

Oriental Bird Club



A.S.

Birding sites in Malaysia

HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF THE WORLD



Volume 2 New World Vultures to Guineafowl



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MALAYSIA

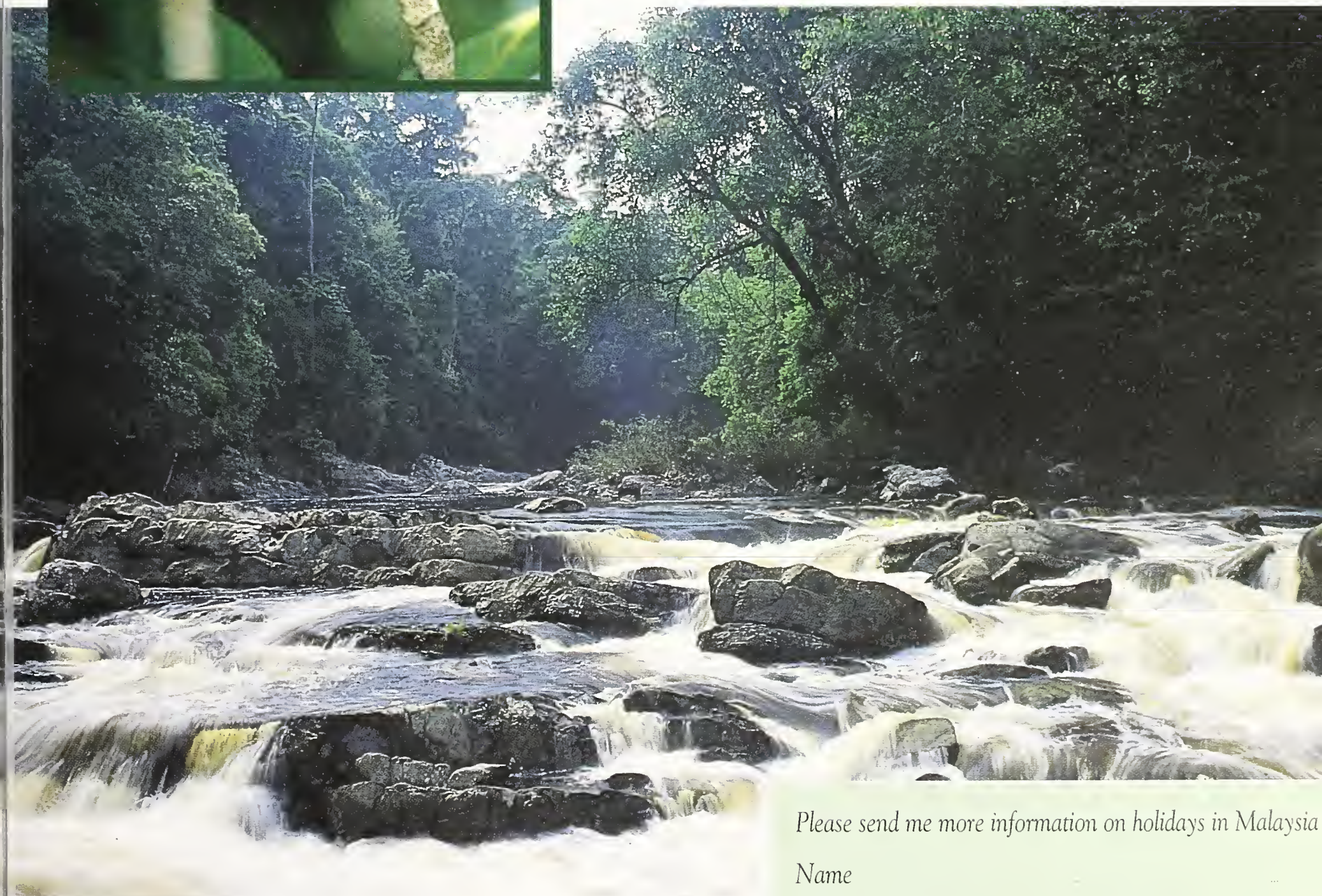
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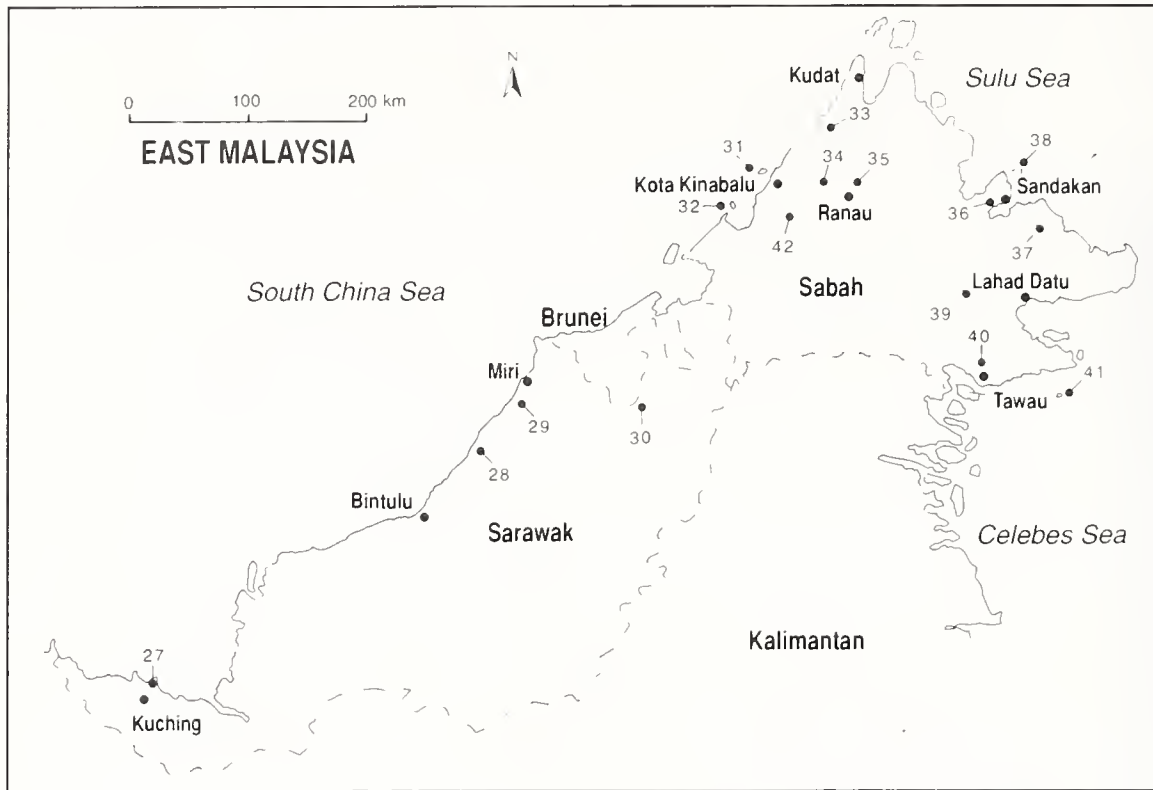
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Birding sites in Malaysia



INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is an ideal destination for birdwatchers, offering a diverse range of species and a host of exciting places to visit. In this booklet we try and give you a taste of some of the best sites in the country, drawing upon the wealth of information given in John Bransbury's *A birdwatcher's guide to Malaysia*.

We reproduce here the summary maps showing the 42 sites described in this book. Following on, there are four site accounts taken from the book. We have chosen two areas located near to Penang Island in north-west Peninsular Malaysia, which offer very different birding experiences. The first, Kuala Gula, is an area of extensive and well-managed mangrove forest and intertidal mudflats, holding large concentrations of waterbirds and rarities such as the Milky Stork. By contrast, the second area, Bukit Larut, comprises montane and hill forests and so a chance to see many of the forest species restricted to the higher altitudes of the Peninsula.

The other sites included are two national parks, Gunung Mulu and Bako, which are both in Sarawak. Gunung Mulu extends over an area so large and diverse that a visit of several weeks could still not cover its varied terrain. As well as having a bird list above 300 species the area is famous for its extensive cave system, including Sarawak Chamber, thought to be the largest cave in the world. Bako combines a wide range of habitats in a relatively small area, easy access from Sarawak's main city, and an excellent selection of Borneo's lowland bird and mammal species.

