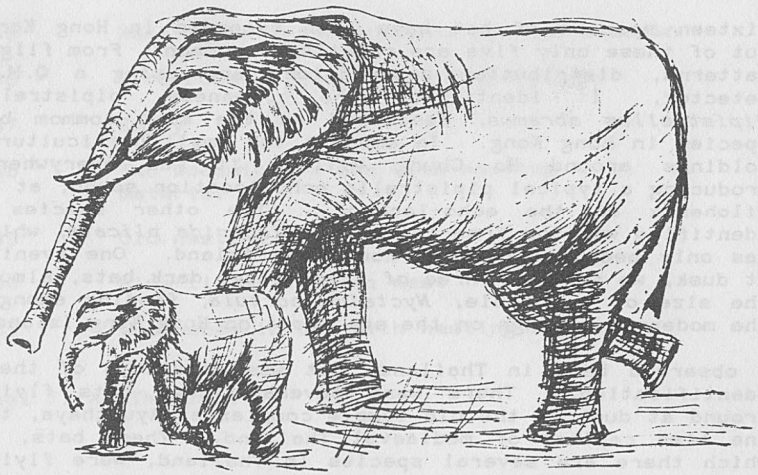
owlet. Bats were also present in good numbers in the Khao Yai National Park , situated at the western end of the Phanom Dongrak Range, about eighty kilometres north-west of Bangkok. Again, however, I was unable to identify any of them. I found that the noises created by the numerous large brown cicadas, which went well up in the ultra-sonic range, swamped the receiver of the Q.M.C. detector, so that no bat sounds were heard. Just north of the Park, so I was told, is a cave complex which contains thousands upon thousands of roosting bats. These bats produce a cloud-like spiral effect as they emerge from their caves at dusk to go to their feeding areas. The large amount of guano produced by the bats supports a thriving fertiliser industry. Unfortunately, we did not have time to visit the caves.

We reached Khao Yai, travelling the last 40 kilometres on a 'tut-tut'(a sort of motorised rickshaw) from Pak Chong. What a journey! We bounced along at 40 m.p.h., hanging on as best we could, initially passing numuerous paddy fields before starting to climb up into the rain forest covered hills. There were times when we thought the engine would fail us, as gradients increased and so did the number of hairpin bends. We stopped at the park gates, paid our dues and set off for the tourist chalets and the reception centre. Our cheerful Thai driver briefly stopped his vehicle at a scenic vantage point so that we could have our first view of the rain forest. I was awe-struck by what I saw. Miles and miles of rain forest, intermingled with tree covered hill tops. We then hurried on, because he wanted to get back to Pak Chong that night. We passed signs telling us of 'elephant crossings' or 'tiger viewing point', but no animals were to be seen. Our chalet, which we booked for two nights, was simple but adequate.



Established in 1962, Khao Yai was the first Thai National Park to be designated, and it is one of the largest, containing 2168 square kilometres of rain forest. With an elevation of 600 to 1000 metres above sea level, it contains a great deal of wildlife, supporting such large animals as the Indian or Asiatic elephant *Elaphus maximus*, the gaur *Bos gaurus* and the tiger *Panthera tigris*. We saw none of these mammals, although we went out each evening on the Park lorry, with its powerful search light, looking for large mammals.

The numbers of Asiatic elephants in the Park are increasing, now that they are under special protection. Population estimates vary between 150 to 200 animals. We were certainly aware of their presence as we walked along the elephant trails, and occasionally we would come across a fresh heap of elephant dung. The wild buffalo *Bubalus bubalis* is related to the guar. We did not see any in the wild, but plenty of domestic buffalos were to be seen working the paddy fields to the north of the Park.

We did see a number of deer. Sambar deer *Cervus unicolor* abound in the Park, and were only visible at night. Often out in the open, they were present in small groups, mostly females with this year's young. The searchlight sometimes picked out a single animal browsing in scrubland next to the road verge, only its head visible above the foliage. Around the chalets, sometimes in broad daylight, a pair of Indian muntjac *Muntiacus muntjac* passed by, with their calf. This species of muntjac has a darker coat than the Chinese or Reeve's muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi*, which is found in South China and was introduced into England. Known also as the barking deer, this forest species gives out a bark-like call when alarmed or during the mating season. On our second night, we were all suddenly woken by our local deer uttering a vey loud bark next to the chalet.

I was able to identify two species of squirrel around the reception centre at Khao Yai, both in the same tree. The first was a large squirrel, more bulky than our grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*, with a long coarse tail, which was predominantly grey, but streaked with black. Its upper pelage was grey, with white underparts separated by a distinct demarcation line. Unable to identify this mammal, I wrote to Dr. Gordon Corbet on returning to Britain, with the above description. He commented that it was ' almost certainly one of the many colour varieties of *Callosciurus finlaysonii*, probably *C.f. bocourti*. (Finlayson's or the Variable Squirrel). This species is quite extraordinarily variable in colour - uniquely so amongst mammals I suspect, but your description fits the ones from that part of Thailand'. Earlier in the week, at Ayutthaya, I had seen a dark brown version of this squirrel, which Gordon Corbet suspects was *C.f. floweri*. The only identification specimens for this subspecies are from Ayutthaya.