

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

### *Trachypithecus popa* – a new primate species from central Myanmar

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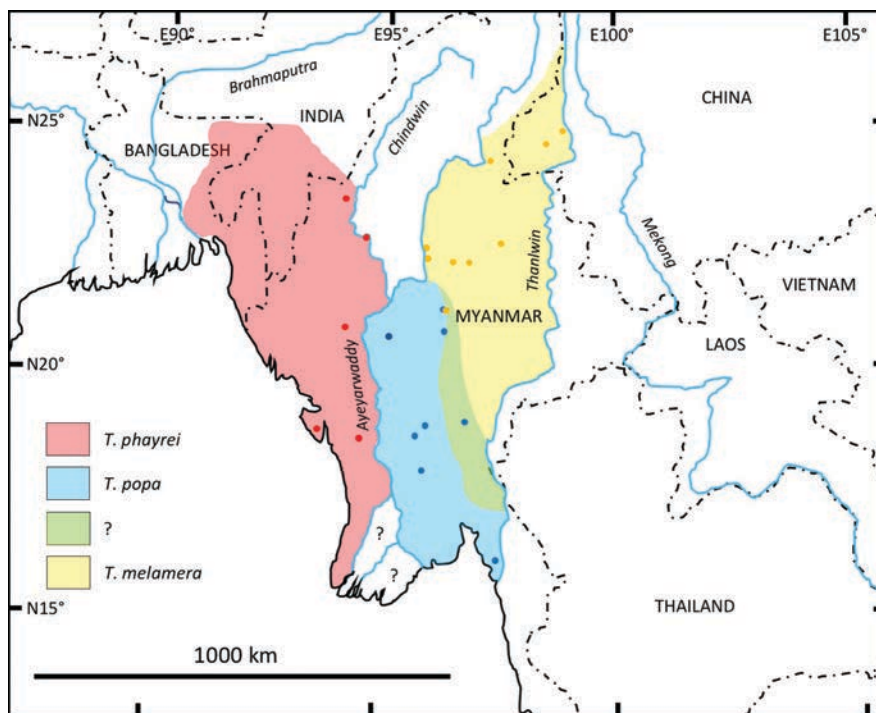
A new primate species named Popalangur (*Trachypithecus popa*) has been discovered in Myanmar after years of extensive study, including analysis of a 100-year old specimen kept in the Natural History Museum, London.

The Popalangur is described based on extensive genetic and morphological studies and field surveys undertaken by the German Primate Center (DPZ) – Leibniz Institute for Primate Research in Göttingen and the conservation NGO Fauna & Flora International (FFI) (Fig. 1).



**Fig.1.** Adult female and juvenile Popalangur (*Trachypithecus popa*) in the crater of Mount Popa, Myanmar. Photo: ThaungWin.

The Popalangur only occurs in central Myanmar and is named after the sacred Mount Popa, which holds the largest population of the species with about 100 individuals (Fig. 2). Mount Popa is an extinct volcano, which features an important nature reserve, as well as a sacred pilgrimage site, home to Myanmar's most venerated spirits, known as 'Nats'. Altogether there are only 200 to 250 individuals of the new species, which live in four isolated populations. Throughout its range the langur is threatened by habitat loss and hunting, and the new species can be considered as "Critically Endangered" by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Just described, the Popalangur is already facing extinction.



**Fig.2.** Distribution of the new discovered Popalanger (*Trachypithecus popa*) and closely related species.

Researchers of the DPZ and FFI in collaboration with partners from other non-government organizations, universities and natural history museums, investigated the evolutionary history and species diversity of langurs in Myanmar. Their study resulted in the description of this new langur species.

The Popalanger differs from known species in fur coloration, tail length and skull measurements. Genetic studies revealed that the new langur species separated from known species around one million years ago. The DNA for genetic analyses was obtained from fecal samples collected by FFI staff in the wild, as well as from tissue samples of historical specimens from the natural history museums in London, Leiden, New York and Singapore.

The studies about the new discovered species provides also a new insight to the phylogentic relationship and divergence time among mitochondrial lineages of the genus *Trachypithecus*, which also occurs with six species in Vietnam.

## ORIGINAL PUBLICATION

### **Mitogenomic phylogeny of the Asian colobine genus *Trachypithecus* with special focus on *Trachypithecus phayrei* (Blyth, 1847) and description of a new species.**

Christian Roos, Kristofer M. Helgen, Roberto Portela Miguez, Naw May Lay Thant, Ngwe Lwin, Aung Ko Lin, Aung Lin, Khin Mar Yi, Paing Soe, Zin Mar Hein, Margaret Nyein Nyein Myint, Tanvir Ahmed, Dilip Chetry, Melina Urh, E. Grace Veatch, Neil Duncan, Pepijn Kamminga, Marcus A. H. Chua, Lu Yao, Christian Matauschek, Dirk Meyer, Zhijin Liu, Ming Li, Tilo Nadler, Pengfei Fan, Le Khac Quyet, Michael Hofreiter, Dietmar Zinner, Frank Momberg (2020): Zoological Research, <http://www.zoores.ac.cn/en/article/doi/10.24272/j.issn.2095-8137.2020.254>