 87 years

July 14 2011, By SEAN YOONG , Associated Press

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This photo, taken June 13, 2011 and released by Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, shows an adult female Bornean Rainbow Toad, also referred to as Sambas Stream Toad (*Ansonia latidisca*) in Penrissen, Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo. Scientists scouring the mountains of Borneo spotted the toads, which were last seen by European explorers in 1924, providing the world with the first photographs of the colorful, spindly-legged creature, a researcher said Thursday, July 14, 2011. (AP Photo/Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, Indraneil Das) NO SALE, MANDATORY CREDIT, ONE TIME USE ONLY, NO ARCHIVES

Scientists scouring the mountains of Borneo spotted a toad species last

seen in 1924 by European explorers and provided the world with the first photographs of the colorful, spindly legged creature, a researcher said Thursday.

In recent years, the Washington-based Conservation International placed the Sambas stream toad, also known as the Bornean rainbow toad, on a world "Top 10 Most Wanted Lost Frogs" and voiced fears it might be extinct.

Researchers found three of the slender-limbed toads living on trees during a night search last month in a remote mountainous region of Malaysia's eastern Sarawak state in Borneo, said Indraneil Das, a conservation professor at the Sarawak Malaysia University who led the expedition.

Only illustrations of the toads previously existed. Das said his team first decided to seek the toad last August, but months of searching proved fruitless until they went higher up the Penrissen mountain range, which has rarely been explored in the past century.

"It is good to know that nature can surprise us when we are close to giving up hope, especially amidst our planet's escalating extinction crisis," Robin Moore, a specialist on amphibians at Conservation International, said in a statement announcing the discovery.

The toads found on three separate trees measured up to 2 inches (5.1 centimeters) in size and comprised an adult male, an adult female and a juvenile, the statement said.

Das declined to reveal the exact site of his team's discovery because of fears of illegal poaching due to strong demand for bright-hued amphibians. Researchers will continue work to find out more about the Borneo Rainbow Toad and other amphibians in Penrissen.

Conservationists say many endangered animals in Borneo are threatened by hunting and habitat loss sparked by logging, plantations and other human development.

**More information:** Conservation International:  
<http://tinyurl.com/25k8yr2>

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