



The Jungle Times

Issue 31: August 2011

Independent Newsletter of Danau Girang Field Centre, Established
2008

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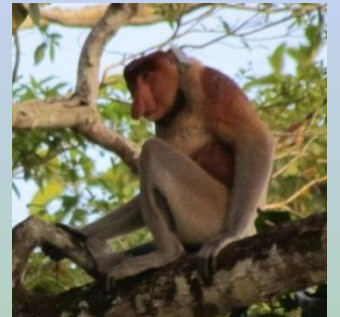
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This month's guests....



Alex Cameron and Daniel Kelly – Aberystwyth University

“ We have been given the opportunity to travel to DGFC in order to experience life in the Bornean jungle and learn new skills related to our Zoology degrees. We are hoping to establish a link between Aberystwyth and DGFC so that future students may come here to benefit from the research that is being undertaken.”

**Kathrin Röper - Institute of Zoology,
University of Veterinary Medicine, Hannover,
Germany**

“ My first visit to lovely DGFC was in 2010 . This time I’m back for three months to study Proboscis Monkeys, to gain insight into the topic of sexual selection. The first month has already passed so quickly and I’m really enjoying my time here.”



**Jennifer Brunke, University of Veterinary
Medicine Hannover, Germany**

“ I am really happy to be back at DGFC!!! I already had the pleasure of visiting last year, studying the behaviour of tree shrews. I am back again looking at the effects of habitat fragmentation on the diversity of small mammals along the Kinabatangan.”

DGFC becomes home to three new PTY students!

This month saw the arrival of three new PTY students from Cardiff University. Alice Miles, Rebecca Lawrence and Josie Jackson will be helping out at DGFC and carrying out their own project for one year as part of their undergraduate Zoology degrees.



For the next year at DG I will be taking over the nocturnal primate project. This will involve following Krik the slow loris and hopefully, Western Tarsiers. I'm excited to get started as there is not much known about either of these animals and it will be interesting to see what I find over the next 12 months. It's a great opportunity to be here and I'm sure it will be an unforgettable experience. *Alice Miles*



During my stay at DG I'll be expanding on the camera trapping project started by the previous PTY students. It's an exciting opportunity for me and I'm really lucky to be able to work on a project like this as an undergraduate. I've already seen and done so many new things since I arrived at DG and I'm looking forward to spending the next year here. *Becky Lawrence*



I am ecstatic about being back at DG for a whole year! During my PTY I will be collecting data for a Wildlife Monitoring Program along the Kinabatangan River. I hope to be able to compare different types of forest to find out the effect of forest disturbances on amphibian, reptile and small mammal populations. I am looking forward to seeing the incredible wildlife (lots and lots of frogs!), improving my photography skills and sharing many experiences with Becky and Alice! *Josie Jackson*

Cornwall College visit DGFC

Six students from Cornwall College came to stay for a two week field course, accompanied by lecturers Andrew Smart and Hazel Selley.



During their stay, the group gained experience in a range of field techniques. Activities included : Studying local aquatic ecosystems, bird surveys, small mammal trapping, radio telemetry, and nocturnal frog surveys. They also went on day trips to the famous Gomantong caves and Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary.



Students described their visit as 'an experience of a lifetime'. We wish everyone the best of luck with their future studies and hope to welcome them back next year.

The Second Proboscis Monkey Collaring

On the 10th August a team consisting of DG staff and the Wildlife Rescue Unit successfully collared a second proboscis monkey. Once they found a suitable male, they managed to dart him and take a variety of samples for genetic analysis and to check for parasites. They also took measurements and of course fitted the collar.

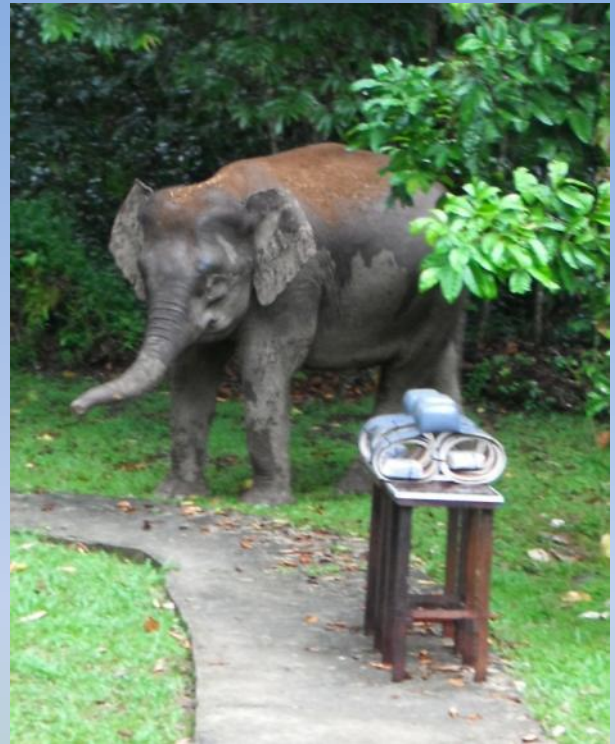
The next morning, the proboscis was released in the same place he was captured. GPS points started coming in on the same day, showing that he was moving. On the following day he was sighted about 1km away, still wearing his collar and back amongst his group. His group consists of 6 females with infants, 2 females without infants and 1 juvenile.



