

A close-up photograph of a Horsfield's tarsier, a small primate with large, round eyes and a long tail, clinging to a tree branch covered in lichen. The background is dark and out of focus.

MALAYSIA

BRUNEI - FRASER HILL -
BORNEO

28 FEB - 10 MAR 2025

Horsfield's tarsier - Inikea, Borneo

Introduction

My fourth visit to one of my favourite places on earth, Borneo with another try for Sunda clouded leopard and Marbled cat. This time I also added 1 night in Fraser hill on peninsular, Malaysia.

However, it seems there will be a fifth visit as well to this third largest island on earth... It's just not working out for me here despite a lot of time on the road in different places, these two felines still eludes me. But Borneo ALWAYS brings out something new and it's a pleasure no matter what to go slowly along these dark, muddy roads by night.

My schedule was:

1 night Fraser hill

1 night Sandakan for a nightwalk in Sepilok

4 nights Deramakot

2 nights Inikea

2 nights Brunei

I booked Fraser hill with <https://bird-malaysia.com/> which included pick up and drop off from airport hotel in Kuala Lumpur, one night in hotel at Fraser Hill and a guide which I did one afternoon and one morning walk with. Very convenient if you don't have the time to explore it on your own and take your own transport which is very much possible.



Fraser hill often covered in mist

For the nightwalk in Sepilok I arranged an evening tour with <https://www.borneoecotours.com/> Which included pick up and drop off from my hotel in Sandakan. It's just about a 30 min drive in between. My main focus here was to find Horsfield's tarsier (Western tarsier) and our walk was entirely for this mission. Great guide, on time pick up and overall an excellent evening with this company.

The Borneo part I booked with <https://www.1stopborneo.org/> and Shavez Cheema joined me in Deramakot. At Inikea and Brunei I was joined by Yulinda Wahyuni and local guides. Well, Shavez showed up the second night in Inikea with two beers and joined the nightdrive 😊

In all places we focused on nightdrives. Very well organized and with good and very knowledge guides all the time. Couldn't ask for more!

In Deramakot we teamed up with Mike Gordon and his two clients and shared the nightdrives. Imagine the level of storys with both Shavez and Mike in the same car... 😊

No need to say so much about Deramakot as all have already been told bout this little gem in the mammalwatching world. I was very curious though to try 1StopBorneo's new places Inikea and Brunei.



Deramakot

My 2 nights in Inikea was my favourite. This hidden place, not too far from Tawau is wonderful for nightdrives.

A long dirty road straight into secondary forest is perfect for long nightdrives.

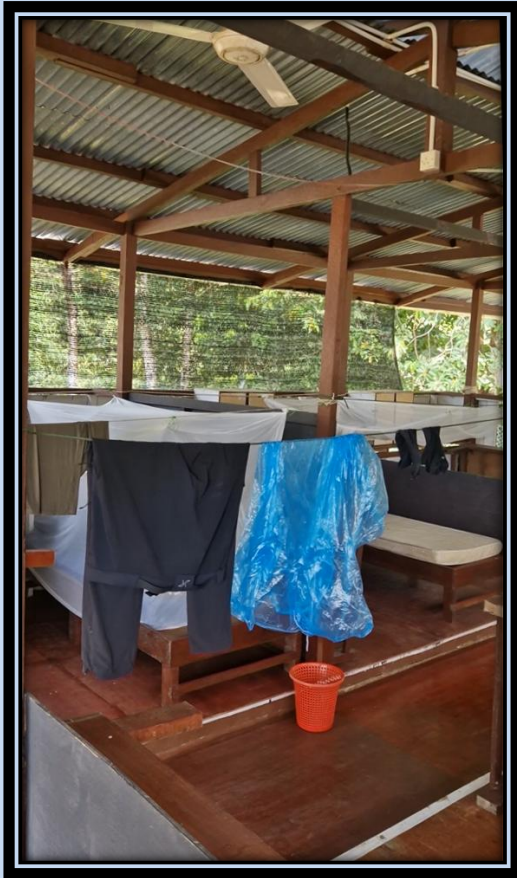
The accommodation is a bit simple with open walls and fan but very much okey.

Showers and toilets are in a building next to were you sleep.

