

# THAILAND



## KAENG KRACHAN NP - BANGKOK

14 July – 20 July 2025



*Indochinese Leopard – Kaeng Krachan, Thailand*

## Introduction

Thailand lovely Thailand, the country that I have visited so many times before but never for wildlife.

Until now.

Only 6 nights in total but a very productive six nights...

My schedule was:

3 nights Kaeng Krachan NP

3 nights Bangkok

Then I flew on to Koh Samui for a 5 day vacation on the beach but we won't take that story here 😊

I booked Kaeng Krachan with the famous Baan Maka Lodge <http://www.baanmaka.com/>

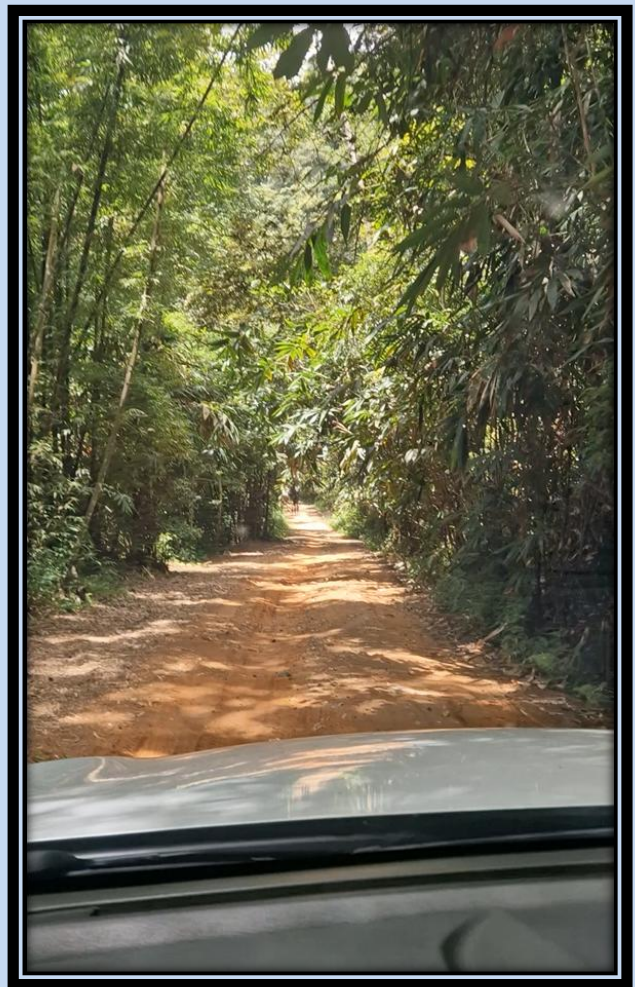
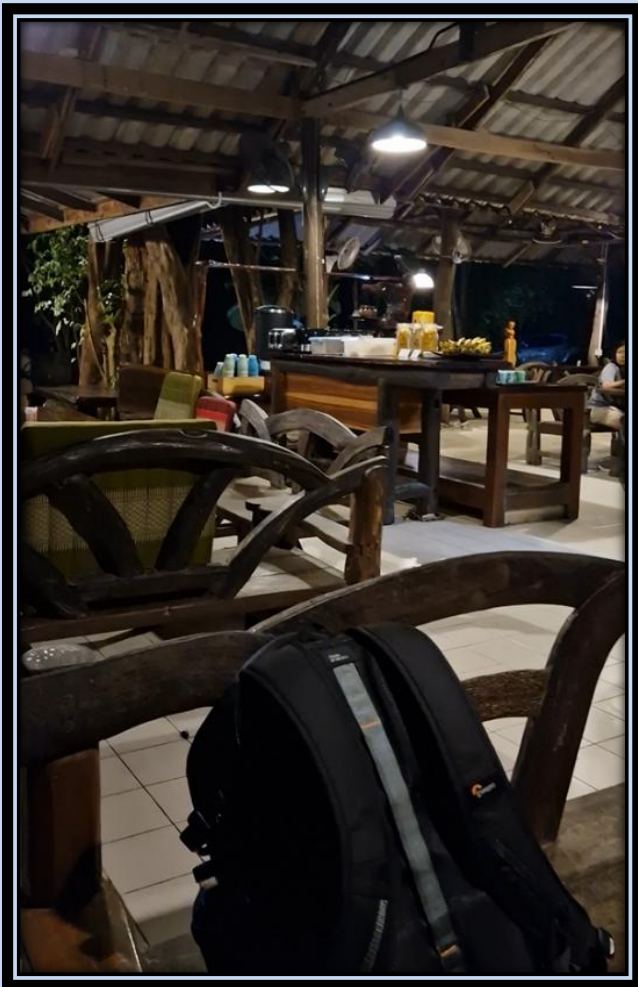
They provided transport to/from Bangkok and I also booked their in-house guide Beckham for 3 full days.

He is easy going, knowledgeable and know where to find your mammals in Kaeng Krachan.

I really recommend him.

We spent the whole days inside the park and had lunch there in one of the two camps inside the park. We were back at the Lodge after dark.

Unfortunately it's forbidden to stay in the park after dark and do spotlighting. That would be a dream to go along this perfect road in search for the Mainland Clouded Leopard...



