

JUNGLE TIMES

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ELEPHANT EXPEDITION

Fifteen members of the Scientific Exploration Society arrived at Danau Girang in search of the Asian Elephant.



Members of the S.E.S. leaving for Danum.

The society organises expeditions to provide data for research projects, and the latest trip led a group to the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary to take measurements from the local populations of the

Asian Elephant. To enable this, the group used Global Positioning System technology, range-finders and photographic equipment to locate the animals and collect the data. Expedition leader, Dr Adrian Lister, said "One possibility is to use this research to determine whether or not these animals are 'pygmy'," a term often used to describe the elephants. "They're certainly small, but not as small as elephants we've observed elsewhere", added Lister. Members of KOCP's Elephant Conservation Unit, Soliman and Farina, led the group in search of the elephants, which were sighted on two occasions.

The expedition started at Danau Girang before moving to Sukau. On return to the field centre, some members were given a tour by Chloe. Tours can include a trip to see the

wrinkled-nosed bats outside our bathroom, trails and the watchtower – which looks out over the oxbow lake, and do not require booking in advance. Expedition member, Jo accompanied us on a muddy walk in the rain, whilst Dr Garry hunted for scorpions and other creepy-crawlies, and Olly provided evening entertainment with a guitar, including an unusual rendition of 'In The Jungle', complete with home-made percussion instruments.

The expedition then continued to Danum Valley, where more elephant encounters are hoped to take place.



An Elephant on the northern bank of the Kinabatangan River.

TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S... EVEN BETTER?



An orangutan at the field centre

If bad luck comes in threes, good luck decided to follow suit this week, when no fewer than three orangutans passed through Danau Girang Field Centre, causing chaos amongst residents.

Dave and Rachel decided to

follow the great apes into the forest, observing that the animals seemed to include a consorting couple and a young male, perhaps still travelling with its mother.

The orangutans made their way around the main building, past the back of the hostel and off towards the Moonrat Transect, where Dave and Rachel took note of their location and started to head back toward the field centre. As darkness fell, both explorers were found to be lacking torches, and using only the fading light of a mobile phone to find their way, soon lost the green markers.

Armed with only a compass and the tiny light, the intrepid adventurers made their way

north towards the Kinabatangan River, where they eventually found the yellow trail which led them back to the jetty.

The pair returned the following morning but the orangutans had already moved off after an early breakfast, indicated by remnants of fruits scattered at the scene of the last orangutan sighting.



Mr. David Stanton, orangutan observer

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IN OTHER NEWS...

- *Colouring sessions at Danau Girang have become a regular occurrence, and all involved are improving their language skills in the process.*
- *Unidentified small mammals in the roof are keeping the students wondering and are refusing to show themselves for identification purposes.*

DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?

After fifteen minutes of trying to avoid giving our phone numbers to a very persistent man in Sandakan...

"I work with aeroplanes. I teach people to fly." - Man

"Really? Are you familiar with the teapot plane? I fly that back in England." - Rachel

"The Teapot? Yes, I know it well." - Man, oblivious to his downfall.

A VISIT FROM THE FINANCE PEOPLE!

There are few places on the planet where you can truly escape the clutches of money.



Bev waves goodbye to Danau

It catches up with you eventually, even at Danau Girang, and so a representative from Cardiff University's Finance Department came to visit in September.

This worked out rather well for us students, who enjoyed showing Bev Plummer around the field centre for a few days. We couldn't quite find an orangutan to introduce her to, not for lack of trying, but a boat trip on the river provided an interesting afternoon of sight-seeing.

The water level was so high that it was possible to reach the oxbow lake and sail through the flooded forest.

As for the finances, *Jungle Times* has received no comment but everybody seemed happy at the end

of the trip, so one can hope that it all went splendidly!



The flooded forests provided different scenery to the usual boat-trip!

PHOTO ALBUM

Clockwise: An interesting invertebrate found by Farina, Excited SES Members, A curious looking lizard, A walk on the Mallotus Trail, A DGFC film evening.



TRAIL MAINTENANCE...

Nothing stays still for long in the rainforest, large trees included, and so regular checks of the trails at Danau Girang are a necessity.

Chloe, Dave and Rachel were doing the rounds one evening and hoping to finish the red trail before sunset, when it became clear that this wasn't going to be possible.

The red trail had apparently vanished into thin air. Knowing that this couldn't be, the three frantically searched their surroundings for a tell-tale sign of red paint and retraced their steps to the last known marker. This

merely led them to the same dead end again and again.

Giving up, they made an about turn back to the field centre. The morning shed a little light on the mystery, revealing a fallen tree blocking the path. It didn't take long though to cut through the debris to allow future access to the trail.

A similar fate awaited the yellow trail after heavy rains, which caught the team unawares on several occasions, but then you don't expect to stay dry for long in the jungle...



Soggy students caught in the rain whilst maintaining the trails.

