Status of the critically endangered species, Malabar civet *Viverra megaspila civettina* Blyth, 1862 in the southern Western Ghats

Dr. E. A. Jayson /

KERALA FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Peechi- 680 653, Kerala, India
Status of the critically endangered species, Malabar civet *Viverra megaspila civettina* Blyth, 1862 in the southern Western Ghats

(Final Report of the Research project KFRI/481/2005)

Dr. E. A. Jayson

Division of Forest Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation

KERALA FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Peechi- 680 653, Kerala, India

December 2007
ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

1. Project No. : KFRI/481/05

2. Title of Project : Status of the critically endangered species, Malabar civet Viverra megaspila civettina Blyth, 1862 in the southern Western Ghats

3. Objectives:
   
a) Identify and locate the Malabar civet in the potential natural habitats.

   b) To survey the captive civet populations in Kerala for identifying the Malabar civet.

4. Date of commencement : April 2005

5. Scheduled date of completion : September 2007

6. Funding agency : Kerala Forest Research Institute Peechi- 680 653, Kerala

7. Project Team
   
   Principal Investigator : Dr. E. A. Jayson
   
   Research Fellow : V.M. Sulfiakar Ali

8. Study area : Kerala

9. Duration of study : 2 Years

10. Project budget : Rs.2.29 Lakhs
Contents

ABSTRACT

1. INTRODUCTION 06
   1.1. Identification 08
   1.2. Difference between Small Indian civet & Malabar civet 09
   1.3. Conservation status 10
   1.4. Literature survey 10

2. STUDY AREA AND METHODS 12
   2.1. Live trapping 12
   2.2. Information from brochure 13
   2.3. Questionnaire survey 13
   2.4. Field survey 13

3. RESULTS 15
   3.1. Malabar civet 15
       3.1.1. Live trapping 16
       3.1.2. Information brochure 16
       3.1.3. Questionnaire survey 16
       3.1.4. Field survey 17
   3.2. Other civets 18
       3.2.1. Common palm civet 18

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS 20

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 21

6. REFERENCES 22

7. APPENDICES 24
Abstract

A study was carried out to locate the critically endangered Malabar civet *Viverra megaspila civettina* in Kerala, starting from April 2005 to September 2007. Field surveys, questionnaire survey, distribution of brochures and live trapping were adopted. In addition to these, known captive breeding centers of Small Indian civet were visited to locate the species. Sixty nine potential respondents were interviewed for the questionnaire survey. Thousand copies of specially designed brochures were distributed to the interested people at Nilambur area where the Malabar civet was last spotted. Apart from these the brochures were distributed to the potential informers also. As official permission was not obtained, live trapping was not attempted extensively as planned.

Even though, many responses were obtained from the enthusiastic public after publishing the details of the Malabar civet (from the Brochure) in the newspapers, detailed studies indicated that all the respondents were referring either to the Common palm civet (Todd cat) or Small Indian civet. A live trap was specially designed for trapping, with many peculiarities and it was proved to be very effective. Live trapping helped in catching only the Common palm civet.

Respondents from Elayur, Nilambur were only aware of the Malabar civet and others were not aware of the species. The habitat of the Malabar civet at Elayur is being lost at a fast pace. Cashew plantations are giving way to rubber plantations and the field surveys revealed that the Malabar civet was not sighted recently. The study could not locate any Malabar civet in captivity also, among the captive Small Indian civets. As the captive breeding of the Small Indian civet is done with great secrecy, the information on captive Small Indian civets is scarce. As the animal is nocturnal in habit, there is still hope of few surviving individuals in some isolated patches at certain remote corners. As most of the potential habitats are with private individuals, there is tremendous pressure to change the land use pattern, which may adversely affect the survival of the species. Spreading information on the rarity of the species may help in the conservation of the species in future.
1. Introduction

The Malabar civet *Viverra megaspila civettina* Blyth, 1862 is endemic to the Western Ghats. It is mostly recorded from the coastal Districts of Western Ghats in southern India from Kanyakumari in the extreme south to Honnavar in Karnataka and in the North as far as Wayanad and Coorg (Corbet and Hill, 1992). There are only two reports of its occurrence in the higher elevation of the Western Ghats, in the High Wavy Mountains and Kudremukh (Karanth, 1986). The Malabar civet was considered "possibly extinct" by IUCN in 1978 until two dead specimens were recovered from Elayar, Nilambur in North Kerala (Kurup, 1989). No confirmed reports on the sighting of the species were available since 1950. It was considered as one of the highest priority species for conservation action by IUCN (Schreiber et al. 1989).

The family of Viverridae contains about 75 species of civet, genets, mongooses and their allies, apportioned among 36 genera; that it is convenient to consider them under the headings of the 6-sub families into which it is divided. Viverrids are small to medium sized animals, generally with long tails and often with rather short legs and many of them are marked with conspicuous spots and stripes. They are semi plantigrade or digitigrades and the claws are partly retractile in the digitigrades species. Many of the Viverrids have well developed scent glands and some of which produce secretions of attractive odor much valued by man. The family is confirmed to the old world where it is widely distributed and forms the counter part to the procyonids of the new. The sub-family Viverridae contains the genets, linsangs and civets. All except one species are spotted or blotted and have ringed tails. They are omnivores and although terrestrial, most of them are agile climbers of the trees. About 5-6 species of genet, inhabit Africa and one of them extends into Southern Europe. They are long bodied slim animals with short legs, long tails and soft fur beautifully marked with rows of dark blotches.

