

TRIP REPORT SINGAPORE, INDONESIA & MALAYSIA

10 APRIL - 19 MAY 2019

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This trip consists of five "legs". It started with a booked three-weeks birding trip with Birdtourasia to West Java and Sumatra. Then we filled up with ten days in West Malaysia afterwards and a stop in Singapore before the tour. And you can't go to Sumatra without trying for the Sumatran Orangutan so we put in a few days in Bukit Lawang between the bird tour and Malaysia.

PART ONE - SINGAPORE

I had found out that Singapore would be one of the best places in the world to see Smooth-coated Otter and that was the reason for the stop-over.

Unfortunately, the flight times changed to the worse so we arrived at midnight and flew from there at noon two days later. So, we only had 36 hours for mammal- and birdwatching.

Smooth-coated Otter



Sunda Flying Lemur



Lesser Dog-faced Fruit Bat



Species list Singapore

1. Sunda Flying Lemur (Sunda Colugo) *Galeopterus variegatus*

First night we spent a couple of hours at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve. On the short walk from the gate to the visitor center we saw seven of these strange animals.

2. Greater Slow Loris *Nycticebus coucang*

Second night we had a brief view of one loris when driving the short road in Windsor Nature Park.

3. Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*

Common in Singapore Botanical Garden and Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park.

4. Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata*

After trying Singapore Botanical Garden twice and Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park we finally found a group of about nine in Gardens by the Bay.

5. Lesser Dog-faced Fruit Bat (Lesser Short-nosed Fruit Bat) *Cynopterus brachyotus*

A few hanging in the trees in Ginger Garden in Botanical Garden. Fruit Bats flying around the gate at Bukit Timah were probably also this species.

6. Nepalese Whiskered Bat *Myotis muricola*

One or two flying close to Swan Lake in Botanical Garden.

Some other observations

Bat sp. Very small bats fluttering very low over the trail in Bukit Timah NR.

Bat sp. Middle sized bats flying over a small lake in Bukit Timah NR.

Red-legged Crake *Rallina fasciata*. Close to the entrance to Botanical Garden. LIFER!

Wagler's Pit Viper *Tropidolaemus wagleri*. Close to visitor Center in Bukit Timah NR.

PART TWO - JAVA

This was part of a birding tour in Java and Sumatra. It was a scheduled tour with Birdtour Asia, a highly reputed company specializing in bird trips in Asia. Tour leader was Carlos N. G. Bocos, who to my delight, was very interested in mammals. He had recently begun to explore the bat world after guiding Nils Bouillard in West Papua for his Big Bat Year 2019. Anyway, it was a birding trip and it was not possible to spend so much time on mammals.

Except for a boat trip in Jakarta Bay and another along the mangrove in Muara Angke in Jakarta we spent most of the nine days in and around Gunung Gede and Gunung Halimun NP. Birding was difficult, wheather was bad with lots of rain and it was hard work walking up and down the mountains. Even so, we managed to see some good mammals.

I didn't get many photos in Java. Rain and tough walking made me either leave the bigger camera in the hotel or had it packed in the backpack when the opportunities appeared.

Grizzled Langur



Javan Langur



Javan Gibbon



Diadem Leaf-nosed Bat



Species list Java

1. Sunda Flying Lemur (Sunda Colugo) *Galeopterus variegatus*

A total of three in Carita when spot-lingting for owls.

2. Horsfield's Treeshrew (Javan Treeshrew) *Tupaia javanica*

A brief view in Cibodas Botanical Garden close to Gunung Gede. Also seen in Gunung Gede of someone else.

3. Crab-eating Macaque (Long-tailed Macaque) *Macaca fascicularis*

Two seen far away in Cibodas Botanical Garden and five during the boat trip in Muara Angke.

4. Grizzled Langur (Javan Surili) *Presbytis comata*

This endangered Javan endemic were seen all three days in Gunung Halimun NP.

