

1 **Bornean clouded leopard minimum home range analysis in a peat-swamp forest,**
2 **Indonesian Borneo**

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4 Lynn Pallemmaerts^{1,*}, Adul², Ici P. Kulu³, Karen A. Jeffers², David W. Macdonald⁴, Susan M.
5 Cheyne^{2,5}

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7 ¹Biodiversity Unit, Department of Biology, Lund University, Lund, Sweden;

8 lynn.pallemmaerts@gmail.com

9 ²Borneo Nature Foundation, Palangka Raya, Indonesia

10 ³UPT LLG-CIMTROP, University of Palangka Raya, Palangka Raya, Indonesia

11 ⁴Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Department of Zoology, University of
12 Oxford, The Recanati-Kaplan Centre, Tubney House, Tubney, OX13 5QL, United Kingdom

13 ⁵Faculty of Humanities, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, United Kingdom

14 *Current addresses:

15 Department of Recent Vertebrates, Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS), Rue
16 Vautier 29, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

17 Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Department of Zoology, University of
18 Oxford, The Recanati-Kaplan Centre, Tubney House, Tubney, OX13 5QL, United Kingdom

19

20 **Type of article.** Original contribution.

21

22 **Abstract.** Little is known about the spatial ecology of the Bornean clouded leopard *Neofelis*
23 *diardi borneensis* in peat-swamp forests, which account for 32% of the island of Borneo.

24 This study uses data from 10 years of camera trapping to provide preliminary estimates of
25 minimum home range size and overlap in a tropical peat swamp forest in Central Kalimantan,
26 Indonesian Borneo. Home ranges were estimated using minimum convex polygons (MCPs)
27 and fixed kernel utilization densities (KUDs). Since May 2008, we identified a minimum of
28 12 individual Bornean clouded leopards ($n_{\text{male}} = 9$, $n_{\text{female}} = 1$, $n_{\text{unknown}} = 2$) from a total of 157
29 independent photo-captures. Estimates of minimum home range could only be calculated for
30 six males that had been recaptured at a minimum of five different camera stations. For these
31 males, the obtained averages of $\text{MCP}_{50\%} = 0.7 \text{ km}^2$, $\text{MCP}_{95\%} = 2.2 \text{ km}^2$, $\text{MCP}_{100\%} = 6.2 \text{ km}^2$,
32 $\text{KUD}_{50\%} = 7.7 \text{ km}^2$, and $\text{KUD}_{95\%} = 35.3 \text{ km}^2$. All home ranges overlapped significantly.

33 Spatial organisation is valuable information not only in understanding the species'

34 behavioural ecology, but also to inform extrapolations to viable Bornean clouded leopard

35 population size. The use of camera trap data to estimate home range size merits further
36 investigation.

37

38 **Introduction**

39

40 Globally, large carnivores are under threat from anthropogenic disturbances. Most species are
41 categorized as threatened by the IUCN, with declining populations and a high risk of local or
42 total extinction (Ripple et al. 2014). The consequence of the decline of large carnivore
43 numbers is a serious concern for conservation, as these carnivores are apex predators and
44 regulate and stabilize the ecosystems they inhabit (Ripple et al. 2014).

45

46 In the rainforests of Borneo, the situation is no different. The local apex predator, the
47 Bornean clouded leopard *Neofelis diardi borneensis* (15-25 kg; Hearn et al. 2017) is the
48 largest of a guild of 5 wild cats (Adul et al. 2015; Cheyne & Macdonald 2011) and is listed as
49 Endangered by the IUCN (Hearn et al. 2008). Despite its role as an apex predator within
50 Borneo's ecosystems, until recently the ecology of the Bornean clouded leopard has been
51 scant (Cheyne et al. 2013, 2016; Hearn et al. 2016; Macdonald et al. 2018), even more so in
52 peat-swamp forests, which cover about 32% of the island (Gaveau et al. 2014; Gaveau et al.
53 2016). Because they are rare and elusive, studying Bornean clouded leopards remains a
54 challenge, and a lot of information on their basic ecology is lacking. For instance, the only
55 studies on spatial ecology for Bornean clouded leopards come from non-peat forests in Sabah
56 (Hearn et al. 2013, 2018). The need to close the gap within the knowledge on Bornean
57 clouded leopard spatial ecology is pressing because of its Endangered status.

