

Chromosome Analysis and Morphometric of Intermediate Roundleaf Bat, *Hipposideros larvatus* (Chiroptera, Hipposideridae) by Conventional, GTG-banding and Ag-NOR Banding Techniques

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Summary Chromosome analysis and morphometrics of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) from Northeast Thailand were studied. Bat chromosome preparations were conducted by squash technique from bone marrow and testis. Conventional staining, GTG-banding and Ag-NOR banding techniques were applied to stain the chromosomes. The results showed that the diploid chromosome number of *H. larvatus* was $2n=32$, and the fundamental number (NF) was 66 in both males and females. The types of autosomes observed were 14 large metacentric, 2 large submetacentric, 4 medium metacentric, 4 medium submetacentric, 2 small metacentric, 2 small submetacentric, and 2 small telocentric chromosomes. The X-chromosome was a large submetacentric chromosome and the Y-chromosome was a small submetacentric chromosome. From the GTG-banding technique, the number of bands in *H. larvatus* was 159, and the location of each chromosome pair could be clearly differentiated. NORs are located at the secondary constriction near the centromere on the long arm of the large metacentric chromosome pair 8. We found that during metaphase I the homologous chromosomes showed synapsis, which can be defined as the 16 bivalents. Six external morphological characters were measured as well as 13 cranial and dental measurements. The karyotype formula of *H. larvatus* was as follows:

$$2n (44) = L_{14}^m + L_2^{sm} + M_4^m + M_4^{sm} + S_2^m + S_2^{sm} + S_2^l + \text{sex-chromosomes}$$

Key words *Hipposideros larvatus*, Karyotype, Chromosome, Morphometric.

Bats are mammals with special morphological and physiological features that enable them to perform true flight. The nocturnal orientation of most bats is provided by a phenomenon known as echolocation which has permitted many species to exploit a variety of sheltered roosts that offer such advantages as microclimate stability and small risk of predation (Varella-Garcia *et al.* 1989). The order Chiroptera is divided into the suborder Megachiroptera, comprising the single family Pteropodidae, and the suborder Microchiroptera, which includes 16 families. There are approximately 1,057 species currently recognized within 192 genera (Schober and Grimmberger

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1993, Wilson and Cole 2000, Kleiman *et al.* 2004).

The bat fauna of Thailand includes 10 families, 40 genera and approximately 120 species, ranking it as one of the world's most diverse chiropteran faunas. Nine families of the suborder Microchiroptera have been recorded in Thailand: Emballonuridae, Rhinopomatidae, Craseonycteridae, Nycteridae, Megadermatidae, Rhinolophidae, Hipposideridae, Vespertilionidae, and Molossidae (Lekagul and McNeely 1988, Bumrungsri *et al.* 2006, Francis 2008). Hipposiderid bats are distributed in the tropics and subtropics of the Old World and the family includes nine genera and 81 species. The genus *Hipposideros* is the largest within the family with 67 species (Bogdanowicz and Owen 1998, Simmons 2005).

The systematics of bats is based primarily on classical morphological characteristics such as shoulder articulation, dentition, and other cranial features. More recently, cytogenetic data have shown considerable promise as a valuable tool for systematics studies. The order Chiroptera is an interesting group with chromosome evolution ranging from considerably conservative to quite divergent (Varella-Garcia *et al.* 1989). Chromosomal studies of bats from Thailand have reported only 36 species representing seven families (Harada *et al.* 1982, Hood and Baker 1986, Harada *et al.* 1985a, 1985b, Bickham *et al.* 1986, Hood *et al.* 1988, Wu *et al.* 2009, Supanuam *et al.* 2012).

There have been many previous literature reviews about chromosome analysis of bats in family Hipposideridae (Ray-Chaudhuri and Pathak 1966, Ray-Chaudhuri *et al.* 1971, Dulić and Mutere 1974, 1977, Peterson and Nagorsen 1975, Ando *et al.* 1980, Handa and Kaur 1980, Harada *et al.* 1982, 1985a, Hood *et al.* 1988, Zhang and Wan 1992, Choudhury and Patro 1993, Rautenbach *et al.* 1993, Sreepada *et al.* 1993, Rickart *et al.* 1999, Gu 2002a, 2002b, 2006, Volleth *et al.* 2002, Mao *et al.* 2007, Yi and Harada 2006, Koubinová *et al.* 2010). In the present study, we report the karyotype analysis and chromosomal characteristics of the nucleolar organizer regions (NORs) of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) from Northeast Thailand. In the future, basic knowledge and cytogenetics of *H. larvatus* could be applied to several research areas, especially to assist in protection from extinction.