5. Javan Langur (Javan Lutung, Ebony Langur) *Trachypithecus auratus*

The most common primate. Three days in Gunung Gede and two in Gunung Halimun.

6. Javan Gibbon (Silvery Gibbon) *Hylobates moloch*

Heard several times but only one seen in Gunung Halimun NP.

7. Short-tailed Gymnure (Lesser Gymnure) *Hylomys suillus*

This one stressed me a lot when seen by others but not by me as I had never seen a

Gymnure before. But after borrowing Carlos thermal scope I found not one but two! At a resting place with a small building along the trail up on Gunung Gede. Daytime.

8. Black-striped Squirrel (Black-banded Squirrel) *Callosciurus nigrovittatus*

Several on both Gunung Gede and Gunung Halimun.

9. Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*

The last mammal on Java. Two individuals at Muara Angke.

10. Three-striped Ground Squirrel *Lariscus insignis*

A few around the campsite just above the hot springs on Gunung Gede.

11. Spotted Giant Flying Squirrel *Petaurista elegans*

One discovered when searching for owls a little further from the campsite above the hot springs on Gunung Gede.

12. Slender Squirrel *Sundasciurus tenuis*

One in Carita.

13. Javan Small-toothed Palm Civet *Arctogalidia trilineata*

(Small-toothed Palm Civet *Arctogalidia trivirgata*). Not a valid species according to IUCN. Very exciting to see one feeding in a tree behind Cikiniki Guesthouse in Gunung Halimun NP. See Jon's report from June 2010...

14. Sunda Palm Civet *Paradoxurus musangus*

(Common Palm Civet *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*). Not a valid species according to IUCN. One seen around Cikiniki Guesthouse in Gunung Halimun NP at night and two cameratrapped under the building.

15. Javan Ferret Badger *Melogale orientalis*

Our guide put out food around the campsite above the hot springs in Gunung Gede to attract the badger but everything was left in the morning. I was the only one to see it when it sneaked around behind my tent at 4 am.

16. Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*

Two small groups in Gunung Gede.

17. Diadem Leaf-nosed Bat *Hipposideros diadema*

One hanging from a branch beside the trail when searching for owls in Carita.

18. Great Woolly Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus luctus*

One hanging from a branch over the trail when searching for owls in Gunung Gede.

19. Lesser Large-footed Myotis *Myotis hasseltii*

Many bats flying just over the water surface at dusk in Muara Angke were said to be this species.

Some other observations

Black Giant Squirrel *Ratufa bicolor*. Seen by another person on the walk on Gunung Gede.

Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula*. Seen by the tour leader on Gunung Gede.

Javan Mongoose *Herpestes javanicus*. Seen by another person when it crossed the road between the cars near our hotel RedDoorz in Cibodas, Gunung Gede area.

Squirrel sp. A lot of squirrels remained unidentified after very brief views.

Rodent sp. A big rodent was camera trapped under the building in Cikiniki Guesthouse in Gunung Halimun.

Rodent sp. Our tour leader saw a lot of unidentified rodents with the thermal scope when searching for owls.

PART THREE - SUMATRA

The second part of the birding trip were spent at Way Kambas NP and Kerinci Seblat NP.

We stayed at Satwa Elephant Lodge outside Way Kambas but didn't have much time to explore the grounds as we started birding very early in the mornings, were out for most of the day and went owling and frogmouthing to late in the evening.

Hari, famous among mammalwatchers, was our local guide, and thanks to our tour leader Carlos who knew about my interest for mammals, we spent some time on bats and a short walk to see loris. Unluckily the wheather was still very bad and spoiled a lot of our activities. Anyway, Way Kambas is a really nice place and I would like to return for more mammalwatching.

In Kerinci Seblat we began to explore the higher elevations on Mount Kerinci between 1800 and 2500 meter, and then moved on and birded Tapan Road between Sungai Penuh and Mauro Sako village from 300 to 1400 meters a.s.l.