Sabah is fast becoming one of the most popular destinations for visiting birdwatchers to South-East Asia. In the second part of this booklet Nick Pope takes us on a trip to some of the best sites such as the montane forest of Mount Kinabalu, the hill forests of Poring Hot Springs, and the lowland rainforests at Danum Valley and Uncle Tan's camp. There are even some excellent birding areas close to Sabah's capital, Kota Kinabalu, and information is also given for these sites. Finally Phil Heath gives us an insight into the spectacle of Batu Punggul Virgin Forest Reserve, off the well-worn circuit of Sabah's birding sites.

This booklet would not be complete without some colour photographs, and we are fortunate to be able to show a stunning selection of some of Malaysia's most spectacular species. We are most grateful to the photographers, and to the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board who have sponsored the production costs of this booklet.

- 1 Lake Gardens and Bukit Tunku
- 2 Sungai Batu Mining Pools
- 3 Universiti Malaya and Rimba Ilmu
- 4 Templer Park
- 5 Gombak Valley (Ulu Gombak)
- 6 Genting Highlands
- 7 Bukit Gasing and Petaling Jaya
- 8 Taman Pertanian, Shah Alam
- 9 Pulau Tengah, Klang
- 10 **KUALA SELANGOR NATURE PARK**
- 11 PBLs ricefields, Sekinchan
- 12 Tanjong Karang and Patai Rasa Sayang
- 13 The Gap (Semangkok Pass)
- 14 Fraser's Hill (Bukit Fraser)
- 15 **KUALA GULA**
- 16 Penang Island (Pulau Pinang)
- 17 Cameron Highlands
- 18 **BUKIT LARUT (MAXWELL HILLS)**
- 19 Pulau Langkawi
- 20 Kenyir Dam (Tasik Kenyir)
- 21 Pulau Redang
- 22 Taman Negara
- 23 Tasik Chini
- 24 Pulau Tioman
- 25 Endau-Rompin
- 26 Pasoh Forest Reserve
- 27 **BAKO NATIONAL PARK**
- 28 Niah National Park
- 29 Lambir Hills National Park
- 30 **GUNUNG MULU NATIONAL PARK**
- 31 **TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN NATIONAL PARK**
- 32 Pulau Tiga Park
- 33 Kota Belud Bird Sanctuary
- 34 **KINABALU NATIONAL PARK**
- 35 **PORING HOT SPRINGS**
- 36 Sepilok Forest Reserve
- 37 **UNCLE TAN'S JUNGLE CAMP**
- 38 Turtle Island Park
- 39 **DANUM VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA**
- 40 Tawau Hills Park
- 41 Pulau Sipadan
- 42 Crocker Range National Park

15 Kuala Gula

Perak

Kuala Gula is a small fishing village on the Perak coast, about 40 km north-west of Taiping. Though not the most attractive birding spot in Malaysia, the village is a handy place to stay for a few nights while you explore the adjacent coastal areas, in particular Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary and the Matang Mangrove Forest Reserve (the bird sanctuary forms part of the forest reserve and is situated towards its northern end).

Consisting of a vast expanse of tidal mudflats, mangrove forests and islands, and extending some 40 km from about Kuala Kurau in the north to beyond Kuala Sepetang (Port Weld) in the south, the area is perhaps best known as the place to see Milky Storks. A number of other sought-after species can also be found there, among them Black-crowned Night-Heron, Lesser Adjutant, Masked Finfoot, rare migrant shorebirds, Brown-headed Gull, rare terns, and Ruddy Kingfisher. In all, about 140 bird species have been recorded, and the experienced observer could probably add a further 20 or 30 to the list.

At the time of writing, the sanctuary at Kuala Gula has few visitor facilities - there's just a park office (where you can get a bird list and a map of the area) and accommodation for up to nine people. There is also a resident ranger who will guide you around the local area (if he is available); in addition, the ranger can organise for you to be taken out in a boat by one of the local fishermen. Facilities at Kuala Gula may soon be improved, however, since there are plans to make the sanctuary more attractive to ecotourists by building chalets to accommodate a larger number of visitors.

Good birdwatching areas

A boat is almost essential to get the best out of this site, for access to Perak's northern coast is somewhat limited (apart from Kuala Kurau and Kuala Sepetang). If you have time, be sure to take a boat trip from Kuala Gula; you will of course have to pay for fuel and for the boatman (it could cost M\$50 to 100, depending on how long you stay out), and you will need to arrange the trip in advance - phone the park office on 04-557207 (Azman Said is currently in charge of the sanctuary and he is very helpful). The ranger at Kuala Gula may be able to accompany you in the boat and he will

Birds: Kuala Gula

Mangroves, wetlands, scrub:

SUNDA WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos moluccensis*
 LACED WOODPECKER *Picus vittatus*
 COMMON FLAMEBACK *Dinopium javanense*
 DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis*
 COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*
 STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER *Pelargopsis capensis*
 WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER *Halcyon smyrnensis*
 BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER *Halcyon pileata*
 ASIAN KOEL *Eudynamis scolopacea*
 CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus sumatranus*
 GREATER COUCAL *Centropus sinensis*
 LESSER COUCAL *Centropus bengalensis*
 PINK-NECKED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron vernans*
 WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
 MARSH SANDPIPER *Tringa stagnatilis*
 COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*
 COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*
 PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER *Pluvialis fulva*
 LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*
 BRAHMINY KITE *Haliastur indus*
 CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE *Spilornis cheela*
 LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*
 GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*
 INTERMEDIATE EGRET *Mesophoyx intermedia*
 CHINESE POND-HERON *Ardeola bacchus*
 STRIATED HERON *Butorides striatus*
 YELLOW BITTERN *Ixobrychus sinensis*
 CINNAMON BITTERN *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*
 GOLDEN-BELLIED GERYGONE *Gerygone sulphurea*
 MANGROVE WHISTLER *Pachycephala grisola*
 BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE *Oriolus chinensis*
 PIED TRILLER *Lalage nigra*
 PIED FANTAIL *Rhipidura javanica*
 ASHY DRONGO *Dicurus leucophaeus*
 COMMON IORA *Aegithina tiphia*
 MANGROVE BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis rufigastra*
 GREAT TIT *Parus major*
 YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus goiavier*
 OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL *Pycnonotus plumosus*
 ZITTING CISTICOLA *Cisticola juncidis*
 YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA *Prinia flaviventris*
 ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE *Zosterops palpebrosus*
 GREAT REED-WARBLER *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
 COMMON TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus sutorius*
 DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus atrogularis*
 ASHY TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus ruficeps*
 ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*
 PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes malaccensis*
 COPPER-THROATED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia calcostetha*
 OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia jugularis*
 WHITE-RUMPED MUNIA *Lonchura striata*

Mudflats:

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*
 WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*
 EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata*
 COMMON REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*
 TEREK SANDPIPER *Tringa cinerea*
 RUFIOUS-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis*
 CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*
 GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*
 MONGOLIAN PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus*
 GREATER SAND PLOVER *Charadrius leschenaultii*
 COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*
 LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*
 WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybridus*

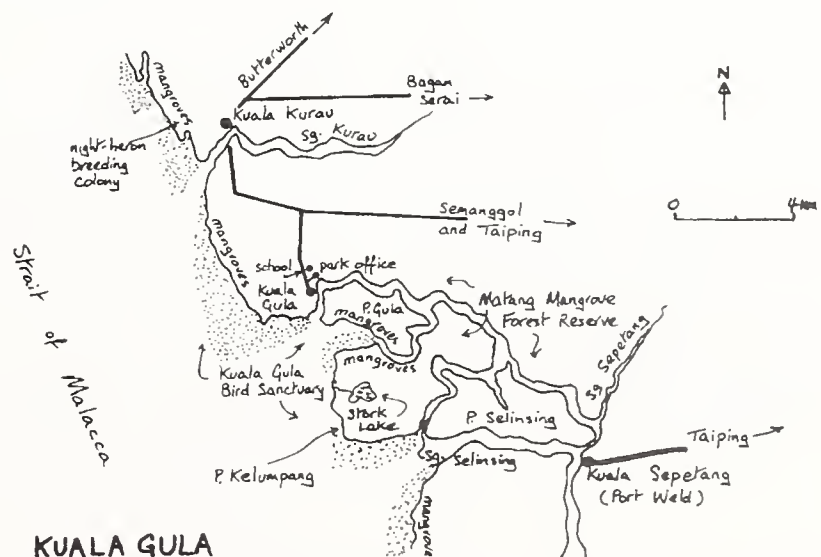
WHITE-WINGED TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus*
 GREAT EGRET *Casmerodius albus*

Open (dry) areas, overhead:

