

Umphornpimon Prayoon 2014: Abundance, Suitable Habitat, and Main Preys of Dhole (*Cuon alpinus* (Pallas, 1811)) in Thap Lan National Park. Master of Science (Forest Biological Science) Major Field: Forest Biological Science, Department of Forest Biology. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Naris Bhumpakphan, Ph.D. 131 pages.

Dhole are the medium size carnivore that play an important role for control quality and number of ungulate population. Nowadays, the Dhole populations in the world have been reduced across their native territories. The main reason for the severe decline in the Dhole population numbers is thought to be through hunting from human, habitat loss and severe decreases in natural prey. Therefore, the study aims to investigate and assess the abundance and habitat suitability of Dhole and their main prey species, *i.e.* Sambar, Barking deer and Wild boar in Thap Lan National Park during November 2009 to March 2012 by using Line Transect Method and identify their preys from scat analysis via Micro-Techniques. The results revealed that the highest relative abundance (RA) value of Dholes (3.7 %) was observed in the secondary forest, similar to Barking deer (9.7%), while Sambar (30.7%) and Wild boar (31.5%) were observed in the bamboo forest. The ratio of RA all year round of Dhole: Sambar: Wild boar: and Barking deer was 1: 5.2:10: and 2.7, respectively.

Additionally, the Percentage Contribution (PC) showing an effect on the habitat selection in all year round for Dhole which was related to the occurrence of Wild boar (36.5%) and Barking deer (26.4%). On the contrary, the PC of the main prey species: Sambar (61.7%), Wild boar (48.4%) and Barking deer (45.96%). It showed that the habitat selections of three species were mostly related to the forest types. Moreover, the analysis of Habitat Suitability (HS) of Dhole and the three main prey species showed that they all were overlapped geographically during all year round at 14.2%, the dry season at 12.7% and the wet season at 17.6%. The results corresponded to the highest frequency of occurrence of Wild boar throughout the year (50%) and as well as occurrence of prey species which were composed of Lesser mouse deer (38.9%), Muridae (36.4%), Sambar (9.1%), Barking deer (6.8%), Hog badger (4.5%), snake (4.5%), Burmese hare (2.3%) and birds (2.3%), respectively. The results of this study highlight the key point and recommendation for future monitoring research and also prove useful in planning better management needs and strategies for the survival, further conservation and manipulation to support dholes and their main prey in the future.

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Student's signature

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Thesis Advisor's signature