

## FEEDING BEHAVIOR OF PROBOSCIS MONKEYS (*NASALIS LARVATUS*) IN ISOLATED MANGROVES HABITAT OF SABAH (NORTHERN BORNEO), MALAYSIA

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Feeding behavior of proboscis monkeys (*Nasalis larvatus*) was studied at an isolated mangrove habitat of 263 hectares at Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary (LBPMS), Sabah, Malaysia. Data on feeding behavior was collected using an all-occurrences sampling method. Two transect plots (10m X 100m) containing 130 mangroves trees were established and monitored monthly for changes in phenology (that is changes in fruit, flower and young leaf production of mangrove plants). The total number of feeding observations was 1,180. At least 20 species of mangrove plants and non-mangrove plants were used as food sources at LBPMS, with a marked preference for *Rhizophora apiculata*, *Bruguiera parviflora* (mangrove tree), *Acrostichum aureum* (mangrove fern) and *Derris trifoliata* (mangrove climber). *Rhizophora apiculata* and *Bruguiera parviflora* were the most dominant trees. Proboscis monkeys are selective feeders, and during times of low plant food sources, the proboscis monkey depends on a feeding program (baked pancake composed of wheat and rice flour without sugar) and cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*) provided twice daily by the LBPMS management as their food supplement.

Keywords: *Nasalis larvatus*, *Rhizophora apiculata*, mangrove tree, feeding behavior