Also Mount Kerinci was hard work. We spent endless time walking and climbing fallen trees up and down the mountain. Birding was very slow and I will never go back there again...

Tapan Road was different as we birded along the road, the rain had stopped and we had two very early mornings spot-lighting for mammals. Tapan Road has great opportunities for excellent mammalwatching.

Greater Slow Loris



Sumatran Langur



Black-striped Squirrel



Three-striped Ground Squirrel



Plantain Squirrel



Binturong



Large Flying Fox



Minute Fruit Bat



Lesser False Vampire



Lesser Sheath-tailed Bat



PART FOUR - SUMATRA (BUKIT LAWANG)

Lars and I left the other persons in the birding group and took the flight to Medan. We had booked an arrangement with Bukit Lawang Jungle Trekking that included transfer from Medan to Bukit Lawang and back, accommodation in Bukit Lawang two nights and a three-day jungle trek in Gunung Leuser NP. The transfer took around four hours. We stayed at Bukit Lawang Indah Guesthouse which kept an environmentally friendly profile with filtered water and free from plastic. The straws were of metal that were washed and reused.

At the time of booking we informed that we wanted to see wild orangutans and asked if it was possible on a three-day hike. It would be but no guarantee of course. Our guides were Ipul and Dani and Ipul told us the chances for really wild orangutans were close to zero which made us feel a little cheated.

Both guides were really nature-lovers who worried about oil palm plantations and poachers. Especially Ipul who could neither read nor write was a very good guide. He had very sharp eyes and pointed out a lot of snakes, lizards, mammals and birds.

The weather was good with no rain, but the heat and humidity made the walk quite strenuous on the narrow and steep trail.

Sumatran Orangutan



Lar Gibbon



Thomas's Langur



Silvered Langur



Crab-eating Macaque



Southern Pig-tailed Macaque



Small Long-fingered Bat



Species list Sumatra

1. Sunda Flying Lemur (Sunda Colugo) *Galeopterus variegatus*

One in Way Kambas and a mother with baby along Tapan Road.

2. Pen-tailed Treeshrew *Ptilocercus lowii*

Two of these small, fast-moving gems in bushes along the road in Way Kambas. NEW FAMILY!

3. Lesser Treeshrew *Tupaia minor*

Brief view in Way Kambas.

4. Large Treeshrew *Tupaia tana*

Good view of one who wedged around in a tree in Way Kambas.

5. Greater Slow Loris *Nycticebus coucang*

Three seen in a plantation near Satwa Lodge, Way Kambas during a night walk with Hari.

6. Crab-eating Macaque (Long-tailed Macaque) *Macaca fascicularis*

A few seen in Way Kambas and along Tapan Road. Very common in Bukit Lawang and during the Orangutan trek, Gunung Leuser NP.

7. Southern Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca nemestrina*

Seen by others in Way Kambas and along Tapan Road. Luckily, they were common on the Orangutan trek, Gunung Leuser NP.

8. Sumatran Langur (Mitred Langur, Sumatran Surili) *Presbytis melalophos*

Observed in Way Kambas and along Tapan Road five different days.

9. Thomas's Langur *Presbytis thomasi*

This beautiful primate, endemic for northern Sumatra, were seen twice during the Orangutan trek, Gunung Leuser NP and once outside our guesthouse in Bukit Lawang.

10. Silvered Langur *Trachypithecus cristatus*

First one and then ten in Way Kambas and one just outside Bukit Lawang.

11. Lar Gibbon (White-handed Gibbon) *Hylobates lar*

A wonderful encounter with a group of six in Gunung Leuser NP during the Orangutan trek.

12. Siamang *Symphalangus syndactylus*

Seen in Way Kambas and on Mount Kerinci, heard along Tapan Road.

