

Sabah, Borneo

August 20th – September 5th 2017

Marcel Gil Velasco & Laura Abad



Introduction

This was my first trip to a tropical country and so I didn't know what to expect. Despite I had read all the trip reports available, gathered as much information as possible from friends who had just been there and studied both the field guides and some sound libraries, I was still scared of not being able to find my most desired species. Apart from some easy species, Borneo is probably not the best option for your first tropical experience. The number of species is not as high as in the Neotropics and some areas aren't easy to explore, with a very limited accommodation offer and not many facilities such as canopy walks or observation towers. It's still far from the actual challenges found in remote places such as Papua New Guinea, but I still wouldn't describe it as easy. However, following Yann Muzika's advice and taking advantage of his recent trip to the area, together with Daniel López Velasco, we decided to take the risk, do our best and see what happens. In the end it worked out extremely well. We ended up seeing 249 species, with 42 endemics (following Eaton's taxonomy), which isn't bad. But, most importantly, we enjoyed the mesmerizing landscapes, some unforgettable observations of most of our target species and, all in all, a very memorable trip

Sources of information

Book

Birds of the Indonesian Archipelago – Greater Sundas and Wallacea, by James Eaton & others. Lynx, 2016. This is a very nice book, with beautiful (and actually useful) illustrations, updated taxonomy and maps and a size and weight that makes it suitable for the field. Definitely the best option these days.

Trip reports

- Birding Trip Report: Borneo (Sabah, Malaysia) Sepilok, Kinabatangan, Danum Valley, Crocker Range NP, Kinabalu NP 11 to 27 Aug 2015 – By Pritam Baruah
- Kinabatangan River, November 2014, by Ian Reid
- Birding Sabah, March – April 2015, by Måns Grundsten

Sounds

I used a sound library compiled by Manolo García and Guillermo Rodríguez for their trip some years ago.

Please email me if you want to get it. All the sounds are available in xeno-canto.org.

Yann Muzika and Daniel López Velasco had been in the area a couple of months before and provided extremely useful information and advice about the itinerary, accommodation options and local contacts. I want to thank them here once again.

Itinerary

Since we had a stretched budget and schedule (and Laura wanted to spend some days diving in the amazing reefs of the eastern islands), we removed everything that wasn't "needed" to see the target species. This is, Rafflesia Information Centre (RIC), Sepilok and Tabin.

RIC is the area to see some mid-altitude species, especially Bornean Barbet, Bornean Leafbird, Bornean Bulbul and Whitehead's Spiderhunter. Mountain Barbet is also much commoner here and some other sought-after species, such as Long-tailed Broadbill, albeit also present in continental Southeast Asia, are also among the targets at RIC. We had assumed we were going to miss these species, but finally managed to connect with some of them. The Kinabalu Mountain Lodge offers a nice mid-altitude option very close to Kinabalu NP and even Bornean Barbet might be possible there with more effort.

Sepilok used to be the best place for one of the country's megas: Bornean Bristlehead. However, the species seems to have become much scarcer during the last years and many birders visiting the area easily dip it nowadays. I wasn't sure I would be able to cope emotionally with a visit to the Orang-utan recovery centre, so we decided not to go. Moreover, the only accommodation option (Rainforest Discovery Centre) it's bloody expensive.

Tabin is usually described as a Pitta paradise and it probably is (apart from having good densities of Clouded Leopard), but the price of the lodge made it impossible for us.

So we were left with the following itinerary:

- Mount Kinabalu (August 20th - 22nd)
- Poring Hot Springs (August 23rd)
- Gomantong Caves (August 23rd evening)
- Kinabatangan River (August 24th – 27th)
- Danum Valley Field Centre (August 27th – 31st)
- Mabul Island (September 1st – 3rd)
- Kota Kinabalu (September 4th – 5th)

Diary

Mount Kinabalu

We stayed at Kinabalu Mountain Lodge and I'd strongly recommend this place as long as you have your own car to go from there to the park. It's very cheap and it has a very nice terrace from which you can see a beautiful landscape and some very nice birds. We had arrived very late at night on the 19th, so, instead of going straight to the park, we slept until a bit late and enjoyed a breakfast on the lodge's terrace. It turned out to be a very good decision from a birding point of view too, since we got the only sightings of Bornean Leafbird and Kinabalu Serpent-eagle of the entire trip. Several Mountain Barbets and a Whitehead's Spiderhunter were singing from the bottom of the valley and it would have been possible to see them in this area if we had gone for them. Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush, Bornean Flowerpecker and the ubiquitous Chestnut-crested Yuhina filled the endemic species list seen foraging around the garden in our first morning there.

We then decided it was about time to enter the park. Since the dirty road that links the main road with the lodge looked good at night, we left the car and covered the 2km distance between the lodge and the park entrance walking. The walk produced nice views of a Blyth's Hawk-eagle soaring over and a flock of Black-capped White-eyes with at least 2 Hume's White-eyes in between. We also saw the first Palearctic migrant of the trip, in the shape of an unexpected Asian Brown Flycatcher.

Our first contact with the park was kind of disappointing. We did the lower part of the Kiau View trail, coming back to the road across the Pandanus trail. Golden-napped Barbets calling from everywhere, but impossible to find them high in the trees. My first

tropical mixed flock ever was made out of Grey-chinned Minivets, White-throated Fantails, more Chestnut-crested Yuhina and a Yellow-breasted Warbler. At that point, I got the feeling I was missing half of the flock...

In our way back to the lodge, just before exiting the park, we came across another flock of Laughingthrushes, this time with several Sunda Laughingthrushes among the Chestnut-hooded. Some stunning Bornean Tree-pies were noisily feeding in the trees around the restaurants at the park gate.

When it was almost dark, already from the lodge, I finally managed good views of a Golden-napped Barbet singing from the top of a tree. That was it for the first day. Several nice species seen, but the feeling I was missing too much and the increasing fear of not having enough information/experience to find the top targets.

The second day didn't start better. We decided to go straight to the Timpohon gate, looking for Mountain Black-eye and some other highland specialties, to no avail. After a short stop at the viewpoint under the Bukit Ular Trail, that produced Little Cuckoo-dove and Mountain Imperial Pigeon we then took the Upper Silau-Silau trail, meant to be good for Whitehead's Trogon and Bornean Stubtail, among others. The area was extremely quiet, with just one flock seen along the entire trail. However, it included the only Maroon Woodpecker and Penan Bulbul (the ugliest endemic?) of the trip. Some Bornean Whistlers around too. In our way back to the car (upper in the Power Station Road) our luck changed. We came across a group of birders who told us they had found a fruiting tree just before the Timpohon gate toilets, in the right side of the road going up. Seemingly, they had seen a Fruit-hunter there a couple of days before. We decided to pay yet another short visit to the Timpohon gate before loo-

Record shots of the Fruit-hunters. A male (left), a female-type (centre) and a male feeding a female-type (right).





