INTRODUCTION

After an enjoyable trip to Way Kambas in 2012 I decided to return in 2013 for another attempt at Sunda Clouded Leopard and to try to add a few additional species in Java. Although it was another enjoyable trip with two more sightings of Marbled Cat and a Flat-headed Cat it did not produce the hoped for leopard and our time on Java was less rewarding than hoped due to poor guides and heavy rain both nights at Gunung Gede which scuppered attempts to see Javan Ferret-badger and Sunda Stink Badger. Nevertheless we did manage to find a respectable 38 species of mammal and a few good night birds as well.

LOGISTICS

• Getting there – We flew to Jakarta with Emirates and then onto Bandar Lampung with Garuda. The lodge then provided transfers from Bandar Lampung to the lodge. The internal flight cost £100 return. You can get there more cheaply by catching a bus from Jakarta to Merak, a ferry from Merak to Tanjung Karang and then another bus to Way Kambas but to be honest time was more important to us than money so we took the flight.

Transfers on Java were organised by H Isak Ickamer (Alex) of the Indonesian Guide Association. Allow plenty of time for the transfer back to the airport as the traffic is dire.

• Accommodation –
  1. The cheapest accommodation at Way Kambas is at the guesthouse at Way Kanan Substation which has rooms with shared toilets and shower and you can cook your own food or arrange for the rangers to cook for you for a fee. You will need to take your own mosquito nets.
  2. I stayed outside the park at Satwa Ecolodge. [www.ecolodgesindonesia.com/satwa](http://www.ecolodgesindonesia.com/satwa). Most if not all of the bird tour groups stay here now and I can thoroughly recommend it particularly as they can help overcome some of the bureaucracy around the use of guards/guides. I booked everything through [ecosafari@ecolodgesindonesia.com](mailto:ecosafari@ecolodgesindonesia.com) and Nyoman who I dealt with responded to all my queries quickly and efficiently as she had in 2012. Nigel ate at the lodge, I had breakfast at the lodge but cooked my own food at other times having taken a small hotplate with me.
  3. On Java we stayed in a clean but basic homestay at Gunung Halimum. The food was very good according to NG but he will eat anything! At Gunung Gede we stayed at Freddy’s Homestay as recommended by Jon Hall. It was basic but adequate.
  4. The total cost of the trip including internal flights was £1100 per person. This included accommodation, food, transfers to and from Bandar Lampung & Java, full use of a 4WD with driver and guide throughout, all park entrance and guide fees, 6 boat trips (these cost USD50 each if booked separately), and unlimited bottled water etc.
  5. Although it gets busier with visiting tour groups at times there were rarely more than two other guests while we were at Satwa. The staff could not have been more helpful, running into ‘town’ to pick things up for me, cooking breakfast when I returned from the forest mid-morning and being up well before dawn to look for mammals.

• When to visit – The dry season normally starts in May and lasts until late August/early September. Most bird tours visit in July-September when it is hot and dry with occasional heavy showers. The wet season had lasted 6 weeks longer than normal on Sumatra and this was reflected in the fact there was more standing water in the forest and the vegetation along
the track was thicker. On Java we had heavy rain on our two nights at Gunung Gede which impacted heavily on spotlighting.

- **Guides**

1. As in 2012 at Way Kambas we pre-booked Hari [harlyono_ecolodges@yahoo.com](mailto:harlyono_ecolodges@yahoo.com) through the lodge and he was excellent again. His knowledge of mammals has increased since the first visit and his ability to pick up eyeshine is exceptional. He and our driver worked very hard. He is very popular with tour groups so should be booked in advance. You also have to take a park guard/guide with you at all times due to the ‘dangers’ of tigers, elephants etc. This is a waste of time but with Hari present I was able to organise it so that the extra guide stayed with the car or walked behind us to avoid disturbance. This worked well.