Danica Stark has been checking up regularly on the now named Tuah (meaning 'Lucky' in Malay) and tracking his movements. He seems to be covering a stretch of 4.5 km and rarely returns to the same sleeping sites. Points continue to come in and his movements will be followed until the collar drops off after 52 weeks.

Elephants are back after a year!

As well as the many human guests that have visited this month, the elephants popped by DGFC whilst making their way up river! It was a bit of a shock to Kathrin, who peered out of the window only to find five elephants walking past. We watched them feeding right outside the main building before casually strolling up the path towards the river, joining an estimated 50 individuals at the jetty. It was truly an incredible experience and a fantastic welcome to the field centre for the new PTY students as this is the first time the elephants have been seen in the vicinity for a year.



Above: an elephant poses with satellite collars!



For updates on the movements of the collared elephants, Aqeela and Liun, check out our Facebook page

Meanwhile in Tabin....

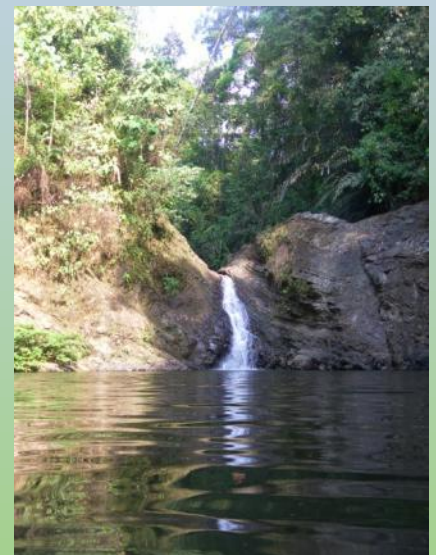


One of our new PTY students, Becky Lawrence, was invited to Tabin Wildlife Reserve with Penny Gardner and her field assistants (Pictured above). Penny is a PhD student from Cardiff university, studying wild Banteng populations in Sabah. Here, Becky tells us all about her time away :

“I was lucky enough to spend a week helping Penny and her team to set up a new camera trapping grid . It was really hard work but we also had a lot of fun. We spent 3 days camping in the forest, trekking for at least 8km a day and clearing our way through the undergrowth with parangs as we walked. It felt like a real jungle adventure!

It was my first real taste of camping in the field and I loved every second of it. Highlights included: being surrounded by fireflies at night, watching tortoises, swimming in a waterfall, going on a night drive on one of our evenings off and learning a bit more Malay from the field assistants.

It was a really good opportunity for me to gain some hands on experience. I’m lucky to be able to learn from other researchers and I’m grateful to Penny and her team for taking the time to help me.”



BBC film crew visit...



Among the new arrivals this month were producer Gillian Taylor and award winning camera man and director Alistair McEwan, from the BBC Natural History Department, both of whom have worked on a huge range of documentaries from 'Planet Earth' to 'An Animal's Guide to Britain.'

For their current project, the pair came to Sabah in search of Bornean elephants. Their visit was timed to perfection, with the elephants welcoming the film crew at the jetty! The film crew stayed at DG for one week and we were lucky enough to join them on some of their trips out. We enjoyed listening to Alistair and Gillian's incredible stories about filming throughout the world. We wish them safe travels and good luck in successfully filming the rest of the content for the 4-part series, which will hopefully be aired on the BBC next Spring.



"My most memorable experience has to be when we turned up and the place was totally surrounded by elephants. We were filming at the jetty and the elephants were trying to join us, they were amazing." – Gillian Taylor



Steven talks orangutans

One of our guests this month was Steven Gregory, from the University of Adelaide. We asked him a few questions about his trip:

What brings you to DG? I'm working with DGFC, the Sabah Wildlife Department and Hutan, on orangutan population modelling. I want to investigate how global change might affect Sabah's orangutan populations.

