

Sumatra Primate Trip July-Aug 2023

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I had very limited holidays and wanted to cover as many places as possible. So, the itinerary was quite time constraint and ambitious. English is not my first language, please ignore the grammar errors inside the passage.

Day 1 PEK - KUL - MED

Day 2 Medan to Silboga to Tapanuli forest

Day 3 Tapanuli forest

Day 4 Tapanuli forest - back to Medan by flight transfer to Padang airport

Day 5 Padang airport to Tapan road

Day 6 Tapan road

Day 7 Gunung Kerinci and transfer to Zacky's homestay

Day 8 Full day drive to Jambi

Day 9 Full Day Bukit Tigapuluh

Day 10 Full day drive Jambi to Pekanbaru

Day 11 Rumbai Camp

Day 12 Rumbai Camp and flight to Kuala Lumpur in the afternoon

Day 13 Fraser Hill and Kuala Selengor

Day 14 flight home

Day 2

In the morning flight from Medan (KNO) to Silboga(FLZ)

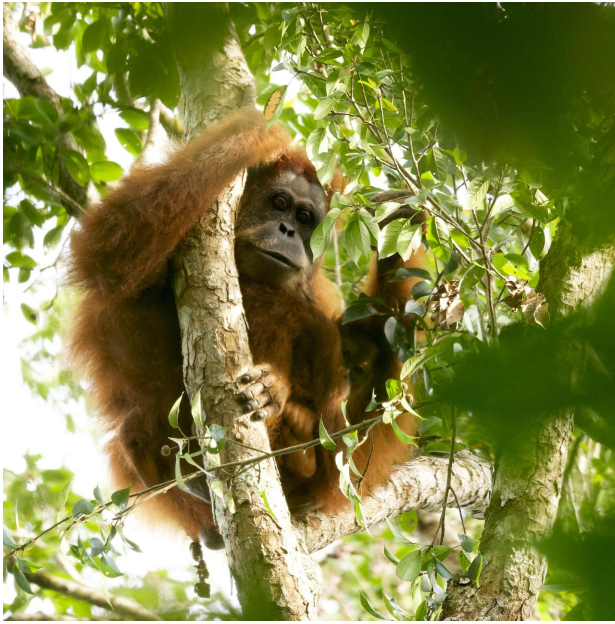
Then, met my guide [Decky](#) at the airport and drove to the Batangtoru forest immediately. It took 3 to 4 hours to reach the entry point of the forest with a lunch break. At the entry point, I was asked to leave most of my belongings in the car and only carry what I need with me to walk to the campsite. On the way, we stopped at a place where sometimes black Sumatran langur and gibbons may be seen. But we waited for an hour and didn't see anything. We continued to the campsite. A few other guides joined us and set up everything.

That night, we searched for about two and half hours for slow loris and failed. Not a good start.

Day 3

In the morning, after breakfast, we hiked a bit for searching the tapanuli orangutan. After half an hour, we found a mother with a baby. They were quite annoyed by our presents and made lots of alarm calls and moved away. We followed them a bit and they started to calm down. I took a few photos and then said we should

continue in hope for gibbons. The forest was filled with the sound of gibbons. Some of them were quite close. But I was told they were all in the inaccessible part of the forest. So we waited for a while hoping they will move to our direction but they did not.



In the afternoon, we went to the forest closer to the entry point because the black Sumatran langur is usually seen in that area.

After lots of walking and

waiting we didn't see any. However, just as we wanted to get back, we saw a few very far away. They asked me to go ahead fast and they will follow me afterwards. So, I quickly followed the langurs but they were very skittish, not allowing me for even one photograph. And it's getting dark as well, so we thought we will come back to this place tomorrow morning because they slept here.

At night, we tried one more time for the slow loris and failed again.

Day 4

The next morning, they were cooking breakfast, and they told me the langurs were just at the trees above our camp. But when I grabbed my camera and tried to see them through the viewfinder, they quickly moved away. Then we packed everything and made our way back. On the way back, we saw one siamang at very close range.



Overall, I didn't truly enjoy this experience. Because the local guide other than Decky didn't speak any English, it's quite hard to tell them what I wanted to do. The food was just white rice with dried fish for the first two days. They were also talking all night because all five of them were sleeping in one small tent. It also didn't help

that even in dry season, the forest was full of leeches.

Furthermore, although I knew beforehand that the orangutan is not easy to see, not everyone come to this place and see them. But I did get the impression that the black Sumatran langur is easy to see and be filmed. I think if my expectations were lower, I would enjoy this trip a lot more.

Day 5

Travel day, it took 8 - 10 hours from Padang to the town near Tapan Road. Didn't see anything special on the road. Everything in this part of the tour was smoothly ran by [wildsumatra](#).

Day 6

Early morning, I met my guide [Bayu](#), and then we left to the famous Tapan road. The road started from the high elevation to go to the lower. The road cut through the national park and the scenery is breathtaking. In the morning it was very foggy, but it wasn't long before we saw a family of siamangs. They were very chill and continuing feeding while we were watching not far away on the road. Then we heard some movements made by the Sumatran surilis. They quickly went into hiding. However, after this encounter,

we saw many more groups of them just by the road. At least one or two groups were very habituated and gave us prolonged view. When we reached the lower altitude, we saw many southern pig tailed macaques and one black striped squirrel running on the wire. Overall, this was a very comfortable and easy day, I did not expect that most of the time I would spend in the car and the langurs are easy to see.

