

Range extension of the Large Asian Leaf-nosed Bat (*Hipposideros lekaguli*) to Negros Island, Philippines

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Subject identified by: Gilbert A. Bejec, Abner A. Bucol.

Location: Cayasu Cave (Lat 9.7393°, Long 122.92042°), Mabinay, Negros Oriental, Philippines.

Elevation: 130 metres ASL.

Habitat: Natural cave, with an entrance of 167 m², a ceiling height of 1-5m, and a length of 886m.

Date and time: 05 February and 05 March 2019, between 10:00 and 14:00 hrs.

Identity of subjects: Large Asian Leaf-nosed Bat, *Hipposideros lekaguli* (Mammalia: Chiroptera: Hipposideridae)

Description of record: Four individuals were caught on 05 February 2019 and another two on 05 March 2019. The bats were mist-netted while doing a bat survey in Mabinay, Negros Oriental. All 6 bats were released after taking morphometrics.

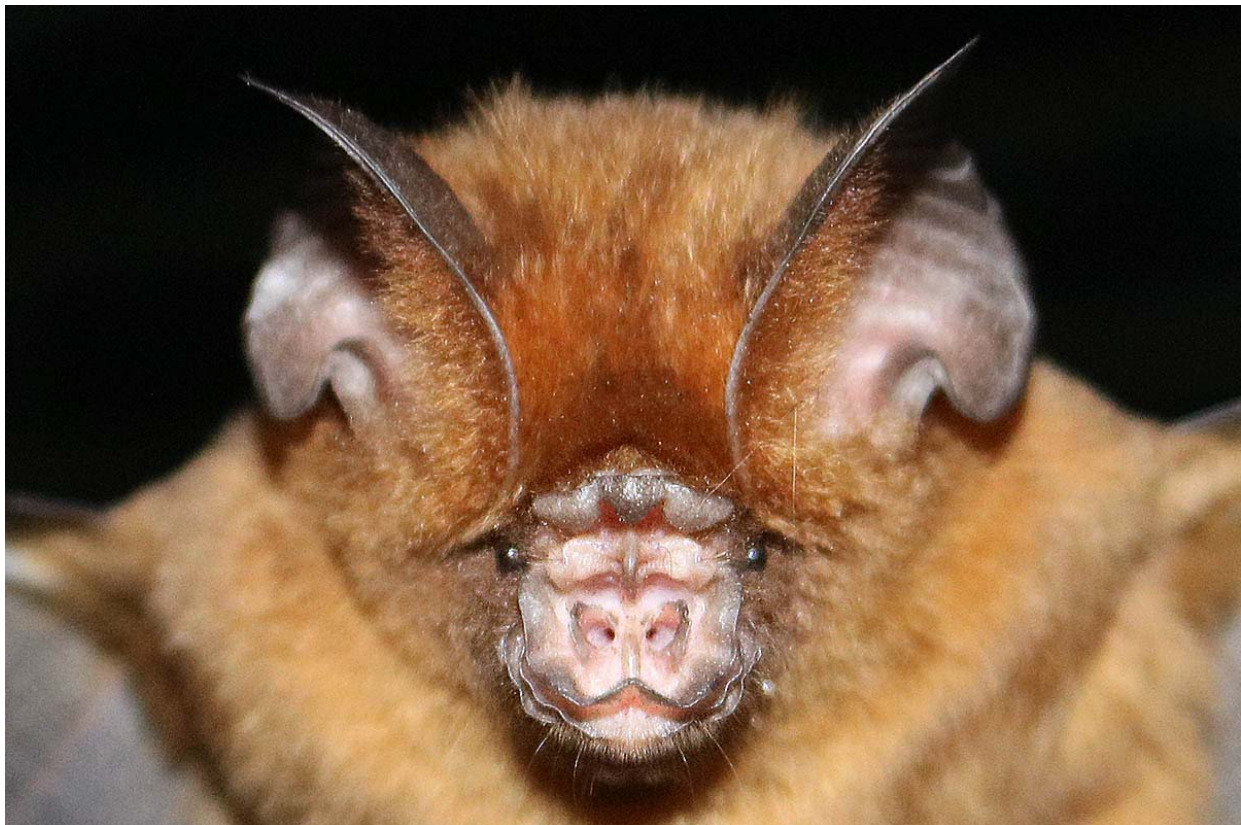


Fig. 1

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Fig. 2

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Remarks: *Hipposideros lekaguli* is one of the most distinctive bats in the Philippines, with a large foliated noseleaf, the posterior portion of which is distinctly trilobed and inflated into deep pockets (Fig. 1). There are three leaflets lateral to the anterior noseleaf (Thonglongya & Hill, 1974; images in Heaney et al., 2010). The median ridge is high and triangular (Fig. 2), and forearm length ranges from 66.5 to 72 mm (Balete et al., 1995).

The live specimens from Cayasu Cave had the following characters that distinguish this bat from other species: total length 112-120 mm; body length 66-73 mm; tail 45-47 mm; hind foot 11-13 mm; ear 24-29 mm; forearm 67-69 mm; and weight 20-28 g.

In Cayasu Cave, *H. lekaguli* was caught along with *Hipposideros diadema*, *Miniopterus schreibersii*, and *Rhinolophus arcuatus*. On Negros Island, the other known congeneric species are *H. diadema* (forearm length: 77-88 mm), *H. obscurus* (forearm length: 42-48 mm), *H. pygmaeus* (forearm length: 37-41 mm), and *H. ater* (forearm length: 38-43 mm) (Heaney et al. 2010).

According to Heaney et al. (2010), the species is distributed from Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia to Philippines. In the Philippines, its known range includes Luzon (Quezon and Quirino provinces) and Mindoro islands. (They also mentioned that this species may occur elsewhere in the country as there are some unconfirmed records in other localities, but not specified where, and that additional surveys are needed).

This species as a whole is considered Near-threatened by the IUCN due to tourism, religious disturbance to caves (presumably in Thailand), mining (limestone mining in Thailand), and other various anthropogenic activities (Csorba et al. 2019). In Cayasu Cave, we observed evidence of human disturbance including dumping of garbage, presence of graffiti on walls, washing activities, and construction of structures for potable water extraction.

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