

Jungle Times

Independent Newsletter of Danau Girang Field Centre, Est. 2008



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*Picture of the month:
Pangolin courtesy of the
crew from Scubazoo*

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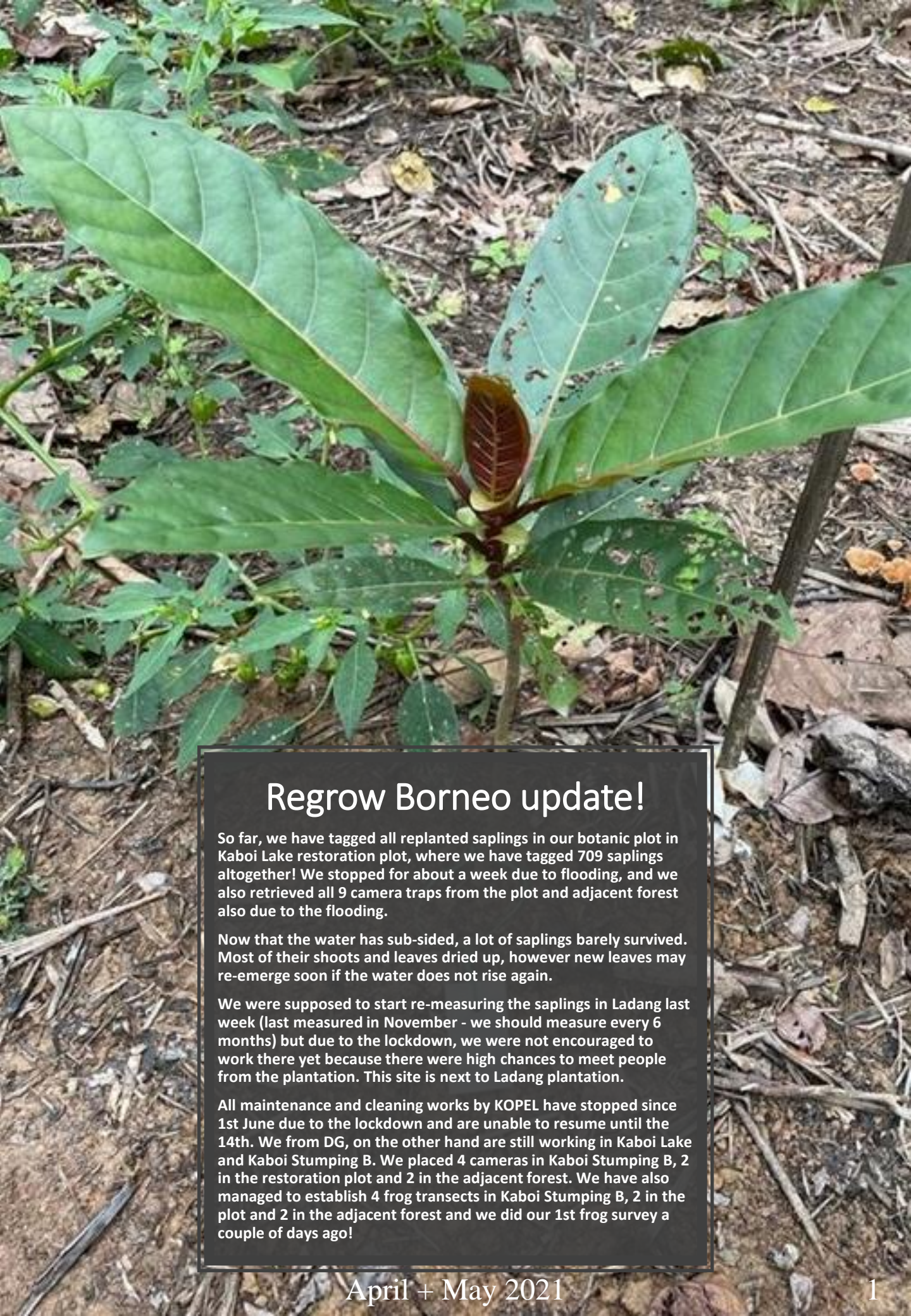
Page 6: Picture of the month



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Regrow Borneo update!