BARRED BUTTERQUAIL *Turnix suscitator*
 BLUE-THROATED BEE-EATER *Merops viridis*
 BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER *Merops philippinus*
 LONG-TAILED PARAKEET *Psittacula longicauda*
 HOUSE SWIFT *Apus nipalensis*
 LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus macrurus*
 SPOTTED DOVE *Streptopelia chinensis*
 OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*
 BLACK-WINGED KITE *Elanus caeruleus*
 WHITE-BELLIED FISH-EAGLE *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
 PACIFIC REEF-EGRET *Egretta sacra*
 BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus*
 LONG-BILLED CROW *Corvus validus*
 ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis*
 ASIAN GLOSSY STARLING *Aplonis panayensis*
 COMMON MYNA *Acridotheres tristis*
 JUNGLE MYNA *Acridotheres fuscus*
 BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*
 PACIFIC SWALLOW *Hirundo tahitica*

Difficult-to-find or rare species:

BLACK-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx erithacus*
 RUFIOUS-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx rufidorsa*
 RUDDY KINGFISHER *Halcyon coromanda*
 ORIENTAL BAY-OWL *Phodilus badius*
 BUFFY FISH-OWL *Ketupa ketupu*
 CINNAMON-HEADED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron fulvicollis*
 LITTLE GREEN-PIGEON *Treron olax*
 MASKED FINFOOT *Heliopais personata*
 RED-LEGGED CRAKE *Rallina fasciata*
 RUDDY-BREASTED CRAKE *Porzana fusca*
 BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*
 WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*
 GREY-TAILED TATTLER *Tringa brevipes*
 RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*
 ASIAN DOWITCHER *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
 GREAT KNOT *Calidris tenuirostris*
 RED KNOT *Calidris canutus*
 LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*
 LONG-TOED STINT *Calidris subminuta*
 RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*
 BROWN-HEADED GULL *Larus brunnicephalus*
 LESSER CRESTED-TERN *Sterna bengalensis*
 GREAT CRESTED-TERN *Sterna bergii*
 BLACK-NAPED TERN *Sterna sumatrana*
 EASTERN MARSH-HARRIER *Circus spilonotus*
 CHINESE EGRET *Egretta eulophotes*
 JAVAN POND-HERON *Ardeola speciosa*
 BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax*
 SCHRENCK'S BITTERN *Ixobrychus eurhythmus*
 BLACK BITTERN *Dupetor flavicollis*
 MILKY STORK *Mycteria cinerea*
 LESSER ADJUTANT *Leptoptilos javanicus*
 MANGROVE PITTA *Pitta megarhyncha*
 CROW-BILLED DRONGO *Dicurus annectans*
 LARGE WOODSHRIKE *Tephrodornis gularis*
 SIBERIAN THRUSH *Zosterops sibirica*
 EYEBROWED THRUSH *Turdus obscurus*
 YELLOW-RUMPED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula zanthopygia*
 HILL MYNA *Gracula religiosa*
 LANCEOLATED WARBLER *Locustella lanceolata*
 PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER *Locustella certhiola*
 DUSKY WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuscatus*
 FOREST WAGTAIL *Dendronanthus indicus*



know where the best birds are to be found - for example, he will probably suggest you go to the lake on Pular Kelumpang, about 2 km south of the park office. Known locally as Stork Lake, the area is usually reliable for Milky Storks, Lesser Adjutants and a variety of waders.

If you don't manage to get out in a boat, you can still enjoy quite good birding around Kuala Gula fishing village, where tracks provide access to areas of mangrove, and to the drains, canals, scrub and plantations along this part of the coast. If you can't arrange a boat trip, you will probably be better off going to Kuala Selangor Nature Park, where you'll find a greater variety of birds in a smaller, more accessible area.

Access and accommodation

Kuala Gula lies to the west of the main Ipoh to Butterworth road. To get there from Taiping, head north towards Butterworth until you reach Semanggol, then turn west on the road to Kuala Kurau. (At present there are a lot of roadworks between Taiping and Butterworth, and there are detours everywhere. Should you become lost, ask for directions to the 'Balai Polis Simpang Empat Semanggol' - the road to Kuala Kurau passes right by the police station). About 18 km along the Kuala Kurau road there's a turn-off to the left leading to Kuala Gula; follow this road for about 4 km and look for a school on the left. Immediately beyond the school there's a sign marked 'Projek Konservasi Burung-Burung Laut', and a single-lane road leading to the park office behind the school. There are no regular buses to Kuala Gula - a long-distance taxi from Taiping will cost you around M\$40.

Accommodation is available close to the park office, but since it is used by visiting government officials and research workers you should book a room in advance by writing to the Director General, Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Km 10 Jalan Cheras, Kuala Lumpur 56100, or by phoning 03-9052872 (ask for Mr Jasmi). Given that there are plans to upgrade the accommodation it would pay to check with the office at Kuala Gula (tel: 04-557207) before you book; for meals, you can either take along your own food or go to one of the several small eating places in Kuala Gula village.

When to visit

Milky Storks, Lesser Adjutants, Black-crowned Night-Herons and at least some of the site's other sought-after species are present throughout the year, but the Milky Stork population (and probably those of some of the other waterbirds) fluctuates from season to season. Up to a hundred or so Milky Storks may be in the area at any one time; July is said to be the best month for them - for example, about 50 were present in July 1992. If you are mainly interested in looking for migrant shorebirds, you should visit from about September to January or February.

Other attractions

There is little to see at Kuala Gula other than birds, but you could find Crab-eating Macaques *Macaca fascicularis* in the mangroves and, if you're lucky, you may see Indopacific Humpback Dolphins *Sousa chinensis* from the boat. Other animals to look for include Dusky Leaf Monkey *Semnopithecus obscurus* (distinguished by its conspicuous white eye rings) and Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata*.

18 Bukit Larut Perak

Bukit Larut, or Maxwell Hill as it used to be called, is Malaysia's oldest and least known hill station. Consisting of nothing more than a handful of bungalows and resthouses, the area has so far escaped the attentions of developers who no doubt have been put off by the remoteness of the place. At one time you could get to Bukit Larut only on foot or on horseback - today the horses have been replaced by Land Rovers, and the exciting 10 km journey from Taiping to the hill station takes about 30 minutes, along a narrow, one-way road with more than 70 hair-pin bends.

In stark contrast to the hot and humid plains below, the hill station is set at a delightful 1,100 m (3,600 feet) above sea level where dense, swirling clouds provide welcome relief from the midday sun. And unlike nearby Taiping, with its seemingly endless hustle and bustle, Bukit Larut is marvellously tranquil with hardly a human or vehicle in sight. Needless to say it makes an excellent birdwatching destination, and although there are only a few walking tracks in the area, the road to the top provides plenty of opportunities for birding, and more than 200 species have been recorded.

Good birdwatching areas

The road from the foot of the hill climbs steeply to the small collection of buildings that make up Bukit Larut, then continues for a further two or three kilometres to a Telekom tower at the summit of Gunung Hijau, almost 1,450 m (4,750 feet) above sea level. If you spend two or three days in the area, you'll have time to explore not only the hill station itself, but also at least part of the road up from Taiping. You could for example walk the first four or five kilometres down to the half-way point, where the Land Rovers stop for a short time, then get a ride back up. Better still, walk all the way to the bottom, then catch the Land Rover from there. By spending time at different altitudes you will, of course, increase your chances of seeing the greatest variety of birds, and to get the most out of this site you should also allow time for birding around Taiping's Lake Gardens, which lie at the base of the hill. Near the top, there are a couple of walking tracks leading into the dense rainforest - one leaves the bitumen about 1.5 km uphill from the Gunung Hijau Rest House, near a sign marked 'Gunung Hijau 4751 feet'. If you're not fond of leeches, however, it would be best to stay on the road!

Access and accommodation

Once you reach Taiping, which is approximately 300 km north of Kuala Lumpur via Ipoh, make for the Lake Gardens and get onto Jalan Taman Tasik. Near the zoo, turn into Jalan Bukit Larut and keep going for a kilometre or so past the War Cemetery until you reach the gate at the start of the road up to the hill station. (Any taxi driver in Taiping will know how to get there.) Land Rovers leave for the top every half an hour or so between 08h00 and 18h00, and at weekends and during holiday periods you should book your ride in advance - phone 05-827243. At other times a place in a Land Rover should be easy to get, but you will need to prove to the official at the gatehouse that you have booked accommodation, otherwise you will not be allowed to go up. (It may seem bureaucratic, but you wouldn't want to be stuck at the top with nowhere to stay overnight!) The Land Rover trip is an experience in itself, and it's worth every cent of the two or three dollars you'll be charged.