Materials and methods

The *H. larvatus* samples were obtained from Nongbualamphu Province, Northeast Thailand. The bats, 10 males and 10 females, were transferred to the laboratory and were kept under standard

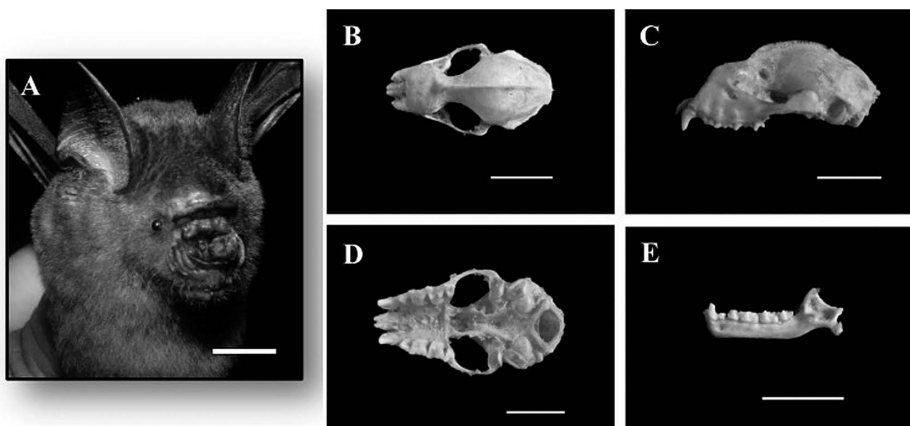


Fig. 1. Morphological characters of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) from Northeast Thailand, including external morphology (A), ventral view of skull (B), lateral view of skull (C), dorsal view of skull (D) and mandible (E) (scale bars 1.0 cm).

conditions for seven days prior to the experiments. Chromosome preparation was conducted by the squash technique from the bone marrow and testis. Conventional staining, GTG-banding and Ag-NOR banding techniques were applied to stain the chromosome (Howell and Black 1980, Rooney 2001). The length of short arms (Ls) and long arms (Ll) of the chromosome were measured and the length of total arm chromosomes (LT, $LT=Ls+Ll$) was recorded. The relative length (RL) and centromeric index (CI) were estimated. CI was also computed to classify the types of chromosomes according to Chaiyasut (1989). All parameters were used in karyotyping and idiograming. External and cranial morphologies were measured for species identification (Duengkak 2006, Francis 2008, Lekagul and McNeely 1988).

Results and discussion

Chromosome number, fundamental number and karyotype of H. larvatus

The present results demonstrated that the diploid chromosome number of *H. larvatus* was

