Introduction:

The trip participants were Brian Cox, Graeme Spinks John Archer and Bob Watts. This was the first time in many years that we had all been on a trip together. Despite all of us having been to Borneo before, the rediscovery of Black Oriole and Dulit Frogmouth in Sarawak was a big enough draw for us to go back. We all had different but overlapping target list which could have caused problems, especially on the Crocker/Mt Kinabalu leg of the trip but as it turned out by the time we got there we had seen most of them and just enjoyed several days birding without any pressure.

From our perspective it was a highly successful trip and we saw almost everything we wanted to see and a few species we hadn’t anticipated. The highlights had to be the Blue-banded Pitta on the Bario Road which performed magically for several minutes in brilliant light; the confiding Malaysian Rail-babbler at Paya Maga; Dulit and Bornean Frogmouths; Everett’s Thrush (for the sheer jam of getting it whilst relieving myself) and Bornean Ground-cuckoo.

The only big miss for me was Giant Pitta which after 3 days of searching at Danum managed to elude me… again!

Itinerary:

25/6 – Arrived KK and overnight at Putatan Platinum Hotel.
26/6 – Drive to Lawas and transfer to Long Tuyo and walk up to Paya Maga.
27/6 – Paya Maga, birding up to shelter at 1200m
28/6 – AM - Paya Maga, PM - drive to Ba’kalalan – evening - Dulit Frogmouth.
29/6 – AM: Hose’s Broadbill site back towards Lawas. PM – Bario Road.
30/6 – Bario Road.
01/7 – Pre-dawn Dulit Frogmouth and walked road until 8am. Fly to Lawas, drive to Klias Peat Swamp. Evening – Kota Kinabalu and Sunda Frogmouth. Night Putatan Platinum Hotel.
02/7 – AM – Crocker Range – PM - drive to Mount Kinabalu
03/7 – Mount Kinabalu
04/7 – Mount Kinabalu – night Putatan Platinum.
05/7 – Fly to Sandakan – transfer to Kinabatangan Jungle Camp.
06/7 – Kinabatangan River
07/7 – Kinabatangan River
08/7 – AM: Kinabatangan River. Transfer to Lahud Datu and onto DVFC.
09/7 – DVFC
10/7 – DVFC
11/7 – AM - DVFC – transfer to Lahud Datu and fly to KK and onto Heathrow.

Logistics:

Access to Ba’kalalan is straightforward but Paya Maga requires 4x4s (in the wet season) and the permission of the village of Long Toyu to access the forest. The village will also provide accommodation and food at one or both of their cabins. After some discussion we opted for the easy option and used the services of Bird Tour Asia to arrange the Sarawak part of the trip. Our guide for this part was Dave Bakewell, a UK birder and an old friend of Johns, who has lived in Malaysia for 20+ years. He is a very experienced birder and knows Borneo very well and we would highly recommend him. He is also of the same generation as us, so we could all swap stories about the good old days of birding the UK in the 80’s.

I organised the rest of the trip which was very straightforward. In KK we stayed at the Putatan Platinum Hotel (http://www.putatanplatinumhotel.com/) which is at the southern end of KK close to the airport and easy access to the road to Sarawak. Early breakfasts were available due to Ramadan but they can also be arranged in advance at other times. We arranged for a hire car from Erac Car hire (contact email: admin@e-erac-online.com), which was recommended by James Eaton of Bird Tour Asia. The car was dropped off when we arrived at the Putatan Platinum and they collected it from the Hotel 3 days later. Everything went very smoothly and the car cost 350RM a day for a large MPV.

We booked flights through the Malaysian Airlines website for our flight from KK to Sandakan and from Lahud Datu back to KK. Robert Chong from the Kinabantangan Jungle Camp met us at Sandakan to take us to the lodge and after our stay they dropped us off in Lahud Datu at the Danum Valley Office where we transferred to the Danum Valley Field Centre.

June/July was a good time to go as many of the birds were vocalising, especially the Pittas and the weather was generally good, except at Mount Kinabalu where we caught the tail end of a tropical storm to the north. My previous trip was in early September 2000 and I struggled to see many of the lowland species especially the Hornbills, which were absent on the Kinabatangan River.

Trip Reports:

There is an abundance of trip reports on the web, most of which can be found on www.cloudbirders.com. Many of the trip reports consist of just personal diaries and a list of birds, which can be interesting but offer little assistance to independent birders.
However the Cloudbirders website has an excellent filter system and a star rating system which is very useful when preparing your trip.

All the higher star rated trip reports were useful and I would like to thank all those authors for their hard work producing such good reports.