Accommodation at Bukit Larut consists of three bungalows and two resthouses, with prices ranging from

Birds: Bukit Larut

Open areas, overhead:

- GLOSSY SWIFTLET *Collocalia esculenta*
- BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL *Hirundapus giganteus*
- HOUSE SWIFT *Apus nipalensis*
- MOUNTAIN IMPERIAL-PIGEON *Ducula badia*
- CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE *Spilornis cheela*
- BLACK EAGLE *Ictinaetus malayensis*
- CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus cirrhatus*
- BLYTH'S HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus alboniger*
- RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Hirundo daurica*
- GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Ground, lower storey:

- MOUNTAIN SCOPS-OWL *Otus spilocephalus*
- RUFIOUS-WINGED PHILENTOMA *Philentoma pyrropterus*
- YELLOW-RUMPED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula zanthopygia*
- RUFIOUS-BROWED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula solitaria*
- GREY-HEADED CANARY-FLYCATCHER *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
- WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA *Copsychus malabaricus*
- CHESTNUT-NAPED FORKTAIL *Enicurus rufficapillus*
- SLATY-BACKED FORKTAIL *Enicurus schistaceus*
- OLIVE-BELLIED BULBUL *Alophoixus ochraceus*
- DARK-NECKED TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus atrogularis*
- CHESTNUT-CROWNED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax erythrocephalus*
- STREAKED WREN-BABBLER *Napothera brevicaudata*
- PYGMY WREN-BABBLER *Pnoepyga pusilla*
- GREY-THROATED BABBLER *Stachyris nigriceps*
- GREY-HEADED BABBLER *Stachyris poliocephala*
- STRIPED TIT-BABBLER *Macronous gularis*
- SCARLET SUNBIRD *Aethopyga mystacalis*
- LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera longirostra*

Middle storey, canopy:

- SPECKLED PICULET *Picumnus innominatus*
- BANDED WOODPECKER *Picus miniaceus*
- CRIMSON-WINGED WOODPECKER *Picus puniceus*
- MAROON WOODPECKER *Blythipicus rubiginosus*
- BUFF-RUMPED WOODPECKER *Meiglyptes tristis*
- FIRE-TUFTED BARBET *Psilopogon pyrolophus*
- GOLD-WHISKERED BARBET *Megalaima chrysopogon*
- GOLDEN-THROATED BARBET *Megalaima franklinii*
- BLACK-BROWED BARBET *Megalaima oorti*
- BLUE-EARED BARBET *Megalaima australis*
- BROWN BARBET *Calorhamphus fuliginosus*
- RHINOCEROS HORNBILL *Buceros rhinoceros*
- GREAT HORNBILL *Buceros bicornis*
- HELMETED HORNBILL *Buceros vigil*
- BUSHY-CRESTED HORNBILL *Anorrhinus galeritus*
- WHITE-CROWNED HORNBILL *Aceros comatus*
- ORANGE-BREASTED TROGON *Harpactes oreskios*
- RED-HEADED TROGON *Harpactes erythrocephalus*
- BANDED KINGFISHER *Lacedo pulchella*
- RED-BEARDED BEE-EATER *Nyctyornis amictus*
- ORIENTAL CUCKOO *Cuculus saturatus*
- BANDED BAY CUCKOO *Cacomantis sonneratii*

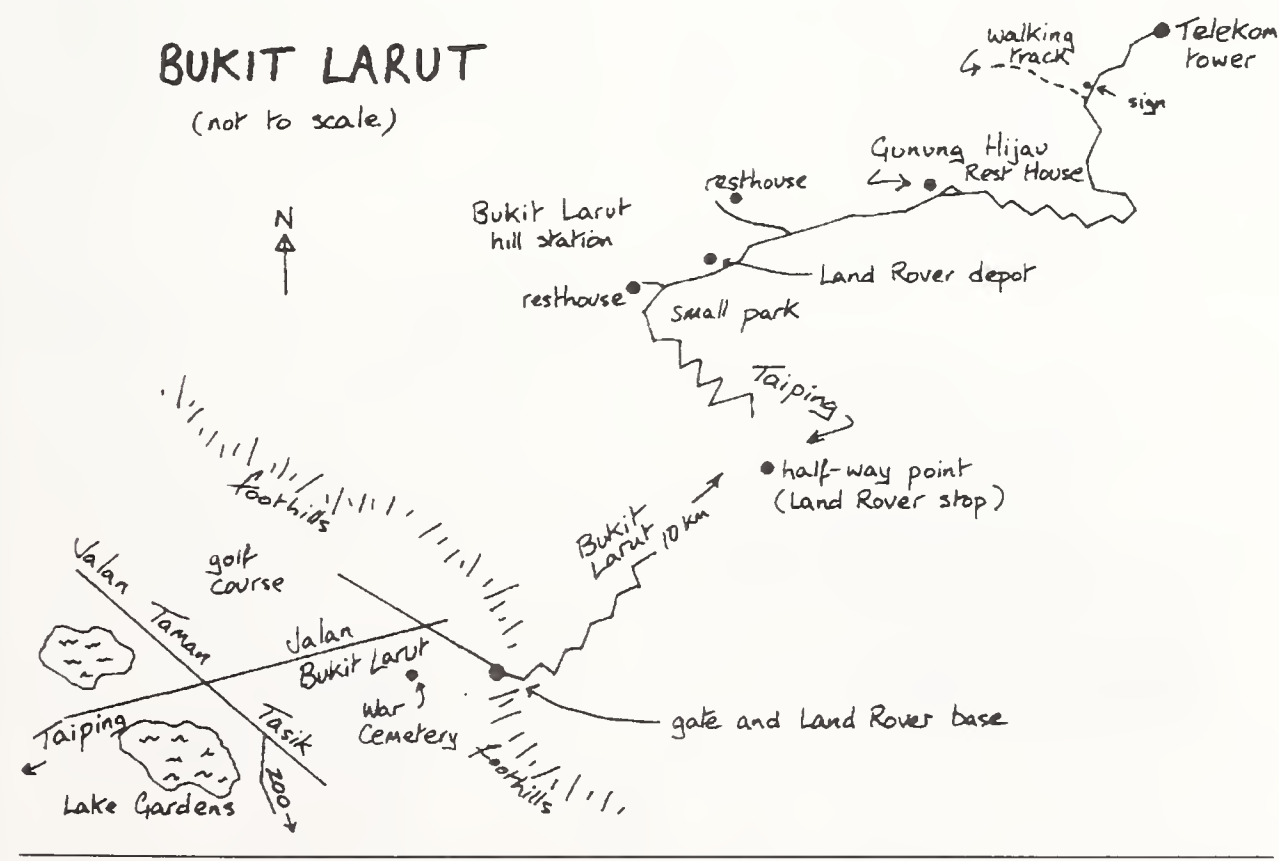
- DRONGO CUCKOO *Surniculus lugubris*
- GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus tristis*
- RED-BILLED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus javanicus*
- CHESTNUT-BREASTED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus curvirostris*
- BLUE-CROWNED HANGING-PARROT *Loriculus galgulus*
- COLLARED OWLET *Glaucidium brodiei*
- LITTLE CUCKOO-DOVE *Macropygia ruficeps*
- THICK-BILLED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron curvirostra*
- WEDGE-TAILED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron sphenura*
- BLACK-AND-YELLOW BROADBILL *Eurylaimus ochromalus*
- SILVER-BREASTED BROADBILL *Serilophus lunatus*
- LONG-TAILED BROADBILL *Psarisomus dalhousiae*
- ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD *Irena puella*
- BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*
- ORANGE-BELLIED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis hardwickii*
- GREEN MAGPIE *Cissa chinensis*
- BLACK-AND-CRIMSON ORIOLE *Oriolus cruentus*
- GREY-CHINNED MINIVET *Pericrocotus solaris*
- BAR-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE *Hemipus picatus*
- WHITE-THROATED FANTAIL *Rhipidura albicollis*
- BRONZED DRONGO *Dicrurus aeneus*
- LESSER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus remifer*
- GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus paradiseus*
- ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER *Terpsiphone paradisi*
- ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa dauurica*
- LITTLE PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula westermanni*
- VERDITER FLYCATCHER *Eumyias thalassina*
- LARGE NILTAVA *Niltava grandis*
- HILL BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis banyumas*
- VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH *Sitta frontalis*
- SULTAN TIT *Melanochlora sultanea*
- BLACK-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus atriceps*
- BLACK-CRESTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus melanicterus*
- RED-EYED BULBUL *Pycnonotus brunneus*
- ASHY BULBUL *Hemixos flavala*
- MOUNTAIN BULBUL *Hypsipetes mcclllandii*
- EVERETT'S WHITE-EYE *Zosterops everetti*
- INORNATE WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*
- EASTERN CROWNED-WARBLER *Phylloscopus coronatus*
- MOUNTAIN LEAF-WARBLER *Phylloscopus trivirgatus*
- CHESTNUT-CROWNED WARBLER *Seicercus castaniceps*
- CHESTNUT-CAPPED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax mitratus*
- CHESTNUT-BACKED SCIMITAR-BABBLER *Pomatorhinus montanus*
- GOLDEN BABBLER *Stachyris chrysaee*
- SILVER-EARED MESIA *Leiothrix argentauris*
- WHITE-BROWED SHRIKE-BABBLER *Pteruthius flaviscapis*
- BLUE-WINGED MINLA *Minla cyanouroptera*
- RUFIOUS-WINGED FULVETTA *Alcippe castaneiceps*
- MOUNTAIN FULVETTA *Alcippe peracensis*
- LONG-TAILED SIBIA *Heterophasia picaoides*
- WHITE-BELLIED YUHINA *Yuhina zantholeuca*
- CRIMSON-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Prionochilus percussus*
- FIRE-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum ignipectus*
- BLACK-THROATED SUNBIRD *Aethopyga saturata*
- LONG-BILLED SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera robusta*
- STREAKED SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera magna*