**Left:** Baan Maka Lodge restaurant

**Right:** Kaeng Krachan road

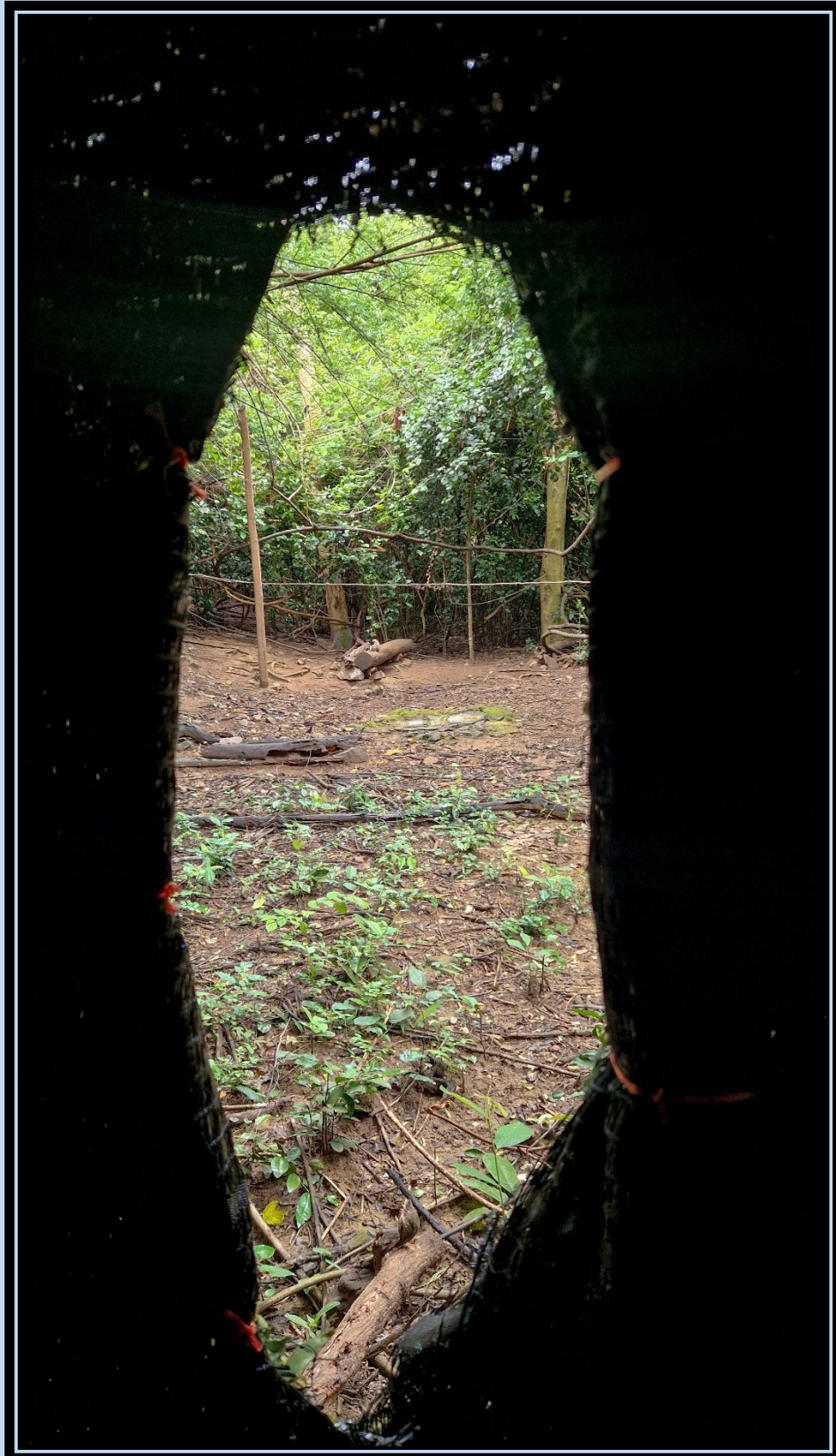
I was joined on this part and the first night in Bangkok (for herping) by the legendary Mark Spence and as always he is a great company!

After dinner back at the lodge we did a nightwalk every night by our own on the paths surrounding the lodge. Mostly in search for the Bengal slow loris which we didn't find, but also for whatever is out there in the jungle.

We also booked one of the birding hides in the area the last morning. There is some interesting mammals who visits them as well. More on this in the "species list" further down.

The accomodation is clean with good food and the AC is a relief after the humid nightwalk 😊

This is the place to stay if you want to visit Kaeng Krachan NP.



*Birding hide a short drive from the lodge*

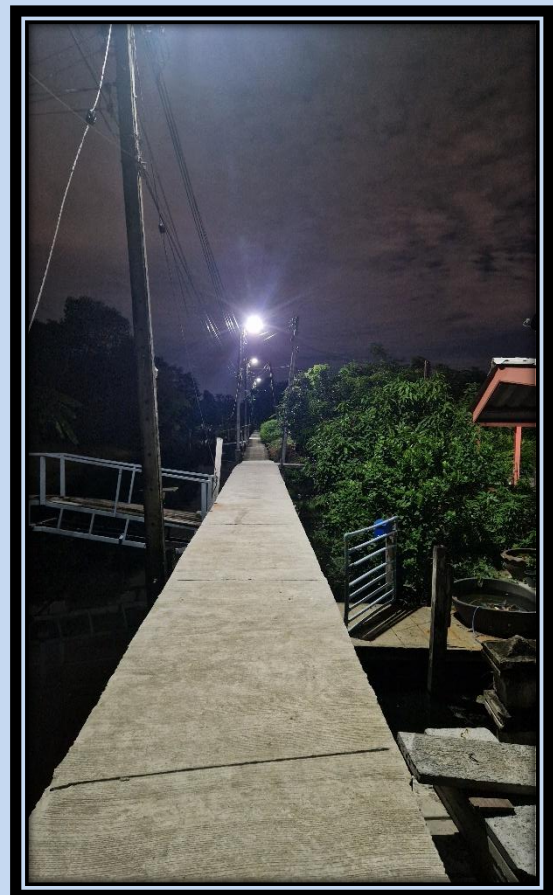
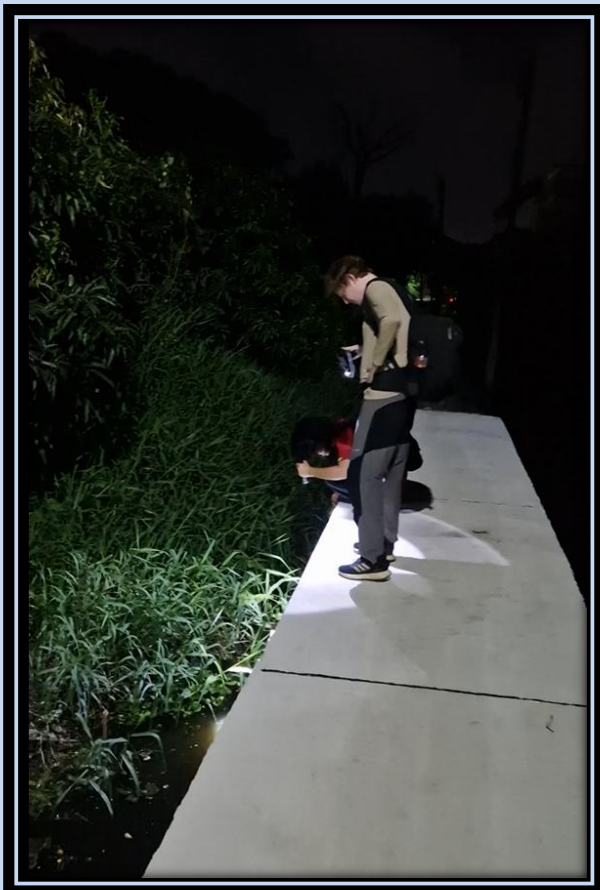


*Kaeng Krachan from the top camp. Looking towards Myanmar.*

Then I had 3 nights in Bangkok of which the first was dedicated some herping in the disgusting Bangkok channels with Mark.