58

59 Spatial organisation is a key component of a species' ecology and it is crucial information to
60 extrapolate from single individuals in their home ranges to viable population sizes in broader
61 landscapes. Efficient conservation of populations of threatened species, such as the Bornean
62 clouded leopard, starts with a basic understanding of home range size and potential overlap
63 (Johansson et al. 2016), as it defines how many individuals can make up a viable population,
64 and how large a population can be sustained within and outside protected areas.

65

66 In an attempt to remedy gaps in the information on this apex predator, we used camera traps
67 to investigate some basic aspects of spatial ecology of Bornean clouded leopards. Using a 10-

68 year database, our objectives were to (1) generate estimates of minimum home range size,
69 and (2) examine territoriality by determining intrasexual overlap of minimum home ranges.

70

71 **Methods**

72

73 The study was conducted in the 550 km² Natural Laboratory for Peat Swamp Forest
74 (NLPSF), within the tropical peat swamp forest of Sebangau (Central Kalimantan, Indonesia;
75 Fig. 1). The NLPSF is located at the north-eastern edge of the Sebangau catchment (approx.
76 5,600 km²). Sebangau is seasonally flooded, being underwater for nine months out of twelve,
77 and is one of the deepest peat swamp forests in the world, with peat depth varying between 3
78 and 26 meters (Page et al. 1999). The forest has a history of logging concessions, illegal
79 logging, and wildfires (Cheyne 2010; Cheyne & Macdonald 2011), but has been protected as
80 a national park since 2004.

81

82 We conducted an extensive and continuous camera trap survey from May 2008 until
83 February 2018 within the NLPSF. In May 2008, the plan was to place the cameras in a
84 systematic grid in the study area, which was achieved in the forest immediately surrounding
85 base camp (see Fig. 1). However, due to the difficulty of the terrain, such a grid was not
86 practical in the areas further away from base camp, and so, over the years, short expeditions
87 were undertaken to set up several camera stations in areas of interest within the NLPSF (see
88 Fig. 1). As a result of this method, 94 different locations were sampled over the 10-year
89 period. Most locations were sampled for short periods of time during within this 10-year
90 period (i.e. for a minimum of two or three months, but up to one or two years), while other
91 locations have been sampled almost continuously since 2008, with an average sampling
92 duration of approximately 21 months for a single location. Over the years, the cameras
93 covered an area of 104.8 km² of the NLPSF (as determined by the polygon formed by the
94 outermost locations), thereby sampling 19.1% of the NLPSF. On average, the cameras were
95 placed at a distance of 2.7 ± 0.6 km of one another.

96

97 We used different types of cameras over the years: (1) Cuddeback Expert (Wisconsin, USA),
98 (2) Cuddeback IR (Wisconsin, USA), (3) Cuddeback Ambush IR (Wisconsin, USA), (4)
99 Maginon WK 3 HD (Germany), (5) Crenova RD100 (United Kingdom), and (6) Bushnell
100 NatureView HD (Missouri, USA). Where possible, we placed the camera stations along
101 transects, animal trails, boardwalks, natural bridges, or watering holes. We placed each

102 camera about 50 cm from the ground and was protected from potential damage by sun bears
103 *Helarctos malayanus*, pig-tailed macaques *Macaca nemestrina*, and rainfall by a plastic box.
104 When enough cameras were available, they were set up in pairs, at a distance of 7 to 10
105 meters from each other, to allow for simultaneous photography of both sides of the Bornean
106 clouded leopards.

107

108 We identified individual Bornean clouded leopards from multiple photographs, based on their
109 unique coat patterns on both sides of their body (cf. Karanth & Nichols 1998) and determined
110 sex based on the presence or absence of secondary sexual traits. All photos were saved in a
111 database, so an individual's ID could be double-checked by several observers if necessary.
112 We defined independent photo-captures using two criteria: (1) the same individual was
113 captured at different locations across the camera grid at any given day and time, and (2) the
114 same individual was captured at the same location at least at 10 minutes' interval. The first
115 criterion allowed for all used locations to be represented in the minimum home range
116 analysis, while the time interval of the second criterion was chosen to allow locations which
117 are used for longer periods of time (e.g. resting site, kill site, den site) to be represented in the
118 future analyses.

119

120 We checked the independent photo-captures for spatial autocorrelation using Moran's Index I
121 (Sokal & Oden 1978) in ArcMap 10.3 (ESRI 2014). Weights for pairs of neighboring stations
122 were computed using the inverse distance between the respective camera stations.

