



The Jungle Times

Issue 33: October 2011

Independent Newsletter of Danau Girang Field Centre, Established
2008

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This Month's Guests....

It has been a busy few weeks here at DG and we've seen many faces come and go. This month's guests included:

Lyndsey Stanton – Houston zoo



“I have had such a great experience so far at DGFC. I have helped with many different projects and have learned so much. I love seeing all the animals of the jungle and have grown to love everything about the field centre (even the cold showers and crazy hornbills).

I want to be like Danica and stay forever!”

Check out Lyndsey's blog entry at :

<http://houstonzooblogs.org/wildconservation/2011/10/a-message-from-a-houston-zoo-intern-in-borneo/>

Diana Marsilio

Diana studied her masters with resident primatologist, Danica Stark. The two were able to catch up when Diana decided to visit DG to gain some field experience

Niall McCann – PhD student at Cardiff university

Niall and his girlfriend Rachel popped by for a couple of days after attending a Tapir conference in Kuala Lumpur .

This Month's Guests....

Yayasan Sabah group



20 staff from the Imbak Canyon Reserve dropped by for a night, on the last leg of their Sabah-wide tour. In 2009 the Imbak Canyon was granted class 1 forest reserve protection status by the Sabah state government and is now managed by Yayasan Sabah. Staff from the reserve visited various field and visitor centres throughout Sabah, in a collaborative effort to exchange ideas and share experience. The visitors were given a presentation by Danica Stark on the day to day running of DG, followed by a question and answer session with our manager, Mark.

Chester Zoo group

Staff from Chester Zoo came to build the new orangutan bridges, with the assistance of the Ropeskills climbing team and DG staff. Check out page 10 for the full story ...

Elephant Collaring

Three Bornean elephants were fitted with satellite collars on 25 and 26 October 2011 in Lot 5 of the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary (LKWS) as part of a collaborative project between the Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD), the NGO HUTAN and the Danau Girang Field Centre (DGFC). This project is funded by the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund from the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, Elephant Family, Houston Zoo and Columbus Zoo.



Above: Wildlife Rescue Unit members (in black) and Benoit Goossens (in yellow), director of DGFC.



Above: Jibius Dausip preparing a syringe with anaesthetic.

Last week, members of the DGFC and the SWD's Wildlife Rescue Unit (WRU) re-collared one bull named Gading (he was first collared in July 2008) and collared two females named Putut (she has a very short tail) and Jasmin.

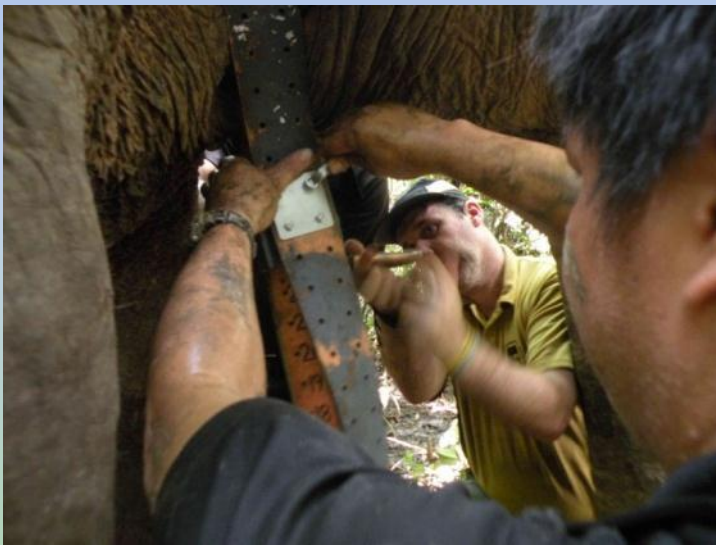


Above: Dr Benoit Goossens and Wildlife Rescue Unit's member taking measurements of Jasmin.



Above: Dr Diana Ramirez from Wildlife Rescue Unit treating a wound on Gading's trunk, probably caused by a fight with another bull.

We now have 5 different elephants (4 females and one male) fitted with a satellite collar and providing important information on the available suitable elephant habitat in the region, allowing the management authorities to prioritise crucial areas in order to rebuild landscape connectivity along the Kinabatangan river. Extensive agriculture through palm oil plantations has considerably reduced the habitat of the elephant in the Kinabatangan, therefore increasing human-elephant conflicts. The herd there, estimated at about 200 to 250 individuals, finds it difficult to move between flooded lands, swamps, fenced plantations, villages, and nature lodges. Moreover, uncontrolled tourism with sometimes up to 20 boats aligned along river banks, less than 5 meters from where the elephants graze, increases the pressure on the herd.



