

The use of camera traps in Malaysian rainforests

Abstract

Camera trapping is not a new tool in wildlife science. It was invented in the late 1890s, before being first used in the field in 1913 (Sanderson & Trolle, 2005). In recent decades, it has been widely used throughout the world, with an annual increment of 50%. The results of these studies have been published in internationally recognized journals (Rowcliffe & Carbone, 2008). Due to the increasing number of wildlife studies, over 100 camera traps of various brands and types are now available in the international markets. In Malaysia, the use of camera traps for surveying wildlife has increased drastically. More recently, the camera traps have been used for surveying and estimating tiger densities (Kawanishi & Sunquist, 2004; Mohamad & Darmaraj, 2009), examining activity patterns of large mammals (Laidlaw & Shaharudin, 1999; Wong et al., 2004; Mohd-Azlan & Sharma, 2006), general wildlife surveys (Laidlaw et al., 2000; Numata et al., 2004; Mohd-Azlan, 2006; Gimán et al., 2007), cryptic animal surveys (Wells et al., 2005; Mohd-Azlan & Sanderson, 2007), and foraging ecology (Miura, 1997; Matsubayashi et al., 2007). Thus, the main objective of this paper is to discuss the use of camera traps in Malaysian rainforest, promote discussion among local researchers who are currently engaged in this technique and to provide recommendations to meet local needs.