The Malabar civet is a mostly nocturnal animal from the Viverridae family, although the Viverridae is distantly related to the felidae family of which the common domestic cat is a member. Although most civet resembles spotted, long-nosed cats, civets of the genus *Viverra* are the most dog-like in appearance, with long legs and rather canine heads and muzzles. It can be told apart from the Small Indian civet easily
by its large size and the dark erectile crest of hair that runs down its spine much like that of the Large Indian civet. Unlike the Large Indian civet, the dark bands run through to the tip of the tail. The under side of the tail has five black and white bands and the black spots on the grey coat do not form lines or patterns but are splotched randomly.

The original habitat of Malabar civet was in the evergreen rain forest belt in the Western Ghats of southwest India, where it lived in wooded plains and adjoining hill slopes. Most capture of this species in the last 30 years has been in valleys, around riparian areas. This suggests possible dependence on shallow waterways where the civet forages at night (Ashraf et al., 1993). Thickets in cashew plantations may also provide important cover. The diet of the related large spotted civet, *Viverra megaspila*, includes small animals, eggs and vegetable matter. To secure their food, civets hunt in the manner of cats, taking prey by surprise, stalking it stealthily or pouncing on it from hiding.

The Malabar civet has never been observed in trees and possibly forages almost entirely on the ground. Species of the genus *Viverra* stay in dense cover by day and come out into the open at night. Malabar civets are aggressive towards members of their own species and have usually been observed alone. It is a large civet, almost similar in size to the Large Indian civet *Viverra zibetha* and its exact measurement is not available. However, it is believed that an adult is around 1090 to 1250 mm long including tail, which is around 330 to 400 mm and weighing up to 6.45 to 8 kg. The coat is long and full grey in colour. The body pattern is blackish and larger as compared to the Small Indian civet. The dorsal crest is black and prominent extending from neck up to the tip of the tail. The tail has five white rings, the last one being only about 25 mm from the tip.

The Malabar civet once inhabited the lowland forests in its range. In northern Kerala, it appears to be confined to thickets in cashew plantations and to highly degraded lowland forests (Ashraf, 1990). It is reported to be nocturnal and retreats to the scrub forests and cashew plantations during the day for shelter. Recent surveys concluded that the typical habitat of Malabar civet is lowland swamp and riparian forests in the coastal plain Districts of Western Ghats. Little is known about its ecology and biology.
About 20 to 25 years ago, this species was apparently widely used to collect civet oil. It was killed for raiding poultry and is declining due to habitat loss. The Malabar civet was once very common in the Districts of North and South in southwest India, but by the late 1960's it was thought to be near extinct and the animal was not sighted again until 1987. This species of civet is one of the world's rare mammals, with no knowledge about the existing population.

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Mammalia
Order: Carnivora
Family: Viverridae
Subfamily: Viverrinae
Genus: Viverra
Species: megaspila civettina

Extensive deforestation has reduced the forests in the Malabar civet's original range to a series of isolated patches and the habitat loss is continuing. Cashew plantations, which probably hold most of the surviving populations of Malabar civet, are now threatened by large-scale clearance for planting rubber. It is not selectively hunted but is captured and killed when encountered. About 90% of the people interviewed in a 1990 survey in the area where the Malabar civet was found were not even aware of its existence. Those who were aware of it were mainly hunters, trappers and civet rearers. Scarcely anyone recognized it as a critically endangered species (Ashraf et al., 1993). Species of the genus Viverra are sources of "civet" (or "civet-musk"), an ingredient which is used in the production of perfume.

1.1. Identification

The coat is long and full grey in colour. The body pattern is blackish and larger in size as compared to the Small Indian civet. The dorsal crest is black and prominent extending from neck up to the tip of the tail. The tail has five white rings the last one being only about two inches from the tip.

a. Tail with complete light and dark rings, body markings indistinct and cloudy, not spotty, size large, anterior upper molars distinctly triangular

*Viverra zibetha*
(Large Indian civet)

a² Tail with light and dark rings incomplete

b. Large size, black rings all complete, light rings just broken by the dorsal black bands of the tail, flanks distinctly spotted with large spots.

c. Mane commencing between ears, skull with anterior upper molars quadrangular as compared with *V. zibetha*

*V. civettina*
(Malabar civet)

c² Mane commencing between the shoulders

*V. megaspila*

### 1.2. Difference between Small Indian civet and Malabar civet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Small Indian civet</strong></th>
<th><strong>Malabar civet</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Small Indian civet is buff colour with spotting all over its body.</td>
<td>Black spots on the grey coat do not form lines or patterns splotched randomly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Black and white ringed tail has 8-10 dark bands.</td>
<td>Underside of the tail have 5 black and white bands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lacks a spinal crest</td>
<td>Dark erectile crest of hair that run down its spine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Body length 45-60 cm</td>
<td>Body length 125 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Weight 2.5-3.5 kg</td>
<td>Weight approximately 8 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All habitats except deserts and also mountains.</td>
<td>Highly degraded low land forest and cashew plantation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3. Conservation status