We booked this 4 hour night walking tour with Tontantravel <https://tontantravel.com/en/tours/bangkok-wildlife-tours/jungle-night-walk-bangkok>

I was fully concentrated on not touching the water...



*Two experts in work in the channels of Bangkok*

The last 2 days around Bangkok I booked with <https://www.wildencounterthailand.net/> with the highly reputable Jirayu Ekkul (Tour) as a guide.

With the main target Eden's whale in the Bay of Bangkok but also a few other lifers on the list. With one day driving a fair amount of distance around Bangkok and the next day whale watching on a very, very rough sea.

Overall a great company and easy to do a custom trip with the targets you want.



*Looking for Smooth-coated otter in the outskirts of Bangkok. We didn't see them. Only one big ring on the water from one individual who had already dived. Close... but a miss.*

Then there was this thing about the whale watching...

If there's one thing I hate, it's rough seas. In general I don't like being stuck on a boat for too long and certainly not on a rough sea.

And yes, this was rough. After only 30 minutes the boat had turned into a floating vomit party. Then we had only 5 hours left...

It was unusual rough sea for the season and about the limit where they go out or not. Long story short, out of about 30 people onboard, 7-8 made it and were able to enjoy the whales at the end



I was one of them!



*Whale watching boat in Bang Khun Tian outside Bangkok*

In the end I saw **26 species** of mammals of which **18 were lifers** and this is the story about them.

### My species list – Bangkok

**1. Eden's whale --- (Lifer)** Main target in Bangkok area and after a few hours search on the rough sea of Bangkok Bay, we did find them. I wasn't feeling very well so I let the crew on the boat take the photos so I didn't have to stare into the camera. I filmed with my phone instead.



*All the credits to the crew at WildEncounter for the photos*



**2. Finlayson's squirrel --- (Lifer)** Another easy target in Bangkok. We went to *Sri Nakhon Khuean Khan Park and Botanical Garden* and took a walk in this nice lung of Bangkok. We found two of them within an hour.



**3. Lyle's flying fox --- (Lifer)** We drove 90km outside Bangkok city center to a temple called *Wat Pho Bang Khla*. Here you find a huge colony of this spectacular megabat as they have protection from the monks.



4. **Northern treeshrew** --- When overlooking the pond from a terrace where we searched for the Smooth-coated otter in the outskirts of Bangkok, this nice little fellow came by to say hello.



5. **Tanezumi rat** --- (**Lifer**) Another visitor on the terrace overlooking the pond. Most likely this species due to the overall appearance and that it is the dominant species here.



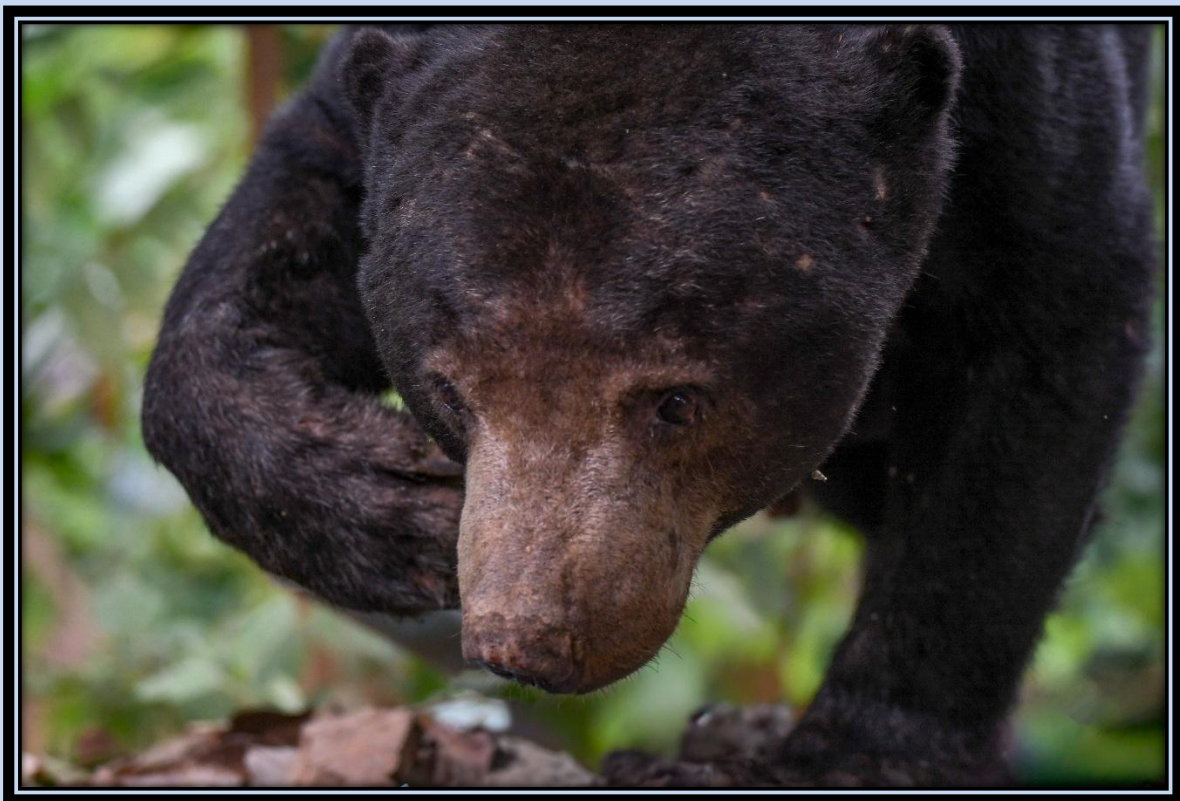
## My species list – Kaeng Krachan

1. **Sun bear --- (Lifer)** The main target in Kaeng Krachan and the very first mammal we saw. I didn't have to wait for him, he waited for me at the lower campsite. He was already there when we arrived, searching for food around the restaurant.

Never has a target been so simple.

We saw him two times at this camp. In the morning and afternoon the first day but then nothing.

We didn't see any Sun bear at the top camp who also has regular visitors.

