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Marbled cat in Sabangau peat-swamp forest, Indonesian Borneo

As part of an ongoing project to identify and assess the distribution and population status of Bornean felids in the Sabangau Peat-swamp forest, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, a marbled cat *Pardofelis marmorata* has been photographed for the first time. The marbled cat is classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List 2008.

The IUCN Clouded Leopard and Small Felid Summit in Thailand (Povey et al. 2009) identified only six known locations in Malaysian Borneo and five locations in Indonesian Borneo as being home to the marbled cat, including Sabangau (2° 31' S/113° 90' E). For a detailed description of the site see Cheyne et al. (2009).

The last confirmed sighting of a marbled cat in Sabangau was in 1994 (Shepherd et al. 1997) and the continued presence of this cat was unknown. Interestingly, the cameras on which the cat was first photographed (19 August 2009; Fig. 1) had been in place since May 2008, thus 15 months were required to obtain these photographs. The second photo was taken on cameras 2.5 km from the first pair 12 days later (5 September 2009; Fig. 2). Unfortunately the photos are not clear enough to determine if the cat is the same individual, though this seems likely. The question of where this cat has been and why it took so long to show up on the cameras remains unclear. Azlan & Sharma (2006) also found low abundance of marbled cats (1 photograph) and suggest this could be because the cats are rare and/or spend little time on the ground. If the later is true then marbled cats will be under-represented in camera trapping studies, thus sightings like this one become all the more important.

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Fig. 1. Marbled cat pictured on 19 August 2009 (Photo S. Cheyne).



Fig. 1. Marbled cat pictured on 5 September 2009 (Photo S. Cheyne).