IUCN Categories:

Civets and Palm civets, a diverse assemblage of animals are grouped in a single family, the *Viverridae*. A civet has long body and short limb and it has an elongated head and pointed muzzle. To obtain their food civets have keen eyes, a sharp sense of smell and acute hearing. The facial vibrissae or the whiskers are prominent in these animals and are very mobile and can be directed backwards and forwards. Civets are found all over the Oriental region and in Africa but they mainly occur in India and the Malay countries, where largest number of species live. The species was once very common in the coastal Districts of Malabar and Travancore (Prater, 1980).

The objective of this study was to locate and assess the critically endangered Malabar civet in its habitat and to suggest measures to conserve the species which is one of the rarest mammals on the earth.

1. To locate the critically endangered Malabar civet in its habitat.

2. To survey the captive civet populations in Kerala for the identification of Malabar civet.

1.4. Literature survey

Since the species is thought to be extinct in the sixties, no information was available on the species. Then in eighties, the species has been located at Elayur in the North Kerala. The species has been reported from Karnataka by Karanth (1986). However, no detailed studies on the ecology and behavior of the animal have been carried out. Nevertheless, many studies have been reported on the similar species of civets from different parts of the country (Ayadurai et al., 1987; Acharjyo and Patnaik, 8
1987). As the species is endemic to the Western Ghats no information on the species has been reported from the other countries. Related civets were subject of studies in India (Xavier, 1993; Xavier and Balakrishnan, 1993; Xavier and Balakrishnan, 1999) and other countries (Joshi et al. 1995; Pendje, 1994).

Information on the biological aspects like the gestation period, litter size, age at sexual maturity of male and female and the life span is also not available. Ashraf et al. (1993) concluded that the typical habitat of the Malabar civet is lowland swamp and riparian forests in the coastal plain Districts of Western Ghats and isolated population still survive but most probably only in the heavily populated areas in the south Malabar from where forest cover has disappeared almost entirely. As no detailed studies are available on the species and considering the above facts this survey was initiated.
2. Study area and Methods

The study was carried out in the Kerala State and the field surveys were carried out in the northern Districts of the State. This area was selected, as the Malabar civet was last reported from this part of Kerala. Elayur an area near Manjeri, Malappuram District in the northern Kerala was selected as the intensive study area, as the last report of the species was from this site (Fig. 1). The study was mainly based on the methods like live trapping, questionnaire survey, gathering information through leaflet, newspaper reports and night search was also carried out to locate the species. Trapping of the species was carried out in the potential habitats identified, using the questionnaire survey method at Elayur. Limited trapping was carried out using the specially designed traps and extensive live trapping could not be taken for want of official permission.

2.1. Live trapping

*Description of the trap:* A live trap was specially designed for the study by Mr. Sreevalsan DFO, Kerala Forest Department with many facilities. First concern when designing the trap was about carrying the trap in the field without difficulty. For this purpose, the trap was made of light steel and can be carried by four people easily in the field and it was weighing only 75 kg. For holding the trap, four rings were provided. Another concern was to keep away, the unwanted small animals which may get trapped. To solve this problem, a special spring mechanism was developed, which will activate the trigger of the trap only when the animal of desired weight will step into the trap and the lowest weight was set as 2 kg. If animals less than 2 kg entered the trap, the trigger will not function. A lever prevented the opening of the trap door from inside the cage, when the animal was trapped. Apart from these, the trap had a facility to keep the live prey safely in a box and another facility was to take the captured animal with out opening the main door. The trigger mechanism was well protected using a cover and other feature was to avoid injury to the animal's tail, even if it remains outside the cage when the door is closed. The basal platform was made of wood to prevent the danger of the trapped animal losing body heat over the night, if metal sheets are used for lining the base (Fig.2). The trap can be easily transported in a jeep and a small door was also provided to supply
Fig. 1 South India showing the study location Elayur, Nilambur and Kerala State
Fig. 2 The specially designed live trap set for catching Civets

Research institute in search of ‘veruku’

BY RAJESH RAO

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 29: KFRI is in search for Viverra civetina, locally known as Veroku or Furred in Malabar region, thought to be extinct but sighted again in 1967 after a hussi was caught with two skins from Hayam Express in Nilambur.

Nature lovers can join the hunt led by the Keral Forest Research Institute (KFRI) to find the animal which is endemic to the Western Ghats. If the survey ends in failure, the institute expects help from the public.

In the past few years, attempts have been made to search for the species, but only the Institute’s efforts have been successful. KFRI’s research team conducted surveys in the Western Ghats and found the animal in the area.

The institute is planning to set up a research center in Malabar to study the habits of the animal and its habitat. The institute is collaborating with the Wildlife Institute of India and the Forest Department to conduct surveys in the region.

