



# The Jungle Times

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# Arrivals

## **Isis Victoriano Llopis**

This month we welcomed volunteer Isis from Spain, she will work in the field alongside research assistants Maz, Daniel and Jesrine helping to sample long-tailed macaques on their state-wide survey of Sabah.



## **Dr Luke Evans**

We proudly welcome back Luke, who must now be referred to as Dr Luke Evans as he passed his PhD with minor corrections. He will now be working with the Sabah Wildlife Department and DGFC on a state-wide survey of estuarine crocodiles within Sabah. Congratulations Luke, your whole DG family is very proud of you!



# Goodbyes

## **Andrea Jankov**

Andrea came to DG as part of her five-month trip travelling within South-East Asia. She helped with all ongoing projects, but found a real passion for wildlife photography during her stay here as well as a talent for the card game Blitz! She was a great volunteer, we wish her all the best as she continues travelling across to New Zealand.



## **Noemi Naszarkowski**

Noemi visited us on her travels within South-East Asia for two and a half months. She helped us with all of our projects, but took a keen interest in the monitor lizard project and even learnt how to do the sampling of them. As well as her incredible drawings she also showed her skill at baking, creating delicious apple crumbles and pumpkin pies. She left to continue her travels within Peninsular Malaysia, have a great time Noemi!



# Goodbyes cont.

## **Tim van Gorkum**

This month we said goodbye to our orangutan Masters student, Tim van Gorkum. Tim joined us in October 2015 to study the feeding behaviour of orangutan mother and infants within the wildlife sanctuary. He had great success, undertaking 5-day follows of mother and baby pairs and collecting very interesting data. He was even lucky enough to see Hantu, our resident flanged male orangutan.

As well as this he helped out with other ongoing projects, including 6-hour nocturnal primate follows with PTY Katey Hedger, which she is very grateful for! He will be sorely missed from DG, we wish him all the luck in the writing up of his report.



# Visitors

## **Christian Loader**

Christian visited from the company Scubazoo for a very brief one night stay at DG. Despite only having 24 hours Katey managed to show him both a loris and a tarsier on their night walk and we grabbed him for a quick chat about the reason behind his visit.

## **Hi Christian, tell us why you have come to visit DG.**

I have come from our company called Scubazoo based in KK to give DGFC some GoPros and accessories for the researchers to use when they go out in the field and get that up close and personal hands on view of what they're doing with the animals. The footage will be used for a TV series that Scubazoo are making in a partnership with DG called Borneo Jungle Diaries; following scientists around Sabah, and the conservation-based work that they are doing. I am also here filming aerial footage with a drone to also use in the series, showing some wide shots of the forest, the rivers, hopefully people at work and obviously the boundary of oil palm plantations so close to the river.

## **Great, what are some of the other projects Scubazoo has worked on in Sabah?**

Another series we are working on right now is called the Borneo Wildlife Warriors, we are following the Wildlife Rescue Unit, which is part of the Sabah Wildlife Department, we have a presenter and camera crew following the rescue unit on all their jobs, whether it be catching a crocodile in a village and relocating it into a river, or like recently they relocated a herd of elephants trapped in a plantation near Lahad Datu, and releasing them into Tabin Wildlife Reserve.

# Visitors cont.

Also recently the Wildlife Rescue Unit rescued 22 live pangolins from a poacher and released some back into the wild, so it's all really exciting current stuff that we're doing with them as well as the work we are doing here at DG.

**It's really great to hear that the work we are doing here is getting out to a bigger audience.**

**Obviously your stay has been a very short one but what has been your favourite part about your visit?**

It has definitely exceeded my expectations, going on a night walk with Katey and being able to track and see a tarsier and a slow loris within the space of 30 minutes, is something that doesn't happen anywhere else on Earth I don't think! Everyone here has been very hospitable and just so warm and friendly and I hope that I can come back and spend more than 24 hours here another time.



# Happy Birthday!

This month we had three birthdays to celebrate! Sergio (our in-house veterinarian) turned 42 and Maz (Monkeybar staff member) turned 24 on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, and Jesrine (also Monkeybar staff member) turned 26 on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March. All birthdays were celebrated in style, with PTY Charlie and volunteer Noemi creating carrot cakes and apple crumbles! Jesrine was also treated to the DG tradition of having an egg cracked on his head then topped with flour, lovely! Happy birthday to you all, we hope you had lovely birthdays in the jungle.



# UWCSEA students

This month we welcomed four students from UWCSEA for a week to complete their creative active service module for their International Baccalaureate degree. Kieran, Kieran, Aiden and Kyle (who previously visited with the Ability Expeditions field course in 2015) came to DG to help out ongoing projects such as monitor lizards, nocturnal primates and learning about our camera trapping programme. They especially enjoyed finding both a slow loris and tarsier on a night walk with Katey, and learning about the issues facing the wildlife in the Kinabatangan which they will hopefully spread the word about back in Singapore! As well as all of this, they completed several river cleans over the week; during which they collected 160kg of rubbish. Thanks for your help during your visit, we hope you had a great time!