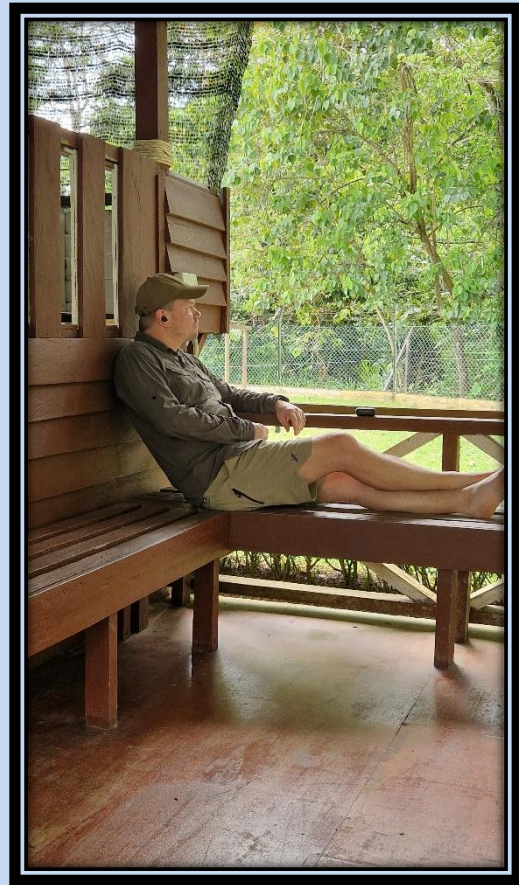
I did saw an empty house with AC rooms just across the road which were in no use at the moment so maybe that's for the future development...



Inikea – accommodation to the right



This is where I slept in Inikea



Daydreaming about a Clouded leopard...



The food is great! The sleeping house in the back



The food is great and the set up for nightdrives is perfect with good guides and driver. They know their things!

Best thing is that I was totally alone in the camp and on the road at night. Only our car and the wildlife. Far from the traffic in Deramakot at times nowadays.

I really enjoyed this quite place and the wildlife was good as well which you can see further down.

This place is worth more visitors!

Then we took the flight from Tawau to Kota Kinabalu and then by car into Brunei.

I had 2 nights here as well.

But it took us longer than expected to reach the village of Terawan where the homestay was located. Around 12 hours in total and it was close to midnight already when we arrived. Light rain in the sky and after such a long trip I skipped the nightdrive the first night and fell asleep immediately.

Next day we visited the beautiful lake at Luagan Lalak park in the afternoon and then we had a long, long nightdrive all the way to Melilas (road ends here at a longhouse) thru some nice but fairly empty forest.

The weather was a bit rainy and we had to wait out the worst of it at the Longhouse in Melilas and with only one nightdrive it's hard to give a fair opinion but the night was slow.

The homestay where we stayed was good. The Chinese man who lived there made the food for us and the rooms are clean and comfortable.

It's always fun to explore new places like this. Where you have the feeling of anything can happens... or nothing.



Luagan Lalak - Brunei

I will do the species list a bit different this time and list from place to place instead of a long list. With a summary at the end.

In the end I saw **33 species** of mammals of which **9 were lifers** and this is the story about them

My species list – Fraser Hill

1. White-thighed surili --- (Lifer) Main target in Fraser hill and easily seen as they were running around in the town centre when I arrived. Also saw them when I walked the road system with my guide later on.



2. Long-tailed macaque --- The ever present primate in this part of the world have also found refuge in these hills.



3. Dusky leaf monkey --- (Lifer) Not so easy to see here according to my guide. It's a hit or miss if you bump into them or not during a walk on the road system around town. We met a group in the foggy afternoon. A lifer for me.



4. Gray-bellied squirrel --- (Lifer) Very common squirrel in these hills. Hard to miss even if you try...



5. **Himalayan striped squirrel** --- Common squirrel and easy to see but harder to photograph.



6. **Max's short-tailed gymnure** --- (Lifer) If there is a "*Max's short-tailed gymnure capital*" in the world it must be here. Numerous at each bird feeding places along the road network where they take advantage of food. Also seen crossing the road when walking.