123

124 We used two different estimators to analyze the Bornean clouded leopard data for minimum
125 home ranges: minimum convex polygon (MCP; Mohr 1947) and fixed kernel utilization
126 density (KUD; Worton 1989). These were calculated with the package "*adehabitatHR*"
127 (Calenge 2006) for R (R Core Team 2017). We calculated the MCPs for the 50%, 95%, and
128 100% percentiles, while the KUDs were calculated using h_{ref} and at the 50% and 95%
129 percentiles. Both methods require a minimum of 5 unique capture locations across the camera
130 trap grid for an estimator to be computed.

131

132 We calculated the overlap in minimum home ranges in two different ways: (1) overlap
133 percentages between 50% and 100% MCPs (i.e. *HR*; see Fieberg & Kochanny 2005), and (2)
134 overlap probabilities between 50% and 95% KUDs (i.e. *PHR*; see Fieberg & Kochanny
135 2005). We did this only for the individuals for which minimum home ranges could be

136 estimated from our data, and only for dyads of Bornean clouded leopards that were present in
137 the study area at the same time (i.e. during at least one and the same year of camera trapping)
138 over the entire study period. The HR percentages for overlapping minimum home ranges
139 were calculated in ArcMap 10.3 (ESRI 2014), while the PHR probabilities for overlapping
140 minimum home ranges were calculated with the package “*adehabitatHR*” (Calenge 2006) in
141 R (R Core Team 2017).

142

143 **Results**

144

145 Across the entire camera grid, we documented 157 independent captures of Bornean clouded
146 leopards over more than 55075 trap nights. Eight of these photo-captures could not be
147 attributed to any known Bornean clouded leopard. From the other 149 independent photo-
148 captures, we were able to identify 12 individuals based on their unique coat patterns. Nine
149 were male, one was female, and two have not yet been sexed (Table 1). The number of
150 independent photo-captures for individual Bornean clouded leopards ranged from 1 to 32
151 (Table 1), with a mean number of detections per individual at 12.4 (SE 3.4).

152

153 Camera trap captures were spatially independent at all the stations, with Moran’s Index over
154 the entire survey period (2008-2018) being non-significant ($I = 0.043$, $p = 0.87$). Minimum
155 home ranges could be calculated for 6 males which had been captured at minimum 5 unique
156 stations across the study grid (Table 1). For the 6 individuals, the 50% MCP averaged 0.7
157 km^2 (SE 0.3 km^2), the 95% MCP averaged 2.2 km^2 (SE 0.6 km^2), and the 100% MCP
158 averaged 6.2 km^2 (SE 2.1 km^2 ; Table 2). For the KUDs, the 50% isopleth spanned 7.7 km^2
159 (SE 1.7 km^2), and the 95% isopleth spanned 35.3 km^2 (SE 7.7 km^2), on average (Table 2).

160

161 Overlap in minimum home ranges was calculated for the 6 males for whom a minimum home
162 range could be calculated. These formed 11 contemporaneous dyads of Bornean clouded
163 leopards. Overlap percentages (HR) for the 50% MCPs ranged from 0% to 59.9%, with a
164 mean at 29.9% (SE 8.4%). For the 100% MCPs, the HR values ranged from 42.5% to 82.7%,
165 with a mean at 61.5% (SE 4.0%). Overlap probabilities (PHR) for the 50% KUD isopleths
166 ranged from 0.25 to 0.51, with a mean at 0.43 (SE 0.02). For the 95% KUD isopleths, the
167 PHR values ranged from 0.74 to 0.94, with a mean at 0.87 (SE 0.02).

168

169 **Discussion**

170

171 Our results for minimum home range sizes for our 6 male Bornean clouded leopards varied
172 between the two types of estimators (Table 2). Our mean 50%, 95%, and 100% MCP values
173 are drastically smaller than the MCP results from one female Bornean clouded leopard in
174 Sabah, Malaysian Borneo, obtained through VHF telemetry (Table 3; Hearn et al. 2013).
175 Male felids tend to hold larger home ranges than females (Sandell 1989), yet our mean MCP
176 estimates (for 6 males) are significantly smaller than the estimates for one single female
177 (Hearn et al. 2013). Also, Hearn et al. (2013) cautioned that their estimates are probably an
178 underestimation of the true home range size, since their results are based on only 3-4 months
179 of radio tracking before loss of signal. Mohamed et al. (2009) report a 100% MCP of 45 km²
180 for one male in Sabah, based on camera trapping, which is also thought to be an
181 underestimate. We therefore agree with previous studies that estimating home ranges with
182 MCPs from camera trap data is not feasible (Soisalo & Cavalcanti 2006; Gil-Sánchez et al.
183 2011).

