



Jungle Times

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*Photo of the Month Credit:
Myra Mansell*

Inside This Issue:

Page 2: What's Going On?

Page 4: Visitors!

Page 10: Arrivals



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What's Going On?



ABERYSTWYTH FIELD COURSE

Aberystwyth University were here for one week to study and observe the areas around DGFC. This included bird boats, primate boats, trail walks, night walks and night boats. Whilst they were here they also undertook their own projects analysing and identifying species that they encountered such as butterflies. A light trap was set up by the field course which they monitored for the time they were here, identifying species that were attracted by the set up. Aberystwyth showed great enthusiasm for the local wildlife as they listened to talks given by Miriam, Rich and Elisa. They were a pleasure to host, we wish them the best of luck with their 3rd year of university and future careers!



What's Going On?



HOUSTON ZOO

We had the pleasure of welcoming Houston Zoo on the 20th of September. While they were here they were given talks about all the projects currently here at DGFC as many of the projects here are in liaison with Houston. Commencing the talks they went tracking to find our recently tagged pangolin, Gagah, as many of the projects here are supported by Houston Zoo.

Renee Bumpus has been the senior director of conservation projects at Houston Zoo for 10 years which involves helping the animals they have by supporting them in the wild.

They have been working with DGFC for 15 years, aiming to see the whole picture looking at long term sustainability, working with local people having more of a connection to aid conservation.

‘Really inspiring to see conservation community and how they find solutions and move forward’

September 2019



What's Going On?



SUN BEAR SYMPOSIUM

From the 23rd till the 26th of September 2019, the Sabah Wildlife Department, Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre (BSBCC) and Danau Girang Field Centre (DGFC) held the 2nd International Symposium on Sun Bear Conservation and Management in Kota Kinabalu, Borneo. This symposium followed the Sun Bear Conservation and Management symposium which was hosted by TRAFFIC and Free the Bears two years ago in Kuala Lumpur. The 1st symposium resulted in the development of the Global Status Review & Conservation Action Plan for sun bears 2019-2028 (Crudge *et al.* 2019) and invited range countries to use this action plan as a template, and to then host their own symposium to develop state or country specific sun bear action plans. Sabah is the first state of the range countries that is following suit.

The SWD, BSBCC and DGFC have invited sun bear experts, stakeholders, NGOs and industry players to gather at Le Meridien Hotel to develop the first 'Sun Bear Action plan for Sabah 2020-2029'. The four-day long symposium comprised of a two-day international symposium, preceded by a two-day technical working group for the Sun Bear Action Plan for Sabah.

Visitor Fact File



We would like to introduce you all to Dr Natasha De Vere. Dr De Vere is working at the National Botanic Garden of Wales and lectures at Aberystwyth University.

Natasha has been coming to DGFC for the last 7 years, introducing field courses to tropical ecology. “We’ve had a fantastic time and we’ve been exploring the plots and the rainforest trails. I will attend the Apimondia conference in Canada; an international conference dedicated to honeybees and other pollinators. From Montréal I then travel via Iceland to Bergen in Norway to give a talk on pollinators. In Norway I will give a public talk on the pollinator research we do in the UK where we look at the best plants for different pollinating insects.”

Natasha de Vere



Dr de Vere is well known for her research on DNA barcoding plant species. Here at DGFC she has been looking at the vegetation plots and restoration sites to study how well the forest regenerates. She has been identifying saplings that have come into restoration plots by natural regeneration and used DNA barcoding to identify them as they are difficult to ID just from looking at them.

Natasha, we wish you all the best on your travels and good luck at the conferences. We are looking forward to hosting you and your students next year.



Visitor Fact File



NIGELLE DE VISME

‘Success is going from failure to failure without losing without enthusiasm!’



This month DGFC had the pleasure of hosting Nigelle De Visme on her return to Malaysia where she spent her childhood back in 1953. This return was inspired by the documentary Judi Dench’s Wild Borneo Adventure which is how she learnt about DGFC. Nigelle de Visme is a writer and has spent much of her life traveling the world and ‘saying yes to life!’.

While here Nigelle went on forest walks, primate boats, night boats and entertained us all with many amazing stories about her life. When asked what the best part of her trip to DGFC has been she said that it was meeting all of us and seeing the work that we are doing.

Make sure to check out her books available on Amazon!



Visitor Fact File



Name: Jens Hauser

Where are they from?: “At the moment I live in Lund, in the southern part of Sweden, but I am originally from Stockholm. I have been living in the southern part for the last 16/17 years”.

Their work: “I work as a test manager, so I test web applications or any type of IT system. I write the strategy on how to properly test things and mitigate any risks so that nothing bad happens with the software”.

