

**SWM SUSTAINABLE
WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAMME**

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SMALL DORCOPSIS

Family: *Macropodidae*

Genus: *Dorcopsulus*

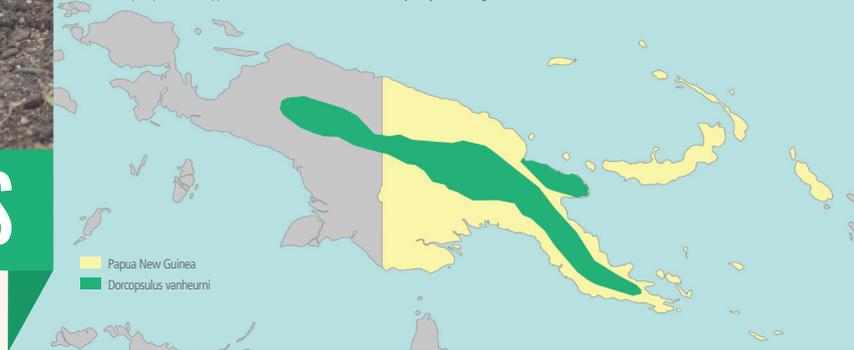
Species: *vanheurni*

Local names: *Benand* (Kuman language, Gembogl, Simbu), *Gopoi* (Narak language, Jimi, Jiwaka)

Characteristics

The small dorcopsis is the smallest member of the Macropodidae family. With its reddish brown to dark brown fur, it mostly differs from other *Dorcopsulus* thanks to its half-naked tail; the tails of other members of the genus are one-third to one-quarter naked. Records have measured this species as being between 31 and 44 cm and weighing about two kilos, with no apparent sexual dimorphism.

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DATA: IUCN 2016. *Dorcopsulus vanheurni*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2023-1. <https://www.iucnredlist.org>. Downloaded on 04/03/2024.

Distribution

This species occurs in the upper-hill to upper-montane forests throughout the central mountain chain of the island of New Guinea (Indonesia and Papua New Guinea). It has been extirpated from the Hunstein, Schradler, and Torricelli ranges, and probably the Adelberts. There are fossil records from the Vogelkop and from the Arfak Mountains. It occurs from 800 to 3 200 m above sea level. It is also distributed in some parts of Milne Bay, Morobe, Madang, Simbu and Sandaun Provinces.

Diet

The small dorcopsis is an herbivorous browser that feeds mostly on soft vegetation and seems to favour acanth spinach (*Rungia klossii*). Its diet also includes roots, grasses and fruit.

Reproduction

Females give birth to one or two young and can reproduce throughout the year without a proper mating season.

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Habitat

This species is forest-dependent, occurring in primary and secondary forests and small garden clearings, and seems to be associated with humid areas, often recorded by small streams. It uses holes in the ground but rests at night in the open or under the cover of a fallen log. Its home range is about 1-1.5 ha.

Conservation status

Classified as near threatened, this species is now uncommon in most parts of its range, especially in heavily human-populated areas or near settlements. This species occurs in several Protected Areas, and in the YUS Wildlife Conservation Area in the Morobe Province of Papua New Guinea. Along the Bismarck Forest Corridor, it is found within the Mt Golpom Conservation Area in the Jimi District, Jiwaka Province, and within the Mt Waugareame in the Daulo District of the Eastern Highlands Province. Conservation efforts seem to be effective, as numbers appear to have stabilized (and are probably increasing) in no-take zones.

IUCN Red list status

- **Species classification:** Near Threatened
- **Population trends:** decreasing

References

Flannery, T.F. 1995. *Mammals of New Guinea*. Reed.

Leary, T., Singadan, R., Menzies, J., Helgen, K., Allison, A., James, R., Flannery, T., Aplin, K., Dickman, C. & Salas, L. 2016. *Dorcopsulus vanheurni*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2016: e.T6802A21952770. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2016-2.RLTS.T6802A21952770.en>



Threats

The small dorcopsis is threatened by increasing human pressure because of habitat loss and hunting, causing local depletion of the population. The species is hunted mostly for consumption because of its large size compared to other available prey. Its population also suffers predation from naturalized dogs across New Guinea.

Conservation actions proposed:

- monitoring populations in Protected Areas and Community Conservation Areas;
- quantifying the effects of hunting and predation by dogs;
- promoting sustainable community-based hunting and regulations, particularly regarding the use of guns;
- carrying out research on population dynamics; and
- preventing habitat loss and degradation.

The SWM Programme is a major international initiative that aims to improve the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife in forest, savannah and wetland ecosystems. It is funded by the European Union with co-funding from the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and the French Development Agency (AFD). Projects are being piloted and tested with governments, national partners and communities in 16 participating countries. The initiative is coordinated by a dynamic consortium of four partners, namely the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).



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