

New Insights in the Distribution of The Southern White-Cheeked Gibbon *Nomascus siki* and The Northern White-Cheeked Gibbon *Nomascus leucogenys* in Central Lao PDR



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INTRODUCTION

- Gibbons of the genus *Nomascus* are the **most threatened** of the four Hylobatidae genera
- The **Northern White-cheeked Gibbon *Nomascus leucogenys*** and the **Southern White-cheeked Gibbon *Nomascus siki*** have a restricted global range: they are **endemic to Lao PDR and Viet Nam**
- In central Lao PDR, the **distribution range limit between *N. leucogenys* and *N. siki*** still needs to be **determined**, preventing appropriate conservation planning
- It has been **assumed** that the **Nam Theun-Nam Kading river** represents the **geographical barrier** between the two species, but this theory **needs more investigation**
- Gibbon songs** are **taxonomically distinct** between species and, when analyzed, can identify the taxonomic status of a species

METHODOLOGY

- Aim:** investigate the **distribution of *N. leucogenys* and *N. siki*** in central Lao PDR, across three provinces: Bolikhamxay, Khammouan, and Savannakhet and particularly in Nakai-Nam Theun National Park
- We collected **gibbon song recordings**:
 - In-situ** gibbon gibbon recording: **90 *Nomascus*** gibbon songs included in this analysis
 - Ex-situ** gibbon recording: **24** song recordings of ***Nomascus leucogenys*** and **8 *N. siki*** from **12 European zoological facilities**
- Complete dataset analyzed: 737 male calls and 229 female calls



Locations where the 90 *Nomascus* gibbon songs included in this analysis, obtained from the wild, were recorded from seven sites in central Lao PDR and Viet Nam.



MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

- Both species were detected on either side of the Nam Theun-Nam Kading river in central Lao PDR:
 - Male calls:**
 - North of river:** 56.53% *N. leucogenys* and 43.47% *N. siki*
 - South of river:** 31.99% *N. leucogenys* and 68.01% *N. siki*
 - Female calls:**
 - North of river:** 69.31% *N. leucogenys* and 30.69% *N. siki*
 - South of river:** 56.55% *N. leucogenys* and 43.45% *N. siki*
- This suggests **two hypotheses**:
 - The vocalization characteristics between the two species in the region where the geographical distribution of both species meet (along the Nam Theun-Nam Kading in central Lao PDR) do not allow a clear distinction between the two species
 - The Nam Theun-Nam Kading River does not represent a clear geographic barrier between the two species.

Male calls

Female calls

