



The Jungle Times

Independent newsletter of:



Est. 2008

Issue: 95

Inside this issue:

Page 2: Visitors

Page 3: Goodbyes

Page 4: ScubaZoo TV at Danau Girang

Page 5: Modification of river meandering by tropical deforestation

Page 6: Fish Identification Training

Page 7: Python PhD Update

Page 8: Conservation Corner

Page 9: Camera Trap Conundrum

Page 10: Photos of the Month

Page 4



Page 6



Page 8

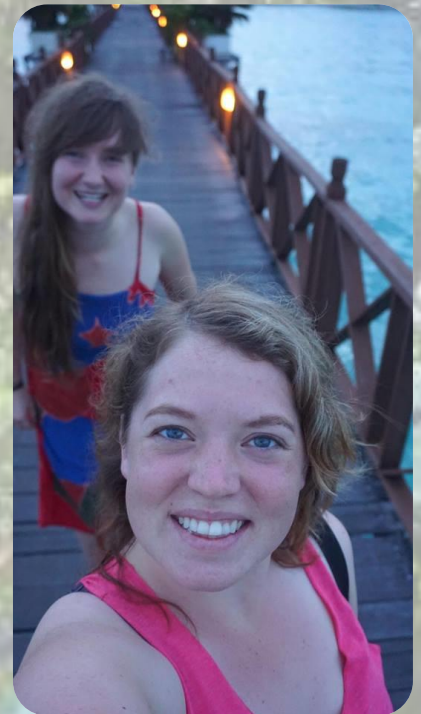


Find us on:
facebook®

Visitors

Mohan Sandhu spent 3 days with us alongside the ScubaZoo film crew. Based in Bristol, England, Mohan designs and builds frames and rigs for wildlife photographers and filmmakers. Mohan's stay at DG was for leisure instead of work, as he was extremely keen to see with his own eyes what actually goes on at the other end of the camera in wildlife documentaries!

Beth Dolmage, a close friend of DG's very own Masters student Kasia Majewski, spent 7 days in the jungle getting stuck in with all the activities DG has to offer. Her unquenchable thirst for adventure and knowledge, dedication, and talented singing voice made her an excellent companion to all the researchers. As a botanist herself, Beth also had much to offer and even more to discover about the incredible variety of plants and trees found in the rainforest



Michael Manalang, an employee from the Vancouver Aquarium and also a close friend of Kasia's, stayed with us for 7 days in order to assist her with the trapping and sampling of the fish species found in the Kinabatangan River.



Goodbyes



This month DG bid farewell to Oriana Bhasin, who has been with us since November conducting her field research for her Masters at the Université libre de Bruxelles. Working closely with PhD student Valentine Thiry on proboscis monkey feeding ecology,

Oriana's main aim was to determine the relationship between the endemic primates and the tree species *Nauclea orientalis*.

As a secondary objective of her project, Oriana set up camera traps in the *Nauclea* trees to identify any other species feeding on the fruit.

Despite the difficulties she faced, Oriana was very successful in her sampling, finding a number of other animals utilising the *Nauclea* trees, including other primates, bats, birds and even mouse deer!

We wish her all the best for the write up of her Masters thesis, and will miss her presence at DG, including the delicious Indian cuisine that she would often cook.



Scuba Zoo TV at Danau Girang

For two weeks at the beginning of this month, the Danau Girang team welcomed a group of film-makers from ScubaZoo TV (SZtv). Fronted by enigmatic presenter Aaron 'Bertie' Gekoski, this professional, hard-working team filmed tirelessly, following the various PhD, Masters and PTY projects.

The series, aptly named Borneo Jungle Diaries, intends to show day-to-day life of researchers at DG. During the short time the SZtv team were at Danau Girang, they filmed complete episodes on pangolins, arthropods and monitor lizards.

SZtv currently have a new show out, following the work of the Wildlife Rescue Unit, who work closely with Danau Girang. The show, entitled Borneo Wildlife Warriors, is available online at:

<http://www.scubazoo.tv/borneo-wildlife-warriors/>

We are greatly looking forward to seeing the results of the filming. The SZtv team will return to DG in late April for further filming.