7. Common treeshrew --- (Lifer) Another species who takes advantage of food at the bird feeding places along the road network. Only one seen very briefly and this is the only proof. Yes, you can see the eye of him 😊



My species list – Sepilok

1. Prevost squirrel --- Seen from the elevated boardwalk.



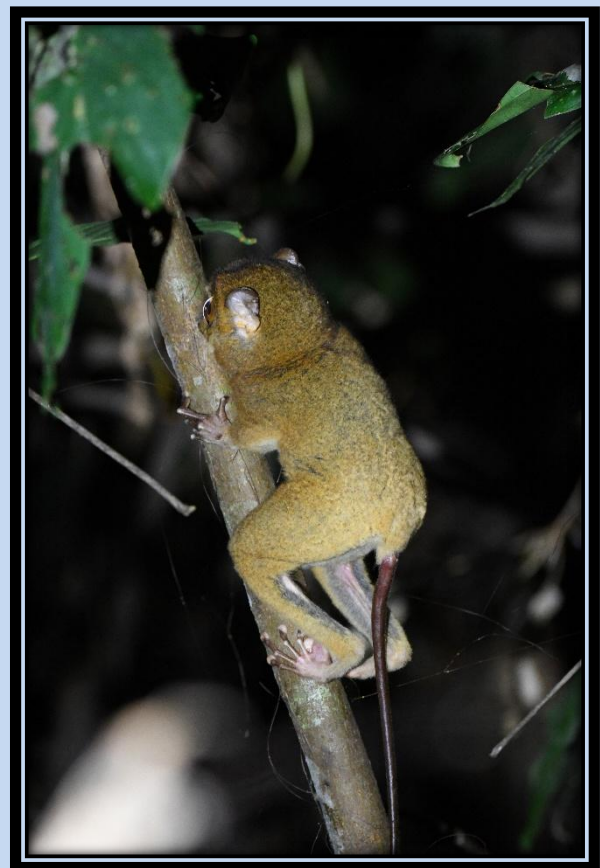
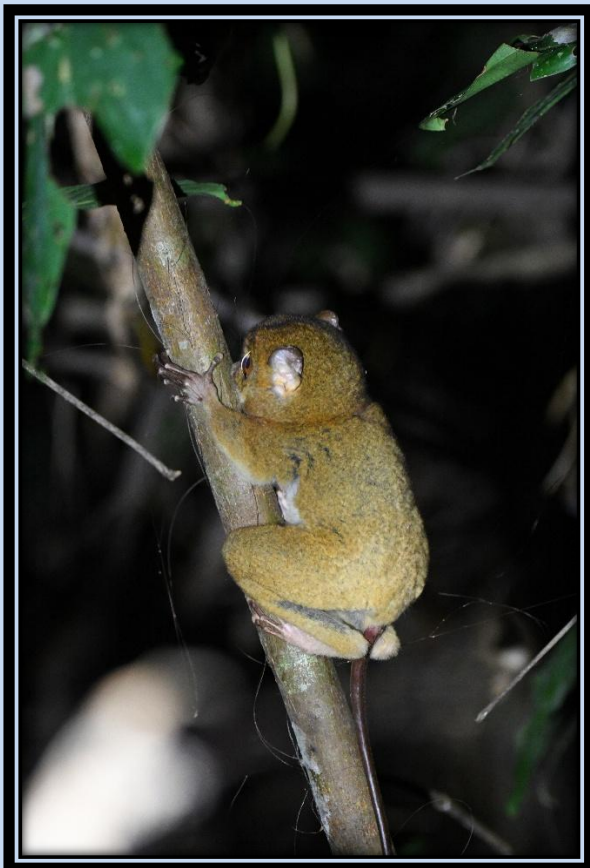
2. Maroon leaf monkey --- Sorry to wake this guy up when we searched for Tarsiers...



3. Philippine slow loris --- Reliable in Sepilok and I saw two of them during my hour's nightwalk.



4. Horsfield's tarsier --- (Lifer) My main reason for doing this nightwalk in Sepilok. As far as I know this is the best and most reliable place to see them and it turned out I wouldn't be disappointed. During my hour's nightwalk I saw two of these fantastic creatures. Sepilok is the place to see this species.