I also got some general and GPS co-ordinates from Mikael Bauer who was in Sarawak a few months before us and then continued onto Kalimantan for the Peacock-pheasant, which unfortunately we didn’t have times to do on this trip.

**Sounds:**

I loaded pre-recorded birdsong onto my Olympus LS10 which I also use to record and playback with a Sennheiser ME66 (the LS10 has an internal drive and an SD drive). My recordings from this trip and others can be found on [xeno-canto](http://xeno-canto.org).

**In Memory:**

I would like to dedicate this report to John Flynn who sadly passed away a few years ago. He was a driving force behind many of the trips we did in the 90’s and 00’s, across Central & South America and Asia (including Borneo with Graeme and Bob). His memory was with us throughout the trip and it’s a shame he wasn’t there when we caught Bornean Ground-cuckoo back….!

**Birding Sites:**

**Sarawak**

**Paya Maga**

The forest belongs to the village of Long Tuyo and a thorough ornithological study was carried out several years ago which discovered a healthy population of Black Orioles. The village want to help preserve the area and have set up an ecotourism project and actively encourage birders to visit. They have built two cabins, one at around 1000m and the second higher up at about 1700m. To ensure that the project is a success it is important for all visiting birders to seek permission from the village to access the forest.
Different families will take it in turn to provide food and cook it at the cabin and if the project provides an income for the village it is more likely to remain protected. An early morning start on the trail is recommended as it is a 5km climb from the start of the trail at 760m to the cabin at 970m and there is good birding all the way.

We left KK at 4am and reached Lawas at 6:30am where we were met by two 4x4 trucks to take us to Long Toyu which is about 1.5hrs from Lawas on good dirt roads. Alternatively if you have your own transport you take the turn off from the main road just to the north of Lawas (GPS 4°51'31.44"N, 115°24'27.05"E) which takes you to Long Toyu at (GPS 4°28'16.79"N, 115°28'40.19"E). Alternatively there are buses from Lawas along the road which can drop you at Long Toyu.

N.B. If you self-drive the road is reasonably good but care must be taken with the logging lorries which assume that you will get out of their way and won’t stop. They can be very long and therefore have to cut the corners of the road, so ensure you do not get stuck on the inside of a bend as they pass. The locals often drive around the outside of the bends and therefore you will often meet cars on the wrong side of the road.

The Cabin is in a fabulous setting with views across to a steep forested escarpment where there was a large communal Hornbill roost at dusk. There are two rooms and a kitchen and a covered veranda for meals. There are only basic mats on the floor for bedding, so for comfort bring your own mats and sleeping bag. Temperature at night when we were there was around 18-20°C so a blanket would suffice. There is also the added luxury of showers and WCs.
Birding consists of walking up and down the single trail and access into the forest is possible in places but because of the steep terrain it is not always at the point that you may want it!

Cabin 2 is another 5-hr hike at around 1700m and would be well worth exploring as it should hold similar species to Mount Kinabalu and some may be a lot easier. We only got up to 1200m, as most of our target species were below this altitude.

The list of good birds for this site is increasing with every trip and it was incredibly birdy and I am sure it will become one of the primary sites in Borneo. At present the infrequent trips ensures that the birds have not been exposed to excessive playback and we got excellent views of everything that we saw.

**Birds:**

Black Oriole: Once you get near Cabin 1 they become fairly regular and we continued to see them up to 1200m at least. They had fully fledged young and we saw up to 20 in total.

Bornean Frogmouth: Several birds were seen and we found them easier to see pre-dawn than at dusk. To be certain of seeing them I would allow a minimum of 2 nights.

Rufous-tailed (Bornean) Jungle Flycatcher: This likely split was the surprise of the trip with one bird seen in sallows by a shallow gully about 1km above the cabin.

Hose’s Broadbill: We heard one below the cabin and previous trips have seen them above and below the cabin.

Blue-banded Pitta: We didn’t see or hear them but previous trips have seen them above and below the cabin.

Malaysian Rail-babbler: Seen just above the cabin (same location as Bornean Banded Pitta) where it is possible to walk in off the trail.

Bornean Banded Pitta: Seen in forest just above the cabin

Black-faced Kingfisher: One calling bird seen well at c.820m.

Red-bearded Bee-eater: One calling bird seen well at c.850m

Pygmy Ibon: 3 below the cabin.

Mountain Serpent-eagle: Seen from the shelter at 1200m.

(Bornean) Hill Blue Flycatcher: Another potential future split with one pair around the cabin, male was singing.