13. Sumatran Orangutan *Pongo abelii*

From 1972 to 2002 it was a rehabilitation center for Orangutans in Bukit Lawang. A feeding platform closed 2015. What I could understand was the Orangutans who could be seen

during the trek all rehabilitated but lived a “wild” life now. Some were said to be over-habituated, stole food and could be aggressive. We saw a mother with a small baby. It was anyway a very nice experience. We were the only people there and the mother sat quietly high up in a tree and didn’t take any notice of us. And I think you can say that the baby was completely wild!?

14. Pencil-tailed Tree Mouse *Chiropodomys gliroides*

Found in a bush by Carlos with the thermal scope when spot-lighting along Tapan Road.

15. Black-striped Squirrel (Black-banded Squirrel) *Callosciurus nigrovittatus*

Mount Kerinci and Tapan Road.

16. Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*

Three days along Tapan Road.

17. Prevost’s Squirrel *Callosciurus prevostii*

One in Way Kambas and a black specimen on the Orangutan trek, Gunung Leuser NP.

18. Three-striped Ground Squirrel *Lariscus insignis*

A few along Tapan Road.

19. Niobe Ground Squirrel *Lariscus niobe*

I really can’t say I saw any particular difference on this and the above species, but the three-striped is more of a lowland species and this we saw high up on Mount Kerinci.

20. Low’s Squirrel *Sundasciurus lowii*

Two on Mount Kerinci and one along Tapan Road.

21. Slender Squirrel *Sundasciurus tenuis*

A few in Way Kambas and Tapan Road and a lot in Gunung Leuser NP.

22. Binturong *Arctictis binturong*

Sumatra seems to be a good place for Binturong as we saw three different animals. The first one crossed the road in front of our car during early morning spot-lighting along Tapan Road. The next was seen climbing a tree and licking its paws during the day, also Tapan Road. The last one we saw in a plantation just outside Bukit Lawang during our night walk with Ipul.

23. Small-toothed Palm Civet *Arctogalidia trivirgata*

Two along Tapan Road during early morning spot-lighting, and two near the plantation outside Bukit Lawang during night walk with Ipul.

24. Masked Palm Civet *Paguma larvata*

Two seen along Tapan Road during early morning spot-lighting.

25. Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*

A total of five in Way Kambas.

26. Serow *Capricornis sumatraensis*

This was the cause of a great frustration for me. During the early morning spot-lighting along Tapan Road I was in the first car. On a lawn close to a building I saw something that gleamed. Looked like metal or other rubbish to me. Big mistake!! Tour leader in the last car used his thermal scope and saw two Serows...

27. Lesser Sheath-tailed Bat *Emballonura monticola*

Hanging in a culvert in Way Kambas. Id by Hari.

28. Dusky Leaf-nosed Bat *Hipposideros ater*

According to Carlos after examined his photos. Hari said Lesser Woolly Horseshoe Bat that is very rare in Sumatra.

29. Horsfield's Leaf-nosed Bat *Hipposideros larvatus*

Probably this species in one of the bat caves outside Bukit Lawang.

30. Lesser False Vampire *Megaderma spasma*

Showed by Hari in a building close to Satwa Lodge, Way Kambas.

31. Horsfield's Fruit Bat *Cynopterus horsfieldii*

In one of the bat caves outside Bukit Lawang.

32. Minute Fruit Bat (Forest Short-nosed Fruit Bat) *Cynopterus minutus*

I suppose it's confirmed now that the "Forest Fruit Bats" roosting under the eaves in buildings in Way Kambas River Station is this species?

33. Large Flying Fox *Pteropus vampyrus*

Many at dusk driving to/from Padang to Kerinci.

34. Great Woolly Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus luctus*

One hanging from a branch in a plantation near Bukit Lawang during night walk with Ipul.

35. Small Long-fingered Bat (Small Bent-winged Bat) *Miniopterus pusillus*

Some of the bats roosting in one of the bat caves outside Bukit Lawang was probably of this species.

Some other observations

Southern Red Muntjac *Muntiacus muntjak*. Seen by some when crossing the road in Way Kambas.