2. On Java we asked Ecolodges Indonesia to organise the ground arrangements and somewhere down the line there was a breakdown in communication as the guide, Alex, had no idea how hardcore we were and was totally unprepared for the trip. He had limited knowledge of the mammals. We had asked for Eddy to be pre-booked at Gunung Gede but this had not happened and it transpired that Eddy no longer guides but his brother does. However although we managed to speak to him he was not available to guide us. Alex did however manage to track down another guide who seemed to know where to find the badgers but unfortunately spoke no English. To be honest at Gede you don’t need guides. We found all three species of primate ourselves despite being told we would not see gibbons there. At Halimum Ade accompanied us but again his English was poor and we had some problems communicating with him.

- **Insects** - Mosquitoes were more of a problem than in 2012 but were not excessive although I would have needed a net had I stayed at the substation. Way Kambas has a reputation for leeches but although I picked up a few away from the main track the leech socks worked and I only picked up one bite.

**MAMMAL WATCHING IN WAY KAMBAS**

- **Timings** - In late May/early June it gets light at 0600 and dark roughly 12 hours later. We tended to be out between 0400 and 0500 (once 0300) for a short spotlighting session before it got light, stayed out until 1000, and then rested until 1600. We would then be out again until 2100 or sometimes much later. In the mornings we tended to drive the full 13 kms of the jeep track and then return alternating between walking and driving sections (see site guide below).

- **Spotlighting**

1. Way Kambas is renowned as one of the best locations for night birds in SE Asia, if not the world, and this is well-deserved. Mammal watching is more difficult although the full moon at the time of my visit (as in 2012) did not help particularly as it subsequently transpired that we had experienced a ‘supermoon’. It certainly seemed that way.

2. The other difficulty is that from a 4WD it is difficult to spotlight both the ground and the trees and it is necessary to spotlight higher levels for flying squirrels, civets and even cats. There is also a lot of ground cover. The lodge is considering obtaining a pick up so that you can spotlight more easily but until that time it is worth spending time spotlighting from the vehicle and on foot. Marbled Cat, Leopard Cat and three species of civet all allowed as to approach them down to a few feet on foot.

3. I did meet with the owner of the lodge and discussed the prospect of him buying a pick-up for spotlighting and it does seem likely that they may purchase one.

4. Bear in mind that the road does get disturbed by rangers on motorbikes an hour after dawn and again on hour after dark but the disturbance is minimal.

- **Boat trips**

1. Boat trips give access to good areas for otters, Silvered Leaf Monkey are common and Asian Tapir, Clouded Leopard, Oriental Short-clawed Otter and Sun Bear have also been seen from boats.
2. Although booked separately they cost USD50 for 2-3 hours it would be worth doing several particularly if you can do night trips using the current and paddles rather than the engine.

SITE GUIDE

JAVA

The account of Jon Hall’s trip on www.mammalwatching.com should be referred to in conjunction with these notes.

- **GUNUNG HALIMUM NATIONAL PARK**

1. We spent two nights here and looked for mammals in 5 main areas.

2. The area around the homestay Citalahab produced Red Giant Flying Squirrel and Common Palm Civet at night and Wild Boar and Javan Gibbon apparently both visit the area.

3. The trail from the homestay to the research station, best walked with Ade, produced brief views of two Javan Langurs, two Silvery (Javan) Gibbons for Nigel & Ade, and several Black-striped Squirrels.

4. The areas around the research station produced Javan Small-toothed Civet in a fruiting tree by the research station.

5. The road beyond the research station would probably have been worth walking at night but we only realised the potential it had on our drive out. We did try spotlighting it by car but as mentioned by Jon Hall in his report the track is so rough you are bouncing up and down the whole time making spotlighting difficult.

6. The road from the homestay to the research station produced a distant Javan Gibbon for RW, two groups were also heard, Three-striped Ground Squirrel, and a lot of scat including what appeared to be that of a small cat, civets and what I took to be Stink Badger.

7. Judging by the number of camera trap photos at the research station Leopard, including ‘black panthers’ are quite common here.

- **GUNUNG GEDE**

1. As mentioned by Jon Hall and Phil Telfer in their reports this is a popular tourist site with lots of noisy tourists on the main trail but to be honest it was not as bad as I had expected, I suspect the late rains had put some people off.