5. Red giant flying squirrel --- It was a bit of a show on the elevated boardwalk where a lot of people gathered at sunset to see this squirrel come out from it's manmade nest. We didn't stayed here for long as this was not my cup of tea.

My species list – Deramakot

1. Red giant flying squirrel --- As always they are common in Deramakot. No need for manmade nests here...



2. Thomas's flying squirrel --- Everywhere in Deramakot



3. Black flying squirrel --- (Lifer) Finally I saw this species which has eluded me everytime on Borneo before. Two different individuals seen during my 4 nights.



4. Hose's pygmy flying squirrel --- (Lifer) Another great lifer for me. Thanx to Mike who spotted this tiny squirrel. No matter how many times you are on Borneo, lifers keep showing up 😊



5. Ear spot squirrel --- (Lifer) Nice endemic from Borneo. You can clearly see the bright spots behind the ears.



6. Cream coloured giant squirrel --- Several seen around the lodge area.



7. Colugo --- Good views of several individuals.



8. Maroon leaf monkey --- Late afternoon in bad light he was just sitting there...



9. Long-tailed macaque --- Always a group around the lodge area.



10. Sunda stink badger --- One seen crossing the road



11. Sunda leopard cat --- Unfortunately the only feline for me here. Seen on every nightdrive. This time they were very cooperative though. They always had a tendency to walk away from me very camera shy, but not this time. With a few staying forever.



12. Bornean striped palm civet --- Abundant in these forests.



13. Island palm civet --- Not as common as the “striped” but you bump into them every now and then.



14. Philippine slow loris --- Although a common species in Deramakot they are always behind a concrete wall of leafs on a fairly big distance. At least for me. I have seen them way better in other places. This photo show what I mean.



15. Trefoil horseshoe bat --- Flying around and sometimes stop for perching on twigs. If you are lucky you have a few seconds to take a shot before they fly again...



16. Acuminate horseshoe bat --- (Lifer) a colony living under one of the lodge houses. There is a hole where you can check inside but you need to lay down to see them. According to earlier measurement from bat detectors and their appearance, roosting and habitat it should be this species.



18. Sambar deer --- Several seen but no photo.

19. Greater mouse deer --- Not a single mouse deer seen on nightdrives, which was strange. One seen in daytime instead on the road out of Deramakot.

20. Lesser Ranee mouse --- One on a blade of grass beside the road at night.

21. Moonrat --- One almost ran between my legs!? When we had a stop for packed dinner in the dark deep of Deramakot. Still don't have a single photo of this species despite lots of sightings during the years.

22. Malayan civet --- Seen but no photo.

23. Banded civet --- The 23:rd and last species seen in Deramakot.

My species list – Inikea

1. Bornean yellow muntjac --- (Lifer) One seen deep inside the foliage at night. A lifer for me. The local guide told me that in Inikea they are more common than the Red muntjac. Shy and it was a quick look.

2. Greater mouse deer --- Unlike Deramakot it was alot of Mouse deers around at Inikea.



3. Lesser mouse deer --- Lesser is more common than greater on Borneo. We had both.



4. Banded civet --- One seen after 10 minutes on the first nightdrive.



5. Bornean striped palm civet --- Common here. Where you have figs you also have Civets...



6. Island palm civet --- Common here.



7. Malayan civet --- Common here.



8. Binturong --- Just a few meters beside the road and in eye level we came across this species. We scared him off with our car and he started to run away along the branches. It all happened so fast and this was the best I got from it.



