



The Jungle Times

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Inside this issue:

2. Arrivals and Visitors
3. Farewell Fabien
4. Clouded leopard trapped
5. Crocodile tagging
6. Itin: A Bornean Elephant
7. DGFC in the spotlight
8. Leiden field course
10. Leiden photo gallery
11. Orangutans on the ground
12. Slow Loris update
13. Sunbear update
14. Other news
15. Other news continued
16. Match the footprint
17. Conservation corner
18. Photos of the month

Page 5:

**Female
crocodile
tagging**



**Page 8 :
Leiden
field
course**

Page 11:

**Orangutans
on the
ground**

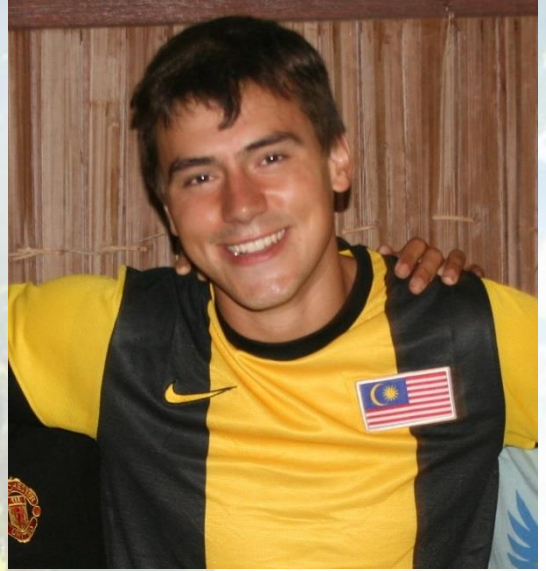


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Arrivals and Visitors

François Ciavatti

has returned to DG for another six months. He spent 5 months here last year working on home ranges of monitor lizards before he returned to France. Welcome back Paco!



WWF

Two WWF Malaysia representatives and 6 guests from Singapore spent an afternoon here at DG. They joined Hannah to find the slow loris' sleeping site and Meg Harris gave them a presentation about the current research at DGFC. We hope that they enjoyed their time here.



Farewell Fabien



On the 4th February we said a sad farewell to Fabien Verniest who had spent 5 months here at DG on an internship as part of his masters degree. He spent most of his time working with the monitor lizard project and carrying out a social study on the perception of monitor lizards by plantation workers and villagers. He also helped out with a number of other projects.

Fabien is now finishing his masters at Agrocampus Rennes in France.

Thanks for all your help and you will be sorely missed!

Clouded leopard trapped

On the 1st February a previously collared clouded leopard named Jack was recaptured in one of the traps here at DG. Jack was collared for the first time back in October 2013 and the collar has been sending PhD student Andrew Hearn crucial data points of his movements. This time the collar was replaced and a health check was conducted by Dr Diana Ramirez from DGFC and Wildlife Rescue Unit.



Jack was in great condition and the procedure went smoothly. Jack was reweighed and he was still a healthy weight of 25Kg.

Crocodile tagging

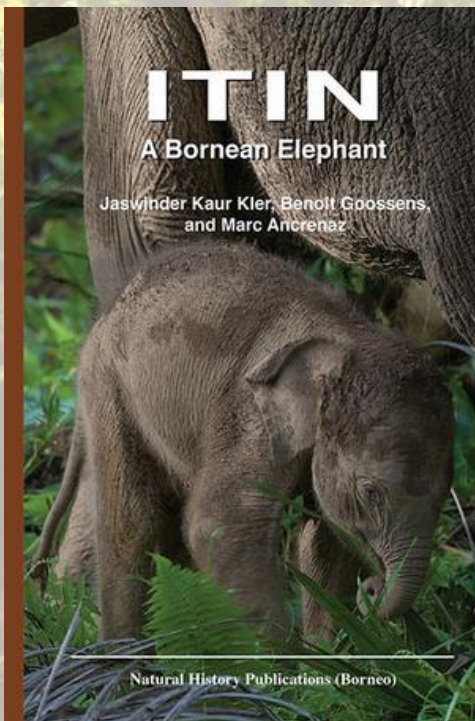


On the 6th of February a female crocodile of 3.96 m (The largest female collared yet) was trapped in the Kinabatangan river. PhD student Luke Evans along with the rescue unit sampled the crocodile named Zalim and fitted her with a satellite tag. This satellite tag will provide Luke with information on nesting behaviour and home range which he will use as part of his PhD project. Luke is now using satellite tags from the company e-obs. Luke's next task will be to track Zalim in order to download the data points.