Male Whitehead's Broadbill. Mount Kinabalu, August 20th 2017.

king for the tree, again to no avail. When we reached the fruiting tree area, the birders were there again and they had already seen a Whitehead's Broadbill, probably my #1 target of the trip (and I know this is hard to say). I still don't know the reasons for not having gone straight to the tree as soon as they had told us about it, but I blame the excitement of being in an enormous rainforest for the first time, with loads of species in the wish list and a not well-defined enough action plan. Thankfully, the luck of finding that group of birders outweighed it all.

The information they provided was key not only in terms of where the birds were but also of how to find them. They then went to the Timpohon gate and we stayed in front of the tree in our own, waiting for whatever to come. The first birds to show up were a party of Bornean Tree-pies, noisy as usual. After a while, a female-like Fruit-hunter appeared and started feeding right over us. Finally, one of the most sought-after endemics in the pocket! While watching the Fruit-hunter, a Mountain Barbet joined it (at a higher altitude than usual for this "RIC species") and then another Fruit-hunter, also female-like, plus yet another Fruit-hunter, this time a gorgeous male. The male

was doing some funny movements that I identified as some sort of display, but then we could see it feeding one of the female-like birds. So in the end I think we were watching a family flock of what is meant to be one of the hardest species in Borneo.

To carry on with the party, we finally got a glimpse of a green flash behind the dense foliage: definitely a Whitehead's Broadbill. At this time, the group of birders came back and we were all waiting for the bird to show up. One of the Fruit-hunters came back and we were all distracted by it when Laura spotted the Broadbill at a ridiculous short distance, perched in the open. Although the light was not the best, the views of it were just amazing. This bird itself is a celebration of bird beauty, greener than the surrounding green rainforest, bright green despite the backlighting. An absolute cracker.

Other interesting birds seen in this area included several Bornean Whistling Thrushes, at least 2 Sunda Bush Warbler, some Mountain Leaf Warblers, some Yellow-breasted Warblers and a flock of Pale-faced Bulbuls, the only sighting we managed of this highland species.



Male Whitehead's Trogon. Mount Kinabalu, August 21st 2017.

After such an orgy of lifers, we felt much more relaxed. Our stay at Kinabalu Mountain was already a success, and we still had a day and a half to search for the rest of the biggies. We decided to spend the midday hours in a good location for the Whitehead's Spiderhunter the tour leader had told us (if you are reading this, thanks again!). The place is just by the Power Station Road, in the lodge after the Liwagu restaurant going up the road (to the left). According to the tour leader, this is probably the best place to find the species nowadays. It indeed has loads of long flowers, the Spiderhunter's favourite. We soon heard an individual that flew in, giving short but good views. However, when I became actually excited, because it was entirely unexpected, was when a small flock of Pygmy Heleia showed up in an isolated tree just by the apartments. This species is very scarce and people usually find it around the lodges out of the park. I thought the only chances we had to see it were around the Kinabalu Mountain Lodge, although I was aware it would be very difficult. It was finally inside of the park, when we weren't even thinking of it.

Already in the afternoon, we took the Lower Silau-Si-

lau trail, looking for the last of the Whitehead's trio: Whitehead's Trogon. Not much later, Laura, who was developing some sort of sixth sense to spot the best species of the rainforest, located a resplendent male sitting on a branch, just over the trail. A female was also present, sitting some meters away. Some trekkers were coming towards us, about to pass under the trogon so I was afraid they'd flush it. They didn't, both male and female stayed there, immobile, remaining unnoticed by the trekkers. After feeling sorry for the people who goes to such places and doesn't look for one of the most amazing bird species in the world, we focused on the birds. It's that beautiful that the more you look at it the more it seems unreal.

Later on, in the highest area of the Bukit Tupai trail, we came across another mixed flock that included a new species for the trip: Erpornis. What a perfect day 2 in the Mountain.

We wanted to spend our last morning looking for the highland species again. We entered the park when it was still almost dark and it turned out to be the key. In our way up, we spotted an Eyebrowed Jungle-Flycatcher in the middle of the road, in the entrance of



Everett's thrush. Mount Kinabalu, August 22nd 2017.

the Mempening Trail, but the best was still to come. Since both the Bukit Ular and the Upper Mempening trails were closed (I don't know why, as far as I knew, it was only the summit trail closed due to the recent earthquake) I was resigned to miss the Everett's Thrush. However, after a couple of waking up calls in the shape of Bornean Whistling Thrushes, the third bird of the suitable size and shape we saw was an Everett's, feeding on the grass just by the road. The light was still very poor, but I managed some record shots to allow identifying the colour rings it was wearing. For what it's worth, I think it's sporting a green ring plus a metal ring in the right leg and a black ring in the left. This is one of the rarest species in the area and I hope this information is helpful for whoever is monitoring them. It was seen from the Power Station Road, just by the lower entrance of the Bukit Ular trail.

After such a nice start, we visited the Timpohon gate

for the 3rd time and, in the end, we managed good views of at least 3 Mountain Black-eyes. Some Indigo Flycatchers were also present in the area, as well as a very approachable Golden-napped Barbet.

We then took the Upper Kiau View Trail, a place meant to be good for both Bloodhead (I prefer this name rather than Crimson-headed Partridge) and Bornean Partridge. We soon located at least 2 Bloodheads crossing the trail and were lucky enough to get very good binocular views of one of them peacefully grazing in a nearby clearing. This species turned out to be one of the most memorable of the trip. It's a partridge, but a very especial one! No sign of Bornean Partridge or Mountain Wren-Babbler, another desired endemic. However, I flushed two dark birds that "looked interesting" but remained unidentified for a while. I didn't react with the first, got suspicious with the second and finally very happy when the third landed for half a second and manage to get bin views: they were Bornean Shortwings. They flew very quick and close to the ground, from a mossy area behind a dead tree, perfectly fitting what the field guide says of them.

We were almost done with the highland species, apart from the impossible ones such as Friendly Bush Warbler, so we went down to the lower Silau-Silau again. There was still a good number of species to be seen, but I was already more than happy with what we had seen. The one I wanted the most was the Bornean For-

Mountain Wren-babbler. Mount Kinabalu, August 22nd 2017.



ktail.