**Full Bird List for Paya Maga.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ferruginous Partridge (H)</th>
<th>Blyth’s Hawk-eagle</th>
<th>Crested Serpent Eagle</th>
<th>Mountain Serpent Eagle</th>
<th>Great Argus (H)</th>
<th>Rufous-bellied Hawk-eagle</th>
<th>Ruddy Cuckoo-dove</th>
<th>Common Emerald Dove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lysth’s Hawk-eagle</td>
<td>Blyth’s Hawk-eagle</td>
<td>Common Emerald Dove</td>
<td>Greater Coucal</td>
<td>Black-bellied Malkoha</td>
<td>Indian Cuckoo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Bornean Frogmouth
Whiskered Treeswift
Glossy Swiftlet
Black-nest Swiftlet
Silver-rumped Spinetail
Orange-breasted Trogon (H)
Banded (Black-faced) Kingfisher
Red-bearded Bee-eater
Rhinoceros Hornbill
Helmeted Hornbill
Bushy-crested Hornbill
Wreathed Hornbill
Golden-faced Barbet (H)
Red-throated Barbet
Mountain Barbet (H)
Yellow-crowned Barbet
Blue-eared (Black-eared) Barbet (H)
Bornean Barbet
Crimson-winged Woodpecker
Buff-rumped Woodpecker
Green Broadbill
Hose's Broadbill (H)
Long-tailed Broadbill
Banded Broadbill (H)
Black-and-yellow Broadbill (H)
Bornean Banded Pitta
Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike
Scarlet Minivet
Black Oriole
Ashy Drongo
Hair-crested Drongo
Malaysian Pied Fantail
Black-naped Monarch
Common Green Magpie (H)
Bornean Treepie
Malaysian Rail-babbler
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher (H)
Bornean Bulbul
Scaly-breasted Bulbul
Grey-bellied Bulbul
Cream-vented Bulbul
Asian Red-eyed Bulbul
Spectacled Bulbul
Ochraceous Bulbul
Hairy-backed Bulbul
Cinereous Bulbul
Pacific Swallow
Dark-necked Tailorbird
Ashy Tailorbird
Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler
Bornean Banded Pitta
Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler
Brown Fulvetta
Moustached Babbler
Temminck's Babbler
Black-capped Babbler (H)
Chestnut-crested Yuhina
Pygmy White-eye
Asian Fairy-bluebird
(Bornean) Hill Blue Flycatcher
Rufous-tailed (Bornean) Jungle Flycatcher
Rufous-chested Flycatcher
Greater Green Leafbird
Lesser Green Leafbird
Bornean Leafbird
Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker
Orange-bellied Flowerpecker
Ruby-cheeked Sunbird
Plain Sunbird
Temminck's Sunbird
Yellow-eared Spiderhunter
Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Dusky Munia
Scaly-breasted Munia
Chestnut Munia

Mammals:
Bornean Gibbon
Brook's Squirrel
Ear spot Squirrel

Ba'kalalan

Ba'kalalan is on the border with Indonesia and most of the surrounding forest has been selectively logged but the new road that is being built over the mountains (Mount Merud) to Bario goes through good forest which is in a protected water catchment area. At the time of our visit it had been tarmacked to beyond the ridge at 1700m. Access actually into the forest is near impossible, especially higher up as the slopes are very steep. Access further along the road may be possible in the future as the road appears to level out as it heads towards Bario.
We were transported from Paya Maga to Ba’kalalan by the Long Toyu pick-up trucks. The journey took close to 4 hours despite being only 130km. The road was once tarmac but the density of potholes made it one of the worst pot-holed roads I had been on for a long time. The other option is to fly in from Lawas (which has one flight, three days a week). We stayed at Sang and Julia’s Homestay (which can be contacted via thehomestayborneo@gmail.com), which is in the town centre and is an excellent place to stay. The food was plentiful and very good.

To find Sang & Julia’s Homestay park at the end of the road adjacent to the runway. Walk up the concrete road between the houses and shops until you reach the football pitch/village green, which is surrounded by houses. Walk across the grass keeping more to the right hand side toward the large blue building (Sang’s Homestay GPS 03°58’40.76”N, 115°37’12.85”E) on the far side of the green. If you arrive by air cross the runway at the northern end and this brings you to the car parking area described above.

There are three main areas that we birded, the new Bario Road, the area where the Dulit Frogmouths are found and the Hose’s Broadbill site described below. We used Sang’s pick-up truck, driven by his nephew, to get around but this can be expensive so you could either arrange to be dropped off in the pick-up truck and walk back or arrange a lift with a motorbike, there were plenty around and I’m sure Sang could put you in touch with one.

Dulit Frogmouths:
Sang is the best person to take you as he will know which birds are active. He took us to a pair he knew to be active and we saw one straight away. Having seen it well we left that one in peace and tried several other pairs, none of which responded. There has been Bay Owl in the same area but that hadn’t been seen for quite a while.