So far, we have tagged all replanted saplings in our botanic plot in Kaboi Lake restoration plot, where we have tagged 709 saplings altogether! We stopped for about a week due to flooding, and we also retrieved all 9 camera traps from the plot and adjacent forest also due to the flooding.

Now that the water has sub-sided, a lot of saplings barely survived. Most of their shoots and leaves dried up, however new leaves may re-emerge soon if the water does not rise again.

We were supposed to start re-measuring the saplings in Ladang last week (last measured in November - we should measure every 6 months) but due to the lockdown, we were not encouraged to work there yet because there were high chances to meet people from the plantation. This site is next to Ladang plantation.

All maintenance and cleaning works by KOPEL have stopped since 1st June due to the lockdown and are unable to resume until the 14th. We from DG, on the other hand are still working in Kaboi Lake and Kaboi Stumping B. We placed 4 cameras in Kaboi Stumping B, 2 in the restoration plot and 2 in the adjacent forest. We have also managed to establish 4 frog transects in Kaboi Stumping B, 2 in the plot and 2 in the adjacent forest and we did our 1st frog survey a couple of days ago!



Acap and his MSc

After graduating from college in 2019, Ashraft Yusni came to Borneo to work as a Research Assistant with the Danau Girang Field Centre.

Growing up in Beranang, Selangor, a place surrounded by then oil palm plantation, Ashraft had not had the chance to be around nature much until after he went to college. He fell in love with Sabah as he started his career in the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary - a place like no other.

After a year of assisting researchers at the field centre, while getting sage counsels and continuous encouragement from his peers, Ashraft has decided to pursue a postgraduate degree in Ecological Processes with the Universiti Malaysia Sabah and lead a project of his own.

His research will focus on the application of passive acoustic monitoring for hornbill research in the wildlife sanctuary. This particular project is a collaboration of many organizations including DGFC, Sabah Wildlife Department, Gaia, HUTAN-KOCP, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, and Hong Kong University. His research is currently funded by Yayasan Sime Darby (through collaboration with Gaia), Rufford Foundation, Oriental Bird Club, and IDEAWILD. With the guidance of his amazing supervisors: Prof. Benoit Goossens, Dr. Liew Thor Seng, and Dr. Ravinder Kaur, and advisors: Dr. Marc Ancrenaz and Prof. Caroline Dingle, Ashraft hopes that this project will benefit hornbill conservation and researchers in Sabah who will adopt this novel method in their future research. By the way, some of Ashraft's life goals are, but not limited to, being a lecturer at a local university and being able to communicate in sign language by the age of 30.

Meet our interns!

Hafizah

Hi, my name is Hafizah Suhud. I'm a BSc student in Conservation Biology, from UMS.

I came to DGFC back in March and I am now spending 3 and a half months doing my internship here.

Here, my field of work is the same as a volunteer. I am currently involved with a variety of exciting projects such as wildlife (cat, snakes, pangolin) tracking, camera traps, botanical plots and Regrow Borneo.

All of these projects need my engagement in helping the process. Coming to DGFC is one of the most rightful decisions I have ever made. Here, I can get on-the-ground experience which gives me more exposure on how they work in the field (conservational background). It is so amusing to see how the researchers use technology to conserve the animals.

Under the pangolin project led by Elisa Panjang, a radio-tracking method by using VHF is used to track the pangolin which enables us to study their behaviour, habitat they inhabit, and their interactions with the other animals. We can see all these things by placing camera and video traps right after we manage to trace the pangolin. Everything is captured and stored as video and image data in the device.

Other than wildlife, I am also able to be engaged with plant conservation. Regrow Borneo is one of the biggest projects at DGFC which is currently conducted. Under this project, I can experience the process of forest restoration. We planted trees, identified species, and measured the saplings. I enjoy this the most because I am into plants, not to be biased to the wildlife, it is just that I prefer plants.

I am lucky enough to be able to meet so many inspiring people who are so passionate about conservational work. These people amaze me as I can truly see their passion, love and determination towards conserving nature which inspires me to do more in this sector myself.



Syazana

My name is Nur Syazana Fatimah Binti Mohamad Juhari. I am a final year student from UMS where I study conservation biology.

