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DIRECT SIGHTING OF TAPIR AT GUNUNG INAS, GUNUNG INAS FOREST RESERVE, BALING KEDAH.

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Malaysia is the centre of the Malayan Tapir's distribution range. Tapirs are found in every forest types including peat swamps up to lower montane forest. Based on the DWNP wildlife inventories, the signs of this animal are generally found in lowland areas, however, signs near Gunung Tahan at 1,430 Gunung Benom at 1,720 and Gunung Bintang Hijau at 1,730 were also found. Tapirs have been observed in forest fringes as well as logged over forest or disturbed forest, and occasionally may wander into rubber and oil palm plantations. According to William and Petrides (1980) Tapirs are found in all states of Peninsular Malaysia from the lowlands to the drier.

Sighting of Tapir were recorded twice between 10.00pm to 6.30am in Gunung Inas, Gunung Inas Forest Reserve. The observation site is situated approximately 0.5 km from the top of the Gunung Inas, 1300 meters above sea level. The observation recorded two individuals of Tapir came very close to our camp site. The first observation was at 10pm where the animal moves towards our camp and stop at around 2 meters of distance from the hammock. The Tapir was there for about 15 minutes observing around before gone for somewhere (Photograph 1). The second observation was at 6.30 am at the same place where we were surprised by a yowling sound coming toward our camp. We thought of a kind of predator chasing their prey for morning meal. In fact it was a Tapir running toward our camp in a moderate speed but luckily it was not hitting our camp. A camera traps study by Novarino (2005) indicating that tapir seems to be active mostly at night, this support the sighting of this animal wandering along the ridges at night. Normally, it is difficult to have direct observation of Tapir at daytime.



Photograph 1 : Pictures above show catch sight of tapir remained for a few minutes at a very close to our camp site before it gone for somewhere.

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