Difficult-to-find or rare species:

- GREY-BREASTED PARTRIDGE *Arborophila orientalis*
- CRESTED PARTRIDGE *Rollulus rouloul*
- RED JUNGLEFOWL *Gallus gallus*
- GREAT ARGUS *Argusianus argus*
- LESSER YELLOWNAPE *Picus chlorolophus*
- RED-THROATED BARBET *Megalaima mystacophanus*
- YELLOW-CROWNED BARBET *Megalaima henricii*
- WRINKLED HORNBILL *Aceros corrugatus*
- LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus sparverioides*
- HODGSON'S HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus fugax*
- GREATER COUCAL *Centropus sinensis*
- REDDISH SCOPS-OWL *Otus rufescens*
- COLLARED SCOPS-OWL *Otus bakkamoena*
- BARRED EAGLE-OWL *Bubo sumatranus*
- GREY NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus indicus*
- BARRED CUCKOO-DOVE *Macropygia unchall*
- JAMBU FRUIT-DOVE *Ptilinopus jambu*
- GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON *Ducula aenea*
- BLACK BAZA *Aviceda leuphotes*
- ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis ptilorhyncus*
- JAPANESE SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter gularis*
- RUSTY-NAPED PITTA *Pitta oatesi*
- HOODED PITTA *Pitta sordida*
- BLUE-WINGED PITTA *Pitta moluccensis*
- DUSKY BROADBILL *Corydon sumatranus*
- LARGE CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina macei*
- LESSER CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina fimbriata*
- SPOTTED FANTAIL *Rhipidura perlata*
- CROW-BILLED DRONGO *Dicrurus annectans*
- WHITE-THROATED ROCK-THRUSH *Monticola gularis*
- ORANGE-HEADED THRUSH *Zosterops citrina*
- SIBERIAN THRUSH *Zosterops sibirica*
- EYEBROWED THRUSH *Turdus obscurus*
- LESSER SHORTWING *Brachypteryx leucophrys*
- FERRUGINOUS FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa ferruginea*
- MUGIMAKI FLYCATCHER *Ficedula mugimaki*
- BLUE-AND-WHITE FLYCATCHER *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*
- TICKELL'S BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis tickelliae*
- PYGMY BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Muscicapella hodgsoni*
- WHITE-TAILED ROBIN *Cinclidium leucurum*
- COMMON MYNA *Acridotheres tristis*
- JUNGLE MYNA *Acridotheres fuscus*
- BLUE NUTHATCH *Sitta azurea*
- ASIAN HOUSE-MARTIN *Delichon dasypus*
- LARGE SCIMITAR-BABBLER *Pomatorhinus hypoleucos*
- MARbled WREN-BABBLER *Napothera marmorata*
- CUTIA *Cutia nipalensis*
- SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum cruentatum*
- BLACK-THROATED SUNBIRD *Aethopyga saturata*
- EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*
- FOREST WAGTAIL *Dendronanthus indicus*
- OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*
- TAWNY-BREASTED PARROTFINCH *Erythrura hyperythra*
- SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA *Lonchura punctulata*

Additional species for Taiping (Lake Gardens and vicinity):

- GREY-CAPPED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos canicapillus*
- RUFIOUS WOODPECKER *Celeus brachyurus*
- COMMON FLAMEBACK *Dinopium javanense*
- COPPERSMITH BARBET *Megalaima haemacephala*
- DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis*
- COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*
- WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER *Halcyon smyrnensis*
- BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER *Merops philippinus*
- ASIAN KOEL *Eudynamis scolopacea*
- ASIAN PALM-SWIFT *Cypsiurus balasiensis*
- LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus macrurus*
- PINK-NECKED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron vernans*
- WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
- BLACK-THIGHED FALCONET *Microhierax fringillarius*
- TIGER SHRIKE *Lanius tigrinus*
- BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus*
- LARGE-BILLED CROW *Corvus macrorhynchos*
- BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE *Oriolus chinensis*
- COMMON IORA *Aegithina tiphia*
- ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis*
- ASIAN GLOSSY STARLING *Aplonis panayensis*
- BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*
- PACIFIC SWALLOW *Hirundo tahitica*
- YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus goiavier*
- OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL *Pycnonotus plumosus*
- COMMON TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus sutorius*



27 Bako Sarawak

M\$15 to M\$100 a night for a double room (the bungalows and resthouses accommodate between six and 10 people each). By far the best place to stay is the Gunung Hijau Rest House; not only is it comfortable, cheap (M\$15 a double at present) and clean, it is situated well away from the other bungalows in a truly superb forest setting where the views are magnificent, and where the only sound you'll hear at night is that of the wind in the trees. What's more, the present manager - Guna - has spent almost all his life at Bukit Larut and he knows the area intimately, including the haunts of many of the birds and other animals. To reserve accommodation at the hill station phone 05-827241, or write to the Officer-in-Charge, Bukit Larut Hill Resort, Taiping, Perak 34020. Guna at the Gunung Hijau Rest House can be contacted direct on 05-827240, or by writing to Rumah Rehat Gunung Hijau, Bukit Larut, Taiping, Perak 34020

When to visit

With daytime temperatures averaging little more than 20°C, Bukit Larut is a pleasant place to go walking and birdwatching all year round, although since this is West Malaysia's wettest spot you may want to avoid the height of the north-east monsoon season (usually November-January). For migrant birds, a visit between late September and late November would probably be most productive. While the place is nowhere near as popular as Malaysia's other hill stations (Fraser's Hill for example), more people are going there during school and public holidays, and at weekends - if possible, don't go at these times.

Other attractions

Among the other animals you could see here are the White-handed Gibbon *Hylobates lar*, Siamang (Black Gibbon) *Hylobates syndactylus*, Dusky Leaf Monkey *Semnopithecus obscurus*, Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca nemestrina*, Asiatic Brush-tailed Porcupine *Atherurus macrourus* (a semi-tame one visits the Gunung Hijau Rest House most nights), Clouded Leopard *Neofelis nebulosa* (ask Guna where to look for this beautiful but elusive cat), Indian Muntjac *Muntiacus muntjak*, Malayan Tapir *Tapir indicus*, and a wide variety of squirrels. There are also numerous butterflies and moths, as well as countless plants, among them many delicate orchids and fascinating pitcher plants.

Situated on a sandstone headland about 40 km north-east of Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, Bako is one of the most accessible parks in Borneo. It is also one of the easiest of the region's parks to explore, for within the 2,742 ha reserve there are 16 well-marked walking tracks with a total length of more than 30 km. Although small, the park contains a wide range of habitats, including mudflats, mangroves, peat swamp forest, mixed dipterocarp forest, kerangas forest and padang scrub (the last occurs on top of a sandstone plateau where the desert-like terrain resembles that found in parts of Australia).

