

Trio under threat: Is there hope for Rhinos, Elephants and Tigers in Malaysia?

By **Reuben Clements**

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Abstract

"Three of Malaysia's charismatic large mammal species are experiencing diverging fates. Populations of the Sumatran Rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) have been decimated due to chronic hunting and loss of lowland forests to an extent where costly management interventions are currently being developed to prevent its extinction.

Conversely, populations of the Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) appear to be stable and even increasing in some areas, but escalating levels of human-elephant conflict due to land conversion into plantations and dams will eventually threaten their long-term survival.

The National Tiger Action Plan for Malaysia was recently initiated by the federal government to double the current wild population by 2020 - this can only happen if their decline due to illegal hunting of tiger and prey in important tiger habitats is arrested as soon as possible.

Reuben will discuss the threats and associated challenges and highlight recent conservation initiatives that can help secure the future of these species in Malaysia, as well as other range states within Southeast Asia.

About the speaker - *Reuben Clements completed his BSc (Hons) and MSc degrees with the Department of Biological Sciences in 2007, publishing 14 scientific papers on animal behaviour, biogeography, conservation science, ecology and systematics. He is a member of with the IUCN/SSC Mollusc Specialist Group and IUCN Cave and Karst Task Force and his work has been featured in the New York Times, National Geographic, Nature, CNN and The Straits Times.*

He now manages WWF-Malaysia's Malayan tiger and the Sumatran rhinoceros projects in Peninsular Malaysia. His team implements activities involving large mammal monitoring, identification of ecological linkages, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, anti-poaching and community outreach.

Talk, Q&A and discussion.

Date: Friday, 18 Sept 2009

Time: 7 pm - 8.30 pm

Venue: DBS Conference Room,
BIK S3 Level 5
(next to the Admin Office)

Host: N Sivasothi