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STUDENTS TALKING RUBBISH?

Thirty-one students and staff from Bungay High School and Wallingford School in England helped to clean up the Kinabatangan River and studied the types of rubbish collected.

The sixth-form students, who are 16-17 years old and currently studying for their A-levels, were based at the recently opened Danau Girang Field Centre located in the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary, Sabah.

The two groups investigated rubbish deposited in the Kinabatangan and were encouraged to think about ways to reduce current pollution and avoid further disruption to the river, which is used by a huge array of wildlife including crocodiles, monitor lizards, birds and primates. Each group spent several days travelling by boat along a 20 km stretch of the river, collecting, identifying and weighing rubbish in order to learn more about the types of waste deposited in the water.

In one week alone, Bungay High School collected 60 kg of waste from the river, half of which consisted of plastic bottles. Although some of these bottles contained cosmetics and shampoo, most

were plastic drinks bottles, which are likely to originate from people passing the road bridge further upstream. Other large contributors to the overall volume of waste collected were plastic carrier bags, which are readily available from most shops and light enough to be easily blown into the water. Polystyrene food containers, household refuse bags, paint pots, oil-cans and an assortment of everyday items such as flip-flops and cigarette lighters were also collected. The exact effects of this pollution on the ecology of the river and its

inhabitants are still to be investigated, but it is clear that large amounts of rubbish accumulating in the water and on the banks pose dangers for wildlife moving along the river. The students themselves had first hand experience of wildlife interacting with waste left by humans when curious wild boar decided to investigate the collected bin bags. The boar took one of the bags and scattered the rest, creating a second clean-up operation for the volunteers!

(CONTINUED INSIDE)



The group from Bungay High School.

VISITORS TO DANAU GIRANG

Danau Girang Field Centre hosted an array of visitors from across the globe this month.

Danau Girang welcomed Peter Riger from Houston Zoo, Texas, Graeme Gillespie from Zoos Victoria, Melbourne, and Marc Ancrenaz, director of Hutan in Sukau, to discuss the possibilities of starting an amphibian project.

Meanwhile, Dr Eshwar Mahenthiralingam arrived from Cardiff University to collect soil in order to study the microbes found in the samples. The samples are to be

studied at Cardiff, and will potentially be used as part of a project for undergraduate students in their final year.

Gabriella Juma and her daughter Madalena also visited from Cardiff this month and taught the resident Cardiff students some ingenious new names to play in their spare time.

Water samples from the Kinabatangan River were also being collected by Sahana Harun from Universiti Malaysia Sabah's Institute for Tropical Biology

and Conservation, and Liz Hamilton from the University of Birmingham, England.

Between collecting soil, water and looking for frogs, some of the visitors were lucky enough to see elephants whilst travelling on the river. Mr. Gillespie described it as "the most amazing elephant experience of my life".

Dr Mahenthiralingam was also pleasantly surprised when an orangutan swung by his site of soil collection. It appeared that the orangutan had little interest in

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IN OTHER NEWS

- Danau Girang hit the local and National Newspapers this month with the running of its first field course with Cardiff University.
- Chloe, Dave and Rachel have walked the trails many times and as a result, got very muddy.

DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?

"I can see the orangutan. It just looks no different from a coconut."

- David Stanton

microbiology though.

"He actually didn't take any notice of what I was doing. I was just lucky enough to be in the right place as he passed through"



Harriet points out wildlife on the riverbank to Madalena.

STUDENTS TALKING RUBBISH? (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1) As well as undertaking the river pollution study, the students, who were enthusiastic about their trip to Sabah, made sure that they made the most of their time at the field centre. They took the opportunity to explore the forest and learn about the diverse range of life it contains. "I had a really good time and really enjoyed viewing so much wildlife, especially on the boat trip to see the crocodiles in the evening!" said Thomas Pynner from Bungay High School.

Recurring responses from the young people praised the hospitality received during their stay and the incredible biodiversity of the area. "This trip has been fantastic. We have been made to feel so welcome as a part of the cen-

tre." said Gina Adams, Bungay High School.

Undertaking fieldwork as part of their science course not only develops practical skills which will help the students to progress with research in the future, but also nurtures a wider understanding of the effects of human activity on the environment.

The amount of litter found during the fortnight poses several questions for consideration: what impact does our waste have on the plant and animal life, and what are the overall consequences for the Kinabatangan River?

Until further research is undertaken, the exact effects cannot be known, but in the words of Kalinda Souther of Wallingford School, "It's one in a

million." The Kinabatangan can either become a rubbish dump or remain one of the most beautiful places in the world; the choice is in our hands.



Sungai Kinabatangan

PHOTO ALBUM



Clockwise: A proboscis monkey, elephants crossing the river, Chloe buying fish, Milena on the Kinabatangan, Harriet's birthday BBQ.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING YEAR AT DANAU GIRANG

With the arrival of the Cardiff Fieldtrip last month were two students whose stay is to be a little longer than two weeks.

