



## Naked Bulldog Bat

(*Cheiromeles torquatus* Horsfield)

The single characteristic that separates bats from other mammals is their wings. No other mammal has the true powered flight. Their adaptation for flight and their ability to navigate with echolocation (biosonar) are what makes them unique.

Among bats, the Naked Bulldog Bat (*Cheiromeles torquatus*) is among the most distinct because of its large hairless body and thick tail, which protrudes for well over half its length from the interfemoral membrane. It has the thickest jaw, widest face and some of the broadest-tipped wings in the entire family (Molossidae). The head is relatively large and broad with a well-developed posterior sagittal crest. The dark grey body is almost completely naked except for scattered short hairs and a cluster of long hairs along a scent gland in its neck. This gland produces a strong smelling secretion; males secrete the substance by a series of small pores, and females, by a single large orifice. Both sexes also possess a pouch along sides of the body, formed by a fold of skin that runs from the upper arm to the upper part of the leg. The pouch opens towards the rear and the hind feet push the wings into it, making the bat move about relatively freely on all its four limbs. The Naked Bulldog Bat has short, strong legs and broad feet. In flight it can be recognised by its large size, strong flight and audible clicking of its echolocation call as it searches for insects. Its exposed tail and large separate ears can sometimes be clearly seen as well. Head and body: 165-185 mm; tail: 54-71; weight: 150-175 grams.



The peculiar characteristic of this bat species is its feeding habit of chasing its main prey, leaf-litter-living beetles, on the ground.

The Naked Bulldog Bat is gregarious, roosts in large caves or hollow trees, rock crevices and holes in earth, sometimes in association with Free-Tailed Bats (*Talarida mops*). They leave their roost early in the evening, and feed quickly and directly, more boldly than smaller bats, which move cautiously to avoid predators such as owls and bat hawks. It occurs on a wide range of habitat from lowlands to mountains.

This species is widely distributed in Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Palawan.

**Status: Endangered due to the continuous loss of habitat.**

– The Research Branch, ARCBC