The institute is also focusing on the conservation of the animal and is conducting a study on its population size. The institute is trying to keep a check on the number of verukus in the region.

Fig. 3. Write up appeared in the newspaper asking for information on the Malabar civet sightings in the State.
water or food to the trapped animal without opening the main door. Trapping was carried out at different parts of Elayur only.

2.2. Distribution of brochure

A three-fold, colour brochure was prepared giving the prominent distinguishing features of the Malabar civet and the Small Indian civet. Thousand copies of this brochure were printed and it was distributed to the people and NGOs at Elayur and to those who were present when the field surveys were conducted. The visitors to the Kerala Forest Research Institute head quarters at Peechi and the visitors to the Sub Centre at Nilambur were also provided with these brochures (Appendix I). In each brochure – identification characters, comparison with Small Indian civet and a pencil drawing of Malabar civet was provided. Based on the brochure, newspapers published many short write ups asking information on Malabar civet from the public (Fig. 3).

2.3. Questionnaire survey

Questionnaire survey was conducted among the local communities, N.G.O’s, and tribal communities using a structured questionnaire. Many individuals shared the information without any hesitation but certain individuals were hesitant of speaking or sharing information with the authors. A sample of the questionnaire format is given in Appendix II. Seventy one respondents from different parts of Kerala were interviewed. Different locations were surveyed namely Thekkumbad, Dhallil, Madakkara, Elayur, Mankada, Vagavurry Estate, Muradikudi, Farook, Nilambur, Kannur, Wayanad and Elayur. The questionnaire elicited basic information like the identification details, profile of the respondent and awareness about the Malabar civet and the questionnaire in total contained 21 questions.

Field survey for Malabar civet and Small Indian civet

A survey of captive populations of Small Indian civet was carried out using questionnaire method and by visit to the Captive breeding centers. Based on the information gathered and received we visited the areas where the small Indian civet was kept in captivity. The farmers were very reluctant to reveal the fact of keeping the small Indian civets in captivity fearing persecution from the Forest Department as most
of these animals are held in captivity without any proper documents. Details of the field survey are given in the Table 1.

Table 1 Details of field survey conducted in Kerala.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Months</th>
<th>Area surveyed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25/03/2006</td>
<td>25/03/2006</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Farook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>03/04/2006</td>
<td>06/04/2006</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Kannur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21/04/2006</td>
<td>22/04/2006</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Trivandrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14/05/2006</td>
<td>20/05/2006</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Munnar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>26/05/2006</td>
<td>30/05/2006</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>08/06/2006</td>
<td>09/06/2006</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15/06/2006</td>
<td>17/06/2006</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>05/07/2006</td>
<td>07/07/2006</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>14/07/2006</td>
<td>15/07/2006</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>01/08/2006</td>
<td>05/08/2006</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>16/08/2006</td>
<td>19/08/2006</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>23/08/2006</td>
<td>26/08/2006</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>18/09/2006</td>
<td>20/08/2006</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Results

3.1. Malabar civet

The Malabar civet is a nocturnal mammal from the *viverridae* family, although the *viverridae* is distantly related to the *felidae* family of which the common domestic cat is a member. Although most civets resemble spotted, long-nosed cats, civets of the genus *Viverra* are the most dog-like in appearance, with long legs and rather canine heads and muzzles. It can be told apart from the Small Indian civet easily by its much larger size and the dark erectile crest of hair that runs down its spine much like that of the Large Indian civet. Unlike in the Large Indian civet, the dark bands run through to the tip of the tail. The under side of the tail has 5 black and white bands. The black spots on the grey coat do not form lines or patterns but are splotched randomly.

The Malabar civet's original habitat was in the evergreen rain forest belt in the Western Ghats of southwest India, where it lived in wooded plains and adjoining hill slopes. Most captures of this species in the last 30 years have been in valleys, around riparian areas. This suggests possible dependence on shallow waterways where the civet forages at night (Ashraf et al. 1993). Thickets in cashew plantations may also provide important cover. The diet of the related large spotted civet *Viverra megaspila*, includes small animals; eggs and vegetable matter. To secure their food, civets have keen eyes, a sharp sense of smell and acute hearing when they hunt. Civets hunt in the manner of cats, taking prey by surprise, stalking it stealthily or pouncing on it from hiding.

The Malabar civet has never been observed in trees and possibly forages almost entirely on the ground. Species of the genus *Viverra* stay in dense cover by day and come out into the open at night. Malabar civets are aggressive towards members of their own species and have usually been observed alone. It is a large civet, almost similar in size to the Large Indian civet *Viverra zibetha* and its exact measurement is not available. However, it is believed that an adult is around 1090 to 1250 mm long including tail, which is around 330 to 400 mm and weighing up to 6.45 to 8 kg. The coat is long and full grey in colour. The body pattern is blackish and larger as compared
to the Small Indian civet. The dorsal crest is black and prominent extending from neck up to the tip of the tail. The tail has five white rings, the last one being only about 25 mm from the tip.

