



# The Jungle Times

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Independent Newsletter of Danau Girang Field Centre, Established 2008

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# First ever radio collaring of a Bornean slow loris

The Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) has teamed up with DGFC to fit a VHF radio-collar on a Bornean slow loris from the lot 6 forest block of the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. This ongoing nocturnal primate project is funded by Columbus Zoo and Cleveland Zoological Society in the US and began its work with the collaring of the western tarsier in April. The slow loris was caught by DGFC staff and brought back to the lab for primatologist Danica Stark and research assistant Baharudin Resake to take measurements, weigh it and fit the collar.



Baharudin Resake, the leader of the project, will be radio tracking the loris to find out information on their ranging behavior, sleeping site locations and gain general understanding of the species. This information is vital to raise awareness in Sabah on the importance of protecting this species from the threats it faces.

Slow lorises are under huge pressure from the illegal pet trade in Asia, due to them being viewed as 'cute' companions. The slow loris is a venomous primate and have their teeth removed to increase sales which brings a large deal of trauma to the animal, as well as this they face a lot of stress during transportation and handling at the markets.



Hopefully, as the nocturnal project progresses we can gain the information needed to protect these fascinating animals.



# Cardiff field course – number 4!

Once again Cardiff University students return to complete their tropical forest biodiversity field course at DGFC. 18 students, doing a variety of bioscience degrees, were joined by Lecturers Prof. Mike Bruford, Prof. Bill Symondson and PhD student Adam Seward. They began their week with a one-day forest safety course delivered by Simon Amos and James Burns from Fieldskills Sdn Bhd.

In the first week, the students gained a variety of conservation research skills in 7 different projects run by the Cardiff lecturers along with the PTYs, staff and Masters Students of DGFC.

Phd student Adam Seward led the bird ringing using mist nests; a total of 13 different species were captured, identified and ringed. He is also a talented photographer and managed to capture some beautiful shots.



Prof. Mike Bruford along with the assistance of PTY student Rob Colgan took groups to analyse the habitat of some of the 10 plots around DGFC.

Master Student Sarah Scriven took people on the nocturnal frog hunt, taking place in forests and plantations. That week she also found her 27<sup>th</sup> species of frog, the lesser swamp frog (*Limnonectes paramacrodon*).



Master Student Luke Evans and Cardiff students were on the look for eye shine, seeing an average of 10 crocs a night along the river stretch from DG to Batu Putih. They also got a few sneaky peeks at our newly collared croc 'Girang'.

PTY student Rodi Tenquist-Clarke took groups small mammal trapping catching tree shrews, squirrels, rats and even caught one naughty fruit-stealing macaque.



Primatologist Danica Stark lead primate surveys, having great success over the week seeing silver langurs, both species of macaques, an orangutan and one river bank holding at least 50 proboscis monkeys!

Prof. Bill Symondson took the groups to study the invertebrates and butterflies. In front of DGFC main building a total of 65 species of butterfly were identified, representing just how high the biodiversity of these forests are. Bill also found the amazing stalk-eyed fly and a resin-cocoon making caterpillar- In his 3 years of coming to DGFC, he had never seen them here before!



# Dr Muller comes to smell proboscis monkey poo!

Later in the field course we were joined by Dr. Carsten Muller, a lecturer from Cardiff University, who spent his time collecting proboscis monkey faecal samples for odour analysis using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). We interviewed him to get a greater insight into the value of his research and about his stay here at DGFC.

## **How long have you been doing research with Cardiff University?**

I have been working at Cardiff for 14 years, I took over lectureship in 1999 and been permanent since 2006.

## **Describe the research you are undertaking at DGFC, and what are you hoping to accomplish?**

I want to get enough samples of proboscis monkey faeces from 6 groups, hoping the sensing device is good enough to pick up the odour and maybe to record any differences between groups and potentially individuals.

## **What gave you the idea for your research?**

Dr Mike Bruford gave me the idea, and having a back ground in chemical-ecology, I find Proboscis monkey smells very interesting. I did some similar work in the UK on otters, identifying individuals from their scent. Proboscis monkeys are renowned for their TCP like smell and I am also interested in the structure of the olfactory system of their noses and if given the chance, would love to dissect one if a dead individual was found.

