



# The Jungle Times

Issue 29: June 2011

Independent Newsletter of Danau Girang Field Centre, Established 2008

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

**2 & 3 – First crocodile tagging in Borneo!**

**4 – This month's visitors**

**5 & 6 – Miami University returns**

**7 & 8 – Borneo Carnivore Symposium**

**9 – Photo Album**



*Crocodile tagging on pages 2 and 3*



*Visitors in June on page 4*



*Miami field courses on pages 5 and 6*



*Borneo Carnivore Symposium on pages 7 and 8*



# DGFC does the first Crocodile tagging in Borneo!

On the 18<sup>th</sup> June, the Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) and Danau Girang Field Centre (DGFC) fitted a satellite tag on a saltwater crocodile in the Kinabatangan, an effort to monitor its movements to ensure its further survival following the changing landscape emerging from plantations.

SWD director Dr Laurentius Ambu said the tagging of this four-metre long male crocodile named 'Girang', was the first of such initiatives in Borneo, and may possibly be the first in South-East Asia.

"It was carried out in the vicinity of the Field Centre with the assistance of the Sabah Wildlife Rescue Unit," said Ambu.

"Following the Human-Crocodile Conflict Conference that was held in Kota Kinabalu in June 2010, SWD expressed a desire to carry out scientific work on the primary cause for the rising levels of conflict being experienced in Sabah large rivers," added Ambu.



From top left clockwise; the crocodile, called Girang in the cage being prepared for being moved up the beach; Girang being moved up the beach to shade; DGFC staff Samsir assisting WRU staff; attaching the satellite collar between Girang's scutes.





“The tagging of a saltwater crocodile with a satellite device, is the start of a long-term research and conservation programme initiated by our Department and the DGFC,” added Ambu.

DGFC director Dr Benoit Goossens, who is also leader of the Kinabatangan Crocodile Programme, explained that plantations caused a considerable decrease in the overall amounts of prey available especially to large individuals.

“This situation makes for a far more dangerous environment. The realization of this is that attack rates found near plantations are extremely high compared to those of forested areas,” said Goossens.

“By tagging large crocodiles in plantation areas and in forested areas, and especially males which are potential man-eaters, we will try to understand and monitor the movements of these large predators,” added Goossens.

“It is hoped that the results will help in providing guidelines for plantation workers and local villagers, in order to reduce fatal attacks and contribute to the protection of this very important species for ecosystem health and tourism,” concluded Goossens.





# Visitors of the month



**Paul Crump**, an amphibian researcher who works for Houston Zoo's conservation department, came to do a recce of DGFC as part of DGFC and HUTAN's biodiversity plan for Kinabatangan. Paul graduated from Cardiff University about 6 years ago. Joining Paul was **Rachel Rommel**, colleague from Houston Zoo searching for suitable habitat sites of turtles. She was lucky enough to see the Malayan box turtle in her stay and has asked staff and volunteers of DGFC to send her GPS locations of each turtle seen.



**Dr. Pippa Moore**, a Lecturer in Aquatic Biology from Aberystwyth University, spent two nights at DGFC to look at its potential for hosting Freshwater Biology field courses from the University. She completed a PhD in Marine Biology and Coastal Ecology at Plymouth University and has particular interest in shallow-water marine system structure and function.



**Chris Gwilliams**, a PhD student studying Computer Science at Cardiff University, spent 10 days at DGFC to become involved in the camera trapping project and attempting to increase the efficiency of future projects using camera traps. He proposes to create a network system with a range large enough to incorporate all the cameras in a survey. With this achieved, photo images could be sent directly from the cameras to a computer system back at DGFC and therefore reducing the work load for researchers.

**Rosemary Sigger** - Master's student from University of York is studying primates' use of Oil Palm Plantations surrounding DGFC. For the next two months she will be recording eating patterns, ranging and other behavioural features.



# Miami University returns for their Global Field Program

For the last 2 weeks in June, 2 groups of 20/21 students from the Global Field Program (GFP) visited DGFC for a field expedition focusing on Primate Conservation. The GFP brings Master's degree candidates, scientists, educators, community leaders, and others together at conservation hotspots in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Because the GFP combines summer field courses worldwide with web learning communities, this Master's degree can be completed part-time from anywhere in the US or abroad. Applicants elect to enrol in either a Master of Arts and Teaching (MAT) or a Master of Arts (MA) degree from Miami University, Ohio.

This program builds on the graduate courses and environmental partnerships of Earth Expeditions and the NSF funded Wild Research. Earth Expeditions is a global conservation and education program supporting university courses, degree programs, and collaborative projects in Africa, Asia and the Americas.