(Photo: C. Parker)

PHOTOGRAPHERS TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS.

Seven more visitors to Danau Girang this month included two photographers on a mission to photograph interesting trees, of which there are no shortage here!

Marie Espeus and Mara Sánchez Renero came to Danau Girang Field Centre from Barcelona having been commissioned by a large hotel to produce artwork based on trees.



(Photo: C. Parker)

Jude models the latest jungle fashion...

They didn't have to walk very far before being inspired and were found no further than 200 metres from the start of the Bangkal Trail by another group walking the trails, including Tina Probert and Dan Spring from Australia. The photographers were accompanied by Jude Day and Ron Griffin who live in Kota Kinabalu.

Jungle Times is yet to see the finished artwork, but spirits were high as the group moved on from Danau Girang. Mara Sánchez Renero commented that it was "just the best spot of the trip!"

Also staying at the field centre during this time was Mr Alex Hinchcliffe from Wales who has interests in the eco-tourism industry.

The assortment of visitors to Danau Girang continues to amaze Rachel and Chloe, who enjoy showing them



(Photo: C. Parker)

The photographers at work.

around. They must be slowly improving as one comment in the guest-book reads "Great guiding by Zainal, Chloe and Rachel!" They look forward to future visitors to Danau Girang.

THE FASTING MONTH

September is the fasting month for Muslims all over the world, and keen to join in with all aspects of life at Danau Girang, Chloe, Rachel and Dave decided to give it a try too.

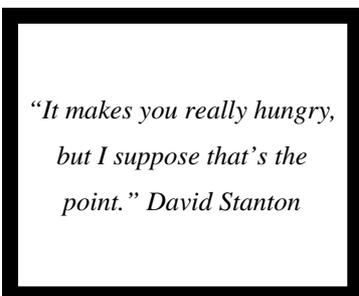
They lasted five days.

Breakfast at three in the morning and the

absence of food during the day soon got the better of the three students, who resigned themselves to re-treating to the three-meal-a-day lifestyle they're used to.

Although the experience was a short one, it imparted a fresh re-

spect for people who fast every year. It also gave them a better appreciation of what it might feel like to go without food on a daily basis; something so many people have little choice about in their lives.



"It makes you really hungry, but I suppose that's the point." David Stanton



This monkey is not lost, don't worry.

HOW TO: THE LOST PROCEDURE

Nuggets of knowledge learnt in the jungle...

Last month, *Jungle Times* gave advice on how to cut a pineapple. This month we focus on what to do if you get lost in the jungle.

1. Stop walking.
2. Don't panic!
3. Mark the point at which you first realise you're lost. This will help anyone trying to find you and yourself if you get further confused about your location!
4. *Back-tracking*: Turn to face the direction you came from and take a bearing

using your compass, if you have one. Walk 200m in that direction, leaving your trail clearly visible so that you can return to your starting point.

5. *The Fan Method*: This uses the same principle as back-tracking, but each of the compass directions are explored, starting first with North, South, East and West. If this doesn't bring you to a recognisable point, start to explore other compass directions and repeat the process, travelling further afield each time.

6. Make a note of the directions you try and any useful features, e.g. water sources, in case of emergency.
7. The international distress signal is six short blasts on a whistle each minute. This will alert others to your whereabouts.

The most important thing is *not to panic* (and to get home again, obviously)! Carrying a compass, whistle, water, pen and a torch can get you out of many tricky situations, so make sure you're prepared before you set out! Good luck!

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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.



"Never smile at a crocodile..."

A TRIP TO K.O.C.P. IN SUKAU!

The Professional Training Year students visited Sukau for the first time this month to discuss their projects with Marc Anrenaz of the Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation Project (KOCP).

KOCP conduct long-term research into orangutan behaviour, including orangutan feeding behaviour, which will be the centre of Chloe and Rachel's attentions this year. Chloe and Rachel will be working with data collected by members of KOCP to create 'time-budgets' for the animals and to study their feeding preferences, something which hasn't yet been studied in forests such as those in the Kinabatangan.

As well as talking with Marc and Mislin about the project, the pair were able to work with teams in the field recording behaviour.



Rachel and Chloe with the Transect Survey Team

Two mornings and a full day, starting at 0530 and finishing at 1830, were spent following Julaina and her three-year-old daughter. "We rested when they rested, moved when they moved and ate when the opportunity arose! As orangutans spend most of the day resting and eating, it wasn't too tricky a task to follow the animals, but the difficulties of recording behaviours obscured by tree branches and keeping

mosquitoes at bay were once again highlighted. We also had the opportunity to work with the nest survey team, recording details of orangutan nests along two transects," said a spokesperson for the pair.

On returning to Danau Girang, Chloe and Rachel expect to be doing rather a lot of data analysis to discover trends in orangutan feeding behaviour. They're hoping orangutans will be on hand around the centre to help them out...



**Danau Girang Field
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