Trefoil Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus trifoliatus*. Seen by some in Way Kambas.

Malay Weasel *Mustela nudipes*. A small mammal crossing the road and seen by me and the tour leader was probably this species but was not seen well enough.

Squirrel sp. A lot of squirrels not seen well enough for id.

Rodent sp. A big rodent with white belly seen rather well but no photo and no id.

Shrew sp. A rather big shrew crossing Tapan Road. Unluckily the tour leader saw it too late for catching it.

Bat sp. A middle-sized bat, light under with what looked like a darker breastband, flying along Tapan Road.

Great Argus *Argusianus argus*. A bird! But what a bird!! Seen during Orangutan trek in Gunung Leuser NP.

Reptiles and amphibians. Four species of snakes, a lot of lizards and frogs during Orangutan Trek, Gunung Leuser NP.

PART FIVE - MALAYSIA

Last part of the trip was Malaysia on our own. We started with Fraser's Hill, a wellknown birding spot, continued to Taman Negara NP for some days and finished with one night in Bukit Tinggi and a visit in Kuala Selangor.

We rented a car at the airport in Kuala Lumpur and drove to Fraser's Hill where we stayed at Shahzan Inn for three nights. We birded during daytime and spot-lighted after dark. There are two roads up to Fraser's Hill, both one-way. The downhill road, also called New Road, was rather productive in the lower part.

In Taman Negara we booked four nights in Delimah Guesthouse in Kuala Tahan, the village just outside the national park on the other side of the river, and one night inside the park at Mutiara Taman Negara Resort. Two nights we spent at Kumpang Hide for tapir watching and went back to Delimah to have a good sleep during the day. Most of the time we walked around in the park and one night we spot-lighted along some smaller roads outside Kuala Tahan.

Bukit Tinggi is famous for Mountain Peacock-Pheasant but there are a lot of mammals too. We birded in the Japanese Garden area and drove around in the surroundings.

On our way back to Kuala Lumpur we took the detour over Kuala Selangor to see Selangor Silvered Langur. The monkeys turned out to be a major tourist attraction. They were fed and put on people's heads.

Asian Tapir



Common Treeshrew



Greater Slow Loris



Pale-thighed Langur



Dusky Langur



Selangor Silvered Langur



Siamang



Asian Red-cheeked Squirrel



Grey-bellied Squirrel



Asiatic Brush-tailed Porcupine



Species list Malaysia

1. Common Treeshrew *Tupaia glis*

A total of ten in and around the village in Fraser's Hill early mornings.

2. Greater Slow Loris *Nycticebus coucang*

One each night when spot-lighting in Fraser's Hill. Downhill (New) Road, lower elevation.

3. Crab-eating Macaque (Long-tailed Macaque) *Macaca fascicularis*

Around Shahzan Inn, Fraser's Hill, common in Taman Negara NP around Mutiara resort, and a lot on the hill in Kuala Selangor where they feed the langurs.

4. Southern Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca nemestrina*

Around ten along New Road, Fraser's Hill and a flock when driving small roads before Japanese Garden area, Bukit Tingii.

5. Pale-thighed Langur (White-thighed Surili) *Presbytis siamensis*

15 along Telecom loop, Fraser's Hill and a big group just outside Shahzan Inn, also Fraser's Hill.

6. Selangor Silvered Langur *Trachypithecus selangorensis*

(Silvered Langur *T. cristatus*). Not a valid species according to IUCN.

Plenty on a small hill close to Kuala Selangor Nature Park, Kuala Selangor, where they are fed and interact with tourists.

7. Dusky Langur *Trachypithecus obscurus*

One close to the long footbridge opposite The Gap Resthouse just before the uphill road to Fraser's Hill. Common near Botanical Garden in Bukit Tinggi.

8. Siamang *Symphalangus syndactylus*

Three very habituated at our hotel in Bukit Tinggi, Berjaya Hills Golf & Country Club, where they came to get fruit three times daily. Also heard from the area around Japanese Garden, Bukit Tinggi.