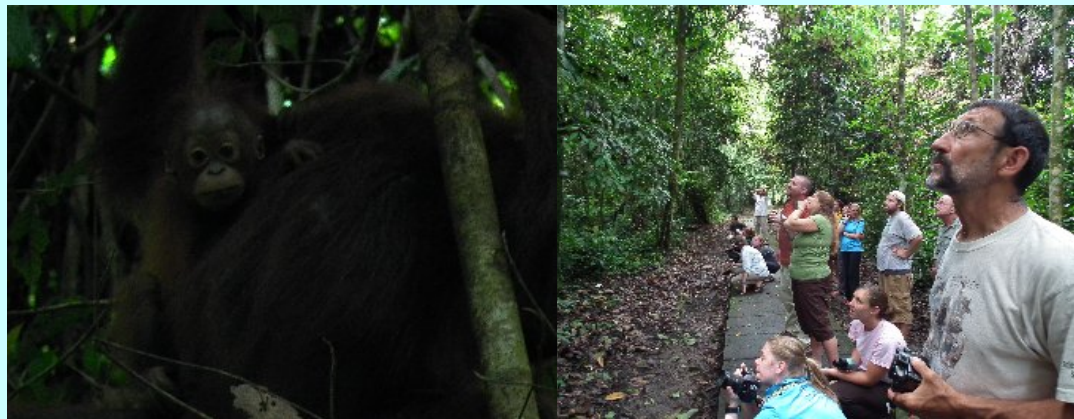




Through Field and Zoo Expedition courses, their mission is to build an alliance of individuals with firsthand knowledge of inquiry-driven, community-based learning for the benefit of ecological communities, student achievement, and global understanding.

Dr Jose Pareja from Miami University, together with Jill Korach, led the first group of students and said at the end of the expedition: " I just wanted to say thank you for allowing us to be and use Danau Girang as a base for our classes this year. Everyone at DGFC was wonderful and they all really went out of their ways to help us have a successful class. Mark was great, the folks helping in the daily operations of the station were great – especially the boat drivers and Budin. Danica, Sarah, Luke, Rob, Rodi and Rose were also great. I know our students enjoyed their research presentations and were really appreciative of their work in conservation and wrote some nice reflections in their journals about their experiences with them".

*'Such an amazing experience! Thanks for the incredible wildlife, and very warm hospitality. We'll be back' – Jenny Mears, Miami Field course*





# 1st Borneo Carnivore Symposium: Road Towards Conservation Action Plans

From the 18th to the 24th June, the Sabah Wildlife Department together with the Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research, the IUCN/SSC Small Carnivore Specialist Group, the IUCN/SSC Otter Specialist Group and the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group organised the 1st Borneo Carnivore Symposium in Kota Kinabalu. The organisers of the symposium were hoping to collate the necessary scientific evidence for little known species that is essential for conservation and immediately transfer that knowledge to those actively involved in implementing conservation of wildlife and the habitats they live in. They were also expecting two outcomes:

(1) important feedback from conservation practitioners to the research community on the kind of evidence required for conservation; (2) a first step to a coordinated effort to develop integrated species conservation management plans for an entire guild for





a region, which both considers and yet transcends state and international boundaries. The symposium saw almost 200 delegates from 15 countries following presentations and participating in discussions on the 24 species of carnivores found in Borneo including cats such as the Sunda clouded leopard and flat-headed cat; civets such as the Malay civet and common-palm civet, and three species of

otters. Three members of Danau Girang Field Centre attended the symposium, Benoit Goossens who gave a presentation on conservation genetics of carnivores, Nurzhafarina Othman (who also acted as the master of ceremony) and Lucy Peter, our Conservation Planning Officer.



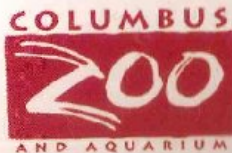
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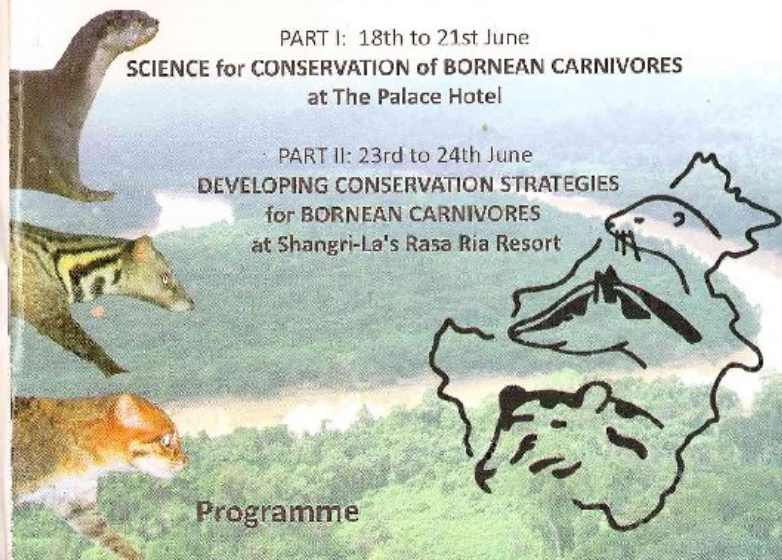