In your opinion, what's the biggest impact on orang-utan populations? Deforestation. There are two forms – logging for timber and forest conversion, for example oil palm, but this has slowed in Sabah in recent years.

What is your most memorable experience here? The people and the place. Everyone is very welcoming and knowledgeable. I hope to be back in Sabah soon when I complete the project.



Steven wrote a blog entry about his trip to Sabah. It makes a great read so why not check it out at : <http://conservationbytes.com/2011/08/23/hairy-red-cousins/#more-6114>

Conservation Corner: Bornean Elephant

Welcome to the new Conservation Corner! Each month we'll be highlighting conservation issues for some of Sabah's most threatened species. This month we focus on the Bornean elephant.

Scientific name: *Elephas maximus borneensis*

Habitat: Forested areas of southern, eastern and central Sabah

Wild population: Estimated 2000+ in Borneo, 250+ in the lower Kinabatangan

Conservation Status: Endangered



Conservation issues:

Bornean elephants have only recently been recognised as a genetically distinct sub-species of the Asian Elephant. Unfortunately, these elephants face many threats in the wild, most of which are human driven. These include:

- The biggest threats are habitat degradation and loss due to land use changes, including logging and plantations.
- Elephants can be destructive and are often seen as pests. Many elephants are harmed or killed for this reason.

Why does it matter ?

The Bornean elephants are very charismatic animals, but they are also keystone species. By protecting these elephants we are also helping to conserve other species which inhabit the same areas.

Future directions

Elephant collaring projects have been undertaken by staff and researchers at DG, in conjunction with the Sabah Wildlife Department . The information collected will help to inform future forest management and government legislation. For more information on this and other conservation projects taking place at the field centre, take a look at the Danau Girang facebook page.

Farewells...

This month we said goodbye to Rose and Bethan. We wish them luck in their future studies and hope to see them at DGFC sometime in the future.

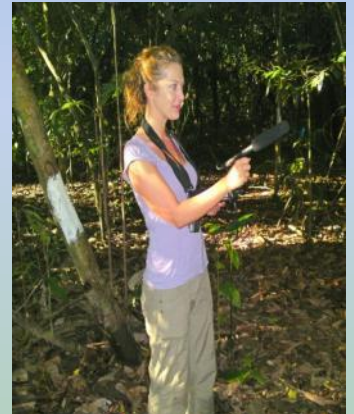


Rose Sigger

Rose returned home after 2 months at DG. She was conducting primate surveys in the area as part of her Masters project at the University of York.

Bethan McCarthy

Bethan arrived with the Cornwall field course, and stayed for a month to collect bird vocalisation data for her dissertation project. She also set up prototype rain traps for a project to be undertaken by researchers from Cornwall university in the future.



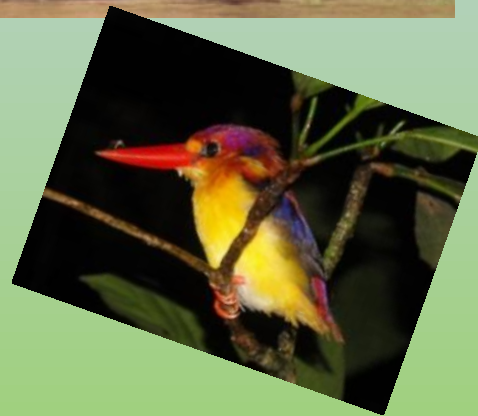
Quiz!

- Is the Bornean rainforest older or younger than the Amazon?
- Mount Kinabalu is the smallest mountain in South-East Asia. True or False?
- What is Sabah also known as, “the Land Below the” Is it sun, rain or wind?
- Borneo is the third largest island in the world. True or false?
- How many previous names has Kota Kinabalu had?

Answers on the next page!

Photo Album

Here are a few of our best photos from this month. Clockwise from left: Great egret; A close encounter with a big spider; White-crowned shama; Krik, the radio collared slow loris; Mother and calf crossing the Kinabatangan river; Oriental dwarf kingfisher; Harlequin tree frog; Chestnut-necklaced hill partridge; Girang, the satellite collared salt water crocodile!



Quiz answers :
 Older by 70 million years
 False -it is the tallest mountain in South East Asia standing at 4,101 m high.
 Wind because it is situated beneath the typhoon and monsoon belt
 True!
 4 = Deasoka, Singgah Mata, Api-Api, and Jesselton. Its current name was changed in 1967

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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The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Cardiff University.

