

A Week in Kinabatangan and Sepilok, Borneo, Malaysia

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From May 30th to June 5th, we spent 3 nights in Borneo Nature Lodge (Sukau area), with a morning visit to Gomantong Caves, 2 nights in Tanini Kinabatangan (Bilit area) and 1 night near Rainforest Discovery Centre (RDC), Sepilok. I believe most mammal watchers on this website have already familiar with Borneo. My mammal list is as follows:

1. **Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*)**: Borneo elephants are always on the migration along Kinabatangan River. At the time we visit, they were far upstream. We took a 30 km Elephant Search river cruise from Bilit to see them.
2. **Large treeshrew (*Tupaia tana*)**: One sighting near Gomantong Caves.
3. **Malayan colugo (*Galeopterus variegatus*)**: One sighting at Borneo Nature Lodge in daytime.
4. **Philippine slow loris (*Nycticebus menagensis*)**: Seen twice during the night river cruises near Sukau, once during the night walk in RDC.
5. **Western tarsier (*Cephalopachus bancanus*)**: One sighting during the night walk in RDC. The sightings are said to be quite stable here.
6. **Long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*)**: Seen every day during the river cruises near Sukau and Bilit.
7. **Southern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca nemestrina*)**: Seen every day during the river cruises near Sukau and Bilit. Also common in RDC.
8. **Silvery lutung (*Trachypithecus cristatus*)**: Seen several times during the river cruises near Bilit.
9. **Maroon langur (*Presbytis rubicunda*)**: Seen near Gomantong Caves. Said to be regular seen here.
10. **Proboscis monkey (*Nasalis larvatus*)**: Seen every day during the river cruises near Sukau and Bilit.
11. **Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*)**: Seen a mother with a baby during the river cruises near Sukau. Seen a pair near Gomantong Caves.
12. **Prevost's squirrel (*Callosciurus prevostii*)**: Seen at Borneo Nature Lodge. Most common squirrel in RDC.
13. **Plantain squirrel (*Callosciurus notatus*)**: Seen around Tanini Kinabatangan.
14. **Cream-coloured giant squirrel (*Ratufa affinis*)**: Seen from the skywalk in RDC.
15. **Red giant flying squirrel (*Petaurista petaurista*)**: Seen from the skywalk in RDC in the afternoon and guaranteed sightings at the beginning of night walks.
16. **Fawn leaf-nosed bat (*Hipposideros cervinus*)**: Many roosting in the lower part of Simud Hitam (Black Cave, open to the-public) of Gomantong Caves.
17. **Creagh's horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus creaghi*)**: Many roosting in the lower part of Simud Hitam of Gomantong Caves.
18. **Wrinkle-lipped free-tailed bat (*Mops plicatus*)**: Large colony could be seen flying out from Gomantong Caves at dark. However, normally they do not roost in the lower part of Simud Hitam. We only saw some pups that might fall down from the deeper part of the cave.
19. **Malaysian flying fox (*Pteropus vampyrus*)**: Seen flying around at dark and foraging in trees during the night river cruises near Sukau. One roosting in the tree near RDC in the daytime.
20. **Cryptic pangolin (*Manis mysteria*)**: One sighting during the night river cruises near Sukau. I will explain this newly published species later on.
21. **Malayan civet (*Viverra zibethica*)**: One sighting in Tanini Kinabatangan at night.
22. **Philippine palm civet (*Paradoxurus philippinensis*)**: Seen in both nights in Tanini Kinabatangan.
23. **Small-toothed palm civet (*Arctogalidia trivirgata*)**: Seen in night river cruises near Sukau and Bilit. Seen around

Tanini Kinabatangan in the daytime.

24. **Smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)**: Seen a family near their burrow during one morning river cruise near Bilit.

25. **Lesser mouse-deer (*Tragulus kanchil*)**: One sighting during the night walk in RDC.

I didn't count the rats common along the river and around the lodge in Kinabatangan at night. I assumed they were Asian house rats (*Rattus tanezumi*) that were introduced to Borneo.

The song of northern Borneo gibbons (*Hylobates funereus*) was heard in RDC in the morning. They were regular seen from the skywalk, maybe once in three days.