It was lunchtime, so before entering the trail we decided to go to a restaurant. We had eaten at Liwagu restaurant the day before and wanted to try something else, so we went to the Balsam cafe. It sounded like a good option after such an exciting morning. We took a sort of trail that links the Silau-Silau with the cafe area and, unexpectedly, located a Bornean Partridge in the middle of it. It's a degraded area, not precisely beautiful, but I'll always remember it for that sighting. Later on, some other birders we found told us that this species goes down the valleys when it's dry and hot, as it seemed to be the case. The Balsam cafe restaurant was closed and we had to cope with some groceries we had brought.

I was afraid of the Bornean Forktail being the only Forktail species we would see and I didn't want to come back home from Asia without having seen such a flagship family. It took us a couple of hours walking around the lower trails and even paying the entrance fee to the botanical garden after the birders we found had told us they had seen one flying towards its direction, but we finally saw a very nice pair of them (the male being colour-ringed as well) in the beginning of the lower Silau-Silau. While looking at the Forktails, we eventually got busy with a mixed flock that popped up from nowhere. The first species we identified were Yellow-breasted Warblers and Temminck's Babblers (heard only until that point) but then some other brown birds came very close to us.

They were Grey-throated Babblers, a species that is meant to be common but we hadn't seen yet. After some minutes with the babblers I noticed there was something else. We approached the bush and they turned out to be Mountain Wren-Babblers, a species I had been looking for.

This was the last species we found in Mount Kinabalu. Although we worked hard trying to find the remaining species during the last hours, that was it for us in the highlands. Only three endemics remained undetected: Bare-headed Laughingthrush, Bornean Stubtail and Bornean Green Magpie. The first is a very scarce species and most people sees just one by using tentative playback. We tried in suitable areas, but didn't work. The Stubtail is almost impossible if not heard and, according to the tour leader we met, they aren't vocal at all at this time of the year (late august). Although some trip reports say it's a common sound in summer, I'm pretty sure that's a mistake. And regarding the Green Magpie... what can I say? That was just a big and unexpected loss.

Poring Hot Springs

The day after, we woke up extremely early to be at Poring Hot Springs before sunset, the famous place for Blue-banded Pitta and Hose's Broadbill. Both are very scarce, but what makes them really hard to find is the place. A "3km" steeply trail that takes you to a waterfall (and the Broadbill area). Following Pritam Baruah trip report, we were in a hurry to reach the 2km marker of the waterfall trail, a place meant to be good for Blue-banded Pitta. Our plan was to spend the time there and resign to the Broadbill, since it's very hard to find even if you reach the place. The 2km up to the Pitta place are among the hardest birding I've ever done, especially because they are not 2km. Since we couldn't believe we had walked that little, I tracked the way back with a GPS and, oh surprise, we had walked for more than 6 km (almost 13 taking in total) straight up, without a single flat area to have a breathe. In our way up, we heard at least 2 Great Argus (remained heard only in the end) and saw a Yellow-crowned Barbet (the only of the trip), which was pretty much it.

We decided to leave after almost one hour waiting for the Pitta (intermittently playing its call) but, when we had walked 100m back, we could hear it calling from a bit down the sloppy side of the trail, in an area that had quite a lot of bamboo. Excited about the possibility of seeing a mythic species such as Blue-banded Pitta, we left the trail and tried to get a bit closer to the bird, sit down and waited. But that was it again. It called 3 times but didn't want to show up.

While waiting for the Pitta, we saw our first Bornean Brown Barbets and the only Chestnut-backed Scimitar-Babbler of the trip. I still don't know if this was all worth it.

Back to the actual hot springs area, we decided to enjoy a bath surrounded by a very nice environment. There were loads of Bulbuls in the disturbed vegetation around the small pools and the reception building. I managed to see one group of, among other commoner species, Scaly-breasted and some Black-headed Bulbuls that remained the only of the trip. This low area is full of very tame White-crowned Shamans, one of the easiest endemics.

Gomantong

Later in the evening, we were already at Gomantong Caves. We didn't have the time to get to the caves, but at least we wanted to enjoy the Bat Hawk show. At least 3 different birds were chasing the flocks of bats emerging from the caves. Also a Hooded Pitta calling just by the entrance road.



Kinabatangan

What in the beginning looked like a place we couldn't afford, ended up being one of the best birding experiences of my life. After having checked several trip reports and realised the recent ridiculous increase in the Kinabatangan Jungle Camp rates, our options to stay in the area and actually have some options to see some of the targets were around zero. However, a phone call with Dani and an email to Yann brought some hope: they both strongly advised I should contact Romzi Awang. So I did, and it was one of the best decisions of the trip. Romzi is a professional local guide that has grown up his reputation together with Robert Chong, the famous funder of Kinabatangan Jungle Camp. Romzi currently represents the best chance you have to connect with the Bornean Ground Cuckoo, probably the most sought-after endemic of the entire trip. His knowledge of the species, almost to individual level, is the only way to guarantee you are doing your best to see this enigmatic species. He also provides amazing views of other big targets, especially White-crowned Hornbill, Oriental Bay Owl and Large Frogmouth.

We met him when it was already dark night and immediately crossed the river with his small boat, the boat where we were going to spend 10 hours a day for the next 5 days. He had sorted our accommodation

Bornean Bristlehead. Menangol, August 24th 2017.

at his sister's, a lovely local house where we shared a bucket challenge-like shower almost with his entire family. All the meals were also provided and they were local and basic but very nice food.

Everything for an extremely reasonable price, especially keeping in mind the average rates of the lodges around.

The morning after, we were ready to go at around dawn. Romzi turned the engine on and quickly sailed to the Mennanggul tributary river entrance. I'll never forget the first 100m: A stunning male White-crowned Hornbill was sat in a dead branch of a Strangling Fig Tree and so were a party of 6 White-fronted Falconets. Soon, Romzi got excited: he had heard the distinctive call of the Bornean Bristlehead. Not much later, we were enjoying 2 birds of this endangered endemic feeding and calling from a nearby tree. Sepilok is no longer a reliable place for the species and most people struggles to find them within the dense rainforest and complex trail system of the Danum Valley Field Centre. Although Kinabatangan seems to be the place to connect with the species these days, I still feel we were extremely lucky of enjoying great views of this mega in our first day in the area.

The scenery was unforgettable: it was just the three of us (Laura, Romzi and me) sailing along the sma-



Top: Bornean Pygmy Elephant. Kinabatangan, August 24th 2017.