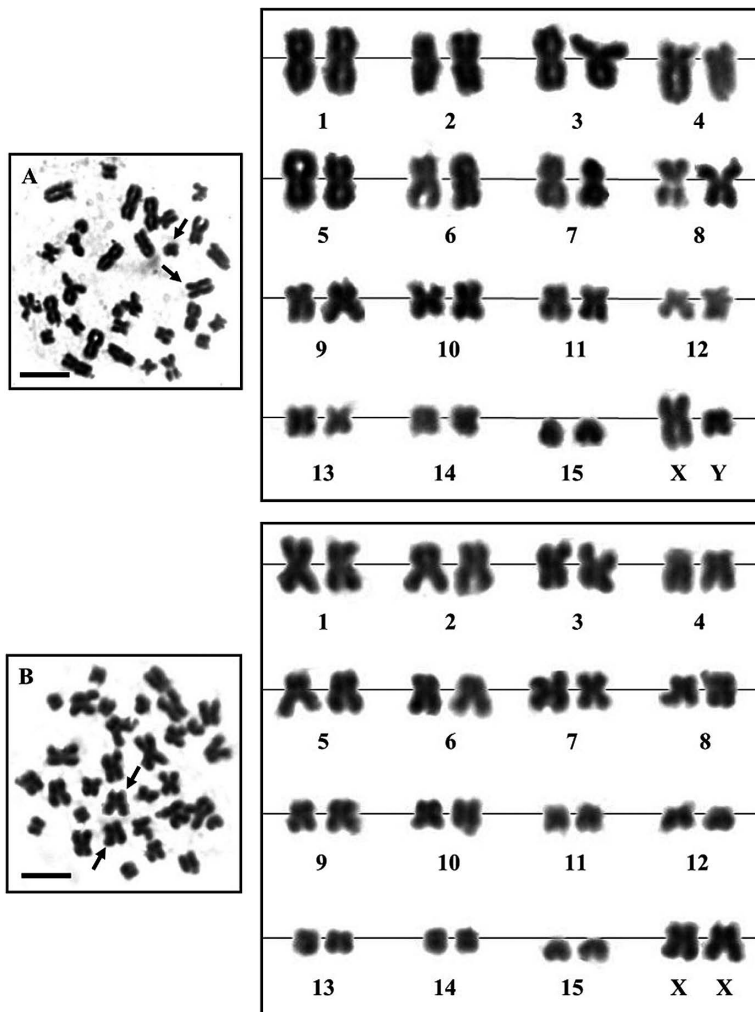


Fig. 2. Metaphase chromosome plates and karyotypes of male (A) and female (B) intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) $2n$ (diploid)=32 by conventional staining technique, arrows indicate sex chromosomes (scale bars $10\mu m$).

Table 1. Review of cytogenetic reports of the intermediate roundleaf bat, *Hipposideros larvatus* (Chiroptera, Hipposideridae).

Species	2n	NF	m	sm	a	t	X	Y	NORs	References
<i>H. larvatus</i>	32	64		30	0	0	sm	a	—	Harada <i>et al.</i> (1982)
	32	—	—	—	—	—	sm	a	—	Hood <i>et al.</i> (1988)
	32	64 in female 63 in male		30	0	0	sm	t	—	Yi and Harada (2006)
	32	—		30	0	0	—	—	—	Volleth <i>et al.</i> (2002)
	32	—		30	0	0	sm	a	—	Mao <i>et al.</i> (2007)
	32	66	20	8	0	2	sm	sm	L(CR)8	Present study

Notes: 2n=diploid chromosome, NF=fundamental number (number of chromosome arm), m=metacentric, sm=submetacentric, a=acrocentric, t=telocentric chromosome, NORs=nucleolar organizer regions, L=long arm, CR=centromeric region and —=not available.

2n=32 (Fig. 2). It is in accordance with previous studies (Harada *et al.* 1982, Hood *et al.* 1988, Volleth *et al.* 2002, Yi and Harada 2006, Mao *et al.* 2007). The NF was 66 in both males and females, which is different from the results of Harada *et al.* (1982), who detected an NF of 64, and Yi and Harada (2006) who detected an NF of 63 in males and 64 in females. The karyotype was composed of 20 metacentric, 8 submetacentric, and 2 telocentric chromosomes. However, it is inconsistent with the results of Harada *et al.* (1982), Volleth *et al.* (2002), Yi and Harada (2006) and Mao *et al.* (2007), which revealed that *H. larvatus* has 30 metacentric/submetacentric chromosomes (bi-arm chromosomes).

The X-chromosome of the *H. larvatus* is a large submetacentric chromosome and the Y-chromosome is the small submetacentric chromosome. These features are different from that reported by Harada *et al.* (1982), Hood *et al.* (1988) and Mao *et al.* (2006) indicating that *H. larvatus* had a submetacentric X-chromosome and acrocentric Y-chromosome. Furthermore, Yi and Harada (2006) also reported that the sex chromosomes of the *H. larvatus* had a submetacentric X-chromosome and telocentric Y-chromosome (Table 1).