Itin: A Bornean Elephant

The 11th February was an exciting day for Benoit Goossens, Jaswinder Kaur Kler and Marc Ancrenaz as it saw the launch of their book “Itin: A Bornean Elephant”.



This book is wonderfully written and is suitable for both adults and children. It tells a story about an eight year old Bornean elephant named Itin and his journey through life. It also provides readers with information about the Bornean elephant's ecology, behaviour and the threats that they face in this fragmented landscape. It is full of spectacular photographs of the Kinabatangan and its wildlife.

The book is available to order online at:

www.nhpborneo.com/book/itin-bornean-elephant/

Priced at 20 ringgit we have a feeling that this will be a best seller!

DGFC in the spotlight

The 6th February was an exciting day here at DGFC when we were visited by Simon Christopher, the CEO and founder of Scubazoo and camera man Damien. Scuba zoo is Southeast Asia's leading underwater filming and photography company and is based in Kota Kinabalu. They have filmed with and broadcasted on channels such as the BBC, National Geographic and Discovery channel.

Simon is planning to produce his own documentary based on the research carried out here at DGFC. During their visit they filmed a number of projects and researchers and they will use this footage to create a promotional video to generate funding for the project.



Leiden Field Course

On the 22nd of February we were joined by a group of students on a field course set up by Dr Menno Schilthuis from Leiden University in the Netherlands. The field course was made up of students from the Netherlands, Denmark, France and Malaysia. During the first week the students participated in a number of projects already running at DG as well as some additional workshops set up by the lecturers.



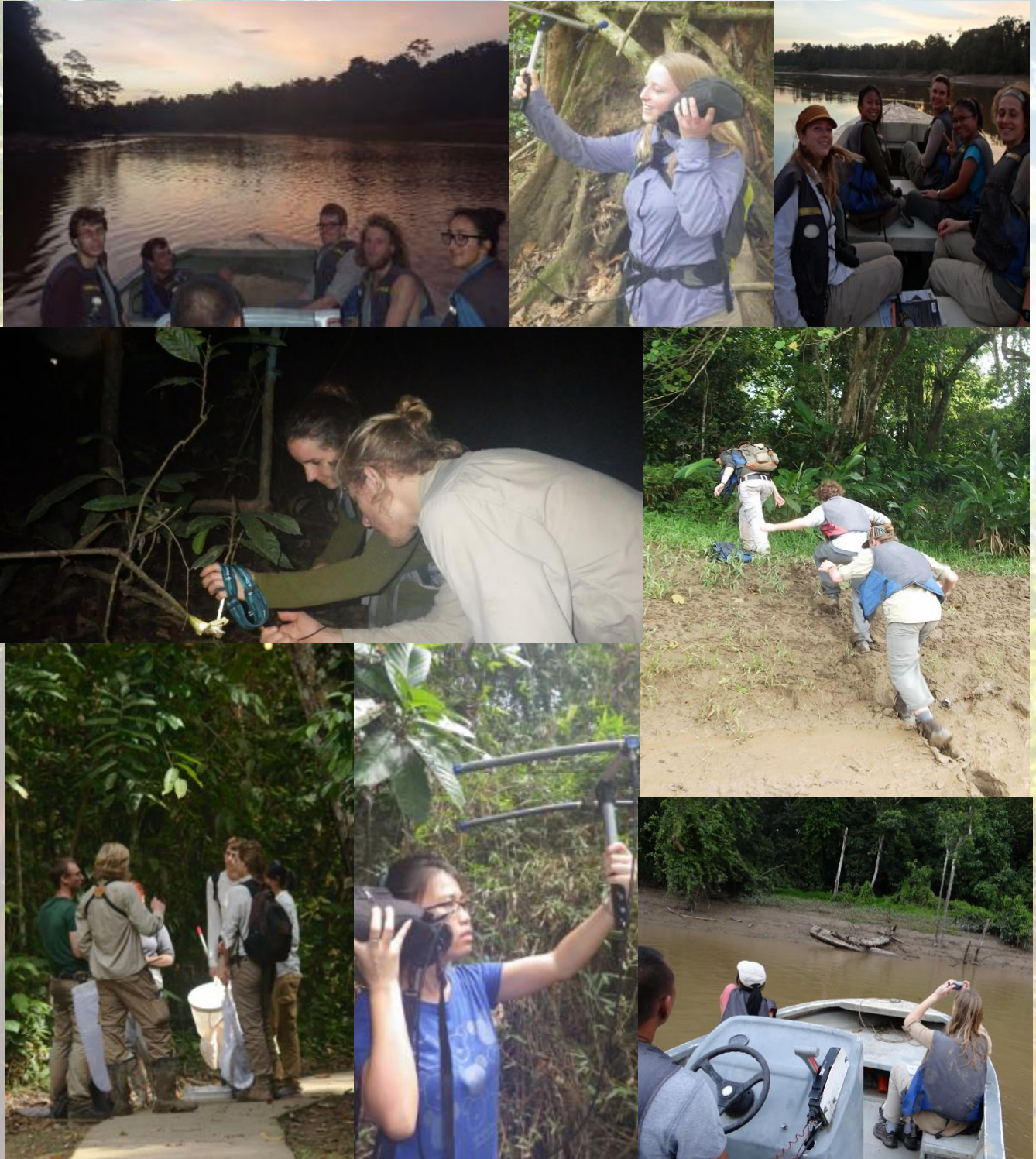
This field course was also interesting for all of us here at DG as we were able to learn about different ecological techniques such as insect trapping, bird watching and plant identification.