Even though this area has been logged we did bird the road on our last morning following a pre-dawn visit to the Dulit Frogmouths. In a few hours we saw Ferruginous
Partridge, Red-throated Bee-eater, Green Broadbill (H), Bold-striped Tit-Babbler and Pygmy Ibons.

Full list of Birds around Ba'kalalan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red-breasted Partridge (H)</td>
<td>Red-breasted Partridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferruginous Partridge</td>
<td>Green Broadbill (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-breasted Waterhen</td>
<td>Black-and-red Broadbill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruddy Cuckoo-dove</td>
<td>Ashy Drongo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Emerald Dove</td>
<td>Hair-crested Drongo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dullit Frogmouth</td>
<td>Malaysian Pied Fantail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian Eared Nightjar</td>
<td>Spotted Fantail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey-rumped Treeswift</td>
<td>Yellow-vented Bulbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossy Swiftlet (Western)</td>
<td>Pacific Swallow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-nest Swiftlet</td>
<td>Dark-necked Tailorbird</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bario Road:
This is the main birding area and is reached by taking a left off the Lawas Road just outside Ba'kalalan, the road goes around the end of the runway and at around 2km from town turn right at the only fork in the road (straight on is Indonesia). The road climbs from here from 1100m to 1700m where it reaches the top of the ridge (3°56'38.21"N, 115°34'39.75"E). In total it is about 10km from town to the ridge and it would be possible to be dropped off here and then walk back as it is all downhill through good birding habitat. The last kilometre is through paddy fields which could be good in the winter for migrants.

We found the best two birding areas to be:
1) Around the 1600 -1700m area, where we saw Fruithunter, Everett's Thrush, Whitehead's Broadbill and Whitehead's Spiderhunter.
2) The area around the 1200- 1300m area where we saw a pair of Hose’s Broadbill, Blue-banded Pitta, Bornean Spiderhunter, Black & White Bulbul and Dark Hawk-cuckoo.
Birds:

Blue-banded Pitta: One bird calling at 1250m down a very steep dense slope. Access looked impossible except a falling trunk 6-8 feet above the forest floor. We edged our way down the truck but unable to see the forest floor below us. However this wasn’t necessary as within seconds we were watching the bird 10 feet away in full view at the edge of the log. It then proceeded to circle us along the edge of the road verge.

Everett’s Thrush: This was the shock of the trip. As I took a pee I saw a bird flying up the slope directly at me. I thought it was going to be a cuckoo dove but as it passed by I got my bins on it and was amazed to see it was an Everett’s Thrush. It continued up the slope and into the forest and lost to sight.

Whitehead’s Broadbill: In the same area as the Everett’s Thrush a male flew across the road several times and eventually perched up.

Hose’s Broadbill: A pair near the Blue-banded Pitta.

Fruithunter: Graeme briefly had a single female at 1600m.

Dark Hawk-cuckoo: One seen at 1300m.

Whitehead’s Spiderhunter: Several seen including one which sat for a prolonged period on a snag at 1650m.

Bornean Leafbird and Bornean Bulbul were seen regularly.

Full list of Birds on the Bario Road.

Red-breasted Partridge (H)
Crimson-headed Partridge (H)
Crested Honey Buzzard
Blyth’s Hawk-eagle
Rufous-bellied Hawk-eagle
White-breasted Waterhen
Spotted Dove
Ruddy Cuckoo-dove
Little Cuckoo-dove (H)

Pink-necked Green Pigeon
Thick-billed Green Pigeon
Mountain Imperial Pigeon
Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo (H)
Dark Hawk-cuckoo
Indian Cuckoo (H)
Black-nest Swiftlet
Rhinoceros Hornbill (H)
Bushy-crested Hornbill (H)

Wreathed Hornbill
Red-throated Barbet
Mountain Barbet
Golden-naped Barbet
Bornean Barbet
Checker-throated Woodpecker
Orange-backed Woodpecker
Hose’s Broadbill
Whitehead’s Broadbill
Hose’s Broadbill Site:
Sang’s nephew had recently heard a Hose’s Broadbill at a patch of forest 20km back towards Lawas. As this was one of our main target species we headed there on our first morning. It is a reasonably patch of logged-over forest about an hour back towards Lawas. We had a number of good species including a male Hose’s Broadbill by a disused camp. Other species included Black & White Bulbul and Pygmy Ibon (4).
Full list of Birds