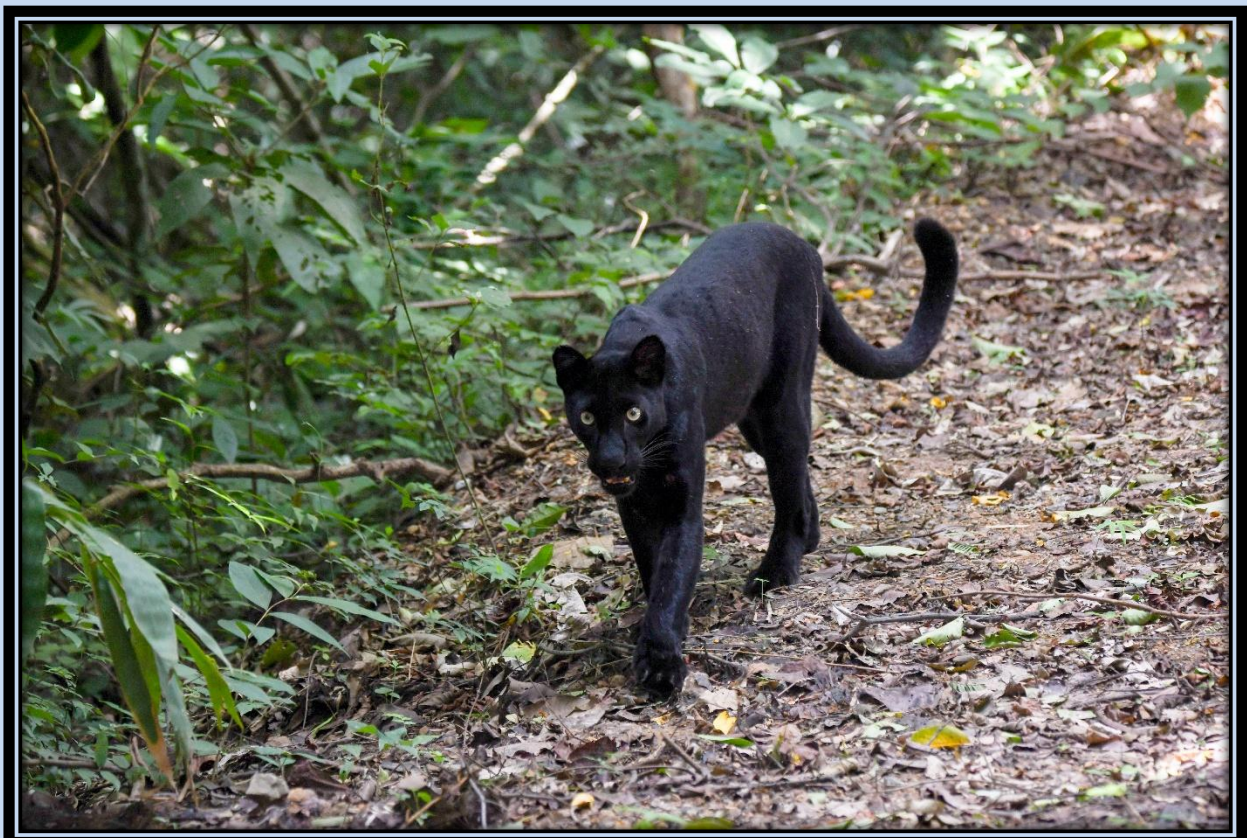


## 2. Leopard --- The highlight of the trip!

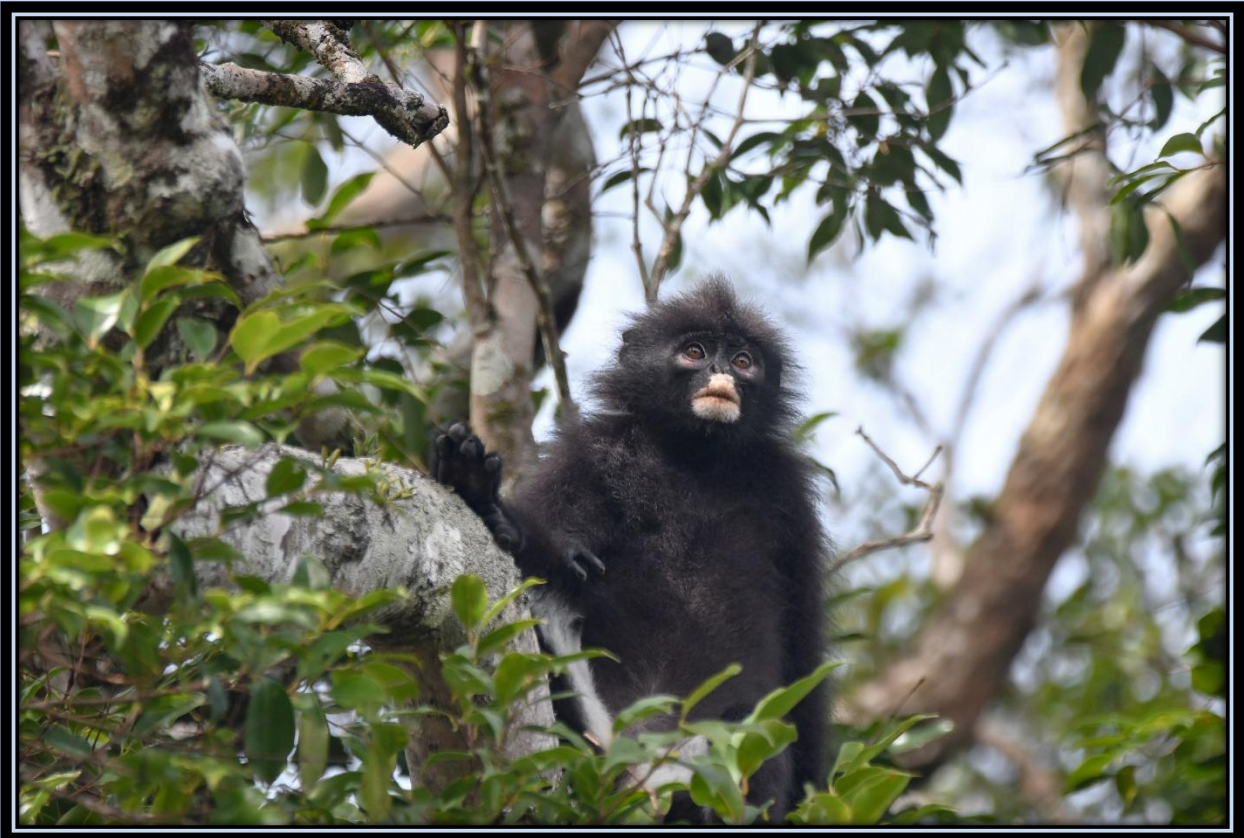
When we were driving down from the top camp at about 12 noon, a time of day where you don't really expect anything big to happen. How wrong we were...

Boom, there he was. Just beside the road. Half asleep. My first Indochinese Leopard and it was a black one!