During the second week of the field course the students designed and carried out their own projects. They proposed a number of interesting projects which ranged from insect diversity to primate behaviour.

Leiden photo album



Leiden photo album



Orangutans on the ground

On February 14th Danica Stark, Penny Gardner and Benoit Goossens co-authored a paper on the terrestrial activity of orang-utans published in Scientific Reports. Camera traps placed across Borneo captured many instances of orang-utans walking along the forest floor. The large flanged males were more commonly seen on the ground, however orang-utans of all ages and both sexes were seen to frequent the floor. The fact that multiple ages and genders have been spotted on the ground suggests that this terrestrial behaviour is a natural behaviour.

However the increase in the numbers of orang-utans using the forest floor could well be due to forest fragmentation. Although this behaviour may help the orang-utans adapt to small scale forest fragmentation, it also increases the animals' risks of coming into contact with humans as well as diseases transmitted by humans or domesticated animals. Although orang-utans are protected by law in Malaysia, there are still people who will kill them.



Slow Loris update

PTY student Hannah Wilson has been working on the nocturnal primate project. Currently we have one slow loris collared, named Boss. On February 27th at 5am a baby slow loris was spotted clinging onto Boss' chest, causing great excitement for Hannah and the two field course students with her. In previous years Boss has been spotted with offspring around this time of year. This alongside the fact that Boss had been staying in the same sleeping sites more frequently indicated that Boss may well have offspring and Hannah was delighted to have been proven right.



The baby was roughly 10cm long and already had fur with a noticeable black strip along its back, characteristic of the slow loris and already looking remarkably like her mother! This places the baby's age at between 1 and 2 months.

Hannah is looking into the home range of the slow loris as well as the effects of lunar patterns on the activity of the slow loris.

We still have two slow loris collars as well as a tarsier collar and have high hopes of collaring a tarsier soon as one has frequently been spotted on a trail near DG.



Our nocturnal primates project is co-funded by Columbus Zoo, Cleveland Zoological Society and Phoenix Zoo.

Sun bear update

Maters student Roshan has been setting sun bear traps for a number of months now. He has not been lucky enough to catch one yet however the camera traps have shown a lot of sun bear activity around the traps. A male sun bear has been sniffing around the traps but has only been entering half way and is yet to set off the trap. Our anticipation is building as the camera traps recently showed the male walking fully inside the trap and licking the oil. This shows that the bear is becoming more confident around the trap so it is just a matter of time before Roshan captures his sun bear!