The karyotype of 26 species of the family Hipposideridae have been reported (Ray-Chaudhuri and Pathak 1966, Ray-Chaudhuri *et al.* 1971, Dulić and Mutere 1974, 1977, Peterson and Nagorsen 1975, Ando *et al.* 1980, Handa and Kaur 1980, Harada *et al.* 1982, 1985a, Hood *et al.* 1988, Zhang and Wan 1992, Choudhury and Patro 1993, Rautenbach *et al.* 1993, Sreepada *et al.* 1993, Rickart *et al.* 1999, Gu 2002a, 2002b, 2006, Yi and Harada 2006, Koubínová *et al.* 2010) and a limited extent of variation is evident. In most of the species studied, a karyotype with 32 bi-armed chromosomes is present and the fundamental number of autosomal arms (NFa) is 60. Within the genus *Hipposideros*, exceptions from this uniform pattern were found in *H. commersoni* from South Africa (Rautenbach *et al.* 1993) and in *H. obscurus* from the Philippines (Rickart *et al.* 1999). The karyotype of *H. commersoni* had 2n=52, whereas that of *H. obscurus* had 2n=24 (NFa=44) (Koubínová *et al.* 2010).

Within the genus *Hipposideros*, 17 out of the 22 cytogenetic species studied had 2n=32 (77.27%). Different karyotypes were found in *H. obscurus* (2n=24), *H. cyclops* (2n=36), *H. commersoni* (2n=52) and *H. gigas* (2n=52) (Koubínová *et al.* 2010). Robertsonian mechanisms of centric fusion/fission combined possibly with whole arm translocations have played a major role in the karyotypic evolution within the genus *Rhinolophus* (Mao *et al.* 2007) and similar mechanisms but with the opposite direction can also be proposed for the genus *Hipposideros* (Sreepada *et al.* 1993, Koubínová *et al.* 2010). The similar fundamental numbers (number of chromosome arms) found in individual karyotypes indicate that the Robertsonian rearrangements are the probable source of karyotype variation among the species of the family Hipposideridae.

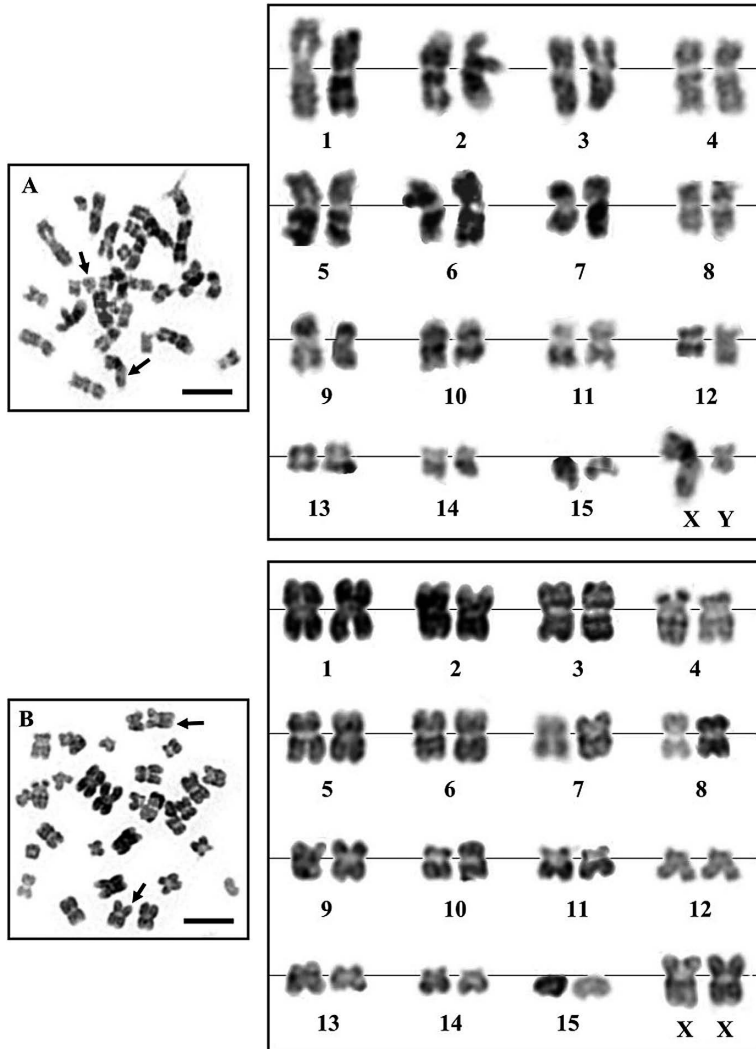


Fig. 3. Metaphase chromosome plates and karyotypes of male (A) and female (B) intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) $2n$ (diploid)=32 by GTG-banding technique, arrows indicate sex chromosomes (scale bars $10\mu\text{m}$).