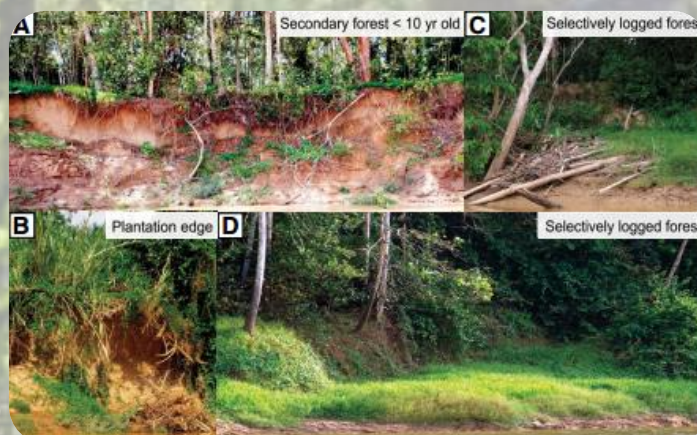


Modification of river meandering by tropical deforestation

A new paper, published in the March edition of *Geology* (Vol. 45, No. 4) documents the effects of habitat modification on erosion rates along select regions of the Kinabatangan River. Written by Alexander Horton as part of his PhD collaboration between Cardiff School of Biosciences, DGFC and Cardiff School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, the study utilised Landsat satellite imagery spanning 25 years (1989-2014) to estimate the increased rate of riverbank erosion by deforestation.

The paper estimates that river bank erosion rates were increased by >23%, due to over 50% of the river's floodplain forest and up to 30% of its riparian cover being removed by logging and oil palm encroachment.

This further highlights the need for riparian buffer zones along the Kinabatangan and other rivers across Sabah. Reestablishment of buffer zones and replantation of tree species are key to minimising river bank erosion.



An image from the paper, defining different areas of riparian habitat across the region of Kinabatangan that was sampled. (Horton *et al.* 2017)

Fish Identification Training

On the 19th and 20th of March, students from DG took part in a 2 day course run by Casey Wae from Forever Sabah. The course was aimed at educating students and the local community about the fish species found in Sabah, with additional training on sampling methods and sustainable fishing.

The first day mainly consisted of an overview of the freshwater fish found in Sabah and basic fish morphology. The students were taught how to carry out ichthyology field work, how to carry out inventory sampling, with focus on recording specimens and appropriate data recording.

On the second day, students were able to put theory into practice when they visited the freshwater lake at KOPEL to sample the microhabitats there. Using a variety of sampling methods, the group caught many different fish species, including a catfish endemic to Sabah!



Python PhD Update



On the 25th March, the team at DG, aided by the Wildlife Rescue Unit, successfully fitted a new python with a GPS tag.

The python, a 4.1m male, was found alongside Cahaya, a female who was also tagged. Cahaya's tag has now been removed after collecting 3 months worth of valuable data on the spatial ecology of reticulated pythons. Cahaya has now been successfully released into the forest around Danau Girang to continue life as one of the top predators in the forest.

The male python was given the Malay name Akar, due to the thick mass of tree roots in which he was found. Akar is now being monitored closely by PhD student Richard Burger before he will be released in early April.



CONSERVATION

ORNITHOLOGICAL



Rhinoceros hornbill

Buceros rhinoceros

Description: A large, arboreal bird with an awesome, protuberant and brightly-coloured casque on the top of its bill; the rhinoceros hornbill is found within primary and secondary forest regions below 1,400 m in the Sundaic lowlands of SE Asia. An interesting nesting behaviour of *B. rhinoceros* is that females remain in tree holes during the incubation process with the entrance sealed using mud, leaving only a small enough hole for food to be passed through by the male! A pair of rhinoceros hornbills is known to live in close proximity to the Danau Girang field centre.

Threats: Habitat loss to palm oil as well as poaching for food and feathers, used by locals to make hats. Logging reduces overall numbers due to their habit of returning to customary nest holes each year despite the forest disturbance by humans.

Conservation: Near threatened on the IUCN red list since 2004, last updated 2016.

Camera-trap Conundrum

Camera traps are an effective method of monitoring the presence of different wildlife species and populations. However, some animals can be too quick, or come too close to a camera for a clear photograph to be taken, which can leave researchers puzzling over what exactly they're looking at! Can you figure out what these camera traps saw out of the animals listed below?

Porcupine, Sun bear, Civet, Orangutan



Answers: Top left: Orangutan, Top right: Sun bear, Bottom left: Porcupine, Bottom right: Civet

Photos 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 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

Email: danaugirangfieldcentre@yahoo.com

*Editors: Jack Devlin, Angus Chaplin Rogers,
Toby Stock & Francis Roy*

Director of Publication: Benoit Goossens

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