I am glad to choose Danau Girang Field Centre as the place for my industrial training because I would like to get a better understanding and learn in more depth how they protect animal and plant species, especially in Kinabatangan, Sabah.

There are several projects that I join under PHD and Master students, and all their projects need me to go into the field. A brief on what I am doing here is that I work as a volunteer to help the other students on their projects such as tracking, checking the camera and video traps, check the traps, making tree tags, assessing botanic plots, and assisting Regrow Borneo.

For the tracking, they teach me how to track the wild animals (pangolin, flatheaded cat, snake) by using radio and antenna to get their signal, as each of these animals were fitted with a tracking device to detect their whereabouts.

The best thing when I go tracking is when I get a visual on the animal, especially pangolin and snakes.

For the botanic plot, there are 10 plots where each tagged tree requires measuring (diameter, angle, distance), and this is also done for the Regrow Borneo project. I get to help make a quadrat for tree sampling, put a tag number on each sapling, and do a sapling measurement (height, crown, diameter).

I really enjoying doing all this work, not only to get more knowledge and experience but also, I can be friends with all the staff and the other students.



Recent publications

ARTICLE

 Check for updates

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-22386-8>

OPEN

Genomic insights into the conservation status of the world's last remaining Sumatran rhinoceros populations

Johanna von Seth ^{1,2,3,21}, Nicolas Dussex ^{1,2,3,21}, David Díez-del-Molino ^{1,2,3}, Tom van der Valk ^{1,2,4}, Verena E. Kutschera ⁵, Marcin Kierczak ⁶, Cynthia C. Steiner ⁷, Shanlin Liu⁸, M. Thomas P. Gilbert ^{8,9}, Mikkel-Holger S. Sinding ^{8,10}, Stefan Prost ^{11,12}, Katerina Guschanski ^{4,13}, Senthilvel K. S. S. Nathan¹⁴, Selina Brace ¹⁵, Yvonne L. Chan^{1,2}, Christopher W. Wheat³, Pontus Skoglund¹⁶, Oliver A. Ryder⁷, Benoit Goossens^{14,17,18,19}, Anders Götherström^{1,20} & Love Dalén ^{1,2,3}

In this paper 5 historical and 16 modern genomes were analysed from isolated Sumatran rhino populations to investigate the genomic consequences of the recent decline, such as increased inbreeding and mutational load. The paper can be found for open access [here](#).

Parasite community structure in sympatric Bornean primates

Liesbeth Frias, Hideo Hasegawa, Tock H. Chua, Symphorosa Sipangkui, Danica J. Stark, Milena Salgado-Lynn, Benoit Goossens, Kenneth Keuk, Munehiro Okamoto, Andrew J.J. MacIntosh

In this paper we characterize the gastrointestinal helminth parasite assemblages of a community of Bornean primates living along the Kinabatangan floodplain in Sabah (Malaysian Borneo), including two species endemic to the island. The paper can be found open access [here](#).

DNA analyses of large pangolin scale seizures: Species identification validation and case studies

Kyle M. Ewart ^{a,1,*}, Amanda L. Lightson ^{a,1}, Frankie T. Sitam ^b, Jeffrine Rovie-Ryan ^b, Son G. Nguyen ^c, Kelly I. Morgan ^a, Adrian Luczon ^d, Edwin Miguel S. Anadon ^d, Marli De Bruyn ^e, Stéphanie Bourgeois ^f, Kanita Ouitavon ^g, Antoinette Kotze ^{e,h}, Mohd Soffian A. Bakar ⁱ, Milena Salgado-Lynn ^{j,k}, Ross McEwing ^a

In this paper we present a standardized genetic marker suitable for species identification of all eight pangolin species and outline practical strategies for sampling large-volume pangolin scale seizures through wildlife forensics. The paper can be found open access [here](#).


A close-up photograph of a pangolin resting on the forest floor. The pangolin's body is covered in overlapping, scaly plates, and its long, pointed snout is visible. The background is a blurred forest floor with twigs, leaves, and moss. A white circular graphic with a thin black border is overlaid in the upper left corner, containing the text "Photo of the month".

Photo of the
month



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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