2. We visited the main trail where we had three groups of Javan Langur in the first 400 metres, a group of c.10 Grizzled Leaf Monkeys where the trail becomes a ‘boardwalk’ for a while and unexpectedly two Silvery (Javan) Gibbons with others calling on the other side of the valley at the same point. We also had Javan Tree-shrew, Three-striped Ground, Black-striped and Black Giant Squirrels along this trail.

3. We spent the late afternoon/evening at Mandlawani Campground looking for badgers but torrential rain which started just as it became dark wiped us out. We did see JavanTree-shrew and Black-striped Squirrel before it got dark. We were told that we should have been able to bait both badgers had the weather been better. In 2012 Dominique Brugiere also saw ferret-badgers around the Air Panas campground at the top of the main trail.

4. Wild Boar are apparently common around the golf course at night but we didn’t look for them, According to volume 2 of Handbook of Mammals of the World Javan Warty Pig only occurs up to 800 metres so should not occur here.
1. **Satwa Ecolodge** – Common Tree-shrew is common in the grounds of the lodge. We also had Plantain Squirrel here.

2. **Satwa Ecolodge to Park Entrance** – walking the road between the lodge and entrance after dark should produce Sunda Slow Loris. We saw 3 in 5 minutes in 2012 but did not try in 2013.

3. **Road to Elephant Sanctuary** – follows the forest edge for 9 kms to the ‘Elephant Sanctuary’ and we drove this several times this year. We had Small-toothed Palm Civet and Masked Palm Civet after the second bridge and great views of Marbled Cat along the stretch after the left hand bend with the building on the left hand side of the road. We also had Indian Muntjac and Wild Boar along the road here. On our last evening there were lots of fresh wild Asian Elephant droppings along the road. The sanctuary itself held several Wild Boar at dusk and we drove a new trail beyond the sanctuary to a new forestry project where we had Malayan Civet on the rubbish tip.

4. **Open woodland near entrance** – Always good for Indian Muntjac and we also saw Sambar on one occasion.
5. **Upper Jeep Track from entrance to Way Batin Bridge (3-4 km)** – relatively unproductive during day other than for Indian Muntjac. Relatively poor at night but we did have Leopard Cat and Masked Pam Civet along here at night. We had Small-toothed Palm Civet and Malayan Civet here in 2012.

6. **Way Batin Bridge** – we had Plantain and Black-eared Squirrel (twice) here in 2013.

7. **Middle Jeep Track from Way Batin Bridge to Rhino Centre Junction (4-5 km)** – Good for primates, Siamang, both macaques and Mitred Leaf Monkey. In 2013 we had fantastic views of Marbled Cat and a Leopard Cat on this stretch and in 2012 we also had Red Giant Flying Squirrel, Malayan Civet and Banded Palm Civet.

8. **Lower Jeep Track from Rhino Centre Junction to Way Kanan Substation (4 km)** –
   - The area to concentrate on.
   - In 2013 we saw Leopard Cat, Malayan Civet, Banded Palm Civet, Malayan Porcupine, both mouse-deer, Sambar, Indian Muntjac, Wild Boar, Black-striped, Plantain & Prevost’s Squirrel, Red Giant & Black Flying Squirrels, Sunda Slow Loris, Siamang, both macaques and Mitred Leaf Monkey here.
   - In 2012 we also had two Marbled Cats, three Leopard Cats, two Yellow-throated Martens, Small-toothed and Masked Palm Civet and Agile Gibbon along this stretch. Others have seen Sun Bear and Sunda Clouded Leopard along here.
   - A couple of the advantages of this stretch are that the track is wider and the undergrowth more open in places making visibility better. There are also a couple of waterholes along this stretch that could be worth staking out particularly later in the dry season.
   - There are also a number of trails which run off of the main track. Most are animal trails and we generally only used them to approach mammals at night rather than actively walking them during the day.

9. **Way Kanan Substation** – a good area to get good views of Lesser Mouse-deer and Silvered Leaf Monkey and the second Marbled Cat in 2012 was only 300 metres from the substation. There were roosting Lesser Short-nosed Fruit Bats in several of the buildings/shelters. There were at least three domestic cats around the station in 2013.

