

JUNGLE TIMES

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SELAMAT HARI RAYA!

Hari Raya celebrates the end of Ramadan, the fasting month, the last week of which Chloe and Rachel spent in Sukau where preparations were well underway at the B&B and throughout the village.

Hari Raya at Danau Girang was a slightly different affair for those living here who would usually spend it with their families. For some it was their first Hari Raya celebrations and so they weren't sure quite what to expect.

Lunch was served as a traditional Mexican dish of cheesy nachos kindly prepared by Milena and her family. Chloe, Dave and Rachel then took to the kitchen in the afternoon in an attempt to create an

open-house style party. Cornflake cakes and cookies were available in Studio 1, fully decorated for the occasion, complete with failed toffee-apples. "Maybe we shouldn't have used so much water..." commented David Stanton as he stood back to admire chunks of



David Stanton displaying his unsuccessful cooking attempt.

apple on sticks, minus the toffee.

Asnih cooked a more traditional meal for everyone in the evening, which topped off an unusual but enjoyable Hari Raya.



Milena's parents enjoy a gathering in Danau Girang's Studio 1.

VISITORS FROM MEXICO!

Milena Salgado Lynn has been at Danau Girang studying proboscis monkeys this year. At the beginning of the month her parents and friend Consuelo Cardenas Montoya came to visit her at Danau Girang Field Centre.

They were greeted at the jetty by the PTY students and children, Amoi and Apoi, playing what they hoped would be a Mexican welcome to the jungle on the guitar. Unfortunately it was later discovered that



Milena's family enjoy the Hari Raya celebrations

their musical offering was in fact from Spain, but the thought was there.

Whilst at Danau Girang, they had the chance to explore the forest, travel on the Kinabatangan River and join

in the Hari Raya festivities which included a Mexican meal at lunchtime. Everyone managed to communicate surprisingly well, thanks to Milena who had the hardest job of all - translating from Spanish to English to Malay and back again!

"Es maravilloso lo que han hecho!" - Ma. Magdalena Lynn Ochoa

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IN OTHER NEWS...

- The PTY Students continue to analyse data from KOCP and become very familiar with Microsoft Excel.
- Monkeys attempt another hostel invasion, but were this time unsuccessful.
- Chloe Parker made more cakes this month to celebrate visitor arrivals, departures, Hari Raya and weekends.

DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?

- "Smoking, drinking and cooking in the bed is forbidden."
- Notice from a hotel room in Laos

WELSH LOVE SPOONS PHOTO ALBUM

Creation of the traditional Welsh love spoon is a highly skilled act developed over hundreds of years.

The spoons are carved by men for their loved ones and can bear elaborate patterns on the handles as a demonstration of devotion to their partner.

For some reason, Dave decided to attempt carving a spoon using a perang at Danau Girang. Luckily for Dave, the spoon was left behind when he returned to Wales at the end of the month. Despite his best attempts, the finished product was far removed from the real thing (left), so it was probably just as well that it remains lost in the jungle.



Clockwise from top: Milena and Benoit at Hari Raya, a Giant Gecko, A large moth, troublesome goats at Batu Putih, Dave and his card house and Chloe in a tuk-tuk.



Jungle Jokes...

Q) Why did the monkey have to see a doctor?

A) Because his banana wasn't peeling very well.

Q) What do you call an angry elephant?

A) Sir!

Q) What do you call a monkey with eight legs?

A) A Spider Monkey.

Q) What do you call a panda at Danau Girang?

A) Lost.

Q) What sort of computer works best in the jungle?

A) An Apple Mac-acque.

Q) Why are Storm Storks so hard to find?

A) They're avoiding the authorities because they forgot to pay their hornbills...

SPECIES IN FOCUS - The Long Tailed Macaque

Common Name: Long-tailed Macaque

Species Name: *Macaca fascicularis*

Distribution: Found in many South-East Asian countries. Very common in the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary.

down from the tree branches for balance whilst sitting. The tails are much longer in comparison to those of their relatives the pig-tailed macaque, *Macaca nemestrina*, which can also be found in the Kinabatangan and are most likely to be confused for the long-tailed macaque.



Searching for food in the grass outside the field centre.



Long-tailed macaques are easily recognisable as they often travel in large groups and jump between trees whilst foraging. The long-tailed macaque has brown-grey fur, with a pale underside and tufty fur around the face. Juvenile macaques have black fur and are carried by their mothers under the body. Their grey tails often hang

Macaques are very good at locating food and have been known to cause problems at Danau Girang Field Centre by breaking into Zainal's house and raiding the hostel for Milo and milk powder. Although demonstrating a certain degree of intelligence, they still forgot to take a mug.