Cinnamon Bittern
Crested Honey Buzzard
Blyth's Hawk-eagle
White-breasted Waterhen
Little Cuckoo-dove
Common Emerald Dove
Green Imperial Pigeon
Greater Coucal
Raffles's Malkoha
Black-bellied Malkoha
Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo (H)
Glossy Swiftlet
Black-neck Swiftlet
Wreathed Hornbill

Mountain Barbet
Crested Honey Buzzard
Blyth's Hawk-eagle
White-breasted Waterhen
Little Cuckoo-dove
Common Emerald Dove
Green Imperial Pigeon
Greater Coucal
Raffles's Malkoha
Black-bellied Malkoha
Square-tailed Drongo-cuckoo (H)
Glossy Swiftlet
Black-neck Swiftlet
Wreathed Hornbill

Mountain Barbet
Blue-eared (Black-eared) Barbet
Bornean Brown Barbet
Hose's Broadbill
Black-and-yellow Broadbill (H)
Maroon-breasted Philentoma
Scarlet Minivet
Ashy Drongo
Hair-crested Drongo
Malaysian Pied Fantail
Slender-billed Crow
Black-and-white Bulbul
Black-headed Bulbul
Bornean Bulbul

Yellow-vented Bulbul
Hairy-backed Bulbul
Pacific Swallow
Yellow-bellied Prinia
Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler
Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler (H)

Pygmy White-eye
Asian Fairy-bluebird
Oriental Magpie-robin
Little Spiderhunter
Yellow-eared Spiderhunter
Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Dusky Munia
Chestnut Munia

Mammals

Bornean Gibbon (H)
Jentink's Squirrel
Yellow-throated Martin

Sabah

Klias Peat Swamp.

This is a good site for Hook-billed Bulbul, Red-crowned Barbet and Scarlet-breasted Flowerpecker. It is near Beaufort which is on the Sabah side of the border with Sarawak and we stopped here on the return journey from Lawas to KK. Turn off the main road south of Beaufort at (5°19’15.27”N, 115°42’45.52”E) and then left after 2.9km, driving south to the main car park at the Park Offices (5°19’31.71”N, 115°40’23.02”E). Buy a permit and then follow the boardwalk south to where it divides to a triangle shaped loop trail. The best area for the Bulbuls is along the western side of the triangle. We eventually saw one in the southern corner on the triangle by the shelter. The triangle is good for Red-crowned Barbet and the Flowerpecker, especially the southern arm of the triangle. The entrance boardwalk had Black-capped Babbler, Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler and Bold-stripped Tit-babbler.

We only had a few hours from mid afternoon but still managed to find the Hook-billed Bulbul and Red-crowned barbet but no sign of the Flowerpecker.
Full list of Birds Klias Peat Swamp

Eastern Cattle Egret  Rufous Piculet
Intermediate Egret  Checker-throated Woodpecker
Little Egret  Rufous Woodpecker
Changeable Hawk-Eagle  Long-tailed Parakeet
White-breasted Waterhen  Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot
Zebra Dove  Black-and-yellow Broadbill
Little Green Pigeon  White-breasted Woodswallow
Lesser Coucal  Green Iora
Raffles’s Malkoha  Pied Triller
Chestnut-bellied Malkoha  Greater Racket-tailed Drongo
Glossy Swiftlet  Black-naped Monarch
Black-nest Swiftlet  Olive-winged Bulbul
Stork-billed Kingfisher  Hook-billed Bulbul
Red-crowned Barbet  Pacific Swallow
Blue-eared (Black-eared) Barbet  Rufous-tailed Tailorbird

Mammals:
Slender Treeshrew  Bold-striped Tit-Babbler
Pig-tailed macaque  Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler
Plantain Squirrel  Black-capped Babbler
Proboscis monkey  Velvet-fronted Nuthatch
Asian Glossy Starling
Common Hill Myna
Greater Green Leafbird
Orange-bellied Flowerpecker
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker
Little Spiderhunter
Yellow-eared Spiderhunter
Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Dusky Munia
Chestnut Munia
We arrived back at KK at dusk and as soon as the hire car had been delivered we headed off to a Sunda Frogmouth site. We arrived at around 7pm and soon heard a number of Sunda Frogmouths calling and after a few failed attempts we found a female perched up giving wonderful views. We tried further along the track and found a male. Due to the increasing pressure by photographers, details of their location has not been included in the report.

**Crocker Range.**

This site is very well covered in other trip reports and we only spent one morning here focussing on finding Fruithunter. We left the Hotel in KK at 5am and after a little detour we arrived at the pass at about 7am as it was foggy we continued down to the Rafflesia Centre. Our only target bird here was Fruithunter. He heard one around the Rafflesia Centre but it was down the slope and after a prolonged wait we gave up and tried further up the road. We eventually got prolonged views of a female at (5°47'2.54"N, 116°20'32.56"E). A second
bird was calling nearby but could not be located. We then birded the road opposite the restaurant at the pass and then mid-afternoon we headed for Mount Kinabalu.

