

STATUS AND CONSERVATION INITIATIVE OF PHAYRE'S LANGUR IN NORTHEAST BANGLADESH

INTERIM REPORT



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Background:

Phayre's Langur (*Trachypithecus phayre*) is an endangered primate, distributing to Bangladesh, China, India, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. Wide array of anthropocentric threats are declining its population. In Bangladesh, the population is thought to have a decline of more than 80% over last 20 years and very vulnerable in it's extremely fragmented locations. Though there is no precise and statistically robust estimation of the population abundance available here. Several forests in northeastern and southeastern Bangladesh are still supporting the langur. To initiate the species specific conservation effort, it was highly required to have insight about their current population status and threats affecting their survival. So, we have been embarking survey the Langur populations in 5 north-eastern forests of Bangladesh since February 2018 by the financial supports of The Rufford Foundation, UK. We are also assessing the threats, local people's attitude towards the langur and initiating conservation in the northeastern forests of Bangladesh engaging local communities. The project has permitted and facilitated by Bangladesh Forest Department and Department of Zoology, Jagannath University, Dhaka.

Project Goals:

No	Objectives	Achievement Status
1	To evaluate the population status of Phayre's Langur in 5 northeastern forests of Bangladesh.	3 out of 5 forests surveyed and another one is ongoing.
2	To assess the threats facing the Langur across the landscape.	Main threats were identified
3	To promote awareness campaign towards biodiversity conservation ensuring participation of local communities.	1 program left
4	To develop management recommendation for the Langur.	Will be done after completing data collection.

Highlights of the Activities:

1) Population Survey:

We have completed surveying Phayre's Langur in Satchari National Park, Lawachara National Park and Rema - Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary. Currently we are surveying the langur at Adampur forest. Survey in Juri forest will be depended on the availability of the

resources. Till now we have recorded 22 groups of Phayre's Langur totaling 231 individuals in Satchari, Lawachara and Rema - Kalenga forests (Fig. 1). The mean group size was 10.66 ± 5.73 ranging from 4 to 26 individuals/group. 46% of the population were adult and 54% non-adult. Adults composed of 39% male and 61% female and their ratio was 1:1.56. We still didn't find any group in Adampur forest. According to local people, there are 3 - 5 groups of Phayre's Langur in Adampur area where repeated surveys has been arranging to figure out current population. Highest number of groups found in Lawachara National Park whereas lowest were in Satchari National Park. We recorded 4 Phayre's Langur groups outside of the boundary protected area boundary of Lawachara National Park and Rema - Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary.

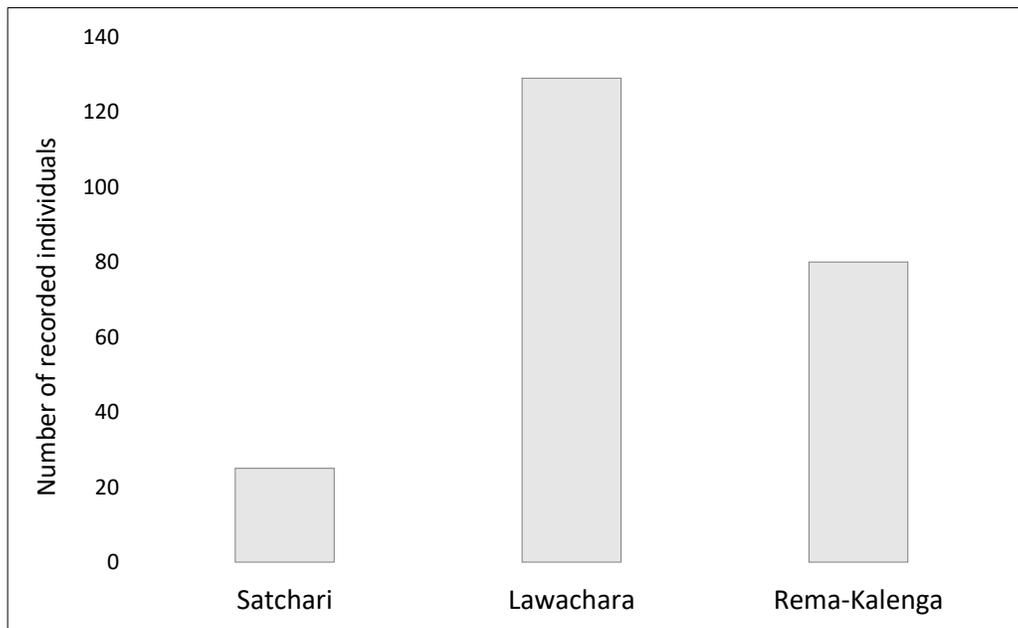


Fig. 1: Number of recorded individuals in Satchari, Lawachara and Rema-Kalenga.

2) Threats Assessments:

Based on our field observations it was clear that wide array of anthropocentric pressures are responsible for ongoing declination of the Phayre's Langur population in the northeastern forests of Bangladesh. The main threats found - habitat destruction and fragmentation, illegal logging, electro-caution fatalities, disturbances, poor implementation of laws and lacking of public awareness. Direct effects of these threats are not visible always but there are significant long term effects especially due to the lacking of canopy bridge on the roads into the forests, death trap like electric lines on the roads, conversion of natural forests into monoculture, mixed plantations, lemon gardening, beetle leaf cultivation, huge amount of illegal extraction of bamboo and

firewood, ignoring protected area laws and pollutions by tourists. Site specific threats and their intensities will be described in final report, to Bangladesh forest department and in publications.