We went back to rest and had dinner before our night drive. It was full moon and very bright, there was traffic throughout the night, at least until when we left at 12. I did not believe this would be a good place for any wild cats like someone suggested years ago.





Day 7

We went to Gunung Kerinci in the morning. They suggested this place because they thought siamangs are easier to see here. But in reality, we didn't see any. We only saw one group of Sumatran surili here. The place was gorgeous, easily one of the most beautiful forest I had seen. Though the morning, we only saw a few niobe ground squirrel. In the afternoon, we moved to [Zacky's](#) homestay because Zacky would guide me to Bukit Tigapuluh. Bayu took me on his motorcycle to a restaurant near a swamp. We saw some nepenthes there and a lesser tree shrew. At night, we went for one more night drive near the village where Mark Spence and Zacky had seen a slow loris. But it was raining and we only saw one unidentified bat.



Day 8

We left early morning again and drove 8 hours to a city near Bukit Tigapuluh. On the way, we saw more siamangs and a tree full of fruit bats. Zacky said he got some information about langurs in some rubber plantation nearby. We checked two places, the first was blocked by a broken truck and full of mosquitoes. It quickly became too annoying to walk. So we went to another place. The langur there was the silvery langur.



Day 9

In the morning, we had another local student joining us. It started to rain as we got closer to the park. The place was mixed with some forests and palm plantation. We saw one group of black and white langur at -1.422646, 102.480816. They were very skittish. We tried to get off the car and follow them, of course it didn't work. The road became slippery due to the rain and we got stuck once. So we decided we shouldn't continue to the park. We went to the head of the ranger's home and waited for the rain to stop. As the rain was getting lighter, we walked to the forest behind the village. I didn't had any hopes for the langurs left because of the weather. As soon as we passed the palm plantation and saw the forest, we saw an agile gibbon feeding. There was a shallow stream between the palm plantation and the forest, but with the rain, it became a river we cannot cross. I took one or two photos before the gibbon swung away. It was a surprise to me as I did not expect to see agile gibbons here. With this way blocked, we tried the forest at the other side. We came upon another group of black and white langurs. Again, they were very skittish, bolted away as soon as they saw us.



n the afternoon, the rain stopped. But we still worried about the road condition and decided to just head back and try again for the group of langurs we saw in the morning. On the way back, we saw two groups of black and white langur and one group of silvered langurs. This time, we stayed in the car, the langurs were still skittish of course, but they did give me the chance for a few photos. When we were back to the city, I asked for one more place they knew had langurs. We saw a few pig tail macaques and one sumatran surili. Deforestation was a serious problem in Sumatra, On the way from Zacky's place to here, the landscape was mostly palm plantations.



Day 10

Just 9 hours drive to pekanbaru city.

Day 11

I had a friend online that has east Sumatran banded langur near his house. So I asked him to take me to see them. He generously agreed and even asked for a ranger to join us. He lived in Rumbai Camp, which belong to an oil company. The ranger monitors the company ground for any illegal activities not specifically for wildlife. We saw many groups of banded langur and long tailed macaque. Interestingly, two of the langurs in the group looked totally different from the banded langurs. I simply imagined they were the pale thighed surilis. When I sent the photo to Mark, he told me they could be the hybrid between the Sumatran surili and the banded

langur. They did look totally different from the Sumatran pale thighed surilis.



Day 12

We had such success yesterday. I asked my friend to take me to try for an agile gibbon sighting. He usually just looks around his neighborhood after work. So he actually hadn't see any gibbons other than the one that came to the outside of his office on two occasions. Thus, the ranger suggested a place he had seen gibbons before. Just after we arrived the place, we walked for 5 minutes and I found a gibbon. The gibbon couldn't care less about us and continuing his business. Then, other gibbons started to call, the lone gibbon followed the sound and moved away. We tried to

follow him but didn't succeed. After this exciting encounter, they took me to see the langurs one more time. When we saw one group of langurs on the tree. I quickly noticed two of them were mating. Just when I thought they were done, they came down to the ground and continued mating on the ground. At one time, one male was done and another male moved in on the female. I could not believe I just witnessed a langur threesome....

My friend took me to lunch and dropped me to the airport for the KUL flight.





Day 13

I had one full day here in KUL because my flight was at 11pm. I hired a car with driver to go to Fraser's Hill and Kuala Selengor Nature Park. In Fraser's hill, I walked the bishop trail and saw two pale thighed surilis, two dusky leaf monkeys and a family of siamangs. At the Kuala Selengor Nature Park, the Selengor Silvered Langurs were at the parking lot asking for handouts of course. Some of them would even climb on tourist's shoulders. I got into the park

and saw one maybe more wild group. Nonetheless, they were fun to see.



Due to the limited time that I had, I did see all my targets except the Sumatra Slow Loris.

Species list

Tapanuli orangutan - *Pongo tapanuliensis*

Black sumatran langur - *Presbytis sumatranus*

Siamang - *Symphalangus syndactylus*

Black striped squirrel - *Callosciurus nigrovittatus*

Niobe ground squirrel - *Lariscus niobe*

Lesser tree shrew - *Tupaia minor*

Sumatran surili - *Presbytis melalophos*

Silvered langur - *Trachypithecus cristatus*

Black and white langur - *Presbytis bicolor*

Long Tailed Macaque - *Macaca fuscicularis*

Agile gibbon - *Hylobates agilis*

East sumatran banded langur - *Presbytis percura*

Malayan pale thighed surili - *Presbytis siamensis*

Dusky leaf monkey - *Trachypithecus obscurus*

Selengor silver langur - *Trachypithecus selangorensis*