Pictures: Dr Benoit Goossens fixing the weight to the belt of the satellite collar together with members of the Wildlife Rescue Unit.

It is time that we act to re-establish quality habitat and provide space for the elephants in the Kinabatangan. The future launching of the Sabah Elephant Action Plan in January 2012, during a Sabah Wildlife Conservation Colloquium, that will be held in Kota Kinabalu, will hopefully give the tools to the government to properly manage the elephant populations in Sabah.



Left: Dr Diana Ramirez from Wildlife Rescue Unit taking a blood sample from Jasmin's ear.

Right: Members of the collaring team with Gading.



Left: Gading, fit with his new satellite collar, minutes before he wakes up.

A View From The Top...

Simon Amos and his climbing team, Steve Chapman, Unding Jami and Nazarius Domianus visited us this month to teach the group at DG how to climb. The day began with knot tying and when we knew them better than a boy scout, we set off to the canopy.



Simon Amos 'showing us the ropes' and the DG group practising their knots!

We took it in turns to prepare the canopy platform, whilst another person got strapped into the harness and started to climb the ladder. When we were confident with the set up, a new challenge was presented to us....



Above and right: Naz, Simon and Unding preparing the ropes for the canopy climb.



This time Simon and his team taught us how to climb without a ladder—quite handy seeing as, unfortunately, most trees in the forest do not come with ladders! The results from this task were as follows: some people are good at hauling themselves up rope, whilst others are good at providing entertainment for people on the ground.



Above: Josie attempting to climb and... well... giving everyone some laughs!

We all had a great time learning to climb trees and will be using these skills to check the camera traps on the orangutan bridges and taking field groups up in to the canopy.

Best piece of advice for the day: **Don't look down!**



Above: The group all in one piece after a successful day of climbing.

Right: The ladder leading up to the canopy platform.



Building Bridges!



DG in New Sabah Times (above) and Daily Express (right) 30th October 2011

The climbing team from Ropeskills were back again this month, this time with staff and volunteers from Chester Zoo. The team were helping to build new orangutan bridges along the Kinabatangan, together with the NGO HUTAN and the Sabah Wildlife Department. The aim is to help orangutans stranded in small forest fragments to cross the tributaries, providing a link between habitats.

It is estimated that 80% of Malaysia's wild orangutan population reside in Sabah, with 700 individuals living in the Lower Kinabatangan region. Unfortunately, logging in the area has removed many of the tall trees which orangutans use to cross rivers and move through the forest. Due to this, habitat fragmentation and genetic isolation now present a real danger to the orangutan population in this area. It is hoped that the bridges will go some way towards relieving this problem, along with better conservation of forest corridors.

Orangutan bridges have been built in the area before using Japanese hose pipes. Chester Zoo came on board to improve the design, using materials left over from their orangutan enclosures. The group were here for 3 days and managed to build and repair 4 bridges altogether, as well as helping to install new camera traps at one of the sites.

The first camera trapping images for the orangutan bridge at Takala will be viewed in a few days, so keep an eye out for updates on the DG facebook page!

Crocodile Conference

From 19 to 21 October, Benoit Goossens and Mark Rampangajouw attended the second International Crocodile Conference, "Human-Crocodile Coexistence: Win-Win Formula", in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Benoit presented a paper on the Sabah Crocodile Program and DGFC's crocodile satellite tracking project. Our work was really well received by the participants, especially by Brunei and Sarawak delegates. Fifteen recommendations were made by the conference participants:



Ben and Mark at the conference

Science: **1.** Develop standardized survey (monitoring) programs and comprehensive databases. **2.** Reassess all existing survey data and develop/modify survey program that allow population status and trends to be quantified. **3.** Identify, categorize and quantify all natural crocodile habitat. **4.** Develop strategy and management regimes for a down-listing proposal.

5. Ensure core funding availability from government for long-term monitoring and management whilst encouraging involvement by private sector. **6.** Enhance collaboration and information sharing between Brunei, Malaysia and Indonesia (Kalimantan) in the management of crocodile populations. **7.** Improve scientific skills and use of traditional knowledge of crocodiles through capacity building. **8.** Range states (Brunei and Malaysia) are encouraged to submit a proposal to downlist *C. porosus* to Appendix II, allowing for Brunei and Peninsular Malaysia to maintain a zero export quota for wild specimens.