**Full list of Birds Crocker Range (Rafflesia Centre)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red-breasted Partridge (H)</th>
<th>Black-and-crimson Oriole</th>
<th>Grey-throated Babbler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crimson-headed Partridge (H)</td>
<td>Ashy Drongo</td>
<td>Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Cuckoo-dove</td>
<td>White-throated Fantail</td>
<td>Chestnut-crested Yuhina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Imperial Pigeon</td>
<td>Bornean Treepie</td>
<td>Frithunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossy Swiftlet</td>
<td>Bornean Bulbul</td>
<td>Indigo Flycatcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black-nest Swiftlet</td>
<td>Ochraceous Bulbul</td>
<td>Bornean Leafbird</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Barbet</td>
<td>Pacific Swallow</td>
<td>Orange-bellied Flowerpecker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden-naped Barbet</td>
<td>Mountain Tailorbird</td>
<td>Eurasian Tree Sparrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-eared (Black-eared) Barbet (H)</td>
<td>Sunda Bush Warbler</td>
<td>Dusky Munia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checker-throated Woodpecker</td>
<td>Mountain Leaf Warbler</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bornean Whistler</td>
<td>Striated Grassbird</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mammals**

Bornean Black-banded Squirrel
We arrived here with a very limited target list of Cinnamon-headed Partridge, Bornean Forktail and Mountain Scops-owl. We hadn’t pre-booked accommodation but since the earthquake in 2014 it is not possible to climb Kinabalu from the Tymphon Gate so the park was very quiet and we had a choice of accommodation. We stayed in The Hill Lodge cabins which is walking distance from the Liwagu Restaurant.

The weather was wet and windy with low cloud and rain on the second morning. Despite the poor conditions we found both the Partridge and Forktail without much problem and also saw a good selection of Kinabalu species. The earthquake caused a landslide on the Bukit Ular Trail which was impassable between the top and about 500m down from the top. All the other trails were open and the park was generally very quiet due to the inability to climb the mountain.

Bob and I mainly birded the Bukit Ular trail and the Liwagu & Silau-silau Trail and both mornings we slowly drove up the main road at dawn which produced several Orange-headed Thrushes, Bornean Whistling Thrush and an immature Bornean Forktail. More Forktails were seen along the river (Liwagu & Silau-Silau Trails). We tried for Mountain Scops-owl on the one dry night and called one in near the Power Station but as is often the case with Mountain Scops-owl, it sat out of view until we got bored and went for a beer. He also spent some time around the back of Rajah Lodge where I saw Fruithunter in 2000, we heard one but couldn’t find it and we also saw Bornean Green Magpie, Whitehead’s Spiderhunter and heard Bare-headed Laughingthrush.

Full list of Birds Mount Kinabalu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red-breasted Partridge</th>
<th>Bornean Green Magpie</th>
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<tr>
<td>Crimson-headed Partridge</td>
<td>Bornean Treepie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Little Cuckoo-dove</td>
<td>Ochraceous Bulbul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Imperial Pigeon</td>
<td>Pacific Swallow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Scops Owl (H)</td>
<td>Mountain Tailorbird</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glossy Swiftlet</td>
<td>Sunda Bush Warbler (H)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden-naped Barbet (H)</td>
<td>Bornean Stubb</td>
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</table>
As with most birders we stayed at Robert Chong’s Kinabatangan Jungle Camp. This is a fabulous place which caters for both generalist and birders alike. We went for the ‘birder’s package’ which is more expensive but includes extended morning, afternoon and night trips, full board and transfers. All apart from John needed the Ground-cuckoo and each of us needed a select number of other species. Robert will tailor your trip to your hit-list and will work hard to see everything. His standard package only includes shorter morning and afternoon trips, similar to the other lodges and this gives you less time in the field.

We found Robert to be very accommodating and worked hard to get us the birds. When we arrived he told us that some elephants had been seen up river and suggested we go straight after lunch, before the other lodges got out, to ensure the best views. It was 30 minutes up river and we saw 20+ elephants and watched them in peace for over 30 minutes until we heard the first boats coming at which point we set off down river for some birding.
The main river is good for White-fronted Falconet, Storm Stork, Hornbills, Bat Hawk, Jerdons’ Baza and Hawk eagles. There are three other main areas that Robert takes you to.

