

# Borneo, Kinabatangan + Deramakot

## 5-13 Mars 2017

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### Introduction

5 nights in Deramakot in search for the elusive Clouded Leopard and 3 nights in Kinabatangan river with main target Flat-headed cat. This was the entry point for this trip.

Well, I didn't succeed with my goals.

We spent 6 hours every night in Deramakot between 18:30 – 00:30 (one night 02:30-08:00 because of heavy rain) + morning drive between 06:30 – 09:00 without any signs of Clouded Leopard. In fact, the cats proved to be very difficult to find and we only managed to find 2 Leopard cats. After four nights we hadn't seen any of them but then two different sightings within ten minutes. The late night after the heavy rain.

Due to long time heavy rain it was also impossible to search for Flat-headed cat in Kinabatangan. Very high water in the main river and even more in the smaller creeks where we still made some half-hearted attempts.

Very disappointed regarding the cats but a lot of other cool stuff.

### Deramakot

1. **Thomas flying Squirrel** --- Very abundant every night. More or less everywhere.
2. **Bearded Pig** --- Very common, saw them every night. Shy and only brief sightings before they disappeared in the thick forest. Best sighting in the camp when walking around one night.
3. **Borneo Pygmé Elephant** --- One brief sighting of a "big" male along the road one morning
4. **Malayan Civet** --- One sighting in camp when coming back after a nightdrive.
5. **Sambar deer** --- Everywhere along the road in night. Especially within 1km of camp.
6. **Western tarsier** --- One spotlighted on quite big distance. Needed binocular to see it.
7. **Philippine Slow Loris** --- Two individuals on different nights. One sighting very good where we followed it for 10 minutes.
8. **Binturong** --- One of the mammal of the trip. One young individual eating in a Fig tree in daylight on morning drive. Watched it for at least 20 minutes.
9. **Bornean striped palm civet** --- Or Small-toothed palm civet. Very common. Seen 4 of 5 nights. Sometimes several individuals in the same tree.
10. **Island palm civet** --- Or Common palm civet. One individual seen in daylight eating in Fig tree. The same tree as the Binturong.
11. **North bornean gibbon** --- Seen on most mornings but on quite big distance. Very good closer view on the last morning close to camp.
12. **Short-tailed mongoose** --- Very brief sighting of one Mongoose running across the road behind the car one morning.

13. **Bornean Colugo** --- Two individuals on different nights. Very good and long sightings. Both of them “flew” away after a while.
14. **Moonrat** --- Unexpected sighting of one animal walking on a bypass road. Very good and clear view of it.
15. **Giant red flying squirrel** --- One individual spotted quite close. Just beside one of the Colugos.
16. **Lesser/Greater mousedeer** --- I was told Lesser but then I read that the greater mousedeer is more common in Deramakot and we saw many of them. Maybe both.
17. **Plantain squirrel** --- Only one individual on morningdrive. Didn't look so much for squirrels and that's maybe an answer to that...
18. **Prevost squirrel** --- Two individuals on morningdrive.
19. **Banded civet** --- Another mammal of the trip. Watched it for several minutes in quite thick bush but saw the animal nice and clear.
20. **Leopard cat** --- Four nights without any signs of a cat. Suddenly on the last one, after heavy rain two different individuals within 10 minutes. The first only very brief sighting as the cat sneaked in the thick bush. The other one was more relaxed and we watched it very close for a couple of minutes. Both sightings between 05:00-05:30.
21. **Red leaf monkey** --- Great view of a group close to camp one morning. Not very common in Deramakot and it can go long time between seeing them.
22. **Long tailed macaque** --- Big group close to camp one morning.
23. **Unidentified fruit bats** --- Maybe Sunda short-nosed fruit bat? Group of them feasted in a Fig tree.

### Kinabatangan

I will only list animals which was not seen in Deramakot. We also saw this: Slow loris, Island palm civet, Bearded pig, Prevost squirrel, Long tailed macaque. North bornean gibbon.

24. **Bornean Orangutang** --- Two individuals seen. One very brief disappearing in the forest and the other one very close view of a relaxed male eating Fig's.
25. **Pig tailed macaque** --- Common along the main river.
26. **Proboscis monkey** --- Very common along the main river
27. **Norway rat** --- Not very sure about this one. The color and size was right but it was in the flooded forest when spotlighted for Flat headed cat. But I guess this rat can be everywhere...
28. **Low's squirrel** --- One seen close to camp in daytime.
29. **Sunda skunk** --- The third mammal of the trip. In fact we saw two different individuals very good when spotlighting 2 hours on the road by foot between bilit jetty port and some lodges 4km away. Seems to be common here and if you want to tick off this species try this road in the night.

