New saola population discovered

In 1995, a new population of the recently described, endangered bovid, the saola (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*), was found in the forests of Bu Huong, Nghe An Province in Vietnam. The new records were to the north of the main known populations, and represent an important range extension for the species. The new population may number only 30 individuals and appears to be confined to river valleys in primary forest. Investigations at this site and a compilation of published and unpublished data suggest that the range of the species in Vietnam and Laos includes over 5000 sq km of mountainous terrain, four protected areas (Vu Quang and Pu Mat, Nature Reserves [Vietnam], Nakai Nam Theun and Hin Namnu National Biodiversity Conservation Areas [Laos]), and three proposed protected areas (Bu Hong [Vietnam], Nam Chuan and Nakai Nam Theun Northern Extension National Biodiversity Conservation Areas [Laos]). All known locations for the species are mountainous with steep river valleys, covered by evergreen or semi-deciduous forests between 300 and 1800 m, with low human disturbance. The main threats to its survival are hunting by local villagers and clearance of forests to provide farmland. Both need to be tackled if the saola and other forest-endemic species of this area are to persist.


**Want more information?** Explore this site: www.journals.cambridge.org

Source: Mekong Research Volume 1 No. 1 November 2004