

World's first video footage of the Myanmar snub-nosed monkey captured

April 1 2014, by Ally Catterick



The first ever video footage of the newly discovered Myanmar snub-nosed monkey has been captured by Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in Kachin state, Myanmar.

Discovered in 2010, the Myanmar snub-nosed monkey has kept a very low profile, evading the searching eyes of scientists hoping for a look.

Despite more than a year of field surveys the monkey was only ever captured on camera traps, with FFI's biologists yearning for direct sightings.

FFI team member Kaung Haung from the local Law Waw tribe was finally the first to encounter a large group of the elusive primates, while trekking through Kachin state to check on camera traps recently.

Full of excitement and with shaky hands he filmed the large band of snub-nosed monkeys leaping through the canopy up above him.

Frank Momberg, FFI's Myanmar Programme Director says, "The [video footage](#) is evidence to the continued presence of this threatened species and gives us a first glimpse into the social organisation of the Myanmar snub-nosed monkey.

"From this footage we are able to determine that they clearly live in large groups, unlike other leaf-eating monkeys that have been shown to live in smaller family units. This means their social organisation and behaviour is similar to other snub-nosed monkeys, which sets the entire genus apart from other leaf monkeys. It also means that larger groups require large home ranges and larger areas of contiguous forest need to be protected to ensure the survival of the species."

The Myanmar snub-nosed monkey is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, with only an estimated 260 to 330 individuals surviving in the wild.

All other [snub-nosed monkey](#) species are also classified as Endangered or Critically Endangered.

Hunting for food and traditional medicine, as well as accelerated deforestation caused by illegal Chinese logging are the main threats for these enigmatic animals.

Since the species' discovery, FFI has started a community-based conservation programme in Myanmar, which provides alternative

livelihoods to local indigenous hunters and operates a community ranger programme to protect the species. This has already had a significant impact on reducing the hunting pressure.

However, Chinese illegal logging continues to threaten the species' survival.

Due to recent armed conflicts this remote border remains largely outside of state control and Chinese logging roads continue to scar the Himalayan mountain ranges.

Hope comes with the peace negotiation process in Kachin state progressing.

Since armed conflicts have ceased in the area a joint FFI – Forest Department team is conducting field work now to finalise the biological justification for the gazettelement of a new National Park, known as Imawbum National Park, and are consulting local communities on boundary delineation.

Frank Momberg continued, "I hope the official National Park designation will make the dialogue with Chinese authorities easier to stop illegal trans-boundary logging."

Provided by Fauna & Flora International

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