



# The Jungle Times

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# Visitors

## **Brent Loken**

Brent visited earlier this month for a few days. He is a Canadian PhD student and has set up his own NGO called Integrated Conservation in Wehea Forest Reserve, Kalimantan. See page 13 for our interview with the man himself!



## **Nicolas Gaidet**

We had a visit from French conservationist Nicolas who is looking to set up links with research groups in Malaysia to continue his work on the transmission dynamics of disease between wildlife. We were lucky enough to grab him for an interview- see for yourselves on page 10.

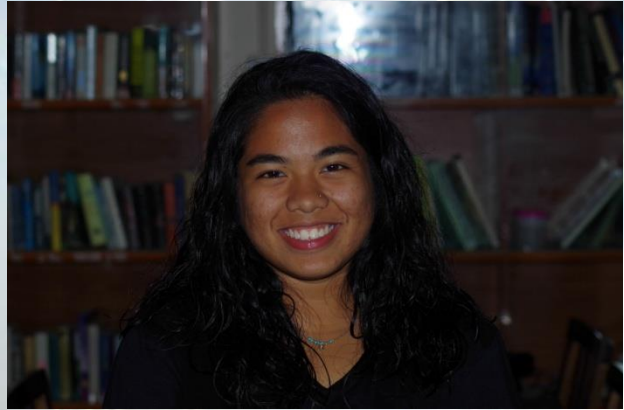
## **Sabah Police and Sabah Wildlife Department**

This month we had a brief visit from both the Sabah Police and Sabah Forestry Department to see how we are getting on. They spent a few hours talking to some of our students about their projects and their time in DGFC. This is strengthening our links with the local area and we hope to continue working with them in the future!



# New Arrivals!

New arrival **Adilla Jamaludin** has joined the centre for one month as a volunteer. She is currently assisting with all of the on-going projects and gaining experience on her gap year before commencing her future studies.



**Lisa Raeburn** has also joined the DGFC team as a volunteer. She will be with us for one month helping with the various projects currently operating. She is particularly interested in our orang-utans and is very active with the orang-utan habituation project, that has been established recently at the centre by Katie Grassle.



For the next 2 months wildlife veterinarian, **Dr Laura Benedict**, from the Wildlife Rescue Unit will be working with us whilst our resident vet Dr. Sergio Guerrero Sanchez enjoys a much needed holiday. Laura is making all the projects possible through the next two months!



# Goodbye Mel

**Melynda Cheok** has sadly left DGFC this month, where she had been working as a field assistant for 8 months. She was a key member of the team and had a large influence on projects involving elephants, nocturnal mammals and camera traps. Mel had initially joined DGFC as a volunteer and proved to be an effective member of the team. Her aid showed to be very beneficial which led to her staying with us for longer as one of our field assistants.



Mel has left to continue studies in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, where she is currently enrolled as a masters student. Mel will be involved in ecological studies using occupancy tests. We wish her all the best in her studies and hope to see her in the future!

# Small Mammal Update- Farewell Jenny!

It has come the time to say farewell to our German PhD student, Jenny Brunke. Jenny has been working at the centre for the last three years in 6-month periods to collect small mammal data. This year is her last trapping year and she will continue on to Cardiff University in 2014 to analyse the samples she has collected. The main aim of Jenny's project is:

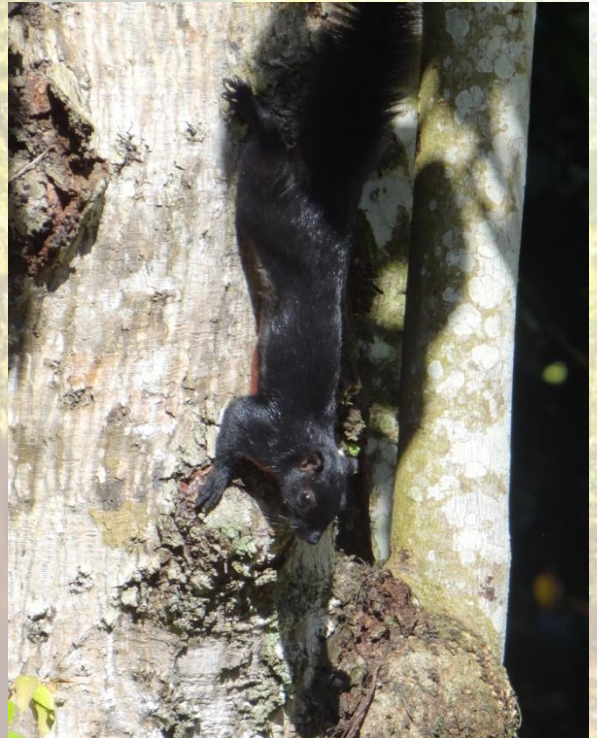
- To see if the fragmentation of the forest has an influence on the diversity, species abundance and populations of small mammals in forest fragments along the Kinabatangan river.