Chromosome marker of H. larvatus

The cytogenetic study of *H. larvatus* in the present study was accomplished for the first time by using our present GTG-banding technique. GTG-banding revealed that the number of GTG-bands on one set of haploid chromosomes, which includes autosomes, X and Y chromosomes, is 159 bands. The GTG-banding technique provides defined dark band regions (heterochromatin) and light band regions (euchromatin) on a chromosome (Rooney 2001). The haploid set of *H. larvatus* consists of 15 autosomes including X and Y chromosomes. However, some chromosomes were not clearly identified because of their variation. The chromosome band scoring is represented by approximate bands that appear (Fig. 3).

This is the first cytogenetic analysis of *H. larvatus* using the Ag-NOR banding technique. The adjacent region on the long arm of the large metacentric chromosome pair 8 (centromeric NORs) showed defined NORs (Fig. 4). The objective of this technique is to detect NORs which represent the location of genes that function in ribosome synthesis. The location of NORs in several bats has

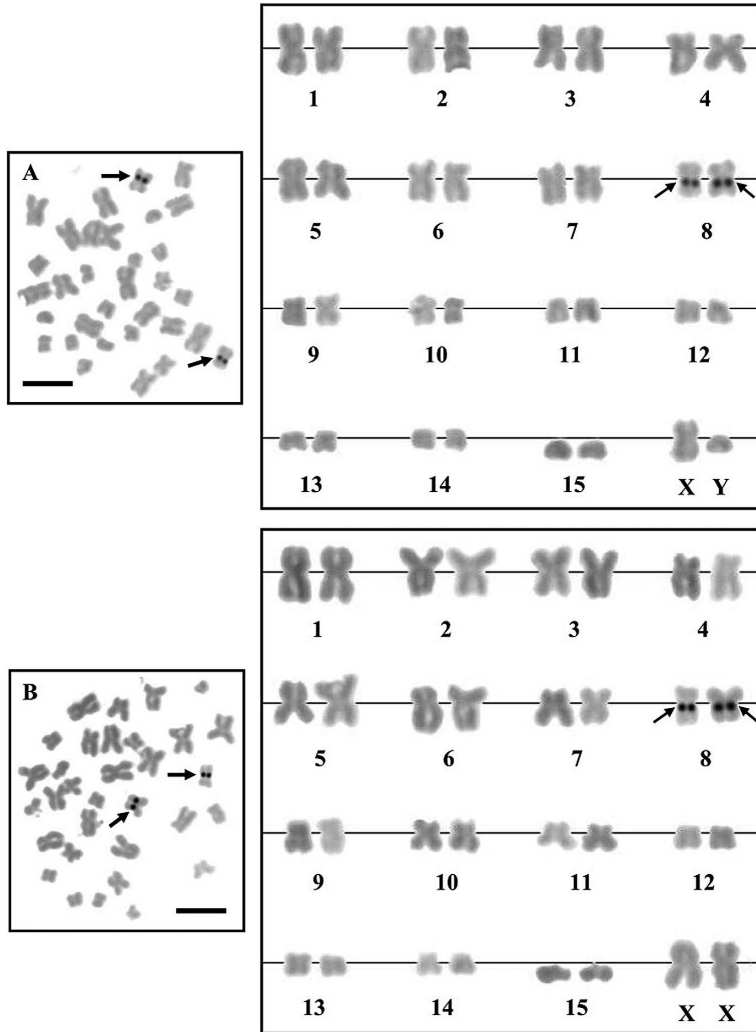


Fig. 4. Metaphase chromosome plates and karyotypes of male (A) and female (B) intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) $2n$ (diploid)=32 by Ag-NOR banding technique, arrows indicate nucleolar organizer regions/NORs (scale bars $10\mu\text{m}$).

been analyzed using the Ag-NOR banding technique (Volleth 1987, Morielle-Verielle and Varella-Garcia 1988, Souza and Araújo 1990, Morielle-Verielle *et al.* 1992, Rodrigues *et al.* 2000, 2003, Santos *et al.* 2002, Noronha *et al.* 2004, Faria *et al.* 2009, Garcia and Pessôa 2010, Vilamiu *et al.* 2010, Gomes *et al.* 2012). Eukaryote ribosomal RNA genes are organized into two different gene families: a major one encoding 18S, 5.8S and 28S rRNAs, and a small one encoding 5S rRNA. The major rDNA genes are clustered at specific chromosomal sites, which are known as nucleolar organizer regions/NORs (Suzuki *et al.* 1996).