- The main side channel, which is on the south side of the main river down river from KJC, this is a good area for the Ground Cuckoo.
- The Ox-bow lake, which is further downstream and on the north side of the river, accessed through a narrow channel.
- The small channel which is about 30 minutes downstream on a bend, on the north side of the river, the channel backtracks towards the Jungle Camp.
Birds:
Bornean Ground-cuckoo: On the second morning we heard one calling along the main river, where it is very difficult to see them due to the thick foliage and high banks. The bird was constantly calling in a thicket on the top of the bank and no amount of manoeuvring could get us a clear view. We eventually disembarked 30m away and slowly approached. The bird saw us before we saw it and disappeared. However a consolation prize was a rather confused looking Sabah Partridge which sat motionless in the path for several minutes. Thankfully a few hours later another Ground-cuckoo was heard down the main side channel and we eventually all got good views. In both cases the bird responded to imitation/playback of its call and came in to about 20-30m from the river edge and then sat on an elevated perch calling constantly for 5-10 minutes. The bird often being picked up by the movement of the blue tail as it pumped it up and down whilst calling.

Sabah Partridge: One seen by chance when we disembarked the boat after the first Ground-cuckoo.

Storm Stork: One seen feeding around KJC and a pair regularly roosted in the grounds. These or two other birds were seen on the top of a tree on the main river one morning.

White-crowned Hornbill: Seems to be easiest late afternoon and Robert has a few favourite sites for them. We saw a pair well on the Ox-bow lake or they can also be seen at the end of the main side channel.

Oriental Bay Owl: Several calling on the first night trip around the junction of the river and main channel. Disembarked to get excellent views of one.

Large Frogmouth: On the third night one was eventually heard calling close to the river, we disembarked and got excellent views.

Bornean Crested Fireback: A male and two females and 2nd male heard. Of all the birds we saw Robert Chong was most excited about these as they were the first he’d seen for 5 years. The male with the two females was actively displaying on the river bank, with the other male calling from the other bank.

Full list of Birds of the Kinabatangan River

| Bornean Crested Fireback | Grey-headed Fish Eagle |
| Bornean Ground Cuckoo    | White-breasted Waterhen |
| Great Argus              | Common Sandpiper |
| Storm's Stork            | Spotted Dove |
| Lesser Adjutant          | Common Emerald Dove |
| Black-crowned Night Heron| Little Green Pigeon |
| Purple Heron             | Pink-necked Green Pigeon |
| Great Egret              | Green Imperial Pigeon |
| Intermediate Egret       | Greater Coucal |
| Little Egret             | White-fronted Falconet |
| Oriental Darter          | Asian Koel |
| Jerdon's Baza            | Violet Cuckoo |
| Crested Serpent Eagle    | Plaintive Cuckoo |
| Bat Hawk                 | Oriental Bay Owl |
| Blyth's Hawk-eagle       | Buffy Fish Owl |
| Wallace's Hawk-eagle     | Brown Wood Owl |
| Rufous-bellied Hawk-eagle| Large Frogmouth |
| Crested Goshawk          | Glossy Swiftlet |
| Brahminy Kite            | Black-nest Swiftlet |
| White-bellied Sea Eagle  | Red-naped Trogon |
| Lesser Fish Eagle        | Oriental Dollarbird |
| Sabah Partridge          | Stork-billed Kingfisher |
| Black-nest Swiftlet      | Collared Kingfisher |
| Red-naped Trogon         | Blue-eared Kingfisher |
| Hooded Pitta             | Blue-throated Bee-eater |
| White-bellied Woodswallow| White-crowned Hornbill |
| White-breasted Woodswallow| Rhinoceros Hornbill |
| Common Iora              | Oriental Pied Hornbill |
| Oriental Dollarbird      | Black Hornbill |
| Stork-billed Kingfisher  | Bushy-crested Hornbill |
| Blue-eared (Black-eared) Barbet | Wrinkled Hornbill |
| Brown Barbet             | Blue-eared Hanging Parrot |
| Peregrine Falcon         | Black-and-red Broadbill |
| Black-and-yellow Broadbill| Banded Broadbill |
| Hooded Pitta             | Black-and-yellow Broadbill |
| White-breasted Woodswallow| White-bellied Woodswallow |
| Common Iora              |
We decided to stay at the Field Centre as it's far cheaper than the Borneo Rainforest Lodge (£250 per night) and you are left up to your own devices. In the past they allowed birders to stay but were reluctant to accept tourists. However it has now all changed and it actively promotes itself as an alternative to the Rainforest Lodge and can be booked by travel agents across Sabah. We booked directly with the office in Lahud Datu via email (danumvalley@gmail.com or rifhanmar@yahoo.com).