# Small Mammal Update- Farewell Jenny!

Jenny will be sorely missed by all at DGFC. She has become a regular face on all the projects during her days off from trapping and her final departure will hit all here at the centre, especially the children of our Malaysian staff who have become very attached to Jenny!

We wish her all the best in this last stage of her studies and we hope Jenny may one day return for a visit! Selamat Jalan Jenny!



# Small Carnivore Project

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November, another Malay civet, named 'Penat', was captured in the wildlife corridor in Lot 5. Penat is the Malay word for sleepy as he was very calm. The male weighed 4.5 kgs and was captured only 500 meters from where our first civet, Tenang, was trapped. Penat was successfully sampled and collared by PhD student Meg Harris and DGFC veterinarian Dr. Sergio Guerrero Sanchez.



Pictured is 'Penat' wearing his new satellite collar which records his movements for a predicted period of 5 months.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of November we also had our first common palm civet trapped! The subadult female weighed 1.4 kgs and was trapped in the wildlife corridor of Lot 5. As she had such a small size, she could not be collared. However, all samples and measurements could still be safely collected and recorded. We hope to see her again when she's a little bigger!

# Small Carnivore Project cont.

There was more great news for the small carnivore project on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November when a female Malay civet was successfully caught, sampled and fitted with a GPS collar. The female was a healthy adult which weighed 3.8 kg. She has been named 'Tajam', which means sharp in Malay. She was caught in the wildlife corridor of Lot 5 in the Lower Kinabatangan, which is only 500m upriver from Penat and 1km from Tenang, who are previously collared male Malay civets. This is very interesting as the home range of each collared civet may possibly overlap! The collaring was assisted by the help of newly joined wildlife veterinarian, Dr Laura Benedict, from the Wildlife Rescue Unit.



Picture of  
Tajem's  
sampling

A fourth Malay civet was also captured and sampled on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November in the 1<sup>st</sup> trap night of a new area. Weighing just 2.85kg she was the smallest Malay civet so far. She was not collared as there are already 3 collared animals in the area, but samples were successfully taken.

The small carnivore project is kindly funded by Houston Zoo and the Sime Darby Foundation.



# Awards

This month the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary won the Best Tourism Attraction award in the Nature Category at the Sabah Tourism Awards 2013!

The award also incorporated all stakeholders including Danau Girang Field Centre, HUTAN, WWF-Malaysia and the four Kinabatangan homestays (Batu Puteh, Bilit, Sukau and Abai).

Datuk Dr Laurentius Ambu, director of Sabah Wildlife Department, received the award from Datuk Masidi Manjun, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment at Magellan Sutera.



# Nicolas Gaidet Interview

## **Tell us about your scientific background and current research?**

I first started to work on wildlife conservation and management in South Africa, working on monitoring methods for large mammal populations in Zimbabwe. I did my PhD on population dynamics of wild ungulates. Seven years ago I started to work on ecology of wildlife diseases. I now work on diseases of wild birds and wild ungulates. For example there is a disease called “peste des petits ruminants” which affects sheep and goat. We don't know the role of wild ungulates in the transmission of the disease however there is a large continental programme in South Africa to control the disease.

## **What have been your main findings from your current research?**

We are working on the transmission dynamic of diseases with an ecological approach. Our current research is on the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1. We are studying the role of migratory birds in its transmission to domestic birds, using what we know about their ecology. For instance, reproduction will have an impact on the proportion of juvenile birds in the population which have not been in contact with the disease before. The way the bird moves can have an impact on how it comes in contact with domestic animals and the way it forages can have an impact on the way the animal can get in contact with the pathogen that is maintained in the environment. We are looking at the potential of the transfer of the pathogen by migratory birds and identifying when and where is the major risk of transmission. We found that it is the migration stopover sites where the exchange of the virus takes place and that there are only a few days a year for potential infection. We have concluded that migratory birds have the potential to spread the virus, however the risk is very low.

# Interview continued...

## **What is the main purpose of your visit to DGFC?**

We have a research network in Southeast Asia called GREASE. There are six core members: The Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and CIRAD, a French research institute. I came to Malaysia to look for potential collaboration with research groups to see if we can build a partnership.