We have shown that the asymmetrical karyotype of *H. larvatus*, which has three types of chromosomes (metacentric, submetacentric and telocentric chromosomes), is an important chromosome marker. Figures 5, 6 and 7 show the standardized ideogram from conventional staining, GTG-banding, and Ag-NOR banding techniques. The ideogram shows gradually decreasing length of the chromosomes. The largest and smallest chromosomes show an approximately threefold size difference. Data of the chromosomal checks on mitotic metaphase

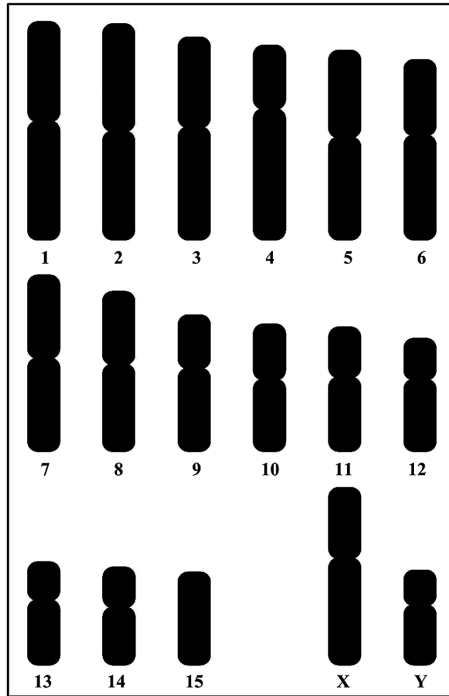


Fig. 5. Standardized idiogram of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) 2n (diploid)=32 by conventional staining technique.

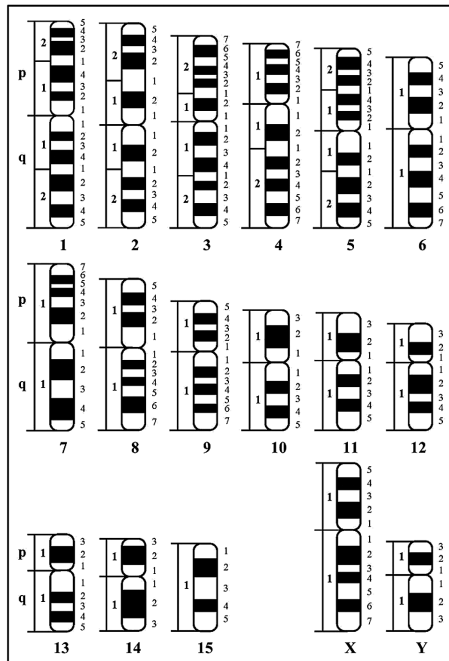


Fig. 6. Standardized idiogram of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) 2n (diploid)=32 by GTG-banding technique.

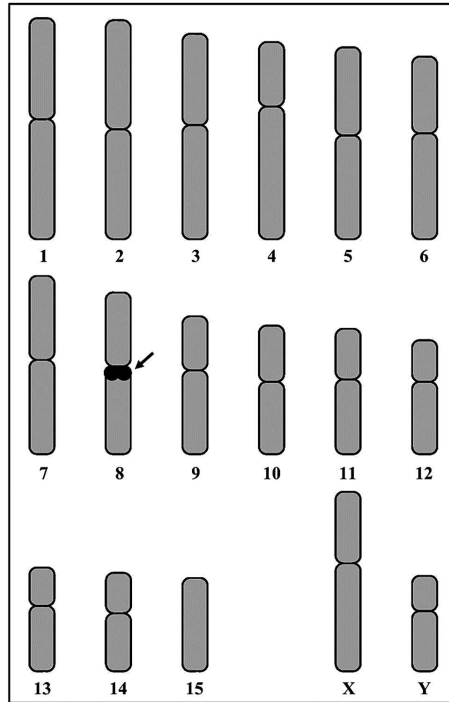


Fig. 7. Standardized idiogram of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) 2n (diploid)=32 by Ag-NOR banding technique. Arrow indicates nucleolar organizer region/NOR.