While Bako's bird life is not especially rich - about 150 species have been recorded in the area - the park is a convenient place to see shorebirds and forest species almost side by side. And since it is located at the end of a north-facing peninsula, the park attracts fair numbers of migrants, especially from September to November. Among the 50 or so migrant species you could see there are Lesser Frigatebird, Chinese Egret, Mongolian Plover, Greater Sand-Plover, Eastern Curlew, Nordmann's Greenshank, Terek Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Asian Dowitcher, and Mugimaki Flycatcher.

Bako is perhaps best known as the place to see animals such as Crab-eating Macaque *Macaca fascicularis*, Silvered Leaf Monkey *Trachypithecus cristatus*, Plantain Squirrel *Calloscirtus notatus*, Bearded Pig *Sus barbatulus* and giant monitor lizards *Varanus*, all of which occur around the park headquarters at Telok Assam. The rare Proboscis Monkey *Nasalis larvatus*, an odd-looking, long-nosed animal confined to the larger rivers and coastal swamps of Borneo, is quite common in the park and can be found in mangroves close to Telok Assam.

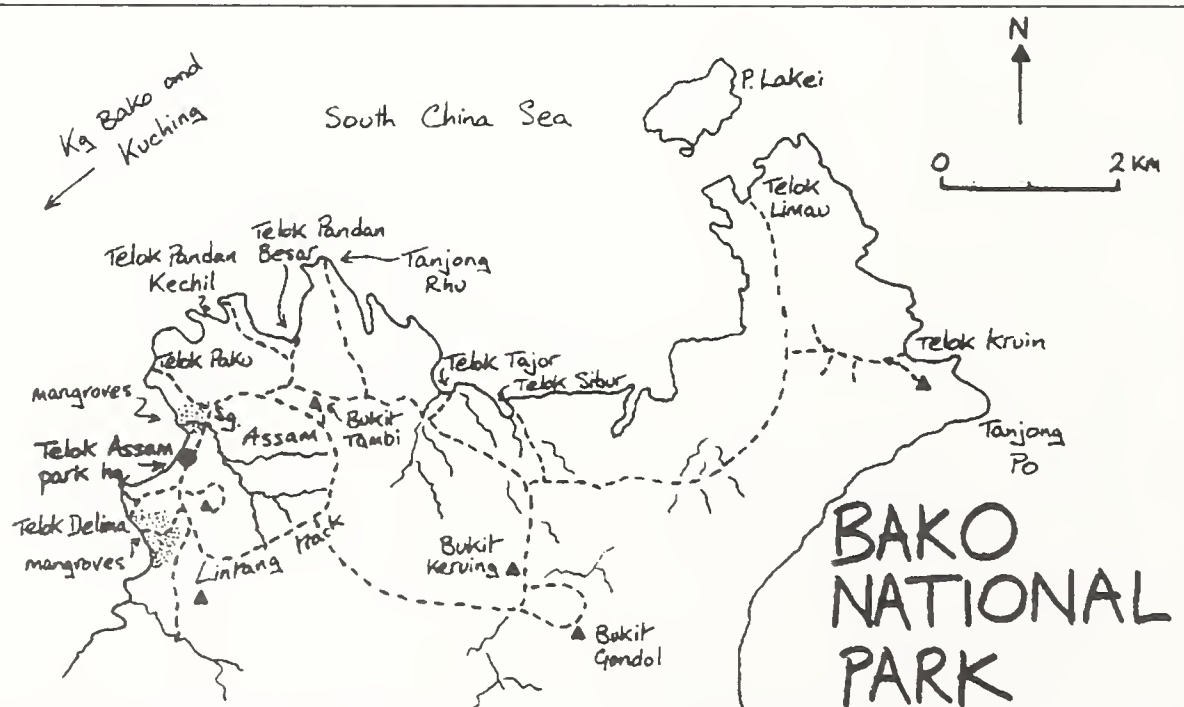
Good birdwatching areas

Depending on the time of year, a variety of shorebirds can usually be seen around Telok Assam, where the mud and sand flats are several hundred metres wide at low tide, and at the five or six bays that lie to the north and east of Telok Assam (see map). You should also keep a watch for shorebirds during the 30-minute boat trip from Kg. Bako to the park HQ - see *Access and accommodation*. Mangrove species can be found quite readily near the park HQ; try the mangroves a little to the north, at the mouth of the Sg. Assam, where there's an elevated boardwalk that allows you to look into the forest canopy. There is another more extensive area of mangrove forest at Telok Delima, about a 45-minute walk to the south of the HQ (Telok Delima is the best spot in Bako for Proboscis Monkeys).

The park's walking tracks are well maintained, and there are several easy walks of less than a kilometre, as well as a number of quite strenuous treks of six kilometres or longer (a park information leaflet, with a map showing the walking trails, can be obtained from the HQ at Telok Assam). One of the most popular walks is the Lintang track, a 5.25 km circular trail that starts at the HQ and passes through many of the vegetation types found at Bako, including mangrove forest, kerangas forest and padang scrub.

Access and accommodation

To reach Bako National Park you must first travel by road to Kg. Bako, which is about a 45-minute drive from Kuching. Then you take a boat to the park HQ at Telok Assam. The Petra Jaya Transport Company in Kuching



operates a bus service to Kg Bako (catch bus number 6); alternatively you can take a taxi, but it'll cost you about M\$50. For the journey from Kg Bako to Telok Assam you can either hire a private boat or go in the official park boat. The average price of the boat trip is M\$20 per person; but if there are only two or three of you the fare could be quite a bit more.

Accommodation at the HQ consists mainly of two-roomed bungalows where a room will cost you around M\$30 per night (you can book the whole bungalow - each one houses up to 10 people - for about M\$60 a night). There is also a hostel where a bunk bed costs about M\$3 per night (if you want a room to yourself in the hostel you'll pay about M\$13 a night). The bungalows and the hostel have bedding, cooking facilities and fans, but no air-conditioning. All accommodation must be booked in advance through the Sarawak National Parks Booking Office, Tourist Information Centre, Main Bazaar, Kuching 93000, phone 082-248088 or 410944. There is a canteen at the HQ where you can get cheap meals, as well as a shop that sells basic items.

If you don't want to go to the trouble of arranging your own visit to Bako, there are a number of tour operators in Kuching who will take you there (at a price!) - inquire at the Tourist Information Centre.

When to visit

Since about one-third of the birds on Bako's list are migrants, a visit between early September and late November will be best. Remember that the monsoon season there is from November to February or March, and during this time there may be occasions when seas are too rough for boats to get to the park. If you can, avoid June, July and August when the park may be crowded and accommodation difficult to find.

Other attractions

In addition to animals like the Proboscis Monkey, Bako supports a rich assemblage of plants - in the kerangas forest and padang scrub on the plateau you will find three types of pitcher plant, as well as four species of the equally fascinating ant plant. For more details about the park's natural history, call at the information centre at the HQ where there are displays, exhibits and audio-visual programmes. Those interested in snorkelling should try the Telok Limau/Pulau Lakei area, north-east of Telok Assam.

Birds: Bako

Open areas (including beaches and mudflats), overhead:

STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER *Pelargopsis capensis*
 BLACK-CAPPED KINGFISHER *Halcyon pileata*
 BLUE-THROATED BEE-EATER *Merops viridis*
 GLOSSY SWIFTLET *Collocalia esculenta*
 EDIBLE-NEST SWIFTLET *Collocalia fuciphaga*
 SILVER-RUMPED SPINETAIL *Rhaphidura leucopygialis*
 HOUSE SWIFT *Apus nipalensis*
 GREY-RUMPED TREESWIFT *Hemiprocne longipennis*
 MALAYSIAN EARED-NIGHTJAR *Eurostopus temminckii*
 LARGE-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus macrurus*
 WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*
 COMMON REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*
 TEREK SANDPIPER *Tringa cinerea*
 GREY-TAILED TATTLER *Tringa brevipes*
 RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*
 ASIAN DOWITCHER *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
 RUFIOUS-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis*
 CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*
 MONGOLIAN PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus*
 LESSER CRESTED-TERN *Sterna bengalensis*
 GREAT CRESTED-TERN *Sterna bergii*
 BLACK-NAPED TERN *Sterna sumatrana*
 LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*
 BRAHMINY KITE *Haliastur indus*
 WHITE-BELLIED FISH-EAGLE *Haliaeetus leucogaster*
 JAPANESE SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter gularis*
 LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*
 CHINESE EGRET *Egretta eulophotes*
 PACIFIC REEF-EGRET *Egretta sacra*
 STRIATED HERON *Butorides striatus*
 BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus*
 WHITE-BREASTED WOODSWALLOW *Artamus leucorhynchus*
 ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis*
 ASIAN GLOSSY STARLING *Aplonis panayensis*
 BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*
 PACIFIC SWALLOW *Hirundo tahitica*
 WHITE-CHESTED BABBLER *Trichastoma rostratum*
 EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*
 YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*
 PADDYFIELD PIPIT *Anthus rufulus*