The Malabar civet once inhabited the lowland forests in its range. In northern Kerala, it appears to be confined to thickets in cashew plantations and to highly degraded lowland forests (Ashraf, 1990). Recent surveys concluded that the typical habitat of Malabar civet is lowland swamp and riparian forests in the coastal plain Districts of Western Ghats. Little is known about its ecology and biology. It was killed for raiding poultry and is declining due to habitat loss. The Malabar civet was once very common in the Districts of North and South in southwest India, but by the late 1960's it was thought to be near extinct and the animal was not sighted again until 1987. This species of civet is one of the world's rare mammals, with no knowledge about the existing population. Two skins kept at the Zoological Survey of India Calcutta (Fig. 4) and another one kept at the Zoological Survey of India, Calicut was examined for the study.

3.1.1. Live trapping

Initially tried at Elayar but not continued as permission was not accorded from the Forest Department. Live trapping resulted in trapping of Common Palm civet. The trapping studies could not locate the species in the intensive study area at Elayar.

3.1.2. Information from Brochure

The brochure helped in spreading the message of rareness of the species and the threat to its survival. The brochure caught hold of the attention of the local reporters of the newspapers and they published many write ups in the newspapers on their own. Many readers responded through phone or letters voluntarily after reading the reports. Publicity given in the prominent newspapers of the Kerala produced more than 20 responses, from all over the State but most of them turned out to be of Palm civet or the Small Indian civet on detailed enquiry (Figs. 5 & 6).
Fig. 4 Malabar civet skin available at the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta
Fig. 5 Small Indian civet in captivity

Fig. 6 Hair structure of Small Indian civet
Fig. 7. Information obtained from the public through letters and phone calls

Fig. 8. A resident of Elayur (Malayil Nadikutty, 65), Malayil who has sighted the Malabar civet at Elayur in the past.
3.1.3. **Questionnaire survey**

Malabar civets were often seen around the Cashew plantations of Elayur during the 1970 to 1990 and now the species is not sighted. Respondents from Elayur alone were aware of the Malabar civet and 4 per cent reported that they have seen the animal before 10 years (Table 2).

**Table 2 Response of local people about the occurrence of Malabar civet (n= 69).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Awareness on the Malabar civet</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Reasons for decline</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Seen in the past 2 years</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>Poaching</td>
<td>9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>During the past 10 years</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>Hunting by feral dogs</td>
<td>13 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>Habitat loss</td>
<td>29 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>No idea about the species</td>
<td>52 %</td>
<td>All the above</td>
<td>49 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However some of the respondents in the questionnaire survey reported the sighting of the species in the area before 4 to 5 years. Most of the respondents were not sighted the species recently (Fig 7). One respondent reported that the species was sighted in the years 1994 and also in 2002. According to him the feral dogs hunted the Malabar civet indiscriminately and they could not escape as they were not able to climb trees. A resident of Elayur claimed that he has spotted the Malabar civet earlier (Fig. 8). News paper reports appeared in the press on the study is given in Appendix.

3.1.4. **Field survey for Malabar civet and Small Indian civet**

Three captive Small Indian civets were located during the survey. Small Indian civet is mostly used for extracting Civitin. They were kept secretly and Civitin is extracted. Trichur is a place where Civitin is traded for the Ayurvedic medicine preparation. A seminar paper was presented on the subject at Emerald Heights College, Ooty (Sullivan and Jayson, 2007).
Table 3. Response from the public for news items appeared in the newspapers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Address of the informer</th>
<th>Animal sighted</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.</td>
<td>Mr. C.N. Jayan, Karakkal Chittoor, Agali P.O. 678 581 (Letter)</td>
<td>Seen Malabar civet in 1996</td>
<td>Attappady, Pattimattam, 03-10-2006 (Claim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Ravindran, Aswathy Iswaramangalam- 679573 (Letter)</td>
<td>Ponnani Town Toddy Cat</td>
<td>Seen above in an abandoned house 03-10-2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Unnamed Letter</td>
<td>Nedumangad, Koikkal Palace area</td>
<td>Not seen now as the trees have been cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04.</td>
<td>Mr. Ranjith, Cherthala, SN College (By Phone)</td>
<td>Near Kalasagar area</td>
<td>Seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05.</td>
<td>Unnamed (By Phone)</td>
<td>Near Vaikkom</td>
<td>Now not seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06.</td>
<td>Trichur (By phone)</td>
<td>Kept in captivity for Civit in extraction</td>
<td>Ayurvedic collection centers in Trichur town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.</td>
<td>Mr. Saju (By Phone)</td>
<td>Trichur (Seen) Toddy Cat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08.</td>
<td>Mr. Sivadas RO, COIRFED, Thevaly Quilon (By Phone)</td>
<td>Seen</td>
<td>Toddy cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Paravur Santhimadam Ashram (By Phone)</td>
<td>Seen</td>
<td>Toddy Cat?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mr. Biju, Ponnani (By phone)</td>
<td>Civet seen</td>
<td>Toddy Cat?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Other Civets

3.2.1. Common palm civet

Common palm civets were reported from Trichur, Nilambur, Wayanad and many other places. We visited the above locations and examined the specimens. Common palm civet is often confused as Malabar civet by local people (Figs. 9 & 10).
A news report had appeared in the press claiming that Malabar civet was spotted in Wayanad but it turned out to be only a Common palm civet (Figs. 11, 12 & 13).
4. Discussion and Conclusions