About the new published pangolin species:



Cryptic pangolin (*Manis mysteria*), Kinabatangan, Sabah

In 2023, genomic analysis revealed a cryptic pangolin species (*Manis mysteria*) from confiscated illegal trade materials from 2012 to 2019. The strongest supporting evidence for this new taxonomic unit is that it is the outgroup of the Sunda pangolin and the Philippine pangolin on the phylogenetic tree. <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2304096120>

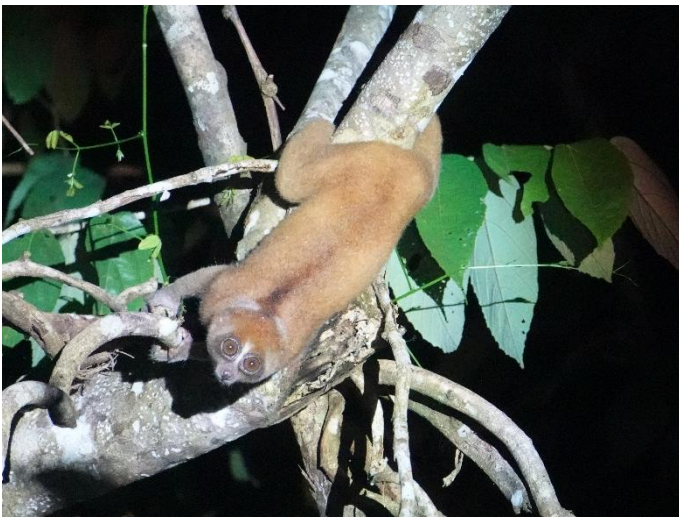
However, researchers did not know the original place of this new species until 2026, when another research revealed that this new species matched the pangolins in northeastern Borneo according to both genomic and skull morphological evidences. <https://academic.oup.com/mbe/article/43/2/msag016/8427391>



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Malayan colugo (*Galeopterus variegatus*)



Philippine slow loris (*Nycticebus menagensis*)



Western tarsier (*Cephalopachus bancanus*)



Silvery lutung (*Trachypithecus cristatus*)



Maroon langur (*Presbytis rubicunda*)



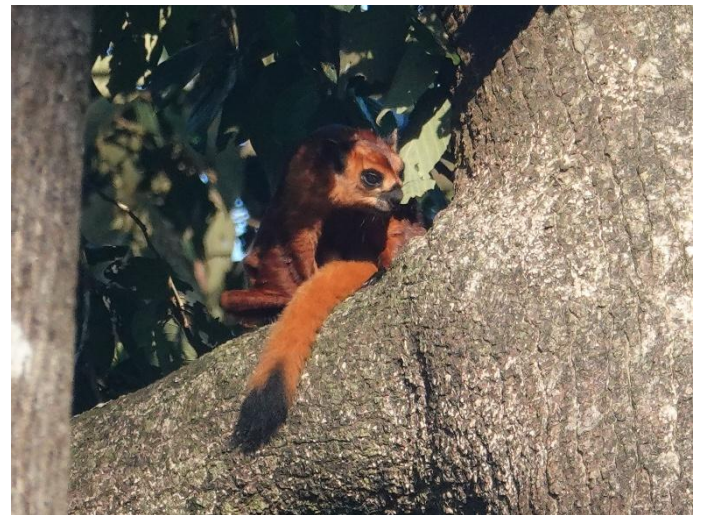
Proboscis monkey (*Nasalis larvatus*)



Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*)



Cream-coloured giant squirrel (*Ratufa affinis*)



Red giant flying squirrel (*Petaurista petaurista*)



Fawn leaf-nosed bat (*Hipposideros cervinus*)



Creagh's horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus creaghi*)



Malaysian flying fox (*Pteropus vampyrus*)



Malayan civet (*Viverra zibetha*)



Philippine palm civet (*Paradoxurus philippinensis*)



Small-toothed palm civet (*Arctogalidia trivirgata*)



Smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)



Lesser mouse-deer (*Tragulus kanchil*)



Buffy fish owl (*Ketupa ketupu*)



Wallace's hawk-eagle (*Nisaetus nanus*)



Rhinoceros hornbill (*Buceros rhinoceros*)



Black hornbill (*Anthracoceros malayanus*)



Storm's stork (*Ciconia stormi*)



Bornean crested fireback (*Lophura ignita*)



Western hooded pitta (*Pitta sordida*)



Black-and-red broadbill (*Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchos*)



Saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*)



Singapore flying dragon (*Draco abbreviatus*)



Whipscorpion (*Typopeltis crucifer*)



Lantern bug (*Pyrops whiteheadi*)