9. Sambar deer --- Typical Sambar deer sighting in Borneo...



10. Philippine slow loris --- Several seen. Common at Inikea.



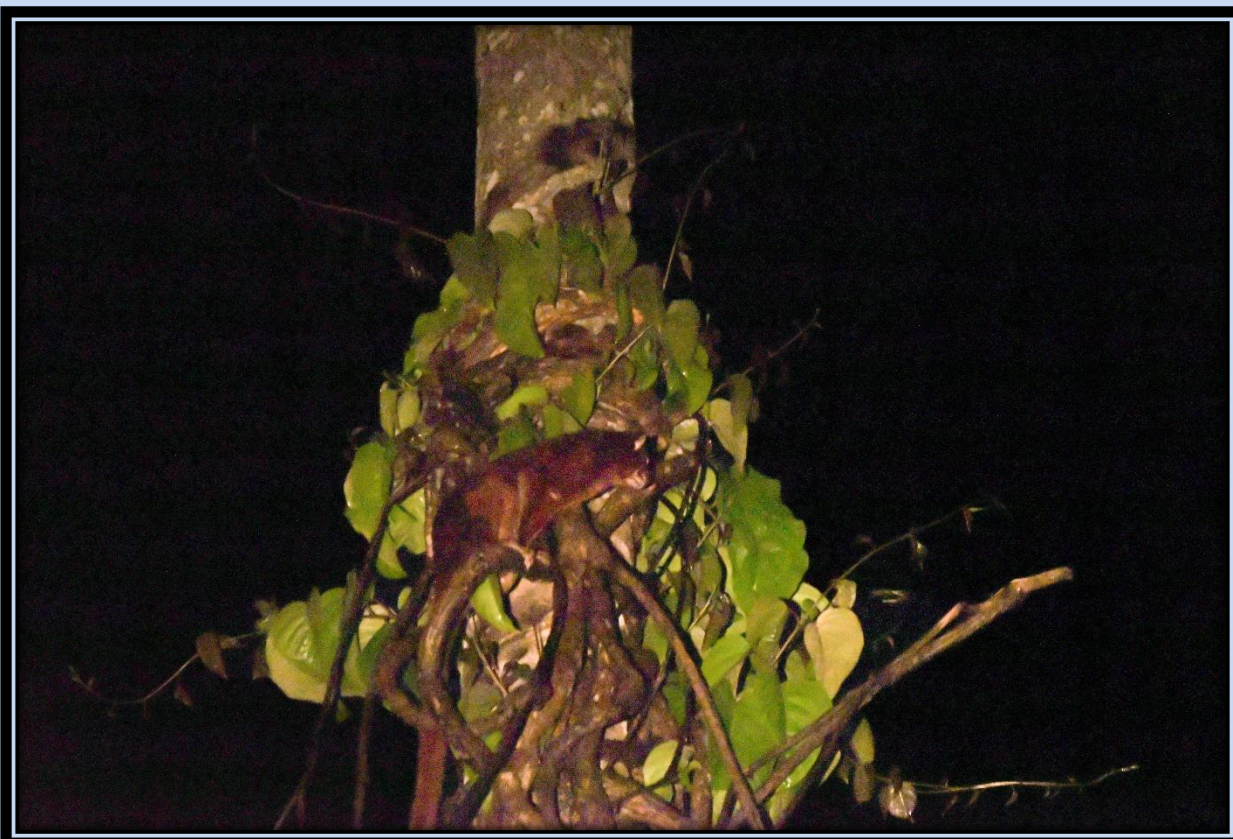
11. Horsfield's tarsier --- Great sighting on our first nightdrive. If I had knew this then I wouldn't have had to go to Sepilok...



12. Sunda leopard cat --- A couple of them seen at Inikea. This is how they use to behave when I see them



13. Thomas's flying squirrel --- Actually the only flying squirrel I saw at Inikea. The forest is a bit lower than in Deramakot for example and maybe that's why.



14. Bornean elephant --- A group seen on the way out of Inikea. At the devastated palm oil plantation where they thrive.



My species list – Brunei

1. Island palm civet --- A lot of them in Brunei on the road to Melilas. Two-digit number on my only nightdrive



2. Philippine slow loris --- The good old Loris again... Only one seen along this road.



3. Sambar deer --- Actually a bit of a rarity in Brunei. Local people hunts them for food here.



4. Long-tailed macaque --- A group seen in the afternoon on Melilas road. My 4th and last species in Brunei.

Stuff I missed

Once again I was here primarily for Clouded leopard and Marbled cat and once again I failed in both. It just doesn't want to happen.

I won't give up of course and I will soon be back again...

Otherwise I did good with my semi-targets. Missed Siamangs at Fraser Hill but it's a species I've seen before so didn't look too much for them.

