



# The Jungle Times

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## Welcome...

Firstly, happy new year! We hope everyone's year has started as well as it has here at DGFC!

This issue includes news about this month's guests, the satellite tagging of a crocodile and we say a sad goodbye to our Belgian; Valou!

Read on to find out more...

*Josie Alice Becky*



# This month's visitors



The Federer family, the owners of Walter Zoo in Switzerland, visited DGFC for 4 nights this month. They were very lucky with the weather and were able to do forest walks (seeing 4 orangutans!), climb the canopy platform and go on morning and night boat cruises.



This month we also welcomed Alice's sister Sophie and friend Rachel. Although it rained every day that they were here, they did have great timing as they were able to watch (from a safe distance!) the satellite tagging of the crocodile!

# Hello / Goodbye!

*This month we welcome Megan English to DGFC, where she will be staying for 3 months studying the elephants. However we sadly say goodbye to Valentine Thiry as her 3 months come to an end!*

**Megan** - I am conducting my PhD research here in Sabah on the Bornean elephant. I have been in Sabah for almost 18 months now looking specifically at the resource use and habitat quality of the population of 250 or so elephants in the Lower Kinabatangan. I will be spending three months at Danau Girang Field Centre tracking the radio-collared elephants and measuring the habitat variables at heavily and rarely used sites and also looking at feed selection and time spent feeding. In addition to improving our understanding of how these elephants utilise their environment at both a landscape scale and plant community scale, this study will also benefit understanding the needs of managing this herd in relation to the future building of wildlife corridors. This study will hopefully assist land deciders and conservation practitioners in designing corridor size, location and composition.



**Valou** - I stayed at DG for three months and I lived an unbelievable experience. I studied proboscis monkey behaviour along the riverbank every morning and late afternoon. I also collected their feces and looked at them through a microscope to find different eaten seed species.



The major part of my project was to analyse proboscis monkey sleeping trees and habitats. It was a very interesting project to create and I really liked that it always involved team work. Living and working in the jungle is the best experience I've ever had! It was not always easy (the swamp, boat surveys in the rain, mosquito bites), but this experience was very interesting and rewarding. I was very surprised by the diversity of animals and plants I saw during the three months and I had the amazing chance to see so many things; a crocodile satellite tagging, lots of primates, birds and a SUNBEAR!!

DG was lovely and a perfect place to stay, live and work, with such kind people and delicious Malaysian meals. I really loved studying the proboscis monkeys by boat surveys! I'm very sad to leave DG and I would like to thank all the staff and the students who helped me during my project and with whom I had a very good time. I have a lot of memories that I'll never forget!



# Satellite tagging of a crocodile

DGFC and Wildlife Rescue Unit satellite-tagged a 3.6 m male on the 27<sup>th</sup> January. It was named Lais (which means small fish in Bahasa Sungai, and it is the name of the small river where he was trapped, in front of DGFC jetty).



Clockwise from top left: camera trap pictures moments before the trap closed, removing Lais from the cage, Danica Stark and Benoit Goossens taking measurements, the Wildlife Rescue Unit and DG team after a successful tagging!

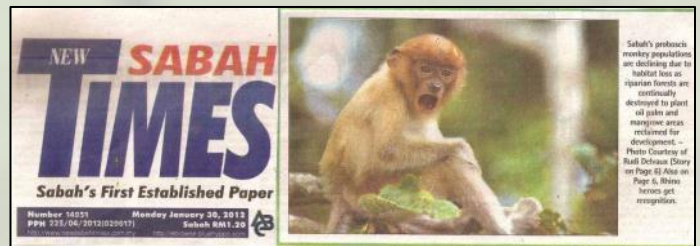




# In Other News...

On Monday 30 January 2012, the results of the PHVA carried out by Danica Stark on proboscis monkey populations in Sabah and Kalimantan (published in January 2012 in Endangered Species Research) were featured in 4 local newspapers, the Borneo Post, the Daily Express, the New Sabah Times and See Hua Daily News.