The field surveys and the questionnaire surveys could not locate the critically endangered Malabar civet during the study. Due to the drastic changes in the land use pattern, the suitable habitat for this animal has been lost. Potential loss of the remaining habitat is a reality in the immediate future. As the habitat of the species is in the private hands, governmental control will be needed to conserve the habitat. Hunting is still prevalent in the area for small game which is highly detrimental to the survival of the Malabar civet. Predation by feral dogs is another threat to the existence of the species. Human settlements are increasing in the area which is also not favourable to the species. It was not possible to locate the species during the study period but that does not mean that the species is extinct. As the species is nocturnal, there is every chance of some individuals remaining in some remote pockets.

The drastic change in the land use pattern in the recent past is one of the reasons for its decline. Cashew plantations have been converted into rubber and other cash crops, resulting in the loss of the remaining habitat (Figs. 14 and 15). Extensive deforestation has reduced the forests in the Malabar civet's original range to a series of isolated patches and the habitat loss is continuing. Cashew plantations, which probably hold most of the surviving populations of Malabar civet, are now threatened by large-scale clearance for planting rubber. If we can save the animal from extinction by spreading the message of conservation an endemic mammal in the Western Ghats will be conserved for the posterity. Only way to achieve this objective is to make more people aware about the rareness of the species, so that if the species reappears anywhere, the information will be reported to the authorities, who will be able to confirm the presence of the species.
Fig. 9. Common palm civet often confused as Malabar civet by local people

Fig. 10. A dead Common palm civet brought to the KFRI headquarters at Peechi
Fig. 11 Common palm civet juvenile brought to the DFO at Nilambur

Fig. 12 Common palm civet caught in the live trap
Fig. 13. Confusing reports usually appeared in the press about the wrong sightings of Malabar civet
Fig. 14. Fresh areas being cleared for planting rubber

Fig. 15. Cashew plantations where the Malabar civet was once located
5. Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Dr. R. Gnanaharan Director, Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi and Dr. C. Renuka, Programme Co-ordinator FEBC for all the encouragement and timely help. Many people helped the survey by providing information on the Malabar civet. Dr. J.K. Sharma, (former Director, KFRI) keenly followed the study and offered encouragement and suggestions for the successful completion of the work. Dr. K.K. Ramachandran, Scientist- in-Charge (F) offered many suggestions to an earlier draft, which helped in improving the style of the report.
6. References


Appendix I Brochure, requesting information on Malabar civet (front side)
Appendix I Brochure, requesting information on Malabar civet (Back side)
7. Appendices

II

KERALA FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE
THRISSUR - 680 653 KERALA
(An Institution of Kerala State Council for Science Technology and Environment,
Government of Kerala)

QUESTIONNAIRIE ON MALABAR CIVET

Project No. KFRI 481/2005

SCHEDULE

DATE

NAME

TIME

PLACE

Identification Details

1. Name of the Panchayath

2. Type of the nearby cultivation

   * Coconut
   * Paddy
   * Areca nut
   * Banana
   * Cashew plantation
   * Mixed

Profile of the respondent

3. Name of the respondent

4. Age
5. Sex

6. Education

7. Marital status

8. Occupation

Awareness of the person

9. Do you know Malabar civet/Jawed? Yes / No

10. Have you seen the civet cat
    Jawed / Pooveruke / Toddy cat

11. If yes, details about the types

12. How is the availability of the civet?
    * Plenty
    * Moderate
    * Not available

13. Types of vegetation preferred by the civet
    * Forest
    * Grasslands
    * Other

14. Which type of food is preferred by the civet?
    * Vegetarian
    * Non-vegetarian
    * Both

15. Do you catch / hunt any animals?

16. Which are the animals you come across while hunting?
17. Details about the catching/hunting
   * Medicinal
   * Food
   * Others