Bottom: Large Frogmouth. Kinabatangan, August 24th 2017.

ll tributary, surrounded by a mesmerizing rainforest packed with monkeys (we got our first gang of Proboscis Monkeys that morning), birds and butterflies. No sight of the Bornean Ground Cuckoo yet, but great views of Hooded Pitta, Red-napped Trogon, Rhinoceros, Bushy-crested, Black, and Oriental Pied Hornbills, Stork-billed Kingfisher and our first Storm's storks.

After the first morning feast, we decided to spend the afternoon going up and down the main river, looking for mammals. Our main target was the family of Bornean Pygmy Elephants that had been sighted a bit downstream. After a quick but heavy rain shower, the whole gang feeding on the soft reed by the river rewarded us with excellent views. The group was made out of females and young, but it was possible to hear the males screaming from inside the nearby forest. Goose-bumping. In our way back, another species of Hornbill, and a very beautiful one: the Wrinkled Hornbill. The riversides were full of monkeys again and we enjoyed great views of 4 species: Silvery Langur, Pig-tailed Macaque, Long-tailed Macaque and Proboscis Monkey.

Not happy with that, we had arranged with Romzi a night cruise to see Large Frogmouth, my first species of Frogmouth ever. After dinnertime, we went out again, this time equipped with torches. We sailed for around 2 minutes and then walked for about 5.

Although we almost immediately heard an individual calling, it didn't seem to be much tape responsive. After a while, we realised the bird was sat in a low branch, just 3 metres away from us, that close that I couldn't take a photo of the entire bird with my long lens. Just amazing.

The day after wasn't going to be worse. With not even the first cup of tea in, we finally heard the sound we had been waiting for: a Bornean Ground Cuckoo was responding to the tape, but it was still distant. Romzi was stopping the speaker every 5 minutes, assessing the bird's behaviour. We didn't hear anything more until a short angry noise came from behind the nearest tree. That was the bird's alarm call, something that, according to Romzi, happens when you are about to see one. We did, indeed, the bird moved in and we got less than half a second of bare-eye views of the entire bird. The sole movement of raising our bins to actually enjoy it scared it away and I immediately became afraid it wouldn't come back. We had seen a Bornean Ground Cuckoo, but too briefly to store an image of it in our minds. It took a while for it to respond to the tape again, but when it did it sounded very close, to the point I connected with it again: this

time I managed to get binocular views of the legs, the tail and half of a wing. In contrast to what had happened in the first observation, this time the bird walked away slowly, pretending to go unnoticed behind the dense bushes. What a shy animal! Romzi moved the boat a bit. We waited for it to show up from the other side of the small river, and it worked. Laura, again, spotted it in the open, where it remained for 10 seconds, allowing us binocular views of the entire bird, followed by an extra 30 seconds of intermittent views of parts of it moving into the rainforest, from where it carried on calling. At that point, we celebrated with a snack, a cup of tea and one of Romzi's tasty sweet cigarettes (everything legal), but I'm still celebrating now that I'm writing these lines.

We had already seen our main targets in the area and the remaining were just some extra megas such as Giant Pitta or Helmeted Hornbill (sadly impossible to guarantee these days), so we focused our energies on another target, a very especial one: Orang-utan.

It was later that evening that we finally spotted a female and a young resting on some branches. Watching a wild Orang-utan had been a dream since I was a child. It's magic: when you see one you immediately realise there's not many of them left and it's our entire fault. They are shy animals. The youngster quickly hid behind some branches, and the female followed him soon after.

The evening was pretty quiet birdwise in comparison, with some nice birds such as another Hooded Pitta along the Mennanggul, great views of more Storm's

White-bellied Woodpecker. Menanggul, August 26th 2017.





Orang-utan. Kinabatangan, August 27th 2017.

Storks, White-bellied, Lesser and a single Grey-headed Fish-eagles by the main river, the only Changeable Hawk-eagle of the trip and 2 Bat Hawks on the way to Oxbow Lake, where we enjoyed a memorable landscape.

The day after started with a similar collection of birds, again sailing along the Mennanggul tributary, but we added really nice views of a vocal Violet Cuckoo, a pair of displaying Jerdon's Baza, two very showy Great Slaty Woodpeckers and a really nice White-bellied Woodpecker. During the hot midday, and just behind his sister's home, Romzi taped in a Chestnut-necklaced Partridge, a potential split and hence a future endemism. The bushes around his place had good numbers of birds, even during the hot lunchtime hours we spent at home. I managed to see some other new birds for me, such as flocks of the endemic Dusky Munia, a Lesser Coucal, both Banded and Black-and-yellow Broadbills and a Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher. The evening was spent along the Teneggang river, but, before getting there, we enjoyed very (too) close views of an enormous Salt water Crocodile. The beast eventually stood up and got into the water, getting us goose bumps again. Once on the tributary, the highlights were a flyover (but our first) Blue-crowned Hanging

Parrot, good numbers of Hornbills (including another solitary White-crowned) and the only Rufous-bellied Eagle of the trip perched in a branch close by.

However, the best of the day was still to come. The weather was very good, so we thought it was a good idea to give a try for Oriental Bay Owl that night. The strategy was similar to that with the Frogmouth. Sailed for a while, then walked for 3 minutes and there it was, eye-level views of an Oriental Bay Owl. We didn't need it to be that close to assess the size of its feet, disproportionately big to stay still on vertical surfaces, but having this species at such close range makes you appreciate every single detail: from the subtle pink eye-ring to the tear-shaped spots on the underparts. No wonder why it's considered one of the most amazing owls in the world.

We spent our last morning along the Kinabatangan river system just enjoying ourselves. We wanted to see another Orang-utan, so we mainly sailed along the main river looking for them. We ended up seeing a young male that gave stunning views. This time, to our delight, we had as much time as we wanted to enjoy its presence. Very good views of another Jerdon's Baza, a shy Ruddy Kingfisher and a Crested Goshawk



Black-crowned Pitta. Gomantong, August 27th 2017.

flying over completed the new species for the trip seen that morning.

