

**THE FIRST SIGHTING OF MONKEY-FOOTED RAT  
(*Pithecheir parvus*) IN TAMAN NEGARA NATIONAL PARK,  
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA**

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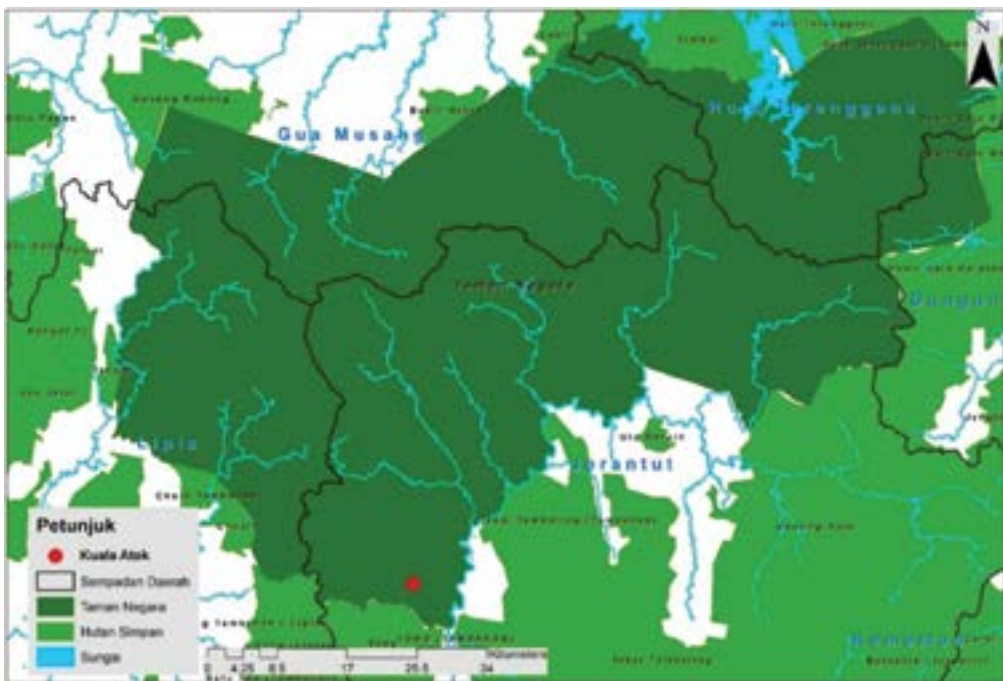
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Monkey-footed Rat (*Pithecheir parvus*) is a small mammal known only to occur in Peninsular Malaysia mostly in the primary lowland habitat with altitude up to 1000 m a.s.l (Francis, 2008). This species is hardly seen in its natural habitat and has very limited information on distribution in this region. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species classified this species as data deficient (Gerrie & Kennerley, 2016). Kloss (1916) collected the first specimen from Bukit Kutu Wildlife Reserve and later Muul and Lim (1971) collected another specimen from the same area before Lim *et al.* (1999) revisited the reserve in 1997 and similarly reported its presence. Syakirah *et al.* (2000) recorded the presence in Kampung Jelamat, Tapak Ramsar Tasek Bera, Pahang in a plot of recently logged and disturbed habitat while Zakaria *et al.* (2001) found this species at Ayer Hitam Forest Reserve in Selangor. In 2006, Nor Zalipah *et al.* (2007) conducted a small mammal monitoring study at Kuala Gandah, Krau Wildlife Reserve (KWR) in Pahang and collected a specimen using pit-fall trapping method and more recently, Ean *et al.* (2014) found this species in Kuala Lompat, KWR during a small mammals survey activity in the area. In total, the finding in this study contributed to the eighth record of the species in Peninsular Malaysia.

During the 1Malaysia Biodiversity Enforcement Operation Network (1MBEON) conducted from 14<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> of October 2014 at Kuala Atok, Taman Negara National Park (TNNP) (Figure 1), a rat nest was sighted. The nest was set on the spreading branches in the understory scrub vegetation about 150 cm above the forest floor. Based on the photographs taken, the materials used for the nest were foliage mainly broad dry leaves and twigs bound together into a large nest (Figure 2). The photographs revealed an adult *Pithecheir parvus* at a curved up body position with the head and fore-feet partly exposed. Also observed were three well-developed tails, a larger one which was obviously of the nursing mother and two smaller-sized kitten tails in the nest. This finding represent the first known nesting record of the species and a new locality record at Kuala Atok, TNNP which contributed significantly to the distribution information. There are increasing need to study and document small mammals in Peninsular Malaysia as records and information on this mammal group are still lacking.



**Figure 1** Map showing Taman Negara National Park and the location of Kuala Atok



**Figure 2** Photographs of the Monkey-footed Rat (*Pithecheir parvus*) nest

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