Photo: Phayre's habitat destruction and fragmentation for agricultural purposes.



Photo: Bamboo - firewood collections by local people and pollutions by tourists.

3) Conservation Activities:

We have initiated various conservation programs in practical ways understanding the varied threats intensity to the Langur in different sites. These are as follows:

Distribution of T-shirts:

Logo embedded T-shirts were distributed among researchers, volunteers, forest staffs, community people, students and teachers of Zoology of Jagannath University.

Clean-Up Program:

In collaboration with Bangladesh Slow Loris Research and Conservation Project, “Satchari National Park Clean Up Program - 2018” program was organized during 12-13th April 2018 at Satchari National Park, Habigonj. 15 people were participated in the event including the forest ranger, beat officer, forest guard, Zoology students and co-management community members. 8 bags of non-degradable waste materials were collected from the forest trails weighting about 50 kg that were burnt outside of the forest area. Certificate, T-shirt and Cap of the program were given to the participants. Project members informally shared the basics of the research projects to them. Finally they were taken to the forest trails for observing wild animals and enjoying nature walks.

Community Consultation Program:

Conservation education was developed according the threats type for the local communities who are directly or indirectly depends on forests for their livelihood. A good number of whom were known to involve in forest co-management system. As an initiative, we have been building their trusts on project activities, engaging them into awareness campaigns, enriching their understanding of the ecosystem services of the forest and the conservation importance of wildlife in their area focusing Phayre’s Langur. Conservation material (e.g. Pamphlet) has been distributing among local communities.

Project News and Knowledge Sharing:

To reach a major audience in Bangladesh, the project has been publishing news and articles in Bengali via different local media. To build relationship, maintaining communications and updating project works to the audience, we have created a project page (Facebook page) named ‘Phayre’s Langur Conservation Initiative in Bangladesh’. Facebook page link: <https://www.facebook.com/Phayreslangur/>

APPENDIX



Photo: Participants wearing Langur T-shirts (white) before starting clean-up program.



Photo: Non-degradable waste materials collected from Satchari National Park.



Photo: Phayre's Langur Survey following streamline at Adampur forest.

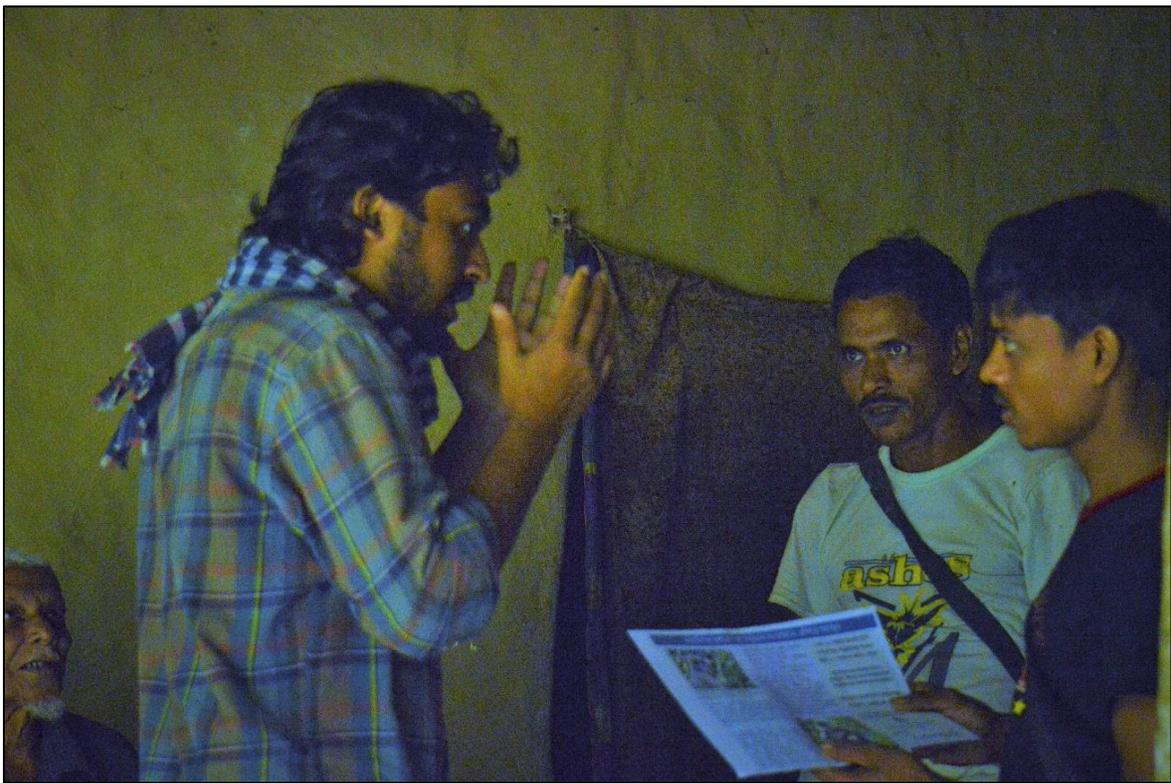


Photo: Pamphlet distribution among forest fringe communities.



Appendix 5: Community Consultation Program at Rema – Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary.



Photo: Presenting research methodologies in 'Wildlife Study Design and Data Analysis' training program at Nepal to discuss the problems and data analysis process.

Published news and articles featuring the project:

Jago news24.com

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