"We ran management scenarios to determine their influence on the declining population trends of three populations, two in Kalimantan and one in Sabah. The Sabah population was the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary (LKWS). The conservation strategies evaluated in our study were: (1) eliminating hunting; (2) eliminating fires; (3) eliminating deforestation; (4) reducing deforestation; (5) implementing reforestation programs and (6) reconnecting sub-populations. Our model used current population surveys and predicted a decrease of about 1,000 individuals within the next 50 years (about 20 individuals/year) in the LKWS and scenarios with the greatest improvement on each population were reconnecting the population through corridors in the LKWS." – Danica Stark.



# Sabah Wildlife Conservation Colloquium

Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> January conservationists and oil palm companies came together to attend the Sabah Wildlife Conservation Colloquium in Kota Kinabalu. The colloquium launched a 5 year action plan for three species; the Bornean elephant, orang utan and the Sumatran rhino. In order to ensure the survival of Sabah's wildlife, several actions were discussed, including strict enforcement against poaching, the creation of wildlife corridors to connect forest fragments and the prevention of more fragmentation. Recent research has shown that two of the states' flagship primates; proboscis monkeys and orang utans are declining drastically due to habitat fragmentation and poaching.



One solution to stop further declines, put forward by the Sabah Wildlife Department, is the creation of the Sabah Ecological Corridor. This forest linkage will bridge forest fragments along the Kinabatangan, through Batu Putih to Deramakot and is home to over 70% of the elephant, orang utan and rhino populations in the state.



The 280 colloquium participants also discussed a “zero tolerance” policy when it comes to killing wildlife. This policy prohibits killing and possession or disturbance of totally protected species. Though there were of course many divided opinions on the actions that must be done to protect our wildlife, both parties at the colloquium united for the common cause.

From Danica: The colloquium brought up some interesting topics regarding the balance between the palm oil industry and wildlife management. One of the main things that stood out for me was the importance in clarifying and enforcing the regulations regarding riverine reserves and the riparian management laws in Sabah.



Ben making his speech (left) and (right); a group picture of all speakers (second row) with front row being (from left to right): Dr Laurentius Ambu (Director SWD), Datuk Masidi Manjun (Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment, Sabah), Tan Sri Bernard Giluk Dompok (Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, Malaysia), Datuk Lee Yeow Chor (MPOC Chairman) and Tan Sri Datuk Dr Yusof Basiron (MPOC CEO)

# Conservation Corner: Sambar Deer



Scientific name: *Rusa unicolor*  
 Conservation status: Vulnerable  
 Population trend: Decreasing

The Sambar Deer is the **most widely spread** deer species in the world, covering many Asian countries. In Malaysian Borneo, this species occurs at extremely low densities in Sarawak, with slightly better populations in Sabah, for example in Danum Valley and Tabin Wildlife Reserve.

## Threats

The most serious threat to the Sambar deer is **hunting for meat**. The most common method is by gunfire and snare traps. Adult males are also sought after for their antlers which are used in traditional medicine and for trophy displays.

**Habitat encroachment** is a second threat, creating smaller forest patches, resulting in isolated Sambar deer populations. These smaller populations are therefore even more vulnerable **to local extinctions**.

*Pictures left to right: Male caught on one of our camera traps; female; female and juvenile caught on one of our camera traps*

## Conservation

The IUCN states that ‘implementing effective conservation interventions is of higher priority in the Southeast Asian region rather than anywhere else.’ These include: **Enforcement of legal protection** against hunters within protected areas.

The populations of Sambar deer must be **maintained** across a number of countries to **preserve genetic diversity**.

**Captive breeding** is being developed in East Kalimantan, where a captive herd of 223 individuals was created in 1998 as a pilot project. If successful, it may lead to key developments in the conservation of this species across its wide range.

# Spot the Difference!

Danica is conducting one of her primate surveys along the Kinabatangan river. Can you spot the **4** differences between the photos?!



Answers: 1. Binocular covers 2. GPS disappears 3. Compass appears 4. Closed book

# Pics of the Month!



Pictures left to right: Macaque stuck in the computer room, huge spider on a tree trunk, Tango our resident orangutan, misty morning on the Kinabatangan, green tree lizard, Iken welcomes Danica back after her Christmas break, very small snake resting on a leaf, Budin, Greater egret, breeding jade tree frogs, elephant, hooded pitta, Valou with a butterfly, Lesser mouse deer, Tuah- the collared proboscis monkey jumping and Becky collecting camera traps from the orangutan bridge!

## 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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