10. **Way Kanan River to junction with Rawa Gajah tributary** – Good for both species of Mouse-Deer, Silvered Leaf Monkey and Long-tailed Macaque. We also saw our only Malayan Flying Lemur here in 2012 and 2013 and Hari has seen Asian Tapir and Clouded Leopard.

11. **Way Batin River** – the lower end of the river before it joins the Way Kanan runs through open swamps that look excellent for elephant, tapir and potentially tiger and rhino. Spotlighting this area at dawn and dusk and better still late at night with the engine turned off could be very productive although we only saw Sambar & Greater Mouse-Deer.

12. **Rawa Gajah (2012 only)**– we saw Sambar, Long-tailed Macaque and Silvered Leaf Monkey along here but could not get as far as the watchtowers as the water levels were too low and we did not have enough time to walk the final stretch. This area can be good for elephant and presumably with enough time could produce tapirs.

13. **Way Kanan River beyond Rawa Gajah tributary** – the best stretch for Oriental Short-clawed Otters and several people have seen Sun Bear on this stretch. The river eventually reaches the sea. Spotlighting this section produced a fantastic Binturing and Small-toothed Palm Civet.

**REFERENCES**

**Books**

- **A Field Guide to the Mammals of South-East Asia** by Charles Francis
- **A Photographic Guide to Mammals of South-east Asia: Including Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Java, Sumatra, Bali and Borneo** by Charles M. Francis
- **A Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo** by J Payne and CM Francis
Internet


ITINERARY

9th
- Late afternoon arrival in Jakarta followed by long 5 hour transfer to Gunung Halimum.

10th
- Morning from before first light until midday along trail between homestay and research station.
- Late afternoon along road from homestay to research station.
- Evening spotlighting along road from homestay to about 2 kms beyond research station.

11th
- Early morning along road between homestay and research station.
- Mid-morning departure for 8-hour drive to Gunung Gede arriving late afternoon.
- Planned evening spotlighting washed out by torrential rain.

12th
- Morning on main trail at Gede.
- Late afternoon/evening at Mandlawani Campground but spotlighting washed out by torrential rain.

13th
- Morning return to Jakarta for late morning flight to Sumatra. Transferred to Way Kambas.
- Late afternoon/evening on jeep track in Way Kambas.

14th
- Way Kambas – jeep track and boat trip on Way Kanan river

15th
- Way Kambas – jeep track, road to Elephant Sanctuary, track through grasslands beyond Elephant Sanctuary to new camp and re-afforestation project.

16th
- Way Kambas – jeep track and boat trip on Way Kanan river

17th

18th

19th
- Way Kambas – jeep track and boat trip on Way Kanan river.

20th
- Way Kambas - jeep track and road to Elephant Sanctuary.

21st
- Way Kambas - Elephant Sanctuary road, jeep track and Way Kanan river.

22nd
- Early morning return to Bandar Lampung for flight back to Jakarta and UK.


Black-striped (Sunda Black-banded) Squirrel

- Java – 3 along trail at Gunung Halimum, 5+ along main trail at Gunung Gede, one Mandlawani Campground.
- Sumatra – much scarcer than in 2012 when 10+ seen, just one along the Lower Jeep Track on 17th.
Plantain Squirrel
- Sumatra – not seen at all in 2012 but common this year, 15th 4+ near Way Batin bridge, 18th singles Lower & Middle Jeep Track, 19th Middle Jeep Track, 20th Research Station clearing, 22nd Satwa Ecolodge.

Prevost’s Squirrel
- Sumatra – Singles along the Jeep Track on 6 dates.

Black Giant Squirrel
- Java – One along main trail at Gunung Gede.

Black-eared (Pygmy) Squirrel

Three-striped Ground Squirrel
- Java – one near research station at Gunung Halimum.

Black Giant Squirrel
- Sumatra – one along Lower Jeep Track on the 16th. The first that Hari had seen.

Red Giant Flying Squirrel
- Java – one near the homestay at Gunung Halimum.
- Sumatra – seen along the Lower Jeep Track on the 13th & 16th. Possibly the same individual.