# University of South Wales field course

This month DGFC welcomed our largest field course from the University of South Wales. Students spent the week getting involved in everything DG is doing, including assisting Katey with the Nocturnal Primate Project, VHF tracking our resident slow lorises and tarsiers. Other activities for the week saw the students participating in night walks around the DG trails, one group was even lucky enough to see a banded linsang (!), climbing our canopy platform and undertaking a trip to the Gomantong caves. All students made the most of their relatively short time at DG and shared the same enthusiasm for conservation we have learnt to expect from University of South Wales students. Everyone at DG wishes all students luck in the continuation of their studies and looks forward to welcoming more groups from the University of South Wales in future.



# KOPEL Open Day

This month the whole of DGFC went to present their latest findings to the Batu Puteh (KOPEL) Community. Presentations were given by Field Centre Director Dr Benoit Goossens, Dr Luke Evans and the current PhD, Masters and PTY students at DGFC. Then after a lovely lunch, the KOPEL staff gave a talk about their recent achievements and together DGFC and KOPEL discussed the possibility of future plans.



Such plans included the introduction of a River Keeper and Elephant Conservation Unit, staffed by the Batu Puteh community to monitor illegal activities as well as the presence of elephants within our area. The day was a huge success from both sides, thank you to KOPEL for having us!



# Update on PTY Projects

Our PTYs are now in full swing with their projects, and have already started to see interesting results come from their efforts.

**Charlie** has been working hard on snake and lizard species richness and survey methods of reptiles within the wildlife sanctuary. Although she hit a rough patch where she struggled to find many snakes, she has overcome this problem by walking transects at night which seems to be an effective method so far!



**Joe** has continued his work on the activity patterns of the common Brunei arboreal tarantula. With all camera traps in operation, some new and interesting information has been collected from all individuals studied. All mature females have retreated into their holes for the second time. The last time this behaviour was observed all individuals returned with offspring. In light of this Joe will be patiently waiting for his spiders to reappear and hopefully with some more juvenile individuals to study!!

# PTY Projects cont.

## Glesni

Glesni has successfully surveyed three different forests and is currently setting up her fourth and final forest survey. Pictures from camera traps have shown her surveys to be successful, with pictures of Banteng at the artificial salt licks, and even pangolins too!



## Abbie and Katey

The nocturnal primate team has had a very eventful month, as Abbie and Katey's data collection is keeping them very busy. They are currently spending many hours in the forest at night following their individuals, focusing mainly on the mother-infant pairs for Katey's project.



# Conservation Corner:

**Common name:** Giant freshwater stingray

**Scientific name:** *Himantura polylepis*

**IUCN status:** Endangered



**Description and Ecology:** The giant freshwater stingray is a large species of stingray found in South-East Asia. Its distribution covers Thailand, Java and Sabah. Its disc width can reach up to a size of 200cm and can weigh up to 600kg in some areas of South-East Asia; the lifespan of this species however, is unknown. The giant freshwater stingray is often observed at the waters margin where it is thought to be feeding on earthworms.

**Threats:** The giant freshwater stingray is fished in central Thailand and the Mekong but is not considered to be a desirable species to eat. In addition to this the ray is also caught for sport-fishing and for use in aquariums. However due to its low survival in captivity, many rays must be fished to supply demand.

**Conservation:** A captive propagation programme has been established to try and stabilise wild populations while they attempt to improve river habitats. Although this species is listed as endangered, further research into populations across south east Asia as well as a new measure of possible threats in order to best address how to formulate actions to conserve this riverine species of ray.

# Guess the Tail!

Pictured below are the tails of three of the primate species that can be seen here in the Kinabatangan, try and match the species with their tail!

**1**



**2**



**3**



**A**

Proboscis monkey

**B**

Long-tailed macaque

**C**

Silver langur

## Fact of the month!

The smooth coated otter uses spraint, a scent marker consisting of faeces and discharge from the scent gland present in the anal region of the otter. Otters mark using spraints in conspicuous places as they contain information such as territorial boundaries, the age, sex, diet choice and if the individual is pregnant which other otters can read.

# Photos of the Month!



## Danau Girang Field Centre

*Danau Girang Field Centre was opened in July 2008.  
It is located in the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary,  
Sabah, Malaysia.*

*Danau Girang is owned by the Sabah Wildlife Department  
and supported by Cardiff University. Its purpose is to further  
scientific research with the aim of contributing to long-term  
conservation projects in the area, and develop a better  
understanding of our environment and the living things we  
share it with.*

### **Danau Girang Field Centre**

Lot 6  
The Jungle  
Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary  
Sabah

Email: [danaugirangfieldcentre@yahoo.com](mailto:danaugirangfieldcentre@yahoo.com)

*Editors: Katey Hedger, Charlie Cooper and  
Joe Hampson*

*Director of Publication: Benoit Goossens*

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