Chloe Parker and Rachel Henson are Danau Girang Field Centre's first participants of Cardiff University's Professional Training Year. On applying to study biosciences at Cardiff, it is possible to enroll on a 'sandwich course', which fits a year of experience in a working environment between the second and final years of study.

Chloe and Rachel will be working on

a project with the Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation Project, as well as helping to maintain the trails at Danau Girang, learning about the local biodiversity and way of life, as well as witnessing the progression of active conservation work throughout the year.

The year is an opportunity of a lifetime for the two students and both making the most of living in such a unique place. "This place is amazing" said Chloe Parker, a quote which has found its way into several local newspapers over the last few weeks!



*Above: Rachel, Chloe and Dave
Below: The Sabah Times*



ENGLISH TEACHING

The Cardiff Students and children living at Danau Girang have been helping each other break the language barrier.

As they entered the second month of living at Danau Girang, the three students from Cardiff University moved up a gear in their efforts to communicate with the family living and working at the field centre.

Although everyone was off to a shaky start, by the end of the month the conversation had developed from a simple 'Apa Khabar?' ('How are you?') to being able to point out wildlife seen around the centre, ask for simple things in the kitchen and offer to help with various jobs.

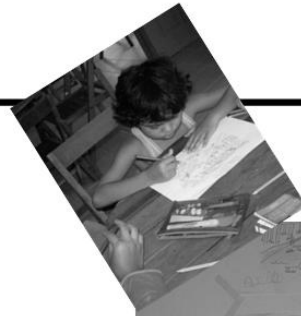
Without a doubt, it has been due to the friendly, patient and welcoming nature of the family that Chloe, Dave and Rachel have been able to progress

with their attempts at learning Malay. Regularly playing, drawing and talking with the three children, Asim, Amoi and Apoi, has been an invaluable learning tool, and the language skills of both parties have come a long way since the students' arrival at Danau Girang.

Themed colouring worksheets have been developed to help everyone involved, which are now on show at the Danau Girang Field Centre. Admission to the art exhibition is free of charge to all visitors to Danau Girang.



The Colouring Club: Asim, Chloe, Amoi and Apoi.



Top: Amoi concentrating hard.

Bottom: Apoi with his work of art.

FIRST WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENT



Danau Girang Field Centre's first work experience student arrives from Cardiff University.

Harriet spent a month at Danau Girang, learning about all aspects of fieldwork. During her stay at DGFC, she helped to co-ordinate activities for two groups of school children and assisted Farina with her observations of elephant behaviour. Not wanting to pass up a traveling opportunity, Harriet visited Bali before returning

back to the United Kingdom.

"I wanted to get some more experience that'll help me find an exciting job..."

HOW TO: CUT A PINEAPPLE.

Nuggets of knowledge learnt in the jungle...

There is a skill to cutting pineapples that was previously unknown to Chloe and Rachel on arrival at DGFC.

These step-by-step instructions will aid you in all future pineapple cutting exploits.

1. Remove the top and bottom of the fruit using a sharp knife.
2. Remove the dark, hard spots by making an inclined incision on both sides of the spot. Repeat until all spots are removed and replaced by diagonal grooves in the flesh of the fruit.

3. Standing the pineapple on one end, cut it into quarters from top to bottom.

4. Slice each quarter into bite-sized chunks and serve to hungry people.

Having cut your pineapple, there are endless ways of consuming it. One serving suggestion is to mix pineapple chunks with rice, raisins, sweet corn and sausage pieces to create a truly unique dining experience.

In the next edition of *Jungle Times*, find out HOW TO: do something else.

Recipe provided by chief chef Chloe Parker. Pineapple cutting advice given by Asnih.



Food containing pineapple!

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**Danau Girang Field
Centre**

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.



Farina and Milena working hard on the river

ELEPHANTS!

The Bornean pygmy elephant is an impressive creature to come across and a sight I imagine few people from Cardiff will be lucky enough to witness. Living at Danau Girang this August has given us several such opportunities.

The first arose at the end of the first Cardiff University field trip, where the group was treated to a close encounter with nearby elephants. It was an unprecedented end to the course, and the event was noted as most students' favourite part of their two weeks in Sabah.

Less than two weeks later, the elephants passed through the field centre, causing minor damage to materials at Zainal and Asnih's house, but otherwise being fairly well behaved! The PTY students arrived just in time to watch the last family group crossing the path, and were

amused to see that they appeared to have two friends traveling in con-



An Elephant!

voy—an otter and a wild boar!

The most impressive sighting of all was made whilst traveling by boat on the Kinabatangan River. Farina and Harriet had been

collecting data, and on our return, after watching a group relaxing and playing by the river, we were privileged to witness the herd crossing the river. 108 individuals were counted, with more still obscured by forest, waiting to cross. Small groups of three to five animals made their way gracefully through the calm waters to the bank on the south side of the river. Mothers helped to push young elephants up to firmer ground with their trunks, and the adults trudged steadily through the thick mud. All in all, it was quite a spectacle!



Elephants, not long before embarking on a river crossing.