Since we had seen pretty much everything by the rivers, we decided to spend our last evening with Romzi at Gomantong, this time visiting the caves and actually looking for some birds around. It went very well. There were several Swiftlets of all 3 species sitting in their distinctive nests, something still required to be sure of what species you are looking at. Mossy-nest Swiftlets were the scarcest, whereas there were good numbers of Edible-nest (being collected) and Black-nest. Just by the road, we managed to tape in a stun-

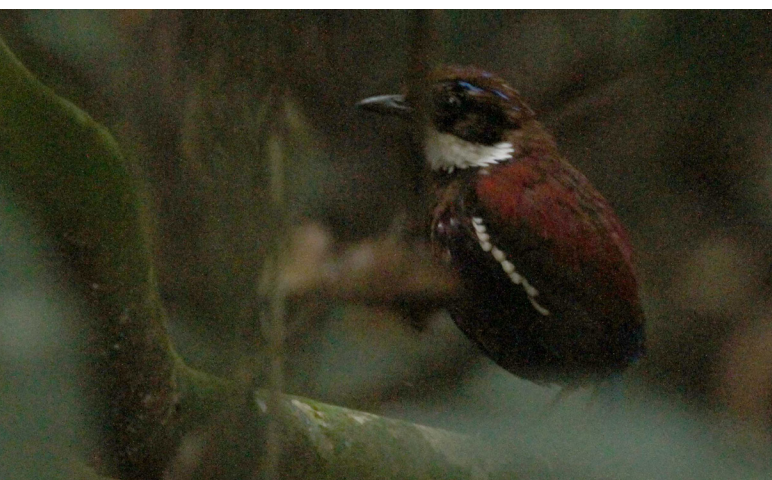
ning Black-crowned Pitta that gave great views. Other interesting birds included a female Wreathed Hornbill (the only of the trip), a heard-only White-crowned Hornbill and a small party of Ferruginous Babblers (also heard around Kinabatangan, but those were the only seen during the trip).

Farewell time. None of the above would have been possible without Romzi and I strongly recommend contacting him if you want to see the best birds there. You can find him on WhatsApp (+60 19-897 5811) and also on his new Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/romzieawang988/>). Please, trust me.

Danum Valley Field Centre

Our next stop was the Danum Valley Field Centre. This is the less expensive option to visit the pristine forest in Danum Valley. However, it's still expensive, very expensive, especially keeping in mind you are sleeping in bunk beds with a very old fan you share with 4 people. If you think you've paid for everything by the odd transfers they ask you to do in order to book your stay, once you get there you still have to pay for absolutely everything: to have access to the washing machine, for the internet... even to walk around.

Blue-headed Pitta. DVFC, August 29th 2017.







Bornean Spiderhunter. DVFC, August 31st 2017.

There's only one trail where you are allowed to go on your own and it's the short one that takes you to the (closed) observation tower. For the rest, you need to hire a couple of rangers that will always be with you. Following some people's advice, we just ignored this rule and went away on our own. Sometimes we met rangers accompanying other trekkers or birders and none of them told us off, just the staple friendly hello and goodbye. It's also worth-mentioning that, according to the lady in the visitor's centre, none of the rangers knows anything about birds or animals in general. I'm happy contributing to the local economy, especially if it supports nature conservation, but I won't pay such an amount of money for nothing.

The first evening was spent in this lower area, all the way to the observation tower and back. The first thing you realise when you enter these trails is that they are infested with leeches. Although we were wearing wading boots and long trousers, we immediately became kind of paranoid about them. However, as time goes on, you get sort of used to them.

One of the first birds we saw was the near-endemic Crested Fireback in the shape of a nice male crossing

the trail. At least 3 Black-crowned Pittas were calling from a bit faraway but while trying to tape them in, a Blue-headed Pitta emerged and obliged at a ridiculously close distance for a while. I reckon it's not a bright adult male, maybe a 1st year male? Nice to connect with the 2nd endemic Pitta of the trip (plus heard-only Blue-banded) nonetheless.

Those were going to be almost the last photos I managed to take at Danum Valley. The day after, my camera decided to stop working as early as I took it out of the bag. It was just wet, but to get it dry there is a huge challenge. I managed every night, to stop working again the morning after. VERY frustrating. So was the birding in general. I saw some nice birds during the days we spent at Danum, including some megas like a very vocal male Giant Pitta, 2 flying-over Helmeted Hornbills, more Black-crowned and Blue-headed Pittas, an amazing Black-throated Wren Babbler and a Bornean Ground Babbler, together with other exciting stuff such as Scarlet-rumped (3) and Diard's (just 1) Trogons, Green Broadbill, amazing views of a White-fronted Falconet, Maroon-breasted Philentoma, some Palearctic migrants such as Dark-sided and Asian Brown Flycatchers and an Arctic Warbler

already integrating a mixed flock made out of a Golden-whiskered Barbet, some Black-napped Monarchs and Brown-throated Sunbirds (?). However, I missed loads, the most painful one being Bornean Banded Pitta. I think this was probably the most beautiful Pitta of the trip and having seen a Giant (one of the most sought-after species in the world) doesn't outweigh the fact I didn't manage to connect with one of my most desired species. I visited all the locations meant to be good for it, but it just wasn't vocal. I even tried tentative playback in some of these areas and got nothing back. Fortunately, there are very similar species in other Greater Sundas, so hopefully I'll get to enjoy the smart barred underparts of these amazing birds at some point.

Mabul Island

Our last stop was Mabul Island, the well-known diving hotspot. The island has two faces: the diving clubs (some fancier than others, but all seemed to be ok) and the very poor village behind them. Since it's all polluted and degraded, the island is not very interesting bird-wise. However, we managed to get reasona-

bly good views of at least 4 Black-napped Fruit-doves around the palm trees on the south end of the island. High numbers of Lesser Frigatebirds were flying both off and over. The shore was packed with Pacific Reef Egrets and Rufous Night Herons, with some Striated Herons feeding under the diving clubs. The sea-watching wasn't much productive, but at least it did allow good views of both Swift and Black-napped terns. The diving, however, was amazing. We stayed at Scuba Jeff (<http://scubajeffsipadan.com>), the high-quality budget option, and I highly recommend it: continuous on-going party in a hipsterish basic accommodation plus amazing diving with Jeff (an underwater-photo legend) and Alex (probably the best diving instructor in the area).



Annotated Trip List

Birds

All the species seen or heard during the trip are listed below following the taxonomy in Eaton et al. 2016. Details are given for the remarkable observations. The endemic species are highlighted in bold.