## **What are your ideas for collaboration with DGFC?**

I wanted to spend a few days here to see the kind of research that you are doing. I am not sure yet which wildlife group or species we will work on. I think that it is relevant to look at the type of habitat and the impact that this has on the transmission of disease. For instance the forest corridor is surrounded by plantations and it would be interesting to look at the transmission of disease through wildlife between the two habitat types.

## **What have been your highlights at DGFC?**

I am really impressed by the infrastructure for working and living and that there are a lot of students working on different projects at the same time so they can interact, share experiences and find solutions together.

# Flora studies in Sabah

Recently our French students **Ariane** and **Marion** have been spending time with the HUTAN team in Sukau. They have been carrying out an on-going study which is made each year on the status of the secondary forest in the Kinabatangan region. Here they were studying ten botanic plots, being particularly interested in the diameter of each tree. The aim of their study is to understand the regeneration and evolution of the disturbed Kinabatangan secondary forest. The girls have also been working in others regions of Sabah to gain a wider perspective of the forest changes over a larger region.



Marion had this to tell us “ We would like to thank HUTAN and especially Markis for teaching us so much about the forest. There was always something interesting shown to us, being the smell of a bark or a new fruit to eat!”.

# Brent Loken Interview

## **Tell me about your scientific background?**

Originally I went overseas, taught at international schools and started a school in Taiwan. I came to Borneo and Wehea and fell in love, so I left my job as principle at the school in Taiwan and started a career in conservation biology with my NGO and PhD. My background is in environmental management, it's a multidisciplinary background with a focus on ecology, equally weighted on the social sciences and the ecological sciences. The ultimate question is how do we make conservation programmes that work? Why have some places failed? How can places be sustained? This drove me to get a PhD.

## **What is your PhD?**

I am fascinated in the impact of social networks and conservation, and where Facebook and Twitter campaigns have a result, and also in Elinor Ostroms' work, looking at what the variables are that yield sustainable outcomes. I am interested in looking at conservation projects such as Wehea and what factors are necessary to make a conservation project work. The common framework that I am using is Elinor Ostrom's common pool resource theory which looks at the ecological and social outcomes. I am trying to see if this theory can form a conservation project on the ground. I aim to look at small scale forces such as the animals and the large scale global forces such as oil palm companies and how to deal with both small scale and large scale forces to produce a conservation outcome. My PhD is therefore an action orientated thesis.

# Interview continued...

## **Tell me about the NGO that you have started?**

It is called Integrated Conservation and was founded in Wehea. The main idea of integrated conservation comes from Elinor Ostrom's common pool resource theory and the framework that she has developed which is the social ecological systems framework. This integrates economic development, social development, education, human development and research, and outreach. I am trying to integrate that into a holistic conservation programme. The sole focus right now is to help the Wehea Dayaks to protect their forest.

## **What are your future plans?**

There is a lifetime of research and work to do in Wehea to ensure the wellbeing of the forest. The two options are to expand the NGO and grow it into other places or stay focused on where we are now. However we are already starting to expand in East Kalimantan. The focus was in Wehea and now we are working with the logging companies that are bordering Wehea and other NGOs that are working in forests near Wehea. This area is the traditional land of the Wehea Dayak so if we are able to get all of the six villages together under a common conservation vision then we can start to connect the various stakeholders working in the area under a conservation plan. We also have an education centre called The Sun bear Education Centre run by Gabriella Frederickson so we are working with her and doing some education activities. The long term vision is to stay with integrated conservation and to develop it further.

# Tarsiers spotted!

The nocturnal primate project, focusing on the slow loris and tarsier has been a long ongoing venture here at the centre. It is headed by PhD student Danica Stark, and currently PTY Hannah Wilson is collecting data for her own project and to benefit the ongoing research into the two species.



Photography by Jenny Brunke

Hannah and Danica are hoping to collar more individuals to have a comparison with our current slow loris, Bos. In recent weeks several tarsiers have been sighted in area surrounding the field centre. A male slow loris has also been seen and we hope come January that we will be able to capture and collar one of each species. This will greatly benefit the project and will give a good comparison to Bos in how the two species utilise the area and how much home ranges may overlap and change in size.

# Monitor Lizards in DGFC

Our monitor lizard team have had success this last month as four out of the five collared lizards' data points have been obtained. Collared lizards have their GPS positions recorded every 3 hours so that we can better understand movement patterns and home range sizes. The new data points are very exciting to have since some individuals have been followed for 4 months now! The collars are likely to remain on the lizards for up to 6 months. Only individuals above 11 kgs can be collared although ones below still have samples and measurements taken for analysis of blood parasites and genetics.