Sun bear sighting!

On the 27th of February a sun bear was sighted in lot 6 by PTY student Anya and Doyo whilst they were setting the lizard traps. The bear was said to have come out from behind a tree just a few feet in front of them. It stood still for a few seconds before running off into the forest. Roshan has now set up camera traps in this site and will hopefully set up a trap there soon.



Other news...

Dr Benoit Goossens and Sen Nathan attended a Sabah Wildlife Conservation reception at the US Ambassador residence in Kuala Lumpur to talk about the collaboration of DGFC and the Sabah Wildlife Department as well as their work on wildlife and habitat conservation.



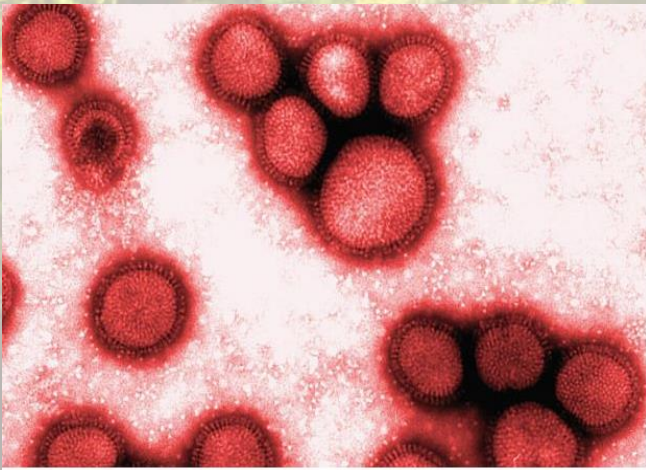
The 15th February celebrated the third annual world pangolin day. This is to raise awareness of the threats such as deforestation and hunting for meat and medicine.

Congratulations to our River Keeper Unit Max and Fendy who were formally appointed as Sabah Honorary Wildlife Wardens until 2016.



Other news continued...

Earlier this month two orang-utan killers were arrested and jailed after a brutal attack on a 15 year old male orang-utan. They were both sentenced to 2 years in jail. This enforcement of the Sabah Wildlife Enactment will hopefully stop further animal killings in the future.



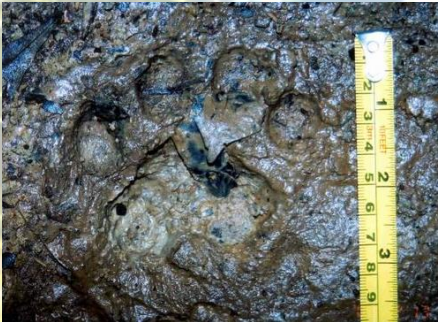
EcoHealth Alliance Malaysia have been hard at work since October last year and have already discovered 7 new viruses in 800 animals sampled in Malaysia. They will be carrying out further studies to see whether these viruses pose any threat.

On the 5th of February two baby elephants were rescued from plantations in the Kinabatangan region by Sabah Wildlife Department and taken to Sepilok Wildlife Medical Care Centre. Human-elephant conflicts are on the rise in Sabah.



Match the Footprint

Can you match these footprints to their animals?



Leopard cat

Civet

Sun bear

Otter

Clouded leopard

Jungle Fact of the Month

The name pangolin is derived from the Malay word Pengguling which means "something that rolls up."

Conservation Corner: Malayan Pangolin

Common name: Pangolin
Scientific name: *Manis javanica*
ICUN status: Endangered



Ecology:

Pangolins are nocturnal and use their well developed smell to find insects. They have large hard overlapping scales made of keratin. They spend most of their time in trees but can also make burrows.