Species	Comment
Bornean Partridge	1 bird seen by Balsam Café, Mount Kinabalu
Chestnut-necklaced Partridge	Several heard around Kinabatangan River. 1 tape-responsive seen well by Romzi's house.
Great Argus	2 birds heard at Waterfall trail, Poring Hot Springs
Crimson-headed Partridge	2 birds seen upper Kiau View trail
Red Junglefowl	1 apparently wild individual at Tenegang
Bornean Crested Fireback	1 bird seen by the restaurant, 1 at Nature Trail and 1 roosting at the entrance road, all in DVFC area
Spotted Dove	Common en route
Little Cuckoo-Dove	Several sightings in Kinabalu NP
Zebra Dove	Several en route and at Kota Kinabalu parks
Little Green Pigeon	Big flocks at Kinabatangan and DVFC
Pink-necked Green Pigeon	Not as numerous as Little, but still abundant in Kinabatangan and DVFC
Large Green Pigeon	2 flocks seen at DVFC: one at the entrance road, one in The Grid
Asian Emerald Dove	Several sightings in Kinabatangan and DVFC
Black-naped Fruit-dove	At least 4 on Mabul
Green Imperial Pigeon	Several in all lowland areas
Mountain Imperial Pigeon	Some seen from upper Kiau View and Timpohon Gate
Rinhorta	One at the entrance road, DVFC
Moustached Hawk-cuckoo	One seen and heard at Menanggol, Kinabatangan
Plaintive Cuckoo	1 at Gomantong
Violet Cuckoo	1 at Menanggol, 1 in The Grid (DVFC)
Greater Coucal	1 at Tenegang
Lesser Coucal	1 at Romzi's place
Bornean Ground Cuckoo	1 at the beginning of Sungai Sukau, Kinabatangan.
Whiskered Treeswift	Several along the entrance road, DVFC
Grey-rumped Treeswift	Some around DVFC. The restaurant seemed to be a good place to see them well.
Asian Palm Swift	Common in villages
Giant Swiftlet	At least 4 birds seen from Timpohon Gate, Kinabalu NP
Bornean Swiftlet	A flock of swiftlets seen high up the mountain from the Timpohon Gate assumed to be of this species
Plume-toed Swiftlet	Common at all lowland sites
Mossy-nest Swiftlet	Just a few in Gomantong cave
Black-nest Swiftlet	Several in Gomantong cave
Edible-nest Swiftlet	Some in Gomantong cave
Brown-backed Needletail	Some at Kinabatangan
Silver-rumped Spinetail	Common at DVFC
Large Frogmouth	Great views of one at Romzi's location
White-breasted Waterhen	1 at Kinabalu Mountain Lodge garden. 2 en route.
Common Sandpiper	Several seen at all lowland sites
Black-naped Tern	At least 4 off Mabul
Great Crested Tern	At least 8 off Mabul
Lesser Frigatebird	Several on Mabul
Oriental Darter	Some around Kinabatangan area, 1 flying over DVFC
Storm's Stork	Several seen around Kinabatangan River.

Species	Comment
Lesser Adjutant	1 bird seen at dusk by Kinabatangan River.
Cattle Egret	Several en route
Intermediate Egret	Several around Kinabatangan River
Grey Heron	Some at Kota Kinabalu shores
Eastern Great Egret	Several around Kinabatangan River
Purple Heron	Several around Kinabatangan River
Chinese Egret	At least 1 at Kota Kinabalu shores
Little Egret	Several at Kota Kinabalu shores
Pacific Reef Egret	Several on Mabul
Striated Heron	Several on Mabul
Black-crowned Night-heron	Several in Kinabatangan
Rufous Night Heron	Several on Mabul
Black-winged Kite	3 en route from Semporna to Tawau
Jerdon's Baza	2 sightings involving 4 birds at Kinabatangan
Sunda Honey Buzzard	1 perched at the entrance road, DVFC
Crested Serpent Eagle	Several in Kinabatangan. Also seen Gomantong and DVFC
Kinabalu Serpent Eagle	1 flying in front of Kinabalu Mountain Lodge
Bat Hawk	3 hunting bats at Gomantong, 1 at Oxbow Lake, Kinabatangan
Changeable Hawk-eagle	1 in Kinabatangan
Blyth's Hawk-eagle	1 soaring over Kinabalu Mountain Lodge road
Wallace's Hawk-Eagle	Several in Kinabatangan
Rufous-bellied Eagle	1 perched at Tenegang tributary
Black Eagle	1 flying over The Grid, DVFC
White-bellied Sea Eagle	At least 4 in Kinabatangan area. Also on Mabul Island.
Lesser Fish Eagle	Several in Kinabatangan
Grey-headed Fish-eagle	2 at Tenegang tributary
Brahminy Kite	Several en route
Crested Goshawk	3 sightings in Kinabatangan area
Oriental Bay Owl	Great views of one individual at Kinabatangan, another one calling from behind.
Reddish Scops Owl	1 heard at Menanggol, Kinabatangan
Mountain Scops Owl	Several heard from Kinabalu Mountain Lodge
Barred Eagle-Owl	Good views of a tape responsive individual at Gomantong
Buffy Fish Owl	Several around Kinabatangan River
Bornean Wood Owl	Heard only at DVFC
Sunda Owlet	Some heard at Kinabalu NP
Red-naped Trogon	1 at Menanggol, Kinabatangan
Diard's Trogon	1 at the entrance road, DVFC
Whitehead's Trogon	Stunning views of a pair at Lower Silau-Silau trail
Scarlet-rumped Trogon	3 seen at DVFC (1 Temballing Waterfalls trail, 1 The Grid, 1 entrance road)
White-crowned Hornbill	1 at Menanggol, 1 at Tenegang and 1 heard only at Gomantong
Bushy-crested Hornbill	Seen 3 times in Kinabatangan and 1 at DVFC
Oriental Pied Hornbill	Common in all lowland sites
Black Hornbill	The 2nd commonest Hornbill, seen at all lowland sites
Rhinoceros Hornbill	Several seen at all lowland sites
Helmeted Hornbill	2 flying over The Grid, DVFC
Wrinkled Hornbill	The only of the trip was a female seen at Gomantong
Wreathed Hornbill	2 seen in Kinabatangan
Bornean Brown Barbet	Several sightings in Kinabatangan area. Also seen at Poring.
Gold-whiskered Barbet	Several at DVFC
Red-throated Barbet	Several heard at Kinabatangan. Only one seen briefly