Long-tailed macaques travel in large groups, but solitary individuals can exist outside of these groups. The groups tend to have fewer males than females.



Clockwise: A macaque in a tree, A foraging macaque, Macaques resting on branches in the evening, A mother carrying a juvenile macaque—notice the black fur.

HOW TO: Survive a 23 hour bus journey from Hanoi, Vietnam to Vientiane, Laos. Nuggets of knowledge from the jungle...

There are many ways one might choose to spend 23 hours, but I sincerely doubt that it involves sitting on a smelly, cramped bus between an elderly Vietnamese man and a tractor engine with no notion of when you may next be stopping, or in fact whether you're even heading to the desired location.

If you ever happen to find yourself on such a bus, travelling from the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi to Vientiane in Laos, the following advice may be useful...

1. Avoid sitting at the back above the

engine. Your body temperature is likely to double during the course of the trip, and additional luggage, boxes and assorted sacks will undoubtedly be stacked around you at various stops.

2. Avoid sitting under a leak in the roof. If you are unlucky enough to find yourself positioned this way, moving to sit in the aisle is a sensible option.

3. Do not allow the co-driver to move to you to other seats throughout the journey. There is no reason for this other than for his amusement at 5am.

4. When reaching the border, find someone who speaks both your language

and Vietnamese. Have your papers and currency ready to purchase a visa, and be prepared to jump to the desk on hearing something that sounds like your surname, shouted by an angry-looking border official.

5. Eat like a Royal Marine—all you can, when you can. Who knows when you'll next stop.

6. Take a book. There's no chance of sleeping with people putting up hammocks above your head or trying to balance on chairs on top of boxes, on top of crates, in the aisle.

7. Have fun. Buses at home aren't even half as interesting!

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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.

AN ADVENTURE TO VIETNAM AND LAOS

Vietnam and Laos could never have been fully prepared for the arrival of three unorganised students from Danau Girang Field Centre.

We arrived in Kuala Lumpur two days before departing for Vietnam, still in need of entry visas and with absolutely no Vietnamese phrases to use on arrival. In our defence, it's a very tricky language and we came out with a similar level of understanding; nothing.

Technicalities aside, we had a brilliant trip and managed to get to the Cu Chi Tunnels where the Viet Cong hid underground from the American forces, Ha Long Bay where the limestone pinnacles form towering statues above the sea and even a Cao Dai Temple. Cao Daim is a mixture of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism and endemic to Vietnam, with 80% of the western province responsible for its creation following it.

Cuc Phuong National Park, in the north, is home to a

monkey sanctuary housing endangered langur and gibbon species with the intent of future release. Unfortunately the future for many of these species looks grim as hunting is still rife in many of the animals' last strongholds. In particular trouble is the Cat Ba langur, with only 60 estimated individuals remaining, and hunting still a large problem in the area. The animals seemed well looked after with a dedicated team of staff working to rehabilitate as many of the primates as possible.

The one thing about Vietnam that surprises every tourist is the number of motorbikes. The 40,000,000 motorbikes, one for every two residents, wind through the narrow streets of old-town Hanoi, up and down the country's long, open roads and through the chaotic streets of Ho Chi Minh City. Crossing the road is a case of walking confidently and praying you won't be hit. Having eyes open or closed is optional, it doesn't seem to matter in the slightest as the drivers somehow seem to swerve around you at the very last minute to avoid a collision!

Stepping out of the bustling cities of Vietnam into Laos PDR is like turning off your aircraft's engine and gliding along the beautiful



Ha Long Bay, Vietnam

mountainous skyline that makes up this intriguing nation. For a country that's always been in the wrong place at the wrong time throughout recent history, (which isn't something it has had a lot of control over), it's certainly been blessed with stunning countryside. Tragically, this perfect vision is laced with the knowledge that thousands of unexploded ordnances still pose a threat to the people of Laos.

We made our way up to the town of Vang Vieng, which thrives on its tourist industry built up around the Laos phenomenon of tubing—floating down a river on tractor tyres. It's a town that's managed to keep its charm despite the hoards of tourists in peak season, and like the rest of Laos, well worth venturing to if you ever have the opportunity!

For Dave, the trip was his last adventure with us before returning to Cardiff, and so we wish him the best of luck heading back to a cold, British winter!



The traveling trio with a friend, Ben, and his bike.