Threats:

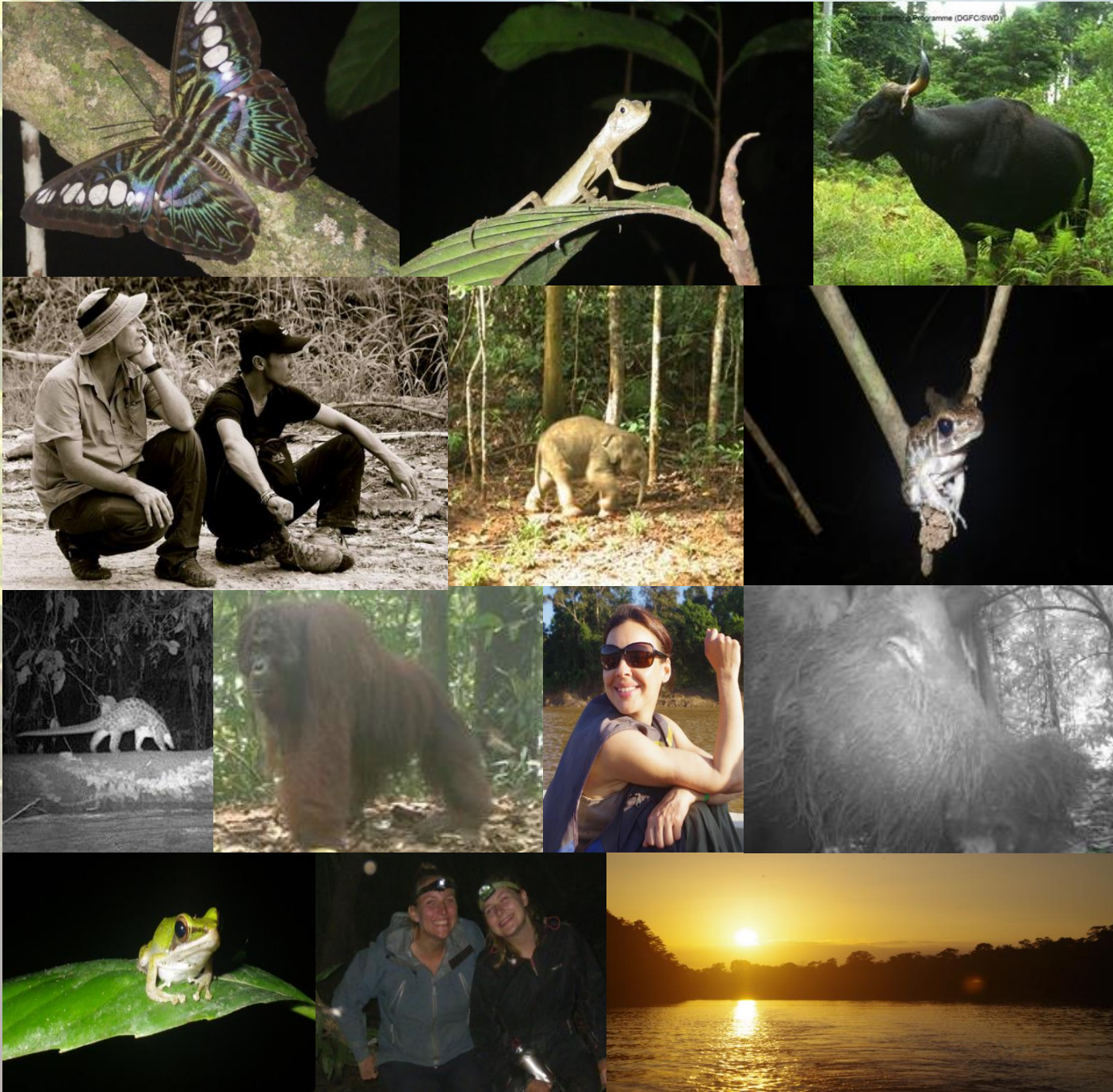
- Deforestation
- Hunted for medicine and food.

Conservation:

- Protected by Malaysian law
- Researchers estimate that that the population has dropped 50% in 15 years.
- World Pangolin day was created on the 15th February to raise awareness.



Photos of the Month!



Photos left to right: Butterfly , Spiny nosed lizard, Banteng, Jean-Marie and Fendy, Baby elephant, White-lipped Frog, Pangolin, Male orang-utan, Peggy, Bearded pig, Rough-sided Frog, Hannah and Anya, Sunset on Kinabatangan. (Photos by Hannah Wilson, Kieran Love, camera traps and Jean-Marie.)

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: Hannah Wilson and Anya Tober

Director of Publication: Benoit Goossens

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