Species	Comment
Mountain Barbet	1 in a fruiting tree by the Power Station Road, just before the Timpohon gate toilet.
Yellow-crowned Barbet	The only of the trip was seen at Poring Hot Springs
Golden-naped Barbet	Common in Kinabalu NP. Some individuals at Timpohon Gate seemed tame and provided good photo opportunities.
Blue-eared Barbet	Pretty common at Kinabatangan. Also heard in DVFC
Grey-and-buff Woodpecker	Seen 3 times in Kinabatangan
Maroon Woodpecker	Only seen once at Kinabalu NP
Orange-backed Woodpecker	1 seen well at The Grid, DVFC
Buff-rumped Woodpecker	Seen once at Tenegang
Buff-necked Woodpecker	Seen twice in Kinabatangan
Checker-throated Woodpecker	1 seen well at Upper Silau Silau, Kinabalu NP
Crimson-winged Woodpecker	1 bird at Upper Silau Silau, Kinabalu NP
Great Slaty Woodpecker	At least 3 sightings involving no less than 6 birds at Menanggol
White-bellied Woodpecker	2 birds at Menanggol. One of them providing amazing views.
Stork-billed Kingfisher	Several in Kinabatangan
Ruddy Kingfisher	One at Tenegang, Kinabatangan
Collared Kingfisher	Several en route
Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher	Some in Kinabatangan, both black and orange backed birds were noted.
Blue-eared Kingfisher	Several in Kinabatangan
Blue-banded Kingfisher	1 at Tenegang
Common Kingfisher	At least 2 at Tenegang
Blue-throated Bee-eater	Several in all lowland sites
Common Dollarbird	Common in all lowland sites
White-fronted Falconet	6 roosting at Menanggol. 1 at DVFC entrance road
Peregrine Falcon	1 hunting bats at Gomantong
Long-tailed Parakeet	Some flying over at Kinabatangan
Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	Only one flying over Tenegang
Green Broadbill	1 at Tembaling Waterfall Trail, DVFC
Whitehead's Broadbill	Amazing views of a male in a fruiting tree by the Power Station Road, just before the Timpohon gate toilet. A female was present too.
Black-and-red Broadbill	Several in Kinabatangan and DVFC
Banded Broadbill	2 sightings at Kinabatangan
Black-and-yellow Broadbill	Several at all lowland sites
Giant Pitta	Finally good views of a very vocal male at DVFC (see map for details). It wasn't tape responsive the first time we connected with it, but finally showed up after 1h wait.
Blue-headed Pitta	3 seen well at DVFC. Some heard.
Blue-banded Pitta	1 bird heard at 2k marker, Poring Hot Springs. Didn't seem tape-responsive at all.
Black-crowned Pitta	Seen well at Kinabatangan, Gomantong and DVFC. Several heard
Hooded Pitta	Several heard at Kinabatangan. Seen well there and at Gomantong.
Blyth's Shrike-vireo	Some records at Kinabalu NP, especially at Pandanus trail
Erpornis	Some in a mixed flock from Bukit Tupal shelter, Kinabalu NP
Dark-throated Oriole	Several at Gomantong and DVFC, also noted at Kinabatangan
Bornean Whistler	Several in Kinabalu NP
Maroon-breasted Philentoma	1 at the entrance road, DVFC
Bornean Bristlehead	2 birds at Menanggol. Seems extremely easy to miss these days.
Common Iora	Some seen at Kinabatangan area and DVFC
Green Iora	1 seen at Kinabatangan area
White-breasted Woodswallow	Common en route and at all lowland sites.
Scarlet Minivet	1 seen at The Grid, DVFC
Grey-chinned Minivet	Several in mixed flocks at Kinabalu NP, also from the Lodge.
Fiery Minivet	Some seen at DVFC, especially along the entrance road

Species	Comment
Spotted Fantail	2 birds seen well at Gomantong. Only record in the entire trip.
White-throated Fantail	Common in Kinabalu NP
Pied Fantail	Very common at all lowland sites
Bronzed Drongo	Seen well at DVFC
Ashy Drongo	Some around Kinabalu NP.
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	Heard at Kinabatangan. Seen well at DVFC
Bornean Spangled Drongo	1 seen at upper Silau Silau trail, Kinabalu NP
Black-naped Monarch	Heard at Gomantong. Seen well at DVFC (entrance road and Tembaling Waterfalls Trail)
Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher	One seen well at Menanggol.
Long-tailed Shrike	2 en route Poring - Sukau
Bornean Treepie	Common at Kinabalu NP
Bornean Black Magpie	2 records involving 5 birds, all of them in Kinabatangan: 3 birds at Menanggol and 2 birds at Sungai Sukau
Sunda Crow	Common at Kinabatangan
Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	Some seen at DVFC, especially along the entrance road
Barn Swallow	Some at Kinabatangan, especially at Tenegang
Pacific Swallow	Common everywhere
Sunda Yellow-vented Bulbul	Common everywhere
Pale-faced Bulbul	A small party by the fruiting tree close to Timpohon Gate' toilet
Olive-winged Bulbul	Common at all lowland sites
Cream-vented Bulbul	Common at all lowland sites
Asian Red-eyed Bulbul	Common at all lowland sites
Scaly-breasted Bulbul	At least 3 birds in a mixed flock at Poring entrance
Spectacled Bulbul	Not seen many times, but most-likely common at all lowland sites, especially DVFC
Black-and-white Bulbul	1 at DVFC, by the rest houses.
Black-headed Bulbul	2 birds as part of the same mixed flock at Poring entrance
Hairy-backed Bulbul	A lovely flock of 6 birds at Gomantong parksite
Yellow-bellied Bulbul	Common at all lowland sites
Penan Bulbul	One bird fitting this taxon at Upper Silau Silau, Kinabalu NP
Cinereous Bulbul	Only 2 birds at Kinabalu Mountain Lodge access road
Streaked Bulbul	Common in Kinabatangan and DVFC
Striped Tit-Babbler	Seen several times around Kinabatangan area
Sunda Scimitar Babbler	Only one seen at 2k marker, Poring Hot Springs
Chestnut-winged Babbler	Seen several times at DVFC
Grey-throated Babbler	One flock at lower Silau Silau trail, Kinabalu NP.
Chestnut-rumped Babbler	One flock by the restaurant, DVFC
Moustached Babbler	Common at DVFC
Rufous-crowned Babbler	Common at DVFC
Scaly-crowned Babbler	Common at DVFC
Sooty-capped Babbler	Common at DVFC
Temminck's Babbler	4 birds at Lower Silau Silau, Kinabalu NP
White-chested Babbler	Common at all lowland sites, especially Kinabatangan
Ferruginous Babbler	Seen once at DVFC (entrance road) and twice at Kinabatangan
Short-tailed Babbler	One at Gomantong
Horsfield's Wren Babbler	Common at both Kinabatangan and DVFC
Black-throated Wren Babbler	One of the best birds seen. An individual flushed from one side of the DVFC entrance road to the other, seen very well for a few seconds when landed on the bottom of a bush.
Mountain Wren-Babbler	One flock at lower Silau Silau trail, Kinabalu NP.
Bornean Ground Babbler	Another stunner. One individual seen well at The Grid, DVFC.
Sunda Fulvetta	Some records at DVFC
Sunda Laughingthrush	Several in Kinabalu NP