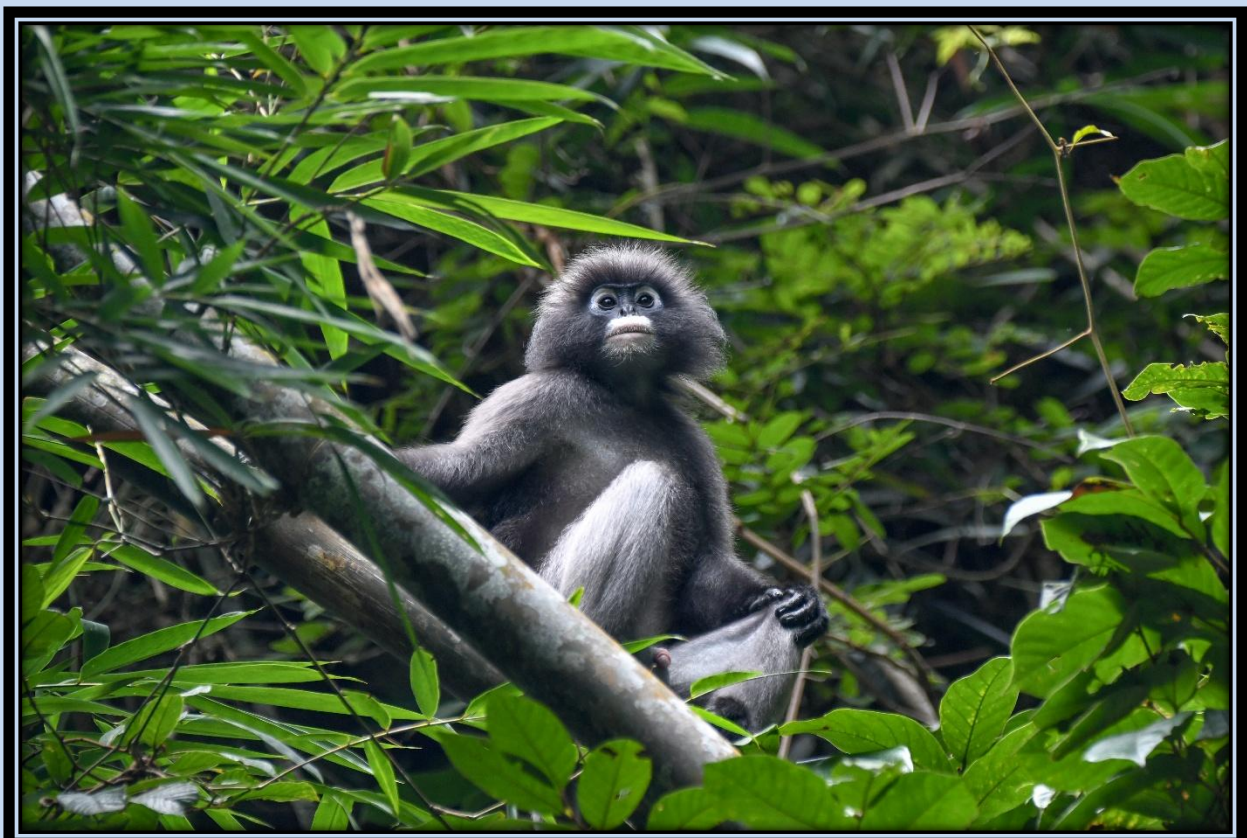
I know the chances of a black panther are good these days in Kaeng Krachan and I was really hoping but you still need luck on your side of course.



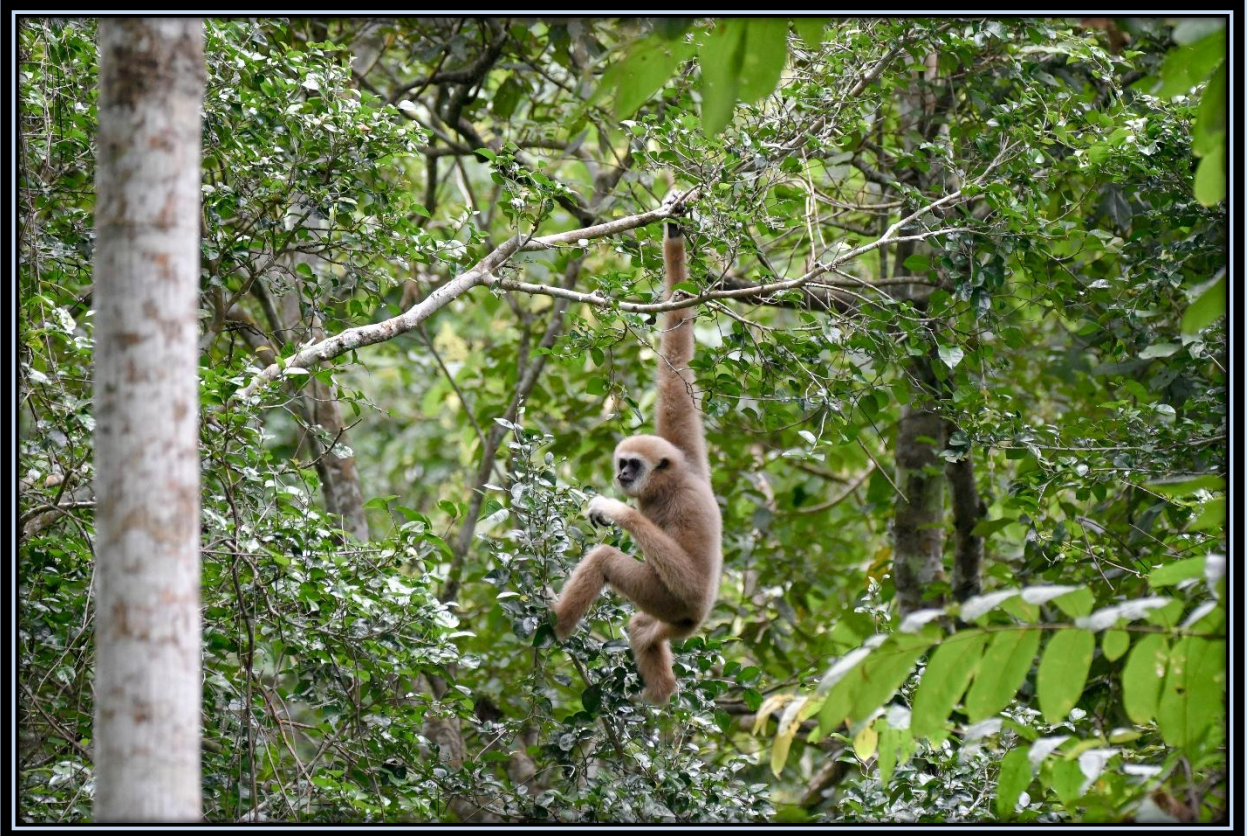
**3. Robinson's banded langur --- (Lifer)** Fairly easy to see in the park at the higher altitudes close to the top camp. Target for me and I was happy that we saw them already on the first day.