18. Are you aware of Small Indian civet (Pooveruke) yes/no

19. Details of the Small Indian civet sighting
   * Location
   * Vegetation

20. Since how long you have seen the Small Indian civet
   * Months
   * 1 year
   * More

21. Remarks:

Place: ___________________________  Signature: ___________________________
Date: ___________________________  Research Fellow: ______________________
Appendix III. Awareness about the Malabar civet in the State of Kerala - profile of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place and District</th>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Awareness about Malabar civet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>04/04/06</td>
<td>Madakkara, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Prakash</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>04/04/06</td>
<td>Madakkara, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Jalaja</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>04/04/06</td>
<td>Madakkara, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Salauddin</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>05/04/06</td>
<td>Madakkara, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Hassan E</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Fish Business</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>05/04/06</td>
<td>Thekkumbad, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Balan</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>05/04/06</td>
<td>Thekkumbad, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Ramesh</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>05/04/06</td>
<td>Thekkumbad, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Santhosh</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Pre-degree</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>06/04/06</td>
<td>Dhallil, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Chandar</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>06/04/06</td>
<td>Dhallil, Kannur</td>
<td>Coconut and Mangrove</td>
<td>Nooruddin</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>18/05/06</td>
<td>Vagavarry Estate</td>
<td>Tea plantation</td>
<td>M.Kalappan</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Forest Watcher</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>18/05/06</td>
<td>Vagavarry Estate</td>
<td>Tea plantation</td>
<td>T.Murugan</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Forest Watcher</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>18/05/06</td>
<td>Muradikudi</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>K.Palani swamy</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Forest Watcher</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>27/05/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Paddy and Cashew</td>
<td>P.C.Chandran</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Daily wage</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>27/05/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Paddy, Cashew and Coconut</td>
<td>K. P Dinesh</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Pre-degree</td>
<td>Film Rep</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>29/05/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Paddy, Cashew and Coconut</td>
<td>P. Jabbar</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>29/05/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Paddy, Cashew and Coconut</td>
<td>C. Moidhdeen</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>SSLC (ITI)</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>30/05/06</td>
<td>Manakada</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Smitha</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Pre-degree</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| No. | Date       | Village  | Occupation          | Farming or
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Land Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>08/06/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Srinivas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>10/06/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Alibapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47 SSLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>06/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>M. Salih.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49 M.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>04/08/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>K.T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51 M.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jayaprakash</td>
<td>BEd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>04/10/06</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>Coconut and Paddy</td>
<td>Sujatha. M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32 B.A BEd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>04/10/06</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Mary N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28 B.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>04/10/06</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Mohanan P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46 M.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>05/10/06</td>
<td>Chandakunu</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Sajidha. M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27 B.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>06/10/06</td>
<td>Chandakunu</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Mohammed Ali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52 M.Sc. BEd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>05/10/06</td>
<td>Chandakunu</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Sajidha. M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27 B.Sc. BEd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>18/10/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Ansar V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42 SSLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>18/10/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Mohammed Kutty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56 7th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>18/10/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Velarudhan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56 7th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>18/10/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Madhavan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52 7th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>22/10/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Ummar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42 SSLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>22/10/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Ummar Koya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52 5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>24/10/06</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Cheriya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51 7th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>24/10/06</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Valliya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56 7th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>24/10/06</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Allavikkuyetty Haji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>52 5th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>24/10/06</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Nani Mustie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48 SSLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Naryanana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50 5th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Babu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28 SSLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Hassan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>53 7th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Anwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27 Pred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Prakash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40 Pred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Anil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32 Pred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>04/12/06</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Maryam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51 5th Std</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>18/01/07</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>NadiKutt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57 SSLC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Plantation</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>18/01/07</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Balakrishnan</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Lineman (Tele)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>18/01/07</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Naryanan</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7th Std</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>18/01/07</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Hameed</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Pre-degree</td>
<td>Auto Driver</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>18/01/07</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Mixed Plantation</td>
<td>Kunzalli</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>7th Std</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>20/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Ayappan</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Bhumi</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Radha</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Krishna</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3rd std</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Kamala</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4th std</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Maran</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5th std</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Gopi</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Mahoot</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Geetha</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Kulan</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Mahoot</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Janaki</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>23/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Govindhan</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Mahoot</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Santhosh</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2nd std</td>
<td>Mahoot</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Kaveri</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Usha</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Coolie</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Kallan</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Mahoot</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Laha</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Krishanan</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Daily wage</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>21/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Forest areas</td>
<td>Suresh</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2nd std</td>
<td>Tracker</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Mixed plantation with forest</td>
<td>Danesh</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Cement worker</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Ottappalam</td>
<td>Mixed plantation with forest</td>
<td>Keshavan</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7th Std</td>
<td>Daily wage</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>24/02/07</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Mixed plantation with forest</td>
<td>Rajesh</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>SSLC</td>
<td>Cement worker</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix IV. Awareness about other Civets in the State of Kerala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Small Indian civet</th>
<th>Common palm civet</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Availability of civets</th>
<th>Recent sighting of other civets</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Madakkara</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>He has seen the Toddy cat and Small Indian civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Madakkara</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No idea</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>She has not seen in local areas, but seen in zoos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Madakkara</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>He has seen the civet on mango tree, using it as food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Madakkara</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td>6 months back</td>
<td>He has seen Small Indian civet and Toddy cat six months back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thekkumbad</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>He has seen on the palm trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thekkumbad</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No idea</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>He don’t know about the civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Thekkumbad</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No idea</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>Not seen and also some people are afraid to part with information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dalil</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No idea</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>Heard about the civet medicine, but not seen the civet in these areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dalil</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No idea</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>Heard about the civet medicine, but not seen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Seen</td>
<td>Hunted</td>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vaguvvarai Estate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2 weeks back He has seen the civet cat nearby the tea plantation in his home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Vaguvvarai Estate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>3 months back Aware of civets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Muradikudi</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back Aware of civets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Plenty</td>
<td>1 year back Species has not become extinct.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Plenty</td>
<td>3 months back Aware, killed some of them unknowingly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Plenty</td>
<td>1 year back Confident about the presence of Malabar civet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2 months back Still present in our area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Manakada</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Daily Her father is a Vydhair, he kept Small Indian civets in captivity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back People of Elayur know Malabar civet very well, and nowadays it is not seen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back He caught the Malabar Civet before 12-14 years back. Now it is difficult.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>10 years back He has seen the Malabar civet when they have caught at Elayur.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>5 years In old days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Months back</td>
<td>He has seen the Malabar civet while he was working the field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>Know about the Small Indian and palm civets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>She has seen the civets in zoos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Months back</td>
<td>Aware of Civet, but no idea about the Malabar civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Chandakunnu</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>Aware of the Malabar civet and seen the Small Indian and palm civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Chandakunnu</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>Know about the Small Indian and palm civets, but no idea about Malabar civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Chandakunnu</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>No idea about the civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>In the childhood he had seen it, now it is not available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>He knows about the Malabar civet, now it's not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Seen</td>
<td>Eaten</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>How Back</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>20 years back they have seen Malabar civet in plenty, but now it's not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Know about the Malabar civet, now it's not there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>He heard about the Malabar Civet but not seen it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Months</td>
<td>Before 15-20 years he has seen Malabar civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Know about the Malabar civet during 1980-1992, afterwards it decreased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Decreased due to deforestation of cashew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Now it's not available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>He has not seen it, but knows about the Malabar Civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Malabar civet is not available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Aware about the Malabar civet but not seen before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>All knows about Malabar civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Seen</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Modality</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>He has not seen it, but knows about the Malabar civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Not seen the Malabar civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>Knows about the Small Indian and palm civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Pukolathur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Seen it before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Months back</td>
<td>Now it's not available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>Seen the palm and Small Indian civets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>6 months back</td>
<td>Knows about the Palm and Small Indian civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>1 year back</td>
<td>No idea about the Malabar civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Elayur</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Knows about the Malabar civet earlier in their childhood days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Knows about the Palm and Small Indian civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>No idea in the forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>She has seen the Palm civet only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Muthanga</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Not</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>He knows the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>Know</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td>Seen</td>
<td>Info</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>She knows the palm civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>No idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Knows about the Palm civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>No idea about the civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Seen in earlier days, now in these forest areas they couldn’t find the civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>No idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Seen only the palm civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Seen the civet long ago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>No idea about the civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Seen in her native place on palm trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Palm civet used as food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Not much idea, she knows that civet is used as food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>He has seen the palm and Small Indian civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Aware about the Palm and Small Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Seen the palm civet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Ottappalam</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Not seen the Malabar civet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Muthanga Forest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Medicine and food</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>More than year</td>
<td>Aware of Malabar civet commonly called as Mullan Panni Mervu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix V. Study generated much interest among press and local people
Appendix VI Study generated much interest among press and local people (Mangalam Daily)
Appendix VII. Study generated much interest among press and local people (Rashtra Deepika)
‘Veruku’ becomes extinct