## 1st BORNEO CARNIVORE SYMPOSIUM

ROAD TOWARDS CONSERVATION ACTION PLANS  
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia  
18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> June 2011

PART I: 18th to 21st June  
SCIENCE for CONSERVATION of BORNEAN CARNIVORES  
at The Palace Hotel

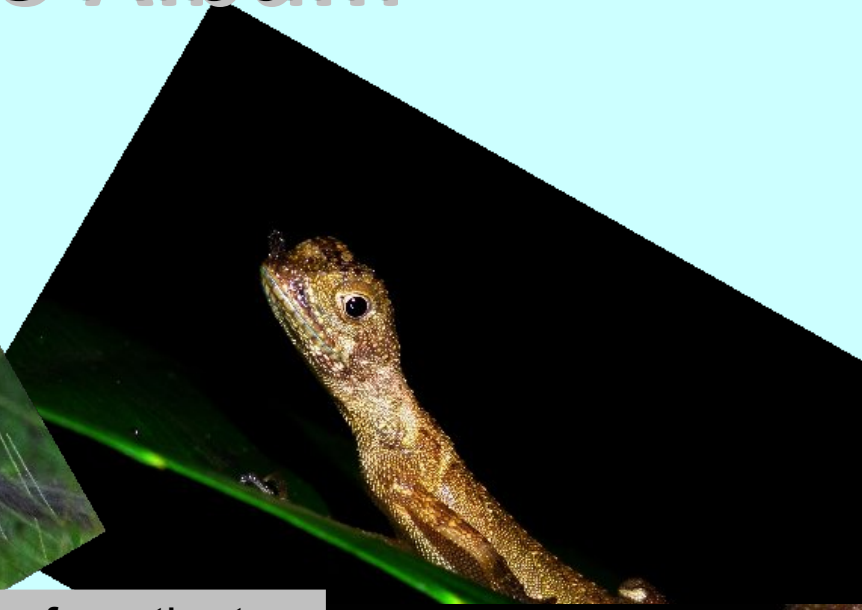
PART II: 23rd to 24th June  
DEVELOPING CONSERVATION STRATEGIES  
for BORNEAN CARNIVORES  
at Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort



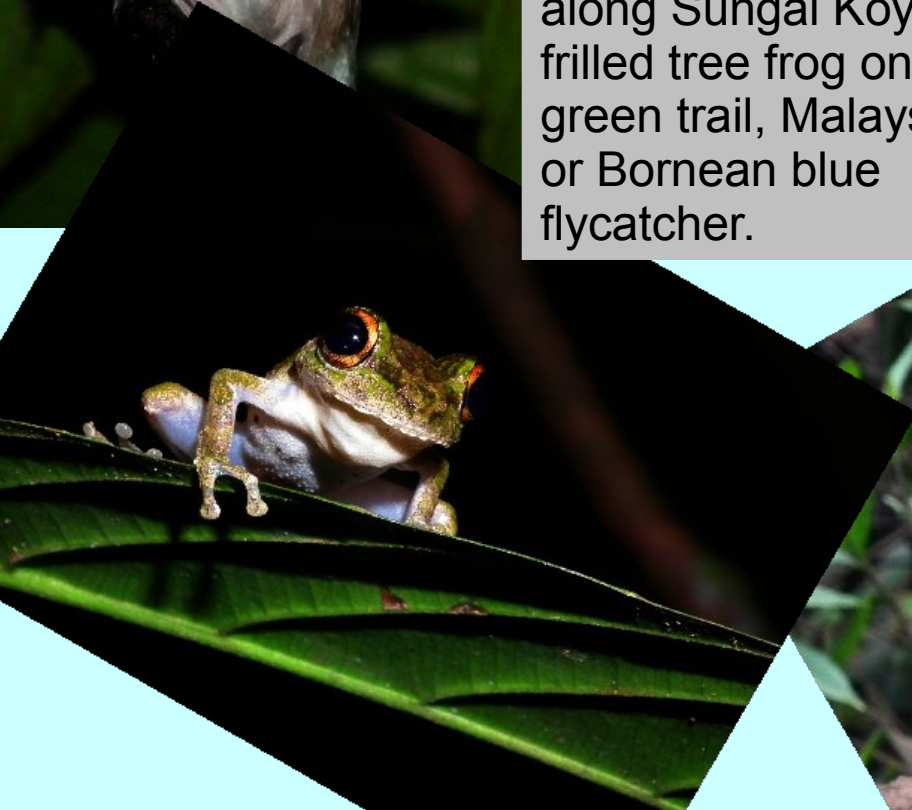
Programme



# Photo Album



Clockwise from the top left; long tailed macaque eating grass seeds outside the main building, proud looking dragon lizard, prosobranch snail – normally found in marine habitats..., stork billed kingfisher along Sungai Koyah, frilled tree frog on green trail, Malaysian or Bornean blue flycatcher.





*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.*

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