Ground, lower storey:

SCARLET-RUMPED TROGON *Harpactes duvaucellii*
 BLUE-EARED KINGFISHER *Alcedo meninting*
 RUFIOUS-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx rufidorsa*
 PLAINTIVE CUCKOO *Cacomantis merulinus*
 GREATER COUCAL *Centropus sinensis*
 EMERALD DOVE *Chalcophaps indica*
 TIGER SHRIKE *Lanius tigrinus*
 PIED FANTAIL *Rhipidura javanica*
 MUGIMAKI FLYCATCHER *Ficedula mugimaki*
 MALAYSIAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis turcosus*
 MANGROVE BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis rufigastra*
 WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA *Copsychus malabaricus*
 STRAW-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*
 OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL *Pycnonotus plumosus*
 ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE *Zosterops palpebrosus*
 RUFIOUS-TAILED TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus sericeus*
 ASHY TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus ruficeps*
 ABBOTT'S BABBLER *Malacocincla abbotti*
 HORSFIELD'S BABBLER *Malacocincla sepium*
 SCALY-CROWNED BABBLER *Malacopteron cinereum*
 CHESTNUT-WINGED BABBLER *Stachyris erythroptera*
 STRIPED TIT-BABBLER *Macronous gularis*
 YELLOW-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Prionochilus maculatus*
 LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera longirostra*
 DUSKY MUNIA *Lonchura fuscans*

Middle storey, canopy:

SUNDA WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos moluccensis*
 GREY-CAPPED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos canicapillus*
 COMMON FLAMEBACK *Dinopium javanense*
 RED-CROWNED BARBET *Megalaima rafflesii*
 BLUE-EARED BARBET *Megalaima australis*
 BROWN BARBET *Calorhamphus fuliginosus*
 ORIENTAL PIED-HORNBILL *Anthracoceros albirostris*
 DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis*
 DRONGO CUCKOO *Surniculus lugubris*
 CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus sumatranus*
 CHESTNUT-BREASTED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus curvirostris*

COLLARED SCOPS-OWL *Otus bakkamoena*
 BUDDY FISH-OWL *Ketupa ketupu*
 PINK-NECKED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron vernans*
 CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE *Spilornis cheela*
 CRESTED GOSHAWK *Accipiter trivirgatus*
 ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD *Irena puella*
 GREATER GREEN LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis sonnerati*
 MANGROVE WHISTLER *Pachycephala grisola*
 BAR-BELLIED CUCKOOSHRIKE *Coracina striata*
 LESSER CUCKOOSHRIKE *Coracina fimbriata*
 PIED TRILLER *Lalage nigra*
 FIERY MINIVET *Pericrocotus igneus*
 SCARLET MINIVET *Pericrocotus flammeus*
 BLACK-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE *Hemipus hirundinaceus*
 CROW-BILLED DRONGO *Dicrurus annectans*
 BRONZED DRONGO *Dicrurus aeneus*
 GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus paradiseus*
 BLACK-NAPED MONARCH *Hypothymis azurea*
 ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER *Terpsiphone paradisi*
 COMMON LORA *Aegithina tiphia*
 GREEN LORA *Aegithina viridissima*
 LARGE-BILLED BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis caerulatus*
 HILL MYNA *Gracula religiosa*
 VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH *Sitta frontalis*
 YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus goiavier*
 CREAM-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus simplex*
 RED-EYED BULBUL *Pycnonotus brunneus*
 STREAKED BULBUL *Ixos malaccensis*
 ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*
 SCARLET-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Prionochilus thoracicus*
 ORANGE-BELLIED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum trigonostigma*
 SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum cruentatum*
 PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes malacensis*
 RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes singalensis*
 COPPER-THROATED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia calcostetha*

Difficult-to-find or rare species:

MALAYSIAN HONEYGUIDE *Indicator archipelagicus*
 WHITE-BELLIED WOODPECKER *Dryocopus javensis*
 BLACK HORNBILL *Anthracoceros malayanus*
 VIOLET CUCKOO *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus*
 WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL *Hirundapus caudacutus*
 FORK-TAILED SWIFT *Apus pacificus*
 ORIENTAL BAY-OWL *Phodilus badius*
 SUNDA FROGMOUTH *Batrachostomus cornutus*
 GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON *Ducula aenea*
 PIED IMPERIAL-PIGEON *Ducula bicolor*
 BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*
 BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*
 EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata*
 FAR EASTERN CURLEW *Numenius madagascariensis*
 SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*
 MARSH SANDPIPER *Tringa stagnatilis*
 COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*
 NORDMANN'S GREENSHANK *Tringa guttifer*
 GREAT KNOT *Calidris tenuirostris*
 RED KNOT *Calidris canutus*
 BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER *Limicola falcinellus*
 RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*
 RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*
 RED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicaria*
 BEACH THICK-KNEE *Burhinus giganteus*
 MALAYSIAN PLOVER *Charadrius peronii*
 GULL-BILLED TERN *Sterna nilotica*
 ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii*
 BRIDLED TERN *Sterna anaethetus*
 SOOTY TERN *Sterna fuscata*
 WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybridus*
 WHITE-WINGED TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus*
 OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*
 GREY-HEADED FISH-EAGLE *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*
 PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*
 GREAT-BILLED HERON *Ardea sumatrana*
 GREAT EGRET *Casmerodius albus*
 INTERMEDIATE EGRET *Mesophoyx intermedia*
 LESSER ADJUTANT *Leptoptilos javanicus*
 LESSER FRIGATEBIRD *Fregata ariel*
 BULWER'S PETREL *Bulweria bulwerii*
 ASHY MINIVET *Pericrocotus divaricatus*
 GREAT TIT *Parus major*
 PLAIN SUNBIRD *Anthreptes simplex*
 RED-THROATED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes rhodolaema*
 OLIVE-BACKED SUNBIRD *Nectarinia jugularis*
 CRIMSON SUNBIRD *Aethopyga siparaja*
 WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*



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3

Mangroves and mudflat species

1. Mangrove Pitta *Pitta megarhyncha* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam). 2. Mangrove Blue-Flycatcher *Cyornis rufigaster* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 3. Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 4. Chinese Egret (left bird) feeding alongside Pacific Reef-Egret *E. sacra* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 5. Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography).



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6



Peninsular Montane species

1: Silver-breasted Broadbill *Serilophus lunatus* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam). 2: Green Magpie *Cissa chinensis* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 3: Fire-tufted Barbet *Psilopogon pyrolophus* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam). 4: Blue-winged Minla *Minla cyanouroptera* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam). 5: Pygmy Wren-Babbler *Pnoepyga pusilla* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 6: Rufous-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula solitaria* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam).

30 Gunung Mulu National Park

Sarawak

Opened to the public as recently as 1985, Gunung Mulu National Park encompasses some 544 km² and is situated in the north of Sarawak, on the Brunei border. Although the park has a great many other interesting features, Mulu is best known for its spectacular caves; during expeditions in the 1970s and 1980s, more than 30 caves and almost 200 km of passages were surveyed - and it's thought that this represents only about one-third of the park's cave system. Other statistics are equally impressive: for example, Mulu's Sarawak Chamber - 600 m long, 450 m wide and 100 m high - is the largest cave in the world; the passage in Deer Cave, at about 100 m wide and 120 m high, is said to be the largest on earth; and the 60 km Clearwater Cave is the longest cave system in South-East Asia.

Not all the attractions at Mulu are underground. The park is named after Sarawak's second highest mountain, Gn. Mulu (2,376 m), while another of the reserve's high peaks, Gn. Api (1,710 m), is famous for the fantastic, dagger-like limestone formations, known as the Pinnacles, that rise 45 m above the trees on the mountain's northern slopes.

The park has a rich diversity of plants and animals: all the major inland vegetation types found in Borneo occur within the reserve, including peat-swamp forest, mixed dipterocarp forest, kerangas forest and moss forest. Scientific surveys, namely the joint Sarawak Government/Royal Geographical Society expedition in the late 1970s, have shown that Mulu supports at least 1,500 species of flowering plants, among them some 170 species of orchid and 10 species of pitcher plant. Also nearly 70 mammal species (including 12 bats), about 75 frog species,

and almost 300 species of butterfly have been recorded.

