ETHNOPRIMATOLOGY: HUMAN-MACAQUE INTERFACE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA CAMPUS

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Received: 4th Jan 2019
Accepted: 23rd Aug 2019
Published: 31st Oct 2020
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22452/mjs.vol39no3.2

ABSTRACT

Studies on human and primate interactions have been very popular but this is the first of such work examining a local scenario within a city campus in Malaysia. A study conducted in University of Malaya (UM) campus on the human and macaque interface showed that undergraduates from Year 1 to Year 4 had similar perceptions and experiences with macaque disturbances and consequences. It was significantly perceived that foraging had caused the macaques to enter residential colleges or faculties. A high percentage of students opted for macaque translocation to curtail the problem. The two focused macaque groups consumed different proportions of natural and artificial food, scavenged or offered, in their natural habitat. Natural food consumed by these animals consisted of petioles, leaves and fruits from different species of plants whereas the artificial food included the types consumed by humans. The major anthropogenic disturbance on the macaque groups was human presence (their approach ing the animals or being nearby). Findings from this work conclusively revealed that the commonly perceived undesirable impact of macaques onto human beings also happened reciprocally from humans to macaques.

Keywords: Macaque disturbances, natural food, artificial food, anthropogenic disturbance onto macaques

1. INTRODUCTION

Macaca fascicularis, commonly known as the long-tailed macaque, is the most widespread non-human primate species in the world (Fooden, 1995). They are widely distributed throughout the whole of Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah, Sarawak as well as