Girang with his satellite collar



Hitam; another large resident of the Kinabatangan!

Conservation: **9.** Develop and implement education programs for primary, secondary, tertiary students on crocodile management. **10.** Develop standards and guidelines on safety practices in crocodile habitats. **11.** Cooperate with media on communicating crocodile conservation management program. **12.** Develop human capital in crocodile management through education, training and capacity building. **Business:** **13.** Establish a working group comprising of stakeholders to draft comprehensive business model. **14.** Ensure incentive driven crocodile business that benefit affected local communities. **15.** Formulate a legal and institutional framework to promote crocodile businesses through government driven programs

Conservation Corner: Storm stork

When a storm stork landed in a nearby tree in front of the main building, we soon learned that there are very few in this area and thought they were an appropriate candidate for conservation corner....

Scientific name: *Ciconia stormi*

Habitat: Southern Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia, Sumatra and Borneo.

Wild population: Estimated 250-500 individuals with a breeding population of 43 along the Lower Kinabatangan, Sabah

Conservation Status: Endangered (IUCN Red List)



Storm stork photographed this month at DGFC.

Conservation issues:

- Habitat degradation and fragmentation due to land use changes, including palm oil plantations and past fire damage.
- Increased development for transportation along river systems increases disturbance to the birds.
- Other minor anthropological threats such as trading and hunting contribute to their disturbance

Future directions:

The storm stork is legally protected in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand and does inhabit protected areas such as the Lower Kinabatangan. Thus further work is needed to establish new protected areas and to understand more of their habitat requirements, population and distribution.

Danau Girang In The Press!

This month DG has been featured quite a bit in the news, from orangutan bridges to elephant collaring, here are some of the headlines. To read more please visit our Facebook page!



See Hua Daily News, 31 October 2011



See Hua Daily News (Chinese), 30 October 2011



Daily Express, 31 October 2011



Borneo Post, 31 October 2011



New Sabah Times, 31 October 2011



New Sabah Times (Bahasa Malaysia), 30 October 2011

Conservation boost for pygmy elephants in Sabah

KOTA KINABALU: Efforts to establish forest corridors along the lower Kinabatangan region – where isolated groups of wildlife are under threat – have received a boost with the recent collaring of five Borneo pygmy elephants.

Wildlife researchers said the four female and one male pachyderm would provide researchers with crucial information on the available elephant habitat in the region.

Dr Benoit Goossens of the wildlife research unit, Danau Girang Field Centre, said: "Extensive agriculture through oil palm plantations has considerably reduced the habitat of elephants in Kinabatangan, increasing human-elephant conflict. The herd there, estimated at about 200 to 250, is having difficulty moving between flooded lands, swamps, planted plantations, villages and nature lodges," he said yesterday.

To complicate matters, Dr Goossens said uncontrolled tourism with up to 20 boats along riverbanks increased the pressure on the elephants when they drink from the river.

"It is time we act to re-establish quality habitat and provide space for the elephants in the Kinabatangan region," he added.

Three Bornean elephants were fitted with a satellite collar last week in the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary as part of a collaborative project between the Sabah Wildlife Department, the non-governmental organisation HUFAN and the centre.

The project was financed by the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, Elephant Family, Houston Zoo and Columbus Zoo.

Last week, members of the centre and the department's Wildlife Rescue Unit re-collared one bull named Gading (it was first collared in July 2008) and two females.

"We followed another bull for almost two hours when Gading showed up. He was our primary target and it took us another two hours to dart and collar him," said Jibus Dausip from the unit who led the collaring team.

Auf Wiedersehen!

After three months of proboscis monkey tracking and small mammal trapping, our German PhD students, Kathrin and Jenny have left DG to spend some time back in Germany.



We will miss them very much but hopefully, they will be back here where they belong in a few months!
Auf Wiedersehen!



Clockwise: Proboscis monkey; Kathrin; Jenny in the field with Samsir and Josie; Jenny

Spot The Difference!

Look carefully at the photos of Josie before and after frogging and try to spot the **5** differences!



- Answers:
1. Head torch changes down
 2. Headphones on/off
 3. Glasses on/off
 4. Frog missing
 5. Frog book upside down

Photos Of The Month



From left to right: DG group on Becky's 25th birthday; gibbon with baby; flatworm; colugo; harlequin tree frog; male elephant walks up DG path; Iken and Ika looking beautiful and two red leaf monkeys along the Kinabatangan!

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

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