184

185 The same cannot be said for our KUD estimates. Our mean and 95% isopleth for 6 male
186 Bornean clouded leopards is of the same magnitude as the 100% MCP reported by Mohamed
187 et al. (2009), as well as larger than the value calculated for the single female in Malaysian
188 Borneo (Table 3). Again, however, the latter is thought to be an underestimate (Hearn et al.
189 2013), so actual female home range size for Bornean clouded leopards could be closer to our
190 male estimates. We cannot make any statements for female minimum home range sizes for
191 Bornean clouded leopards in our study area, since we have no data on them.

192

193 Although we advise treating our MCP and KUD results with caution, we can state that there
194 are no exclusive home ranges for male Bornean clouded leopards in our study area, based on
195 the high levels of contemporaneous overlap between the MCPs and KUDs. This manifested
196 itself from the very beginning of the survey, with several males being caught at the same
197 camera station, a pattern that seems to be common among clouded leopard populations across
198 Borneo (J. Brodie, pers. comm.; A.J. Hearn, pers. comm.; A. Mohamed, pers. comm.).
199 Despite the non-territorial organization of Bornean clouded leopards in the peat-swamp forest
200 of Sebangau, we still record instances of intraspecific communication, which could have a
201 territorial function, on the camera traps. We have records of Bornean clouded leopards
202 spraying urine, rubbing their cheeks against cameras, and possibly scratching trees – all of

203 which have been identified as territorial behavior for Bornean clouded leopards (Allen et al.
204 2016).

205

206 Such a home range overlap in an otherwise solitary species has been noted in some other
207 carnivores (e.g. Wagner et al. 2008, Harmsen et al. 2009, Núñez-Pérez 2011), with the most
208 striking example coming from Costa Rica. Jaguars *Panthera onca* in Tortuguero National
209 Park are known to share home ranges and kills during green turtle *Chelonia mydas* nesting
210 season, since this localised abundance of prey allows for a more flexible spatial organisation
211 (Guilder et al. 2015). For the Costa Rican jaguars, as perhaps the Bornean clouded leopards,
212 high resource availability would allow solitary species to share space to a higher degree than
213 would otherwise be expected. For the NLPSF, one could argue that the location of the study
214 area in comparison to the larger Sebangau catchment (i.e. on the northeastern border) could
215 lead to an accumulation of prey individuals in the study area, due to the hard border formed
216 by the Sebangau river to the north.

217

218 Data are still lacking on the level of overlapping home ranges of females and the maximum
219 home range size for males and females. The ranging and movement data, are key when
220 determining overall viable habitat size as well as informing landscape connectivity plans
221 (Macdonald et al. 2018). These are all necessary for conserving Borneo's Endangered apex
222 predator in a rapidly decreasing habitat (Hearn et al. 2008).