Table 2. Mean of length of short arm chromosomes (Ls), length of long arm chromosomes (Ll), total arm length of chromosomes (LT), relative length (RL), centromeric index (CI) and standard deviation (SD) of RL, CI from metaphase chromosomes in 20 cells of male and female intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) 2n (diploid)=32.

Chromosome pair	Ls	Ll	LT	RL±SD	CI±SD	Chromosome size	Chromosome type
1	1.320	1.608	2.928	0.083±0.008	0.549±0.019	Large	Metacentric
2	1.465	1.473	2.938	0.084±0.009	0.501±0.0021	Large	Metacentric
3	1.213	1.538	2.750	0.078±0.010	0.559±0.018	Large	Metacentric
4	0.880	1.788	2.668	0.076±0.007	0.670±0.017	Large	Submetacentric
5	1.213	1.395	2.608	0.074±0.008	0.535±0.015	Large	Metacentric
6	1.013	1.398	2.410	0.069±0.005	0.580±0.018	Large	Metacentric
7	1.163	1.290	2.453	0.070±0.004	0.526±0.016	Large	Metacentric
8*	0.965	1.165	2.130	0.061±0.006	0.547±0.021	Large	Metacentric
9	0.688	1.113	1.800	0.051±0.003	0.618±0.011	Medium	Submetacentric
10	0.750	0.963	1.713	0.049±0.005	0.562±0.014	Medium	Metacentric
11	0.713	0.990	1.703	0.048±0.006	0.581±0.011	Medium	Metacentric
12	0.550	0.938	1.488	0.042±0.003	0.630±0.012	Medium	Submetacentric
13	0.510	0.885	1.395	0.040±0.002	0.634±0.013	Small	Submetacentric
14	0.520	0.765	1.285	0.037±0.001	0.595±0.019	Small	Metacentric
15	0.000	1.250	1.250	0.036±0.002	1.000±0.000	Small	Telocentric
X	0.940	1.440	2.380	0.068±0.007	0.605±0.006	Large	Submetacentric
Y	0.490	0.790	1.280	0.036±0.001	0.617±0.014	Small	Submetacentric

Remark: *=Nucleolar organizer region/NOR.

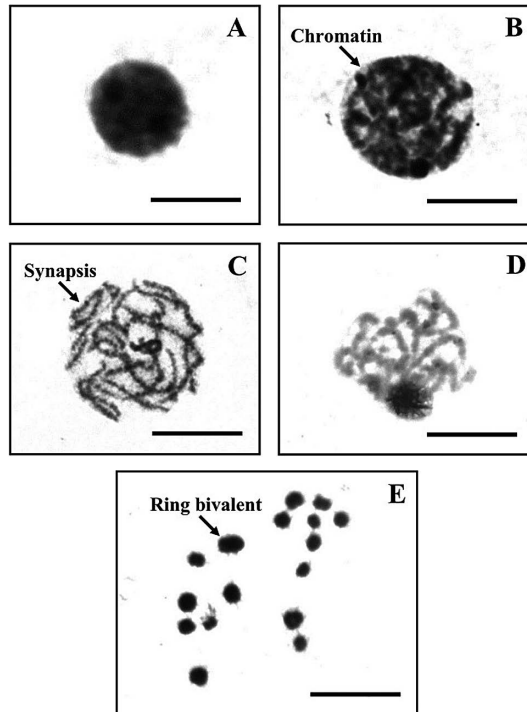


Fig. 8. Meiotic cell division of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) $2n$ (diploid)=32 on interphase (A), late leptotene (B), pachytene (C), diplotene (D), and metaphase I (E); scale bar indicates $10\mu\text{m}$.

cells are shown in Table 2. Regarding the chromosome marker of *H. larvatus*, chromosome pair 1 is the largest metacentric and chromosome pair 15 is the smallest telocentric chromosome. The karyotype formula of *H. larvatus* as follows:

$$2n (32) = L_{14}^m + L_2^{sm} + M_4^m + M_4^{sm} + S_2^m + S_2^{sm} + S_2^t + \text{sex-chromosomes}$$