Malayan Porcupine
- Sumatra – 21st one along the Lower Jeep Track pre-dawn, and three, probably a female plus two young the same evening.

Red Spiny Rat (Maxomys)
- Sumatra – seen well twice along the Jeep Track, others seen running across the main trail and the Elephant Sanctuary road, most common pre-dawn.

Binturong
- Sumatra – fantastic views of one while spotlighting along the Way Kanan River on the 14th. Not seen in 2012 and rarely seen by Hari.

Malayan Civet
- Sumatra – One near the new camp on the 15th and great views of possibly the same individual along the Lower Jeep Track on the 17th, 19th & 21st.

Masked Palm Civet
- Sumatra – singles along the Upper Jeep Track and the Elephant Sanctuary road on the 18th.

Asian (Common) Palm Civet
- Java – one near the homestay at Gunung Halimum.
Small-toothed Palm Civet
- Sumatra – one along the Way Kanan river on the 14th & another along the Elephant Sanctuary road on the 17th.

Javan Small-toothed Palm Civet (split from previous species)
- Java – great views of one feeding in a fruiting tree by the research station.

Banded Palm Civet
- Sumatra – Singles on the Lower Jeep trail on the 13th & 16th.

Leopard Cat
- Sumatra – one on the Upper Jeep Trail on the 14th, one briefly on the Lower Jeep Track (RW only) on the 15th & another on the Middle Jeep Track on the 16th.

Marbled Cat
- Sumatra – fantastic views of two individuals, both juveniles. One on the 15th along the Elephant Sanctuary road sitting c.10 feet up in a tree for over 10 minutes. Another at close range on the ground for 5 minutes along the Middle Jeep Track on the 18th. Surely the best site for the species in the world, Hari has had 7 sightings since our original sighting in 2012.

Flat-headed Cat
- One seen along the Way Kanan River c.15 minutes from the research station on one occasion. Seen well by NG & Hari but badly myself.
- This was Hari’s third record in recent months. Incidentally the picture of Flat-headed Cat on the board at the lodge is actually a Fishing Cat, a species that has recently been found not to have been fully documented as occurring on Sumatra.

Lesser Short-nosed Fruit Bat
- Sumatra – 7+ roosting in various buildings around the Way Kanan Research Station on the 14th, not looked for subsequently. Not seen in 2012.

Malayan Flying Lemur (Sunda Colugo)
- Sumatra - 14th one while spotlighting along Way Kanan river as in 2012.

Sunda Slow Loris
- Sumatra – 14th, one along the Lower Jeep Track. Not looked for in the village where three were seen in 2012.

(Sundaic) Silvered Leaf Monkey (Langur)
- Sumatra – Up to c.20 seen along the Way Kanan river on 5 dates.

Mitred Leaf Monkey (Langur)
- Sumatra – singles along the Middle Jeep Track on the 14th, 18th & 19th & 2+ on the Lower Jeep Track on the 21st.

Javan (Ebony) Langur
- Java – two along the trail at Gunung Halimum and three groups totalling 15+ at the start of the main trail at Gunung Gede.
**Grizzled Leaf Monkey (Langur)**
- Java – c.10 along the main trail at Gunung Gede.

**Long-tailed Macaque**
- Sumatra – the commonest primate in Way Kambas. Seen daily in all areas visited.

**Sunda (Southern) Pig-tailed Macaque**
- Sumatra – much scarcer than in 2012. Seen in small numbers, up to 5, on 4 dates in 4 areas.

**Siamang**
- Sumatra - heard every day, even from the lodge. Seen on 3 days with up to 5 (in up to 3 groups) being seen each day.

**Silvery (Javan) Gibbon**
- Java – Gunung Halimum, two seen along the trail (NG) & one seen distantly from the road between the homestay and research station (RW). At least two troops heard. Gunung Gede two distantly from the main trail, others heard.

**Javan Tree-shrew**
- Java – singles Gunung Gede (main trail) and Mandlawani Campground.

**Common Tree-shrew**
- Sumatra – One on route to Way Kambas, one Way Kambas Jeep Track and seen most days at Satwa Ecolodge.

