

Barred Eagle Owl predates Long-tailed Macaque.

By Yong Ding Li



The large powerful eagle-owls of the genus *Bubo* are generally known to be fearsome predators. Larger members like the Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl *Bubo nipalensis* have been known to tackle prey items as large as peafowls and jackals. This exciting record of an adult Barred Eagle-Owl *Bubo sumatranus* predating a young Long-tailed Macaque *Macaca fascicularis* in Panti forest on 26 June 2009 (photographed by Rane Wong) is perhaps the first documentation, adding on to a long list of other more conventional prey items like bats, small birds and rodents. Adult primates in the Malaysian forest, especially gibbons, langurs and macaques are generally too large to be taken prey by raptors and large owls, unlike their less fortunate cousins in the Philippine, Central African and South American forests. On the other hand, younger animals are lighter, less experienced and can therefore be easily be tackled by an adult owl or eagle (as seen in a recent record of a Changeable Hawk-Eagle capturing a Banded Leaf-Monkey also at Panti). The unfortunate victim in this picture has probably either wandered a little too far from the safety of the troop or was taken alive while asleep. What is unusual is that the macaque appeared to be captured during the day by a primarily nocturnal predator. A possible scenario is that the owl took the opportunity to seize the macaque while it was still asleep shortly before dawn and brought it to a safe spot to feed.