Meiotic cell division of H. larvatus

The present study on meiotic cell division of *H. larvatus* found that during metaphase I (meiosis I) the homologous chromosomes showed synapsis, which can be defined as the 16 bivalents (15 ring bivalents and 1 rod bivalent, Fig. 8E). The largest metacentric chromosome pair 1 is the largest bivalent. In interphase (Fig. 8A) and prophase I (meiosis I), we found that *H. larvatus* had the distinctness of the observable late leptotene (initiation of chromosome shrinking, Fig. 8B), pachytene (completion of chromosome synapsis, Fig. 8C), and diplotene (chiasma and crossing over, Fig. 8D).

Morphological descriptions of H. larvatus

The *H. larvatus* is a small insectivorous bat which has an average forearm and head-body length of 57.63 ± 7.62 mm (45.00–64.00 mm) and 66.96 ± 9.51 mm (51.50–79.00 mm), respectively, as examined (Table 3). The upper body is dark gray-brown to reddish-brown, whereas the underbody is slightly paler and the wing membranes are dark-brown. It has an average tail length of 29.14 ± 5.13 mm (20.00–35.50 mm) and an average ear length of 21.08 ± 1.79 mm (19.20–24.00 mm). The noseleaf is like a horseshoe which has three lateral leaflets and a spear-shaped internarial septum (Fig. 1A). The average length of the tibia and hind foot are 22.46 ± 1.92 mm (19.00–25.00 mm) and 9.81 ± 1.06 mm (8.00–11.20 mm), respectively. The morphology of the skull was

Table 3. External, cranial and dental measurements of the intermediate roundleaf bat (*Hipposideros larvatus*) from Thailand ($n=10$).

Morphological measurement	Mean (mm)	Minimum (mm)	Maximum (mm)	SD
FA	57.63	45.00	64.80	7.26
HB	66.96	51.50	79.00	9.51
T	29.14	20.00	35.50	5.13
E	21.08	19.20	24.00	1.79
Ti	22.46	19.00	25.00	1.92
HF	9.81	8.00	11.20	1.06
GTL	24.03	21.80	25.50	1.27
CBL	21.16	19.00	22.60	1.24
CCL	20.38	18.40	22.00	1.13
ZB	13.28	12.00	14.00	0.71
BB	10.50	9.30	11.80	0.92
IC	3.20	2.90	3.60	0.22
PC	2.95	2.70	3.30	0.16
RW	8.63	7.80	9.20	0.46
ML	16.18	14.20	17.20	0.98
C-M ³	8.47	7.80	9.40	0.59
C-M ₃	9.52	6.90	11.00	1.21
M ³ -M ³	9.16	8.20	10.00	0.51
C ¹ -C ¹	5.57	4.80	6.00	0.48

Remarks: Forearm length (FA), head-body length (HB), tail length (T), ear length (E), tibia length (TIB) and hind foot length (HF). The following cranial and dental measurements were taken: greatest length of skull (GTL), condylo-basal length (CBL), condylo-canine length (CCL), zygomatic breadth (ZB), braincase breadth (BB), interorbital constriction (IC), post orbital constriction (PC), mandible length (ML), rostral width (RW), maxillary tooththrow (C-M³), mandibular tooththrow (C-M₃), posterior palatal width (M³-M³), and anterior palatal width (C¹-C¹).

measured and shown in Fig. 1B, 1C and 1D. The cranial morphometrics including greatest length of skull (GTL), condylo-basal length (CBL), condylo-canine length (CCL), zygomatic breadth (ZB), breadth of braincase (BB), interorbital constriction (IC), postorbital constriction (PC), rostral width (RW), mandible length (ML), maxillary tooththrow (C-M³), mandibular tooththrow (C-M₃), posterior palatal width (M³-M³), and anterior palatal width (C¹-C¹) are presented in Table 3. The skull has no orbital process. The dental formula is 1/2, 1/1, 2/2, 3/3=30. These results agree with Duengkae's (2006), Francis' (2008) and Lekagul and Mcneely's (1988) morphometric descriptions of the external morphology and skull of *H. larvatus* from Thailand.

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