Why they are here: “Photography, and specifically the clouded leopard. I came to Kota Kinabalu and then travelled to Sandakan and then to DG. After this I am doing some more travelling with the hope of getting some good photographs of the clouded leopard”.

Highlights of the trip: “Oh that’s quite hard... Of course when we did the tagging of the pangolin, that was really special. I never thought I would see a pangolin, especially a wild one, so I think that was very special for me. Also seeing how the team works with every animal, but yes for me I think it was the pangolin”.

Instagram: @jens_hauser

Visitor Fact File



Name: Sandi James

Where they are from?: “I am originally from Australia. I lived in Sabah for 4 years and am currently living in Thailand with the plan to return to Sabah in June 2020 to complete my PhD in social policy/public health”.

Their work: “I am a psychologist”.



Why they are here: “I was invited to come to DG to conduct a health and wellbeing session with staff and students”.

Highlights of the trip: “The highlight has been meeting the staff and students and spending time in the forest, seeing the orangutans and witnessing the work being done at DGFC. I was also lucky to meet the visitors from Houston Zoo and speak with them about a potential collaboration looking at human behaviour change and conservation”.



Visitor Fact File



Name: Dr Timothy William.

Where are they from?: “I live and work in Kota Kinabalu, but I am originally from West Malaysia. I have been in Sabah since 1996”.

Their work: “I am an infectious disease physician, and I work at the Gleneagles Hospital in Kota Kinabalu. I used to work in the government sector for the past 20 years but now I am in the private sector”.

Why they are here: “I was invited to come here and give a health talk for the staff in DG and also to the people around here, and also to do a health check – up. I also came here to see the place! I always wanted to come and see the work that’s being done here”.

Highlights of the trip: “The highlight has been seeing the research work done by the scientists here. I followed a group to place camera traps, and just now I’ve been on a night boat. Seeing the catching and research on the pythons was very interesting”.



Visitor Fact File



NURIA SALGADO MACH & EMMI KANERVO

Nuria is originally from Mexico, she is Milena's cousin. These two met in Barcelona whilst at university studying business, they are here on holiday to experience wildlife within the natural habitat. Next they are off to visit Milena and finish off their journey in Kuala Lumpur before heading back to Barcelona. We wish them the best of luck on the rest of their travels!

Highlight: “The Night boat with all the stars that you just don't see in the city.”
“The atmosphere of the bird boat, starting the day with the wildlife waking up”



Research Assistant Arrival

Who: Ashraft Syazwan Ahmandy Bin Yusni, 22 years old.

Where from?: Peninsular Malaysia, born in KL.

Why here?: He has just finished studying at University of Wisconsin in America and is looking to gain more experience and give himself some time to raise funds for a masters at some point in the future. He graduated in August and took a month off and now he's here! He majored in conservation biology with an emphasis on restoration ecology, and also took modules on environmental studies and the social injustices surrounding indigenous people. He was working in the lab when he came across a paper written in collaboration with Benoit/DG/Cardiff Uni about orangutans and knew he wanted to be part of this!

Interesting Fact: Likes heights but doesn't know how to swim!

Quote: "I appreciate how hard it is for people in STEM to get jobs in Malaysia. I am looking forward to getting into the forest surrounded by trees and monkeys and helping to support this ecosystem because I just love this place."

What will he be doing?: Ashraft will be working alongside the other RAs here at the field centre, which means he will be driving teams on the boats down the river for tracking, help maintain the trails, and he will be getting involved in the upkeep of the Botanic Plots.





Volunteer Arrival



ETHAN TOWNSEND -
“England has always
felt like a stop over
point, but Borneo
feels like home”

Ethan has just arrived here after graduating from Bangor University in the UK. His degree was in Zoology with Herpetology so he is keen to expand his experience in his favourite field; reptiles! Since arriving he was over the moon to find out about Rich's PhD project on reticulated pythons and has been on several night boat trips to help capture them. Ethan has visited DG previously, five years ago for a six-week stint, and this time he is extending his stay to two months. He was keen to return and see the progress that has taken place, and he has lived in Kota Kinabalu before so is already familiar with the country. He is most looking forward to experience working with a range of species to aid his future career.



Volunteer Arrival



JASMINE TSCHAN AND PASCAL ARPAGAUS

They have both come here together as a couple as part of their travels in this part of the world, all the way from Zurich, Switzerland. They met at Zurich University where they studied conservation science, and have recently graduated. Before DG they spent two weeks at Danum Valley, and after these two months Pascal will return to begin his masters. Jasmine hopes to follow a similar path starting a masters in ecology and evolution next year. Since being here they have already taken part in pangolin tracking, and both enjoy walking the trails in the forest around the field centre in their spare time.

“We have come here to experience a research environment and help in assisting with the wildlife conservation”.



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 Departments 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.

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