Species	Comment
Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush	Several in Kinabalu NP
Chestnut-crested Yuhina	Several in Kinabalu NP
Pygmy Heleia	An unexpected small flock was seen around the appartments close to Liwagu restaurant, Kinabalu NP
Mountain Blackeye	A small flock seen at Timpohon Gate, Kinabalu NP
Black-capped White-eye	Several in Kinabalu NP
Hume's White-eye	2 birds in a mixed flock with Black-capped White-eyes at lower Kinabalu Mountain Lodge road
Arctic Warbler	One seen in a mixed flock by the rest houses, DVFC
Mountain Leaf Warbler	Several in Kinabalu NP
Sunda Warbler	Several in Kinabalu NP
Bamboo Bush Warbler	Some seen at the entrance road, DVFC
Sunda Bush Warbler	2 at Timpohon Gate
Dark-necked Tailorbird	Very common at DVFC, also seen at Kinabatangan
Ashy Tailorbird	Very common at all lowland sites
Rufous-tailed Tailorbird	Some at both Kinabatangan and DVFC
Yellow-bellied Prinia	Common at Kinabatangan
Asian Glossy Starling	Common en route and especially at Kinabatangan
Common Hill Myna	Common en route
Crested Myna	At least some at Kinabatangan
Everett's Thrush	One seen by upper Kiau View entrance from the Power Station Road at dawn. Colour-ringed.
Fruit-hunter	3 birds at the fruiting tree by Power Station Road, just before the Timpohon Gate toilets. One was a male and the other 2 were female-types; probably a family flock.
Oriental Magpie-Robin	Seen at all lowland sites, especially common at DVFC
White-crowned Shama	Seen at all lowland sites, especially common at Poring
Dark-sided Flycatcher	1 bird seen at Kinabalu Mountain Lodge entrance and another one at DVFC
Asian Brown Flycatcher	1 bird seen by Liwagu restaurant and another one at DVFC
White-tailed flycatcher	2 birds at The Grid, DVFC
Grey-chested Jungle Flycatcher	2 seen well at Tembaling Waterfalls Trail, DVFC
Malaysian Blue Flycatcher	Several around Kinabatangan River
Indigo Flycatcher	Some at Timpohon Gate, Kinabalu NP
Verditer Warbling-flycatcher	Several at DVFC entrance road
Bornean Shade-dweller	1 bird in the middle of the Power Station Road at dawn, Kinabalu NP.
Bornean Shortwing	Exciting encounters with at least 2 individuals along the Upper Kiau View Trail
Bornean Forktail	2 birds seen well at Lower Silau Silau trail, Kinabalu NP
Bornean Whistling Thrush	Several seen at Kinabalu NP

Species	Comment
Little Pied Flycatcher	2 records, both in Kinabalu NP: one by Liwagu restaurant and another one in lower Kiau View Trail
Snowy-browed Flycatcher	Scattered records in Kinabalu NP
Lesser Green Leafbird	At least one confirmed record of this species at DVFC entrance road
Greater Green Leafbird	Seen twice at Kinabatangan and scattered records at DVFC
Bornean Leafbird	One bird at Kinabalu Mountain Lodge garden
Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker	Some in DVFC, especially around the hostel
Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker	Some in DVFC, especially around the hostel
Yellow-vented Flowerpecker	At least 2 at the entrance road, DVFC
Orange-bellied Flowerpecker	Common at all lowland sites
Bornean Flowerpecker	Several in Kinabalu NP, especially around the entrance
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker	Some seen at Kinabatangan area, especially along Menanggol
Ruby-cheeked Sunbird	Several records at DVFC, especially from the restaurant
Plain Sunbird	At least 3 records at DVFC, especially along the entrance road
Brown-throated Sunbird	Seen at all lowland sites, especially common at Kinabatangan
Red-throated Sunbird	What seemed to be a family flock at DVFC entrance road
Van Hasselt's Sunbird	One male and 2 presumed females at the entrance road DVFC
Crimson Sunbird	Only 2 records both at DVFC, one of them involving 2 birds at the entrance road
Temminck's Sunbird	Several in Kinabalu NP
Olive-backed Sunbird	Common at Kinabalu NP
Bornean Spiderhunter	One seen very well by the rest houses, DVFC
Spectacled Spiderhunter	Only one seen at the entrance road, DVFC
Whitehead's Spiderhunter	One heard from Kinabalu Mountain Lodge. Reasonable views of one around the apartments by Liwagu restaurant, Kinabalu NP.
Little Spiderhunter	Some seen at all lowland sites
Scaly-breasted Munia	Common at Kota Kinabalu
Dusky Munia	Some flocks at Kinabatangan and DVFC
Black-headed Munia	Some at Kinabatangan
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	Common everywhere

Mammals

Species	Comment
Mountain Treeshrew	Common in Kinabalu NP
Common Treeshrew	Some seen at all lowland sites
Unidentified Fruit-bat	Dozens on Mabul. Comments welcome!
Wrinkle-lipped Bat	Thousands at Gomantong
Maroon Langur	2 at Gomantong, 1 at Oxbow Lake (Kinabatangan) and at least 4 at DVFC
Silvery Lutung	Common at Kinabatangan. Also seen in the other lowland sites
Proboscis Monkey	One of the highlights of the trip. Big families still survive and can easily be spotted in the immense trees of Kinabatangan area.



Species	Comment
Long-tailed Macaque	Very common and friendly in all lowland sites
Pig-tailed Macaque	Very common in all lowland sites. Seems to like roadsides
Bornean Gibbon	One heard at Kinabatangan. One seen sleeping in a Strangler Fig Tree by the observation tower, DVFC.
Bornean Orang-utan	Simply amazing. 5 individuals seen: 3 at Kinabatangan and 2 at DVFC
Red Giant Flying Squirrel	3 seen during a night drive at DVFC
Prevost's Squirrel	Common at all lowland sites
Kinabalu Squirrel	Not rare at Kinabalu NP
Plantain Squirrel	Common at Kinabatangan
Bornean Black-banded Squirrel	Only seen around Timpohon Gate
Jentink's Squirrel	Quite abundant at Kinabalu NP
Whitehead's Pygmy Squirrel	2 seen in 2 different days at Kiau View trail, Kinabalu NP
Least Pygmy Squirrel	Several seen in Kinabatangan. Also noted at DVFC
Kinabalu Rat	One seen while looking at the Everett's Trush
Malayan Civet	Seen while looking for Oriental Bay Owl at Kinabatangan. 2 seen during the night drive at DVFC
Bornean Pygmy Elephant	A pod of around 20 amazing animals was seen feeding on the Kinabatangan riverside.
Bearded Pig	Common and friendly in all lowland sites
Sambar Deer	Common and friendly in all lowland sites
Red Muntjac	One seen at Poring Hot Springs

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