## **How has your time been here at DGFC?**

I like it here very much. The mud flats around here really interest me and the centre itself is very sophisticated to complete good research. I also love the food here, it's marvellous! It's my first time in South-East Asia, and I hope to be back as soon as possible. If my work here works, then all it needs is people to learn what to do in the field. I hope that I might join the field course next year.



# HJB Charitable Trust scholarship students

HJB charitable trust is an organisation set up in 2001 supporting research into conservation and provides scholarships, bursaries and grants to students who wish to travel from the UK and Wales for educational purposes. In 2010, the HJB Charitable Trust agreed to fund two £1,500 travel scholarships over a period of three years (2011, 2012 and 2013) for Cardiff University students who will attend the School's Tropical Biodiversity Assessment Field Course in Sabah.

For this year's Cardiff field trip, Hugo Creeth, Sarah Shepperd, and Sophie Cowling were successful in their applications, giving them the opportunity to join the rest of the students to learn the ins and outs of tropical conservation at DGFC. The three students were interviewed about their time at DGFC and tell us how gaining the scholarship has benefited them in terms of their education and future prospects.

## How did you find out about the scholarship?

*We heard about it from Blackboard (Cardiff University's online Virtual Learning Environment). Applicants had to apply by providing a letter with good reason of why we should be provided with the scholarship. All of our reasons were based on money problems and so without this scholarship we wouldn't have been able to come.*

## Do you feel this field course has benefited you as a person and in terms for your scientific future?

*Sophie- We wouldn't have had the money to do anything like this; this opportunity has given us the real field skills for our CV, making us more employable for future careers. It's not like being a tourist, it's a very unique experience.*

*Hugo- I would have tried to raise the money to come here if I didn't get the scholarship, but thank fully this made it possible. I have now learnt how to look for crocodile eye-shine, trek through a jungle using a compass and GPS and be independent in planning a research project. It has opened doors for future career possibilities.*

*Sarah- Taking part in this field course, after doing my project on butterfly diversity, has really made me want to do a Masters in entomology research.*



## Why in particular did you want to come on this field course?

*This field course provides skills and experiences that can't be offered by the other field courses, and is a once in a life time opportunity. It's a module that offers more, allowing us to get hands on experience by researchers, students and staff that can actually pass on their skills and knowledge in a practical way. The other field courses would not give us the chance to take part in real rainforest research.*

We at DGFC, would like to thank the HJB Charitable Trust for their support and we would like to encourage future Cardiff students to apply for 2012 and 2013 field courses when the time comes.

# Proboscis monkey conservation program

This month, DGFC saw the launching of the proboscis monkey conservation program, in which two researchers, SWD's Dr Sen Nathan and DGFC's Danica Stark are involved. Dr Sen will be looking at the genetics of proboscis monkeys from five sites all across Sabah for his PhD, while Danica is planning on fitting different individuals with satellite collars to study how habitat fragmentation affects the monkeys' movements. Other data which are being collected include faecal samples for parasites, hormones and smells, other parasites within the fur of the animal and all the measurements of the animals.

To keep with the theme of firsts this year, DGFC, SWD and the Wildlife Rescue Unit (WRU), managed to do the first ever satellite tagging of a proboscis monkey! To enable the project to be possible, a new boat had to be purchased that could be taken all over Sabah (pictured on page 1).

The funding for this project was very generously donated by Yayasan Sime Darby, who came to DGFC for the launching of the project.



# Farewells

**Mres Students** - After 6 months we say Goodbye to Master students Sarah Scriven and Luke Evans from Cardiff University. Their projects have had amazing success, with Luke assisting in radio collaring the first crocodile in Borneo and Sarah finding an impressive 27 frog species including many new discoveries to the Lower Kinabatangan Region. We look forward to when they return to DGFC for their respective PhDs and wish them the best of Luck in all their work.



**PTY students** - The professional training year has unfortunately come to an end for Cardiff University students, and current *Jungle Times* editors, Rodi Tenquist-Clarke and Rob Colgan.