## Summary

I used Alternative Borneo as a provider for Deramakot and was very satisfied with my guide Elsie (Alcey?). Very dedicated and flexible. Couldn't wish for more. Even in heavy rain she refused to come inside the car and still spotlighted for us.

One annoying incident was the night when we decided to go out at 02:00AM. Our driver refused to drive two times during the night and told us that he needed to sleep...

We waited for over an hour totally for this and valuable time disappeared. Our guide was also upset about this. Too much alcohol or something the evening before. Very bad as I have paid a lot of money for this.

As I understand it the sightings of Clouded Leopard is with longer time between and they haven't been seen for a while now. I don't know why this is because Deramakot seeing more and more people and maybe that's the answer. Too much disturbance? I mean, there were a group of 17 Japanese when I was there with a whole caravan of cars + the logging workers + mammalwatchers, so the main road gets some traffic these days. There are some smaller detours to use though.

Is the glory days of Deramakot over? Well, we will see in the future. Or is it time to move to Kalabakan forest reserve for the cats. Can't wait for the first report from this area...

In Kinabatangan I used Kinabatangan jungle lodge. Will never use them again. I had paid extra for Flat headed cat search which proved to be impossible due to high water levels. But the thing was that I doubtly had seen the cats even with perfect conditions as I got a guide who had never seen one in his life and didn't know the difference between Civets and cats... Very good at birds though.

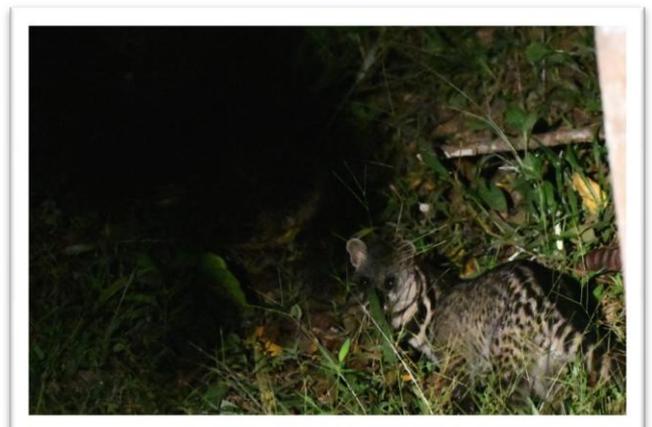
The extra cost was for Flat headed cat needs special guides for maximize the chances and I got this? So I still wonder what the hell I was paying extra for?

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Reticulated python



Malayan Civet



Binturong



Small toothed palm civet



Greater mousedeer



Thomas flying squirrel



Sunda colugo



Red giant flying squirrel



Leopard cat



Plantain squirrel



Maroon langur



Bornean bearded pig



Long tailed macaque



Pig tailed macaque



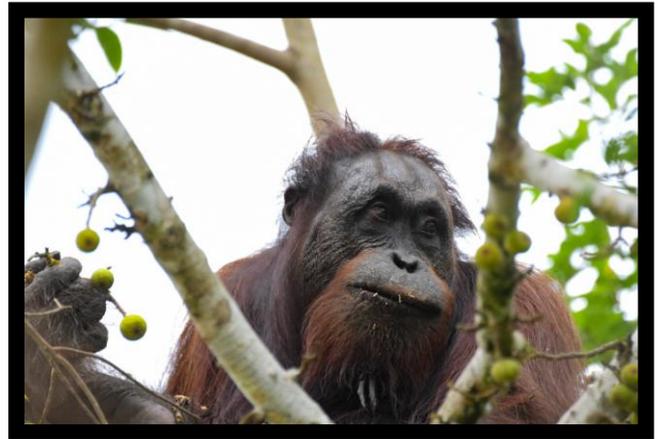
Proboscis monkey



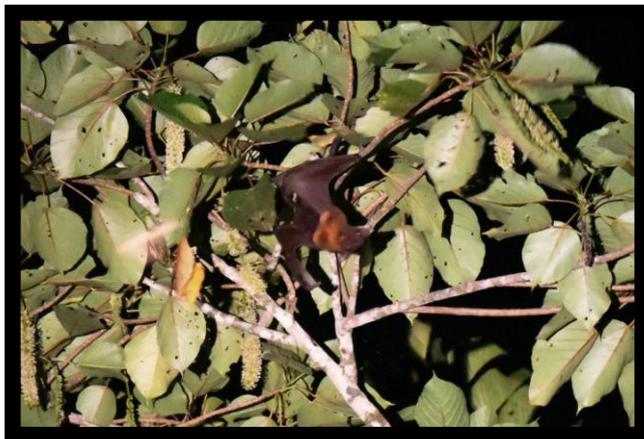
Philippine slow loris



Northern bornean gibbon



Orangutang



Unknown flying fox??



Unknown baby civet?



Banded civet