By RAJESH RAVI

Kochi, March 1: The official search for the Malabar Cheet (Viverra zethina) is over and the animal known as ‘Veruku’ is extinct. A belated but eight-month-long search by the Pechichi-based Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) did not yield any result.

Endemic to the Western Ghats, the mammal is the first from the endangered list to become extinct. An earlier search led by the Wild Life Institute of India also did not produce any results. Experts believe that the extinction of a species permanently closes the door to exploring the ecological history of the landscape.

Many sightings were reported from across the state in response to the search but all of them turned out to be false. E.A. Jayson of KFRI told ‘Express’. A close cousin of the Teddy Cat (Marappatti) and Small Indian Cheet (Pooveruku), Veruku was found mostly in the Malabar coast in the shrubs and cashew plantations. The last recorded sighting of the animal is in 1987 when a hunter was caught in Nilambur with two skins. Interestingly, there are no photos of the animal and an illustration done by a British scientist in 1890 was the lone guide in the search.

The animal has not been studied either and very little academic material is available on the subject. Jayson says that indiscriminate hunting and habitat loss may have been the cause for the animal’s disappearance. The nocturnal animal was large as a dog and preyed on fowls and eggs of other animals. In Malabar the animal is known as ‘Javed’.

The distinctive feature of the animal was its grey colour and the black dots that stretch from one end of the body to the other. Its tail has four rings in black and white and the weight of the animal is approximately between 6 to 8 kg.

K.M. Jayahari of the World Wildlife Fund says that the status monitoring of the endemic species of the Western Ghats is poor or it is not being done properly. “There are problems in the survey methodologies. Even the annual census surveys are not able to produce absolute and reliable data,” he said.

He added that there were no studies or status survey for Day’s Shrew, Nilgiri Marten, Jungle Spidered Squirrel, Ranjini Rat and Bonhote’s Mouse. When one species becomes extinct, it creates an irreplaceable vacuum in the food web of the ecosystem.

This can lead to the extinction of many plants or other animals which depend on the ecosystem service of this particular species. “Most importantly endemism is a phenomenon behind which several secrets of ecological history exist. There should be a system to monitor the population dynamics of species to avoid this sort of crisis,” Jayahari said.

Appendix VIII. Study generated much interest among press and local people (Indian Express)