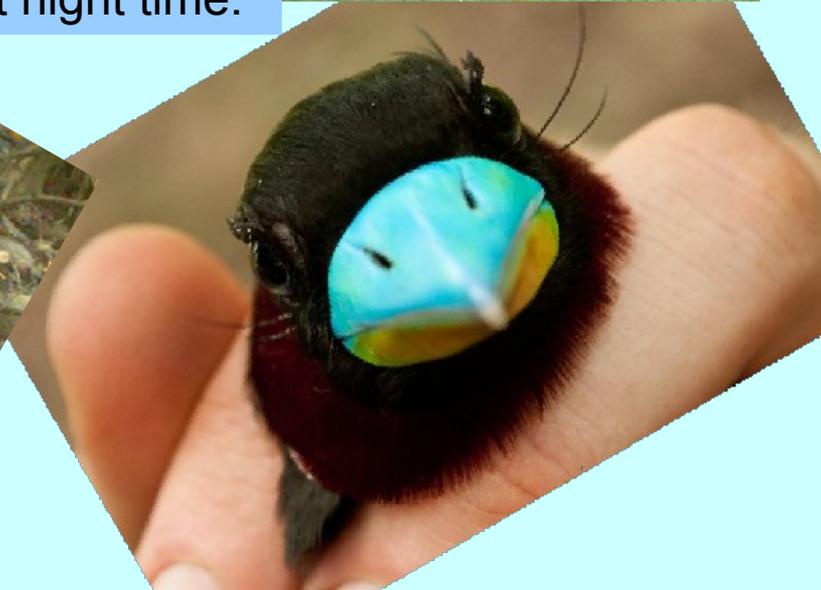
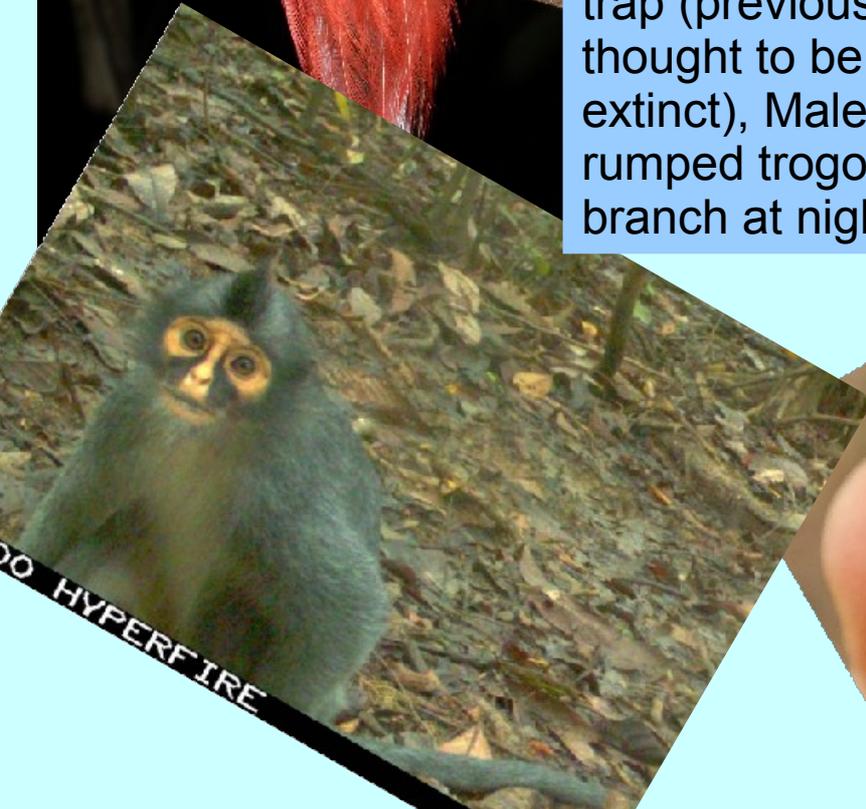
'We have had a truly memorable experience and want to thank everyone at DGFC who made our time here such an amazing journey. We wish the best of luck to the new PTYs; Becky Lawrence, Alice Miles and Josie Jackson who will be taking over the on-going camera trapping project and will also become the new editors of *the Jungle Times*.'



# Photo Album



Clockwise from top left; 'poodle bug' and a flatid...maybe they're related, Kirk the Bornean slow loris, Shield bugs on the underside of a leaf with their eggs, black and red broadbill, Hose's langur on a camera trap (previously thought to be locally extinct), Male scarlett rumped trogon on a branch at night time.



*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

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