Student and volunteer **Fabien Verniest** has recently been interviewing the local public for his project on monitor lizard perception. People working at the nearby oil palm plantation have so far completed 20 questionnaires and there have been 5 personal interviews with Fabien and Malay speakers of DGFC. More questionnaires will be completed to see whether the monitor lizard is perceived differently in different locations.



# Movember!

Members at DGFC have been participating in Movember this year! Movember is an annual, month-long event where men grow moustaches (or try to!) during the month of November in order to raise awareness for male health issues, such as prostate cancer and other male cancers.

Movember aims to increase early cancer detection, diagnosis and effective treatments, and ultimately reduce the number of preventable deaths.

Here are some of the moustache efforts made at DGFC:



# Conferences and meetings

Danau Girang Field Centre and Sabah Wildlife Department co-organised a Wild Animal Network Conference (WARN) this month. The purpose of WARN is to enhance the capabilities of East and South East Asian wildlife rescue centres to rescue and conserve wildlife, provide conservation awareness education for the public and advocate minimum standards for wildlife rescue centres. There are currently 11 countries involved in WARN.



Meaghan Harris giving her presentation in India .

PhD student Meaghan Harris has recently visited India for a week for the Asian Otter Conservation Meet, organised by the IUCN Otter Specialist Group. The meeting involved workshops and presentations on research methods and conservation planning and ended with a field trip to watch otters along the Cauvery river. Meg herself gave a very informative presentation on the Kinabatangan Small Carnivore Project which she is currently involved in with her PhD on Bornean civet and otter species.


# Other news...

PhD student Luke Evans has had success with his crocodiles this month. He has been searching for crocodile nests along the Kinabatangan. One has been discovered in a plantation, which is the first to be known of its kind. Luke has now set up a camera trap and is awaiting results, hoping the mother will return to the nest and we may be able to capture the emergence of the hatchlings.


We are pleased to announce that we are now advertising for the annual Primate Behaviour and Ecology field course which will take place in July/August 2014 . For all enquiries please contact [danicastark@gmail.com](mailto:danicastark@gmail.com)

Our very own Danica Stark is a co-author on a paper which has been published this month on Sunda clouded leopard's population ecology in Sabangau forest, Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Danica has also received news that she has completed her 2<sup>nd</sup> year of her PhD into Proboscis monkey spatial ecology- congratulations Danica!



Danau Girang Field Centre's  
3<sup>rd</sup> annual field course on:



**Primate Behaviour and Ecology**  
Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary,  
Sabah, Borneo

Foundations in primate ecology, primate behaviour, and field techniques.  
*Topics covered include:*

- Radio-tracking diurnal and nocturnal primates
- Constructing habitat and phenology profiles
- Behavioural sampling techniques
- Primate Census Techniques (River, forest transects, triangulation)
- Parasite Analysis
- Acoustics

**21 July – 3 August 2014**

For more information or to apply, contact  
[danicastark@gmail.com](mailto:danicastark@gmail.com)

# Conservation Corner:

## Hairy-nosed Otter

**Common name: Hairy-nosed Otter**

**Scientific name: *Lutra sumatrana***

**IUCN status: Endangered**



### **Ecology:**

The hairy-nosed otter is very rare in Sabah and has only been spotted on a few occasions. It is the rarest and least known species of otter occurring in South Asia, where it is endemic. The species is thought to have declined by up to 50% in the last 30 years. They prefer low-lying peat swamp forest, wetlands and mangroves, inhabiting both freshwater and marine areas. Food items consist of 85% fish and snakes. It is thought they breed in November-December with a gestation of around two months. They can be solitary or in groups of up to six individuals. Body characteristics include: fully webbed feet; short, rough, brown fur; nose entirely covered in hair.

### **Threats:**

- Habitat loss
- Intensive poaching
- Unavailable prey species

### **Conservation:**

- Listed on CITES Appendix II
- It is legally protected in all its range countries: Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sarawak and Sabah.

# Match the Malay

Can you match these animals to their Malay names?

Gecko



Moon rat



Python



Ular Sawa

Gajah

Cicak

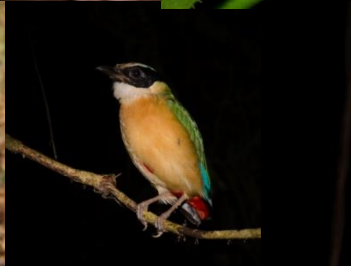
Ikan

Tikus Bulan

## Jungle Fact of the Month

A female bearded pig will build a large, deep nest out of foliage prior to giving birth!!!

# Photos of the Month!



Photos were taken by Baharudin B. Resake

## 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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