Tariffs:
Rest House room charges is RM286.00 per night per room (for two people, twin-beds with attached bathroom).
Bed at the Hostel (dormitory type, with common bathroom, toilet and kitchen) RM 91.00 per bed per night.
Camping Ground with (open air and using a hammock for sleep) RM 78.00 per person per night.
Meals charges are: RM111.00 per day per person (with coffee & tea between meals).
Transport is RM65.00/pax (one way).
Entry permits, RM50.00/pax (pay once).
Camera DSLR RM100/unit/once. Non-DSLR camera RM10/unit/once.

Transport runs on Monday Wednesday and Fridays and leaves Lahud Datu at 15:00 and returns from DVFC at 08:30. We had to book a charter 4x4 to get out on the Saturday. There are night drives every night but these need to be booked up early as they were always full. However there is no restriction in going off owling yourselves (well no-one said we couldn’t!).
As before we were targeting certain species, mainly Giant Pitta for two of us, which we failed to see (it may be easier at BRL). I spent most of my time on the grid trails, especially the centre trail from W5-W10, the W10 cross trail from N5 to S5 and the beginning of the Rhino Ridge Trail as this has been a good area for Giant Pitta over the years. The Rhino ridge trail is popular with the tourists so best to go early. We skipped breakfast, which is a 7am and then returned for lunch at 1pm, before heading out again. In the past Giant Pitta has also been seen at the highest point along the waterfall trail but Bob failed to see any when he went there.

Birds:

Crested Partridge: 4 birds at W10/S5

Great Argus: One regularly displayed at around W10/S3.

Great-billed Heron: One on the river on the last morning.

Bornean Ground Cuckoo: One heard and taped in at W10/S1 but we failed to see it.

Large Green Pigeon: Several seen on the first evening and last morning flying over with the numerous Green Imperial Pigeons.

Blue-banded Kingfisher: One flew up the main river then up the stream besides the HQ buildings on the last morning. One of the DVFC guides informed us that it can be seen on the trail that starts opposite the suspension bridge (East Trail?) and loops around the HQ following the stream.

Blue-headed Pitta: One male around W10-S5 on separate days.

Oriental Bay Owl: One seen on night drive

Barred Eagle Owl: One heard around camp one night.

Bornean Spidehunter: One by river on last morning.

Diard’s Trogon, Rufous- collared Kingfisher, Malysian Honeyguide (H), Black-crowned Pitta, Bornean Banded Pitta, Chestnut-naped Forktail were all seen around W10/N1-5.

Full list of Birds Danum Valley Field Centre

<table>
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<td>Red-throated Barbet</td>
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Blue-eared (Black-eared) Barbet (H)  Black Magpie  White-chested Babbler
Malaysian Honeyguide (H)  Slender-billed Crow  Ferruginous Babbler
Rufous Piculet  Black-headed Bulbul  Striped Wren-babbler
Olive-backed Woodpecker  Olive-winged Bulbul  Black-capped Babbler
Maroon Woodpecker  Cream-vented Bulbul  Common Hill Myna
Orange-backed Woodpecker  Asian Red-eyed Bulbul  Oriental Magpie-robin
Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot  Grey-cheeked Bulbul  White-crowned Shama
Green Broadbill (H)  Yellow-bellied Bulbul  Grey-chested Jungle Flycatcher
Banded Broadbill  Hairy-backed Bulbul  Chestnut-naped Forktail
Black-and-yellow Broadbill (H)  Pacific Swallow  Lesser Green Leafbird
Blue-headed Pitta  Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler  Ruby-cheeked Sunbird
Bornean Banded Pitta  Chestnut-rumped Babbler  Purple-naped Sunbird
Black-crowned Pitta  Chestnut-winged Babbler  Van Hasselt's Sunbird
Green Iora  Bold-striped Tit-Babbler  Crimson Sunbird
Dark-throated Oriole  Bornean Wren-babbler  Little Spiderhunter
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo  Abbott's Babbler  Long-billed Spiderhunter
Malaysian Pied Fantail  Horsfield's Babbler  Bornean Spiderhunter
Spotted Fantail  Moustached Babbler  Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Black-naped Monarch  Sooty-capped Babbler  Dusky Munia
Oriental Paradise Flycatcher  Rufous-crowned Babbler  White-bellied Munia

Mammals
Moonrat  Orang-utan (1 imm)  Common Palm Civet
Large Treeshrew  Prevost's Squirrel  Bearded Pig
Bornean Loris  Black Flying Squirrel  Lesser Mouse-deer
Maroon leaf Monkey  Red Giant Flying Squirrel  Greater Mouse-deer
Long-tailed Macaque  Malay Weasel  Sambar Deer
Bornean Gibbon (H)  Malay Civet