



The Sarawak Museum Journal

Vol. L No. 71

December 1996



ISSN: 0375-3050

E-ISSN: 3036-0188

Citation: Leslie S. Hall. (1996). Brief Notes: Predation on the Bat Chaerephon Plicata by the Black Hornbill, *Anthracoseros Malayanus*. The Sarawak Museum Journal, L (71): 173-176

BRIEF NOTES: PREDATION ON THE BAT *CHAEREPHON PLICATA* BY THE BLACK HORNBILL, *ANTHRACOCEROS MALAYANUS*

Leslie S. Hall

Most species of hornbill are omnivorous, eating fruit as well as small animals. Ground frequenting species appear to be entirely carnivorous while forest species rely on fruit as their main diet (Campbell and Lack, 1985). Carnivory has been observed in several species of Bornean hornbills. Smythies (1981) recorded that the Rhinoceros Hornbill, *Buceros rhinoceros*, can capture Murina in flight and that the White-crested Hornbill, *Berenicornis comatus* can catch weak flying swiftlets on the wing. Captive Black Hornbill, *Anthracoseros malayanus*, have been fed raw fish, small birds (Java Sparrows) and a horseshoe bat, which was swallowed with some difficulty (Smythies, 1981). The following observations confirm that the Black Hornbill will indulge in carnivory in the wild.

Chapman (1985) reported an unidentified species of hornbill flapping in and out of a dense stream of bats emerging from Gua Payau (Deer Cave), Gunung Mulu National Park, but he was unable to determine if the hornbills were catching and eating the bats.

BRIEF NOTES:

**PREDATION ON THE BAT *Chaerephon plicata*
BY THE BLACK HORNBILL, *Anthracoceros malayanus***

by

Leslie S. Hall

Most species of hornbill are omnivorous, eating fruit as well as small animals. Ground frequenting species appear to be entirely carnivorous while forest species rely on fruit as their main diet (Campbell and Lack, 1985). Carnivory has been observed in several species of Bornean hornbills. Smythies (1981) recorded that the Rhinoceros Hornbill, *Buceros rhinoceros*, can capture a *Murina* in flight and that the White-crested Hornbill, *Berenicornis comatus* can catch weak flying swiftlets on the wing. Captive Black Hornbill, *Anthracoceros malayanus*, have been fed raw fish, small birds (Java Sparrows) and a horseshoe bat, which was swallowed with some difficulty (Smythies, 1981). The following observations confirm that the Black Hornbill will indulge in carnivory in the wild.

Chapman (1985) reported an unidentified species of hornbill flapping in and out of a dense stream of bats emerging from Gua Payau (Deer Cave), Gunung Mulu National Park, but he was unable to determine if the hornbills were catching and eating the bats.

On 8th July, 1988 I was sitting at the northeastern entrance to Gua Payau observing the evening exit of Wrinkle-lipped bats, *Chaerephon plicata*. The majority of Wrinkle-lipped bats exit their roosts in Gua Payau via the main southwestern entrance, where their emergence has become a major tourist attraction (Hall, 1994). The bats were flying out of the northeastern entrance in a continuous stream at the rate of about 40 per second. The stream of bats was 10 to 15 bats wide and commenced to depart at 5.24 p.m.. As the bats approached the entrance from within the cave, they flew close to the ceiling and as they left, they passed through a constriction caused by trees growing in the entrance. Above this exit point was a steep limestone cliff on which a small amount of vegetation grew precariously. The weather was fine with some clouds.

At 5.30 p.m. a group of nine Black Hornbills (*Anthracoceros malayanus*) flew from the jungle and landed in a small tree on the cliff overlooking the northeastern entrance to Gua Payau. They were calling