



The Jungle Times

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Breaking news...

Danau Girang Field Centre is on **facebook**
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The Tabin experience: In search of the Tembadau

The Banteng (Tembadau) project is led by PhD student Penny Gardner who is currently carrying out her research in the 122,000 hectares of Tabin Wildlife Reserve. DGFC's two Cardiff PTY students were called upon as volunteers to provide an extra hand in the setting up of the project. The project involves 50 camera traps being placed every 500m within a 2km grid. At each camera station, 2 Reconyx cameras are set up where existing tembadau trails are found.



In addition to helping Penny, the PTY students were treated to the wonders of Tabin, which included night spotting along the forest edge where there were many leopard cats, various species of civets, sambar deer and mouse deer to be seen, a visit to the mud volcano – a large salt lick which animals visit to obtain essential minerals, and a trip to the waterfall for a swim after a hard day's work.

Clockwise from top left; The team around our first camera, beautiful waterfall in the middle of the forest, close up of part of the 'mud volcano' (the mud was actually bubbling out of the top!), powerful waterfall with a large deep pool to swim in.



The project, which takes place in Malua as well as Tabin, aims to gain knowledge on the ecology of the endangered Banteng and hopes to identify their home ranges, habitat use, and to estimate their genetic diversity by scat analysis. Some of Penny's cameras will also be set up near mud wallows and salt licks in hope to capture some rhino images for the BORA project (Borneo Rhino Alliance).

Top 3 pictures of Penny collecting faeces samples for genetic analysis in Cardiff, bottom picture of Tabin field centre before sunset



Funding was obtained from Houston Zoo for Penny's PhD scholarship, and from Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, the Malaysian Palm Oil Council, and Woodland Park Zoo. This is a collaborative project between Sabah Wildlife Department, Sabah Forestry Department, New Forests, Cardiff University, IZW and DGFC.

Visitors of the month

Dr Jo Cable, an ecological parasitologist from Cardiff University, came to DGFC to study the parasites of the fish in the Kinabatangan river, assisted by Milenna. Jo and Milena spent their time catching the fish with DG research assistant Samsir, then dissecting them in the lab at DGFC in order to observe their parasites under the microscope.

From left to right, Milena, Samsir and Jo on the Kinabatangan River



Oliver Krone from the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research, and Jill Shephard from the Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp, spent 4 days at DGFC completing raptor surveys along the Kinabatangan river. The survey took place from Bukit Garam to past the village Bilit, in which a total of 9 bird of prey species were seen and over 15 species of other birds. Below gives a list of the common names of the species recorded:





Bird of prey: Changeable Hawk-Eagle, Wallace's Hawk-Eagle, Oriental Honey Buzzard, White Bellied Sea Eagle, Brahminy Kite, Grey-Headed Fish Eagle, Lesser Fish Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Crested Goshawk

Other birds: Storm's Stork, Purple Heron, Oriental Darter, Striated Heron, Lesser Adjutant, plenty of hornbills (oriental pied, wrinkled, rhinoceros, asian black), Kingfishers (collared, stork-billed, and blue eared), blue-throated bee-eater, Dollarbird, Black-and-Red Broadbill.

Oliver and Jill were focusing more on the sea and fish eagles, hoping to find breeding pairs and nesting sites. They also caught some fish and released them upstream for white bellied sea eagles and fish eagles to see if the birds would respond, and fly down to catch them. Being able to bait the birds would allow Jill and Oliver to return and to start a radio-tracking project and learn more about their nesting and the movement of the eagles, and investigate population genetics.

Let's go and rebuild the bridge

Last October an Orangutan bridge was set up across Sungai Takala as a means of conserving the orangutan population by increasing migration and gene flow. The bridge had been up and running well until a tree fall from the recent floods caused it to collapse.



The repairs were completed by the Ropeskills Rigging Sdn Bhd team, directed by Simon Amos. Once again, they were joined by Japanese NGO Borneo Conservation Trust, MESCOT-Community Ecotourism team and of course the happy helpers of DGFC.

New fire hoses were used and attached between a tree and a man-made metal frame on either side of the river and Reconyx camera traps were set up on both sides of the bridge. Already, the bridge has proven its success with many images of macaques (both long and pig-tailed) as well as one Gibbon using the bridge as a crossing. Lets hope second time round brings some more great primate pictures, and maybe a few orangutans will find themselves amongst the collection.



SEEN bird course

On the 19th May one of our staff at DG, Baharudin Budin, attended 'Technical Skills in Bird Watching Training', a three day workshop run for the members of the Sabah Environmental Education Network (SEEN). The workshop was held in the Rainforest Discovery Centre (RDC) and Koperasi Pelancongan Mukim Batu Puteh, Kinabatangan and provided training to 15 members of the RDC, including those from HUTAN and other conservation and education NGOs and institutes.



The objectives of the training are to enhance participants' knowledge on the importance of birds in the ecosystem and to enhance their technical skills on birdwatching.

Hubert Petol, one of the trainers from RDC involved in the workshop, explains that these educational courses are important in teaching and advising people involved in conservation about the wildlife, so that they themselves can pass on their knowledge to build public awareness.

The Rainforest Discovery Centre

The RDC is run by the EE department of the Sabah Forestry Department. They provide hands on education to field groups and in 2006 they opened their doors to tourists with an interest in bird watching. Amongst the grounds is an impressive 26.5m high tower attached to a canopy walk presenting a view of the wonderful rainforest of Sepilok and allows easy access to the many birds in the area. Although Sepilok holds some primary rainforest still, the forest around the RDC was previously logged in 1957 and in 1972 they began the regeneration project which now provides habitats for the magnificent flying squirrels and the many threatened bird species such as the Bornean Bristlehead (*Pityriasis gymnocephala*).



This month, Guess the footprint...

Here we have three cryptic 'Tapak', Bahasa Malaysia for footprint, which animals are they from...?

Answers from last month, from top left clockwise, Asian black, Oriental pied, White-crowned, Wrinkled (female) and Rhinoceros hornbills.



Photo Album



From top left clockwise, Green broad-bill showing off its camouflage, Arty picture of a Wrinkled hornbill, Flying fox sleeping over the river, Long tailed macaque leaping from a branch, hungry Parachute gekko, Blue eared kingfisher at Sungai Takala.



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

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