9. Asiatic Brush-tailed Porcupine *Atherurus macrourus*

This was the biggest surprise on the trip! After spending a few hours in Tahan Hide, only 200 m from the cabins in Mutuara Taman Negara resort, looking for tapirs and Malayan Porcupines without seeing any, I had a good view of this species on the boardwalk when going back. Then I saw two more around the restaurant.

10. Malayan Porcupine *Hystrix brachyura*

A brief view of one the first night in Kumbang Hide, Taman Negara.

11. Long-tailed Giant Rat *Leopoldamys sabanus*

Two observations of one individual inside Kumbang Hide, Taman Negara, the second night.

12. Grey-bellied Squirrel *Callosciurus caniceps*

Common in Fraser's Hill and Taman Negara.

13. Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*

Two last day in Taman Negara.

14. Asian Red-cheeked Squirrel *Dremomys rufigenis*

One in Fraser's Hill.

15. Common (Red) Giant Flying Squirrel *Petaurista petaurista*

One when spot-lighting the downhill road, Fraser's Hill. Lower elevation. Two when spot-lighting small roads outside Kuala Tahan (Taman Negara).

16. Shrew-faced Squirrel *Rhinosciurus laticaudatus*

One just outside Shahzan Inn, Fraser's Hill.

17. Slender Squirrel *Sundasciurus tenuis*

One in Fraser's Hill.

18. Himalayan Striped Squirrel *Tamiops macclellandii*

A few outside Shahzan Inn, Fraser's Hill.

19. Small-toothed Palm Civet *Arctogalidia trivirgata*

One close to the long footbridge opposite the Gap Resthouse just before the uphill road to Fraser's Hill. Two when spot-lighting the downhill road, Fraser's Hill. Lower elevation.

20. Masked Palm Civet *Paguma larvata*

One on the road at the beginning of the uphill road when spot-lighting in Fraser's Hill. A superb view of one slowly walking in front of Tahan Hide, Taman Negara.

21. Sunda Palm Civet *Paradoxurus musangus*)

(Common Palm Civet *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*) Not a valid species according to IUCN. One seen in a tree from our balcony at Shahzan Inn, Fraser's Hill.

22. Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula*

A brief view of two crossing the road in Fraser's Hill.

23. Asian Tapir *Tapirus indicus*

The highlight of the trip!!! Second night at the Kumbang Hide in Taman Negara it appeared around 09.00 pm, stayed for a few minutes and then crashed away through the bush.

24. Wild Boar *Sus scrofa*

In Mutiara Taman Negara resort during night and along one of the trails during day. One in the village of Kuala Tahan during day.

Some other observations

Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus*. Heard in Taman Negara. One almost scared me to death when I lit the torch on the backside of Kumbang Hide to scan for tapir and I heard a terrifying roar very close. Too close!!

Lar Gibbon *Hylobates lar*

Heard in Taman Nagara three days.

Mammal sp. A big animal was heard when moving around in the bushes in front of Kumbang Hide but never came into view. Maybe a Gaur...

Storm's Stork *Ciconia stormi*. Another nice surprise was this stork that rested for a minute in front of Kumbang Hide.

Malayan Mountain Horned Agama *Acanthosaura titiwangsaensis*. An agama with a very small distribution, Fraser's Hill and Cameron Highlands and described as late as 2009.

Summery

Total number of species seen by me are 63 and another four only seen by others.

If anyone has opinions about the id of the bats – please tell me!!

Some contact info:

Birdtour Asia www.birdtourasia.com

Bukit Lawang Jungle Trekking www.bukitlawang-jungletrekking.com

Lars Petersson, travelmate and husband, www.larsfoto.se. Pictures mostly of birds but also mammals from different trips under Gallery – Bird images from foreign trips.

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Finally, I want to apologize for bad English. Google translate is a good help but sometimes it can be a little bit strange...