**4. Dusky leaf monkey ---** The most common mammal in the park. We saw them several times every day. Along the road and at the top camp.

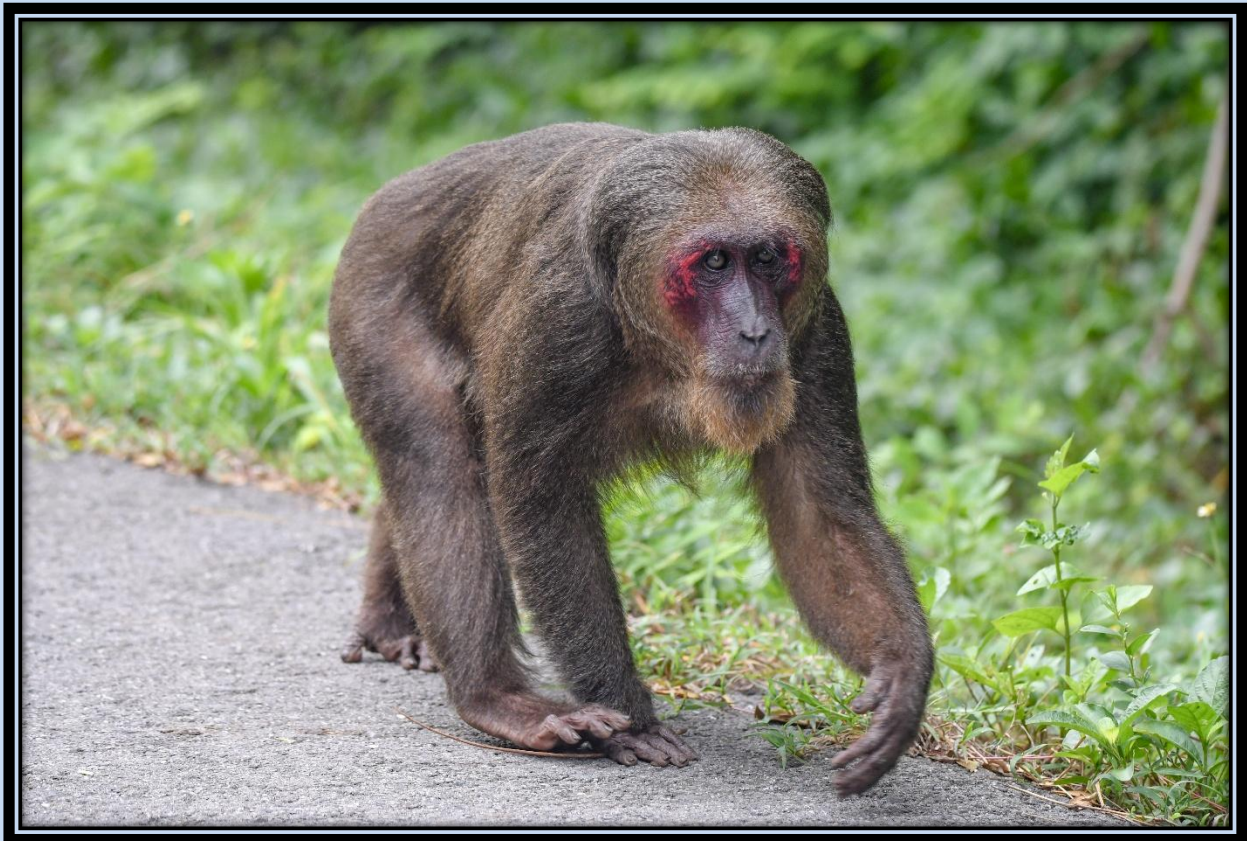


5. **Lar gibbon** --- (**Lifer**) Another primate target for me in Kaeng Krachan. Along with their beautiful song, they were easy to see at the lower altitudes around the lower camp. They vary greatly in color and we saw both light and black variations.



**6. Stump-tailed macaque --- (Lifer)** Usually seen along the tarred entrance road but we struggled hard to see them. Not a trace the first two days forced us to search at another place Beckham knew about. Some kind of a small temple some 45 minutes drive from the lodge where the monkeys were supposed to be.

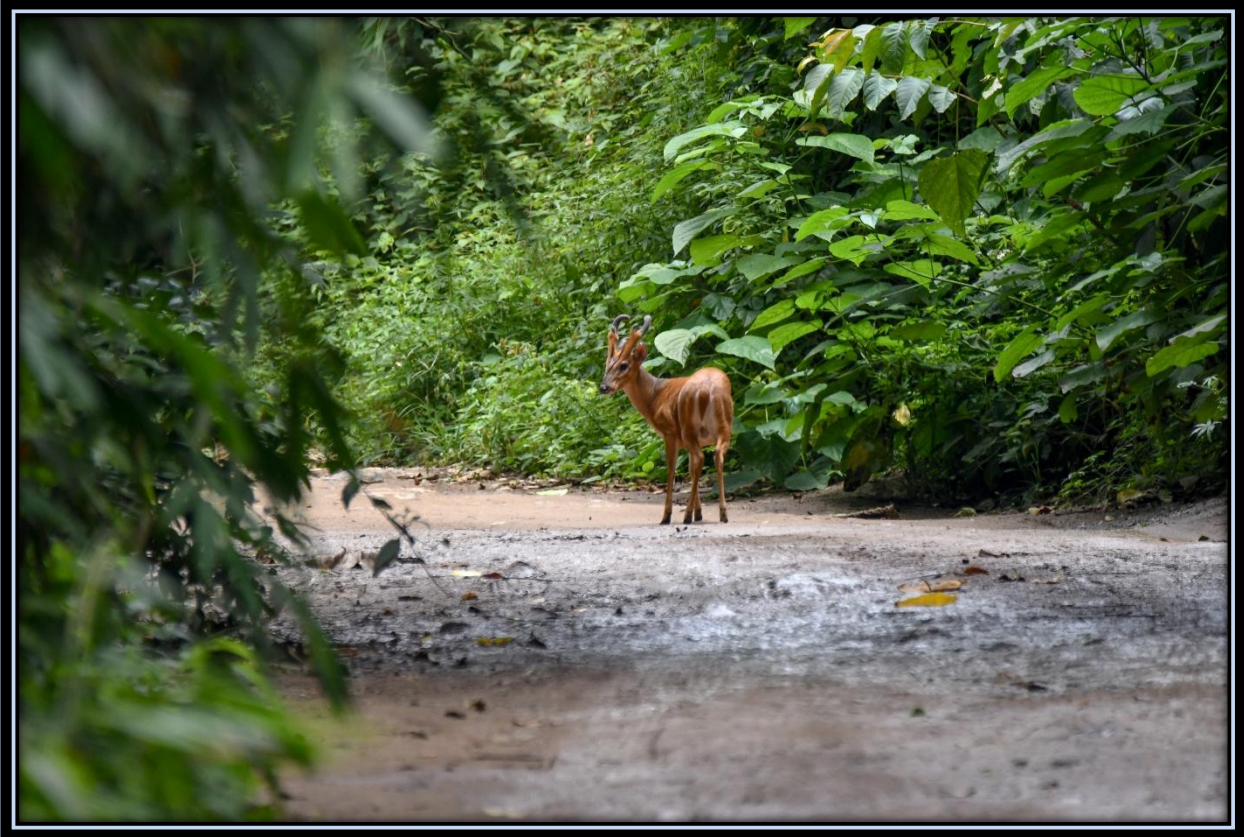
And yes, they were here.