223

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225

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237

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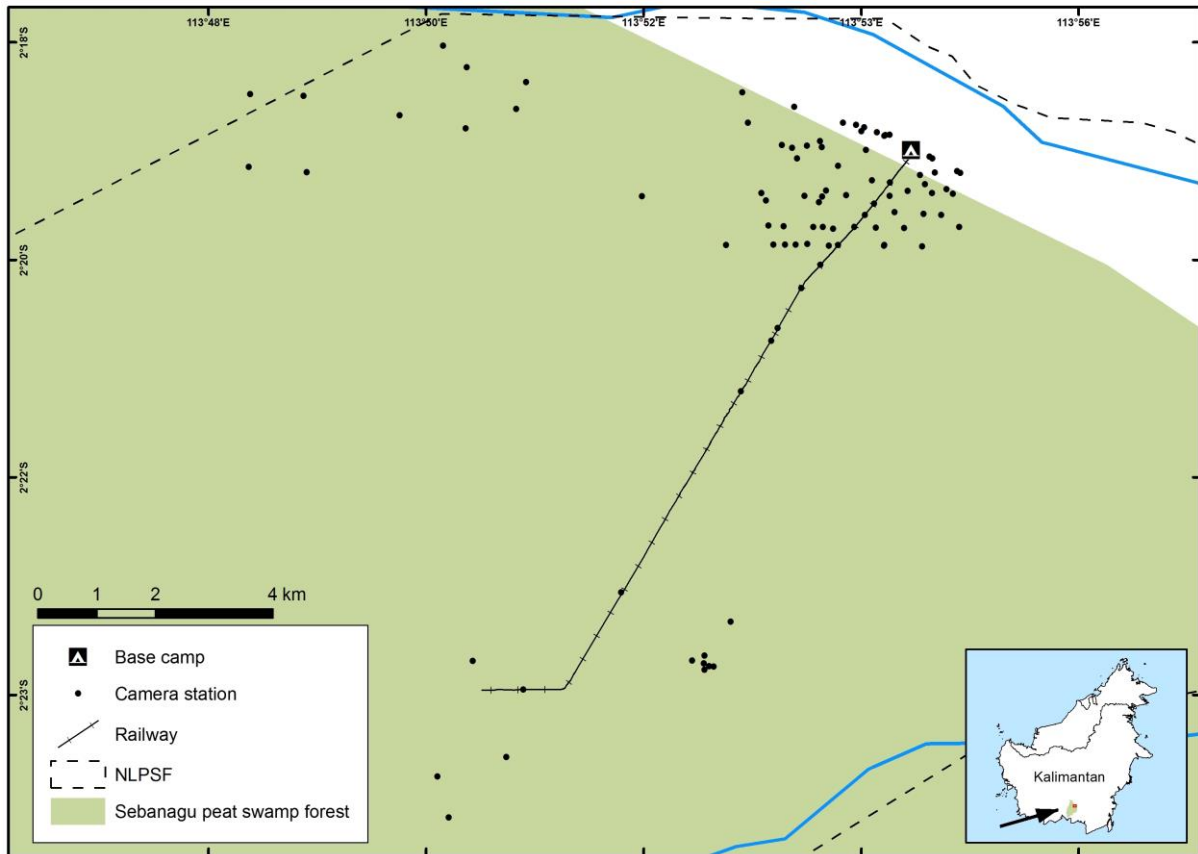
369 **Figures and tables**

370

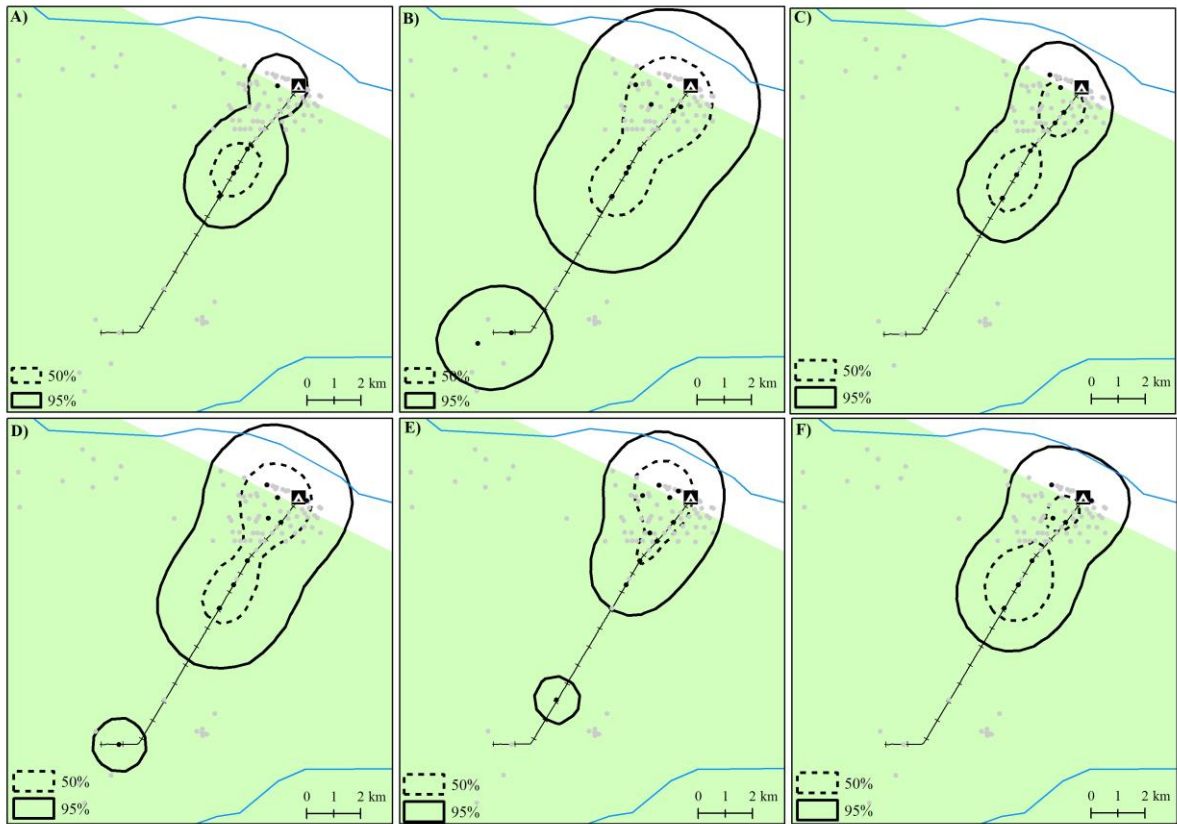
371 Fig. 1. Location of the camera traps in the Natural Laboratory of Peat Swamp Forest