**Eurasian Wild Boar**
- Sumatra - Seen daily although much scarcer than in 2012. A total 34 individuals were seen with a maximum of seven at the Elephant Sanctuary.

**Lesser Mouse-Deer**
- Sumatra – seen daily most mouse-deer that were positively identified appeared to be this species. Max count 3 on the 18th. Most common on the Lower Jeep Track and seen most days in the research station clearing.

**Greater Mouse-Deer**
- Sumatra – seen twice along the Way Batin River, once along Way Kanan river and once along the Middle Jeep Track.

**Indian (Red) Muntjac**
- Sumatra – Up to 6+ seen daily, commonest and extremely approachable along the Lower Jeep Trail but also seen along the Way Kanan river, Middle Jeep Track, in the plantation near the entrance gate and along the Elephant Sanctuary road.

**Sambar**
- Sumatra – seen on 7 days with a maximum of 5 along the Way Kanan river. Also seen along the Jeep Track and in the plantation near the entrance gate.
SPECIES SEEN IN WAY KAMBAS IN 2012 BUT NOT 2013

- **Yellow-throated Marten** – twice seen along the lower jeep track.
- **Agile Gibbon** – seen once along the lower jeep track.
- **Pygmy (Lesser) Tree-shrew** – seen once by Way Batin bridge.

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

- **Sumatran Rhino** – occasionally encountered at camera traps but rarely in life. The best bet is probably to try late night boats particularly along Way Batin and without the engine.
- **Asian Elephant** - Not seen but fresh destruction commonly found in 2012 and fresh droppings ironically along the road to the Elephant Sanctuary on the final night in 2013.
- **Asian Tapir** – commonly encountered at camera traps but rarely seen. Hari, had seen and photographed one along the Way Kanan River about 30 minutes from the Way Kanan Substation, two weeks prior to my visit in 2012. Rarely seen at night along the jeep track. The best bet is probably cruising Way Batin late at night, as with rhinos paddling rather than using the engine.
- **Sumatran Tiger** – frequently encountered at camera traps but again rarely seen. Researchers on average see one a year and most of the rangers have never seen one. Having said that one of the guides at Satwa had one walk across the jeep track 3 metres in front of his motorbike one afternoon in 2008.
- **Sunda Clouded Leopard** – occasionally seen by birding groups along the jeep track at night. One tour leader has seen three here. Hari has only ever seen one, swimming across the Way Kanan one evening.
- **Asian Golden Cat** – occasionally camera-trapped but generally in areas well away from the area visited.
- **Sun Bear** – occasionally encountered with birding groups occasionally seeing them along the jeep track or along the river, particularly beyond the Rawa Gajah tributary.
- **Oriental Short-clawed Otter** – apparently relatively easy later in the dry season when water levels are lower. The best area is along the Way Kanan River about 45 minutes from Way Kanan Substation and about a kilometre past the Rawa Gajah tributary.
- **Otter Civet** – seen by two Americans on a drying out waterhole along the Lower Jeep Track at 10 am one morning while we were there, although diurnal observations of this rare species are unusual, and according to Jon Hall recently reported along the river. However Hari has only ever seen one so it presumably remains rare.
- **Banded Linsang** – rare.

HONORARY MAMMALS (WAY KAMBAS)

- **Large Frogmouth** – seen along the access track at Way Kambas on four occasions, probably three individuals.
- **Javan Frogmouth** – one seen well in the grasslands along the track to the new project beyond the Elephant Sanctuary.
- **Sunda Frogmouth** – one seen well along the road to the Elephant Sanctuary.
- **Large-tailed Nightjar** – common
- **Savanna Nightjar** – very common, 50+, in the grasslands beyond the Elephant Sanctuary.
- **Bonaparte’s Nightjar** – twice seen along the Way Kanan river beyond the Way Batin junction.
- **Buffy Fish Owl** – twice seen along the Way Kambas access track.
- **Brown Hawk Owl** – one along the Way Kambas access track.
- **Collared Scops Owl** – one along the Elephant Sanctuary road, others heard.
- **Reddish Scops Owl** – heard.