**7. Asian elephant ---** Only one seen at the entrance road in Kaeng Krachan.



**8. Northern red muntjac** --- Tried for a desperate second to turn him into a Fea's muntjac which is sometimes seen in the park. But no, just a common Northern red muntjac. One seen in the park.



**9. Black giant squirrel** --- One seen when walking around at the lower camp area.



**10. Northern gray-bellied squirrel --- (Lifer)** Now split into a Southern & Northern species, this was a lifer for me. Seen at the lower camp, in the Baan Maka lodge area and at the bird hide.



**11. Berdmore's ground squirrel --- (Lifer)** Also called Indochinese ground squirrel. Common at the bird hide and they were active here in the morning.



**12. Southeast Asian Striped Squirrel --- (Lifer)** Now split from Himalayan striped squirrel. Seen at the top camp but also very common at the bird hide.



**13. Northern treeshrew** --- Very common at the bird hide where they ran around all morning.



**14. Long-tailed giant rat --- (Lifer)** This creature was seen on one of the night walks we did around the lodge area.



**15. Greater short-nosed fruit bat --- (Lifer)** Seen on one of the nightwalks around the lodge area.



**16. Pearson's horseshoe bat --- (Lifer)** There is a lot of culverts under the road between lower and upper camp. We checked them out for bats. Thai bat guru Pipat Soisook helped me with ID.



**17. Northern woolly horseshoe bat --- (Lifer)** Great bat. Seen in the culverts but also in an abandoned building at the upper camp.



**18. Mountain horseshoe bat --- (Lifer) *Rhinolophus chutamasae*.** Most likely this species as sometimes nasal leaf is coated with a layer of orange liquid with an unknown function on this species. Just as this individuals. Seen in the culverts.



**19. Lesser false vampire bat ---** The most common bat we saw in the culverts.



**20. Great roundleaf bat --- (Lifer)** This beast was hanging from the ceiling of the open building at the upper camp.



**21. Hardwicke's woolly bat---** (Lifer) We checked the bamboo sticks in the forest every now and then and after a while Beckham found this cute bats.



**22. Crab-eating mongoose** --- The only species that escaped my camera on this trip. Seen along the entrance road when it crossed.

### **Stuff I missed**

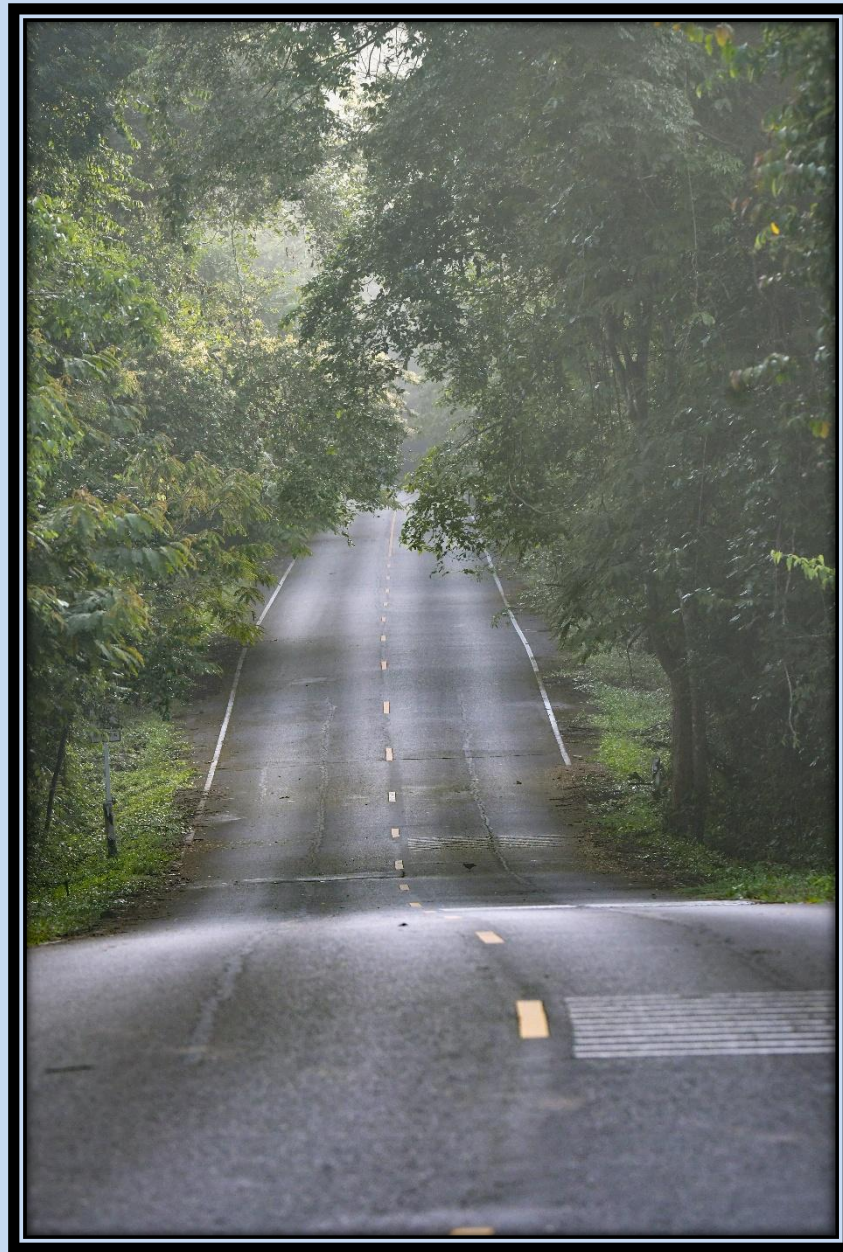
The most notable miss was the **Bengal Slow Loris** which is present at the Baan Maka Lodge. We searched for him every night but failed. Other people had more luck and saw it during our stay.