372 (NLPSF) within the Sebangau catchment in Central Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo.

373



375 Fig. 2. Fixed kernels (50% and 95%) as an estimation of minimum home ranges for 6 male
376 Bornean clouded leopards in the NLPSF. A) M1, B) M2, C) M3, D) M4, E) M5, F) M8.



377
378

379 Table 1. Summary of Bornean clouded leopard detections within the NLPSF, from May 2008
 380 until February 2018. (1) A = Adult. (2) To be considered as an independent capture, the
 381 photos had to be taken on the same day at different locations, or at the same location after a
 382 period of 10 minutes between the first and last detection at that location.

383

ID	Sex	Age ⁽¹⁾	No. of independent captures ⁽²⁾	No. of independent stations	No. of redetection stations	First detection	Last detection
M1	M	A	9	5	1	Jul. 2008	Jul. 2011
M2	M	A	29	11	5	Aug. 2008	Dec. 2011
M3	M	A	20	7	5	Nov. 2009	Oct. 2015
M4	M	A	32	9	7	Nov. 2009	Aug. 2015
M5	M	A	29	10	6	Oct. 2013	Jan. 2018
M6	M	A	3	3	0	Feb. 2014	Feb. 2014
M7	M	A	5	2	1	Dec. 2013	Mar. 2014
M8	M	A	11	7	1	Nov. 2014	Nov. 2016
M9	M	A	3	3	0	Oct. 2016	Dec. 2017
F1	F	A	2	2	0	Oct. 2009	Oct. 2009
ID1	?	A	1	1	0	Oct. 2014	Oct. 2014
ID2	?	A	5	4	1	Dec. 2013	Sep. 2014

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385 Table 2. Home range estimators for 6 male Bornean clouded leopards within the NLPSF.

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ID	Sex	Age	Home range estimators (km ²)				
			<u>Minimum convex polygon</u>			<u>Fixed kernel</u>	
			50%	95%	100%	50%	95%
M1	M	A	0.008	0.02	0.3	2.7	16.3
M2	M	A	1.6	4.3	14.7	14.3	68.7
M3	M	A	0.2	1.3	2.5	6.3	24.8
M4	M	A	1.0	2.5	8.7	10.6	45.1
M5	M	A	1.5	2.4	6.8	5.5	26.9
M8	M	A	0	2.4	3.9	6.9	30.2

Abbreviations: A = adult.

390 Table 3. Comparison of home range estimates for Bornean clouded leopards.

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Location	Method	Duration	Sex	Age	Home range estimators (km ²)					Reference
					<u>Minimum convex polygon</u>			<u>Fixed kernel</u>		
					100%	95%	50%	95%	50%	
Central Kalimantan	CT	10 years	M	A	6.8	2.4	1.2	26.9	5.6	This study
			M	A	0.3	0.02	0.008	16.3	2.7	
			M	A	2.5	1.3	0.2	24.8	6.3	
			M	A	3.9	2.4	0	30.2	6.9	
			M	A	8.7	2.5	1	45.1	10.6	
			M	A	14.7	4.3	1.6	68.7	14.3	
Sabah	CT	7 months	M	A	45	-	-	-	-	Mohamed et al. 2009
Sabah	VHF	109 days	F	SA	29.9	22.6	5.2	16.1	5.4	Hearn et al. 2013

Abbreviations: CT = camera trapping, VHF = very high frequency; A = adult, SA = sub-adult.

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