All in all 9 new lifers for me with top four sightings of **Horsfield's tarsier** , **White-thighed surili** , **Hose's pygmy flying squirrel** , **Max's short-tailed gymnure**

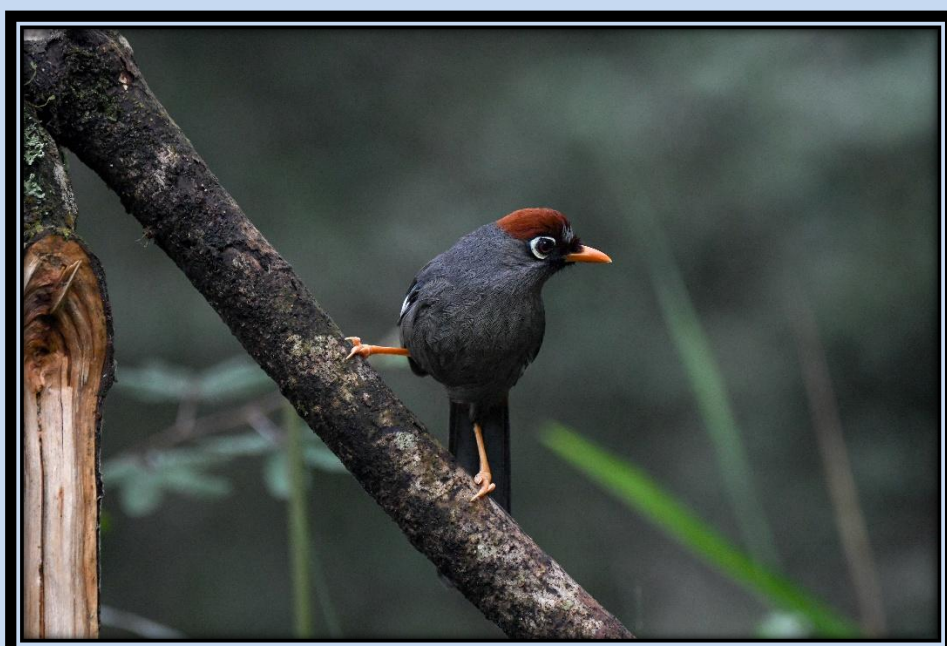
Random photos from my time in Borneo



Oriental pied hornbill - Brunei



Top left: Many-lined sun skink **Top right:** Fire-tufted barbet
Bottom left: Black-browed barbet **Bottom right:** Buff-breasted babbler
 @ Fraser Hill



Chestnut-capped laughingthrush – Fraser Hill



Silver-eared mesia – Fraser Hill



Upper: Scorpion species

Lower: Reticulated python

@Sepilok



Deramakot by night. Very bad road



Praying mantis wants to get in my room



*Mangrove cat snake (Boiga dendrophila) – Deramakot
Striking beautiful snake seen on nightdrive*



Left: Barred eagle owl

Right: File-eared tree frog (*Polypedates ottilophus*)

@Deramakot



Whiskered treeswift – Deramakot



Left: Brown wood owl
Right: Barred eagle owl
@Inikea



Hypolimnas bolina (Blue moon butterfly) - Inikea

Big thank you from me to...

- **Shavez Cheema and Yulinda Wahyuni at 1StopBorneo for great guiding and good company.**
- **To Mike at Deramakot for all the funny stories and endless spotlighting.**

Species list

1. White-tighted surili
2. Dusky leaf monkey
3. Long tailed macaque
4. Red leaf monkey
5. Horsfield's tarsier
6. Himalayan striped squirrel (Western striped squirrel)
7. Grey-bellied squirrel
8. Prevost squirrel
9. Ear-spot squirrel
10. Cream-colored giant squirrel
11. Red giant flying squirrel
12. Thomas's flying squirrel
13. Black flying squirrel
14. Hose's pygmy flying squirrel
15. Common tree shrew
16. Max's short-tailed gymnure
17. Philippine slow loris
18. Bornean striped palm civet
19. Island palm civet
20. Banded civet
21. Malayan civet
22. Binturong
23. Sunda skunk
24. Sunda leopard cat
25. Sambar deer
26. Greater mouse deer
27. Lesser mouse deer
28. Bornean yellow muntjac
29. Colugo
30. Moonrat
31. Lesser ranee mouse
32. Accuminate horseshoe bat
33. Trefoil horseshoe bat

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