I hoped for **Fea's muntjac** along the road at the higher elevation but none.

In Bangkok we searched alot for **Smooth Coated Otter** but failed. However, large rings on the water showed that they were nearby. So we were close...

All in all 18 new lifers for me with top four sightings of **Indochinese Leopard** , **Sun bear** , **Robinson's banded langur** , **Lar gibbon**.

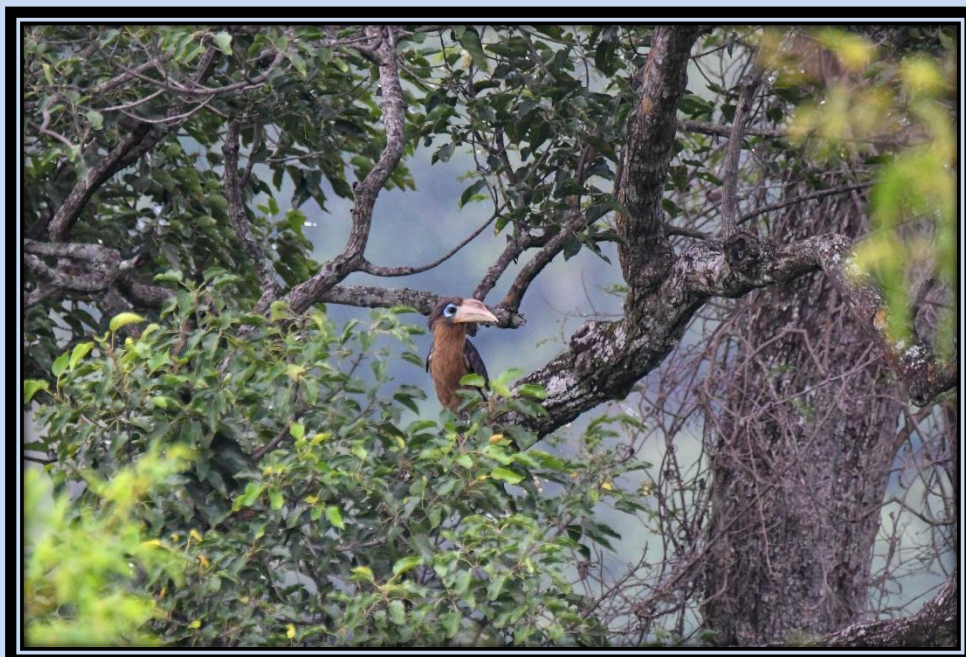
### **Random photos from my time in Thailand**



*Entrance road – Kaeng Krachan*



**Top left:** Blue-winged pitta **Top right:** Asian barred owl  
**Bottom left:** Orange-breasted trogon **Bottom right:** Kalij pheasant  
@ Kaeng Krachan



*Tickell's brown hornbill – Kaeng krachan*



*Tenasserim pit viper – Kaeng krachan*



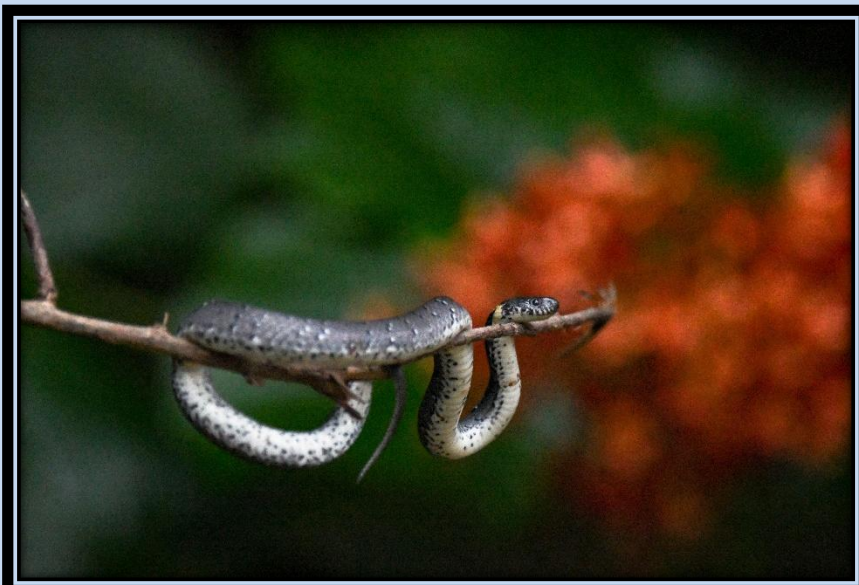
**Top left:** Tokay gecko **Top right:** Asian water monitor  
**Bottom left:** Forest garden lizard **Bottom right:** Boulenger's pricklenape

@ Kaeng Krachan



**Upper:** Southeast asian leaf turtle – Kaeng Krachan

**Lower:** Cobalt blue tarantula – Baan Maka lodge



*White spotted slug snake – Kaeng Krachan*



**Top left:** Indochinese long-nosed vine snake **Top right:** Sunbeam snake

**Lower:** Tentacled snake

@Bangkok



**Left:** Asian Openbill **Right:** Coppersmith barbet

@Bangkok Sri Nakhon Khuean Khan Park and Botanical Garden



*Koh Samui – Lamai beach*

*This is where I ended my tour. Could have been worse...*

### **Big thank you from me to...**

- Guide Beckham in Kaeng Krachan for tireless search for mammals.
- Jirayu Ekkul (Tour) and the whole boat crew at Wildencounter Thailand for great guiding and for taking such nice photos of the whales.
  - Mark Spence for as always great company.

### Species list

BANGKOK = BLUE
KAENG KRACHAN = GREEN

1. Northern treeshrew	* Seen at both places
2. Finlayson's squirrel	
3. Lyle's flying fox	
4. Eden's whale	
5. Tanezumi rat	
6. Sun bear	
7. Indochinese Leopard	
8. Robinson's banded langur	
9. Dusky leaf monkey	
10. Lar gibbon	
11. Stump-tailed macaque	
12. Northern Gray-bellied squirrel	
13. Black giant squirrel	
14. Southeast asian striped squirrel	
15. Berdmore's ground squirrel	
16. Asian elephant	
17. Northern red muntjac	
18. Long-tailed giant rat	
19. Crab-eating mongoose	
20. Pearson's horseshoe bat	
21. Great roundleaf bat	
22. Greater short-nosed fruit bat	
23. Hardwickes woolly bat	
24. Northern woolly horseshoe bat	
25. Lesser false vampire bat	
26. Mountain horseshoe bat	

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