Mulu is undoubtedly one of the best birding destinations in Malaysia (and in South-East Asia for that matter). More than 300 bird species occur in the park, including no fewer than 25 Bornean endemics. Among the more sought-after species you can expect to see in the lower-lying areas are Bat Hawk, Lesser Fish-Eagle, Crested Partridge, Large Green-Pigeon, Blue-headed Pitta, White-crowned Forktail and Sunda Whistling-Thrush, while lowland rarities to look for include Storm's Stork, Wallace's Hawk-Eagle, Black Partridge, Sunda Ground-Cuckoo, Large Frogmouth, Malaysian Honeyguide and Hook-billed Bulbul. The park's slopes and mountain peaks hold a wide variety of submontane and montane birds, including Mountain Serpent-Eagle, Blyth's Hawk-Eagle, Red-breasted Partridge, Crimson-headed Partridge, Bulwer's Pheasant, Orange-breasted Trogon, Hose's Broadbill, Whitehead's Broadbill, Black-breasted Fruit-Hunter, Mountain Wren-Babbler, White-browed Shortwing, Everett's Thrush, Sunda Bush-Warbler, Indigo Flycatcher and Whitehead's Spiderhunter.

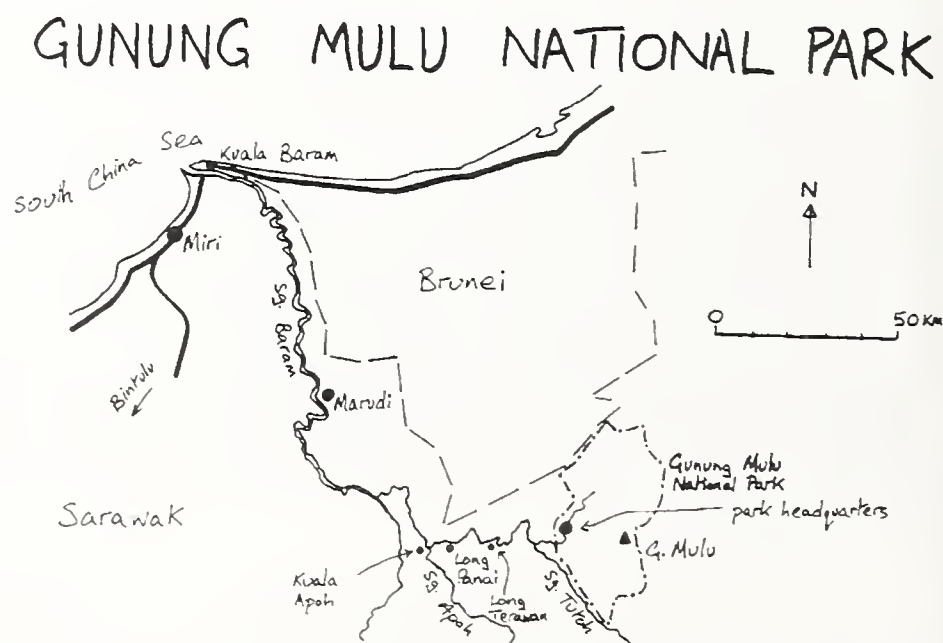
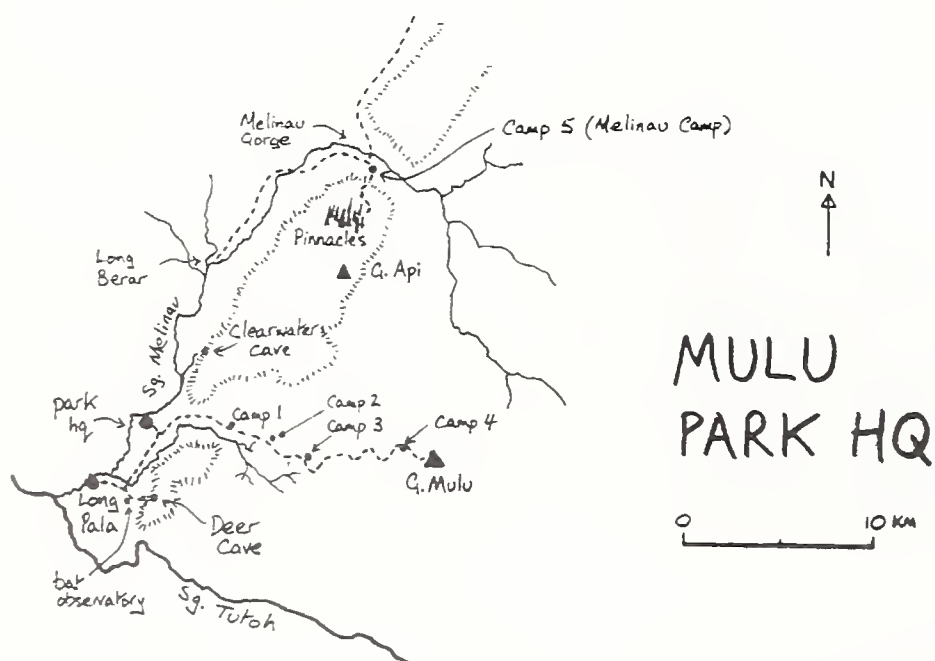
Good birdwatching areas

At the time of writing the visitor facilities at Mulu are still being developed, and the walking track system is nowhere near as extensive as those in Malaysia's other major parks. Even so, there is plenty of scope for the average birder to spend a week exploring around the park headquarters, while the more adventurous visitor could easily fill two or more weeks with treks to the Pinnacles and to the summit of Gn. Mulu. From the HQ, the

trip to the Pinnacles and back takes three to four days (for part of the journey you go by boat up the Sg. Melinau, shooting rapids along the way); the return trek to the top of Gn. Mulu takes four days.

Around the HQ, there's good birding to be had along the banks of the Sg. Melinau, and along the fringes of the lowland forest bordering the cleared areas. Also rewarding is the three to four kilometre walk to Long Pala and Deer Cave. The walk from the HQ to the cave takes around an hour - or considerably longer if the birding is really good - and the well-marked trail (there's a boardwalk most of the way) cuts through a patch of freshwater swamp forest where you've a fair chance of seeing pittas, forketails and other interesting species. Deer Cave is famous because of the millions of bats (mainly Wrinkle-lipped Free-tailed Bat *Tadarida plicata*) that roost deep within its dark confines; at dusk, the bats stream out of the cave en masse and head off to their feeding grounds, and in a clearing near the cave entrance an observatory has been built so that visitors can view the spectacle - it's one not to be missed. The bat observatory, which is situated close to a small stream, is usually a good area for birds - keep a watch for Bat Hawk in the early evening.

As well as walking to Deer Cave, it's well worth taking a boat trip up the Sg. Melinau to Clearwater Cave. En route to the cave you'll almost certainly see Black-and-Red Broadbills in the trees overhanging the river, while Lesser Fish-Eagle and Buffy Fish-Owl are distinct possibilities. At the cave there's a picnic area that is often crowded around lunchtime, but if you get there in the early morning you'll have the place virtually to yourself (as a rule, everybody heads straight underground). Though there are



no walking tracks at Clearwater, with a bit of scrambling you can get across the river - it's quite narrow - and into the forest opposite the picnic ground. Birds to look for in the area include Hose's Broadbill, White-crowned Forktail and Sunda Whistling-Thrush.

When to visit

Although Mulu is open all year round, it can be very wet from about October to February. At present, accommodation at the park is somewhat limited; if you can, avoid the main holiday periods (European as well as local) when rooms may be hard to find.

Other attractions

At the time of writing, only three of Mulu's numerous caves are open to the public, but at least a few of the others will no doubt be developed in the near future. In Deer Cave you will probably get close-up views of bats, since the animals have taken to roosting on the handrails along the walkways - be prepared, as soon as you enter the cave you will almost be overcome by the smell of millions of bat droppings! At Clearwater Cave, where there's an underground river, your guide will take you on a tour that involves wading through waist-high, crystal-clear rushing water - a most pleasant experience. The other cave open to visitors is Lang Cave (175 m long), which has many beautiful formations including the usual stalactites and stalagmites.

The park abounds with wildlife but, except for birds, bats, reptiles and butterflies (notably Rajah Brooke's Birdwing *Troglodytes brookiana* at Clearwater Cave and elsewhere), you will be lucky to see many animals, although squirrels are quite plentiful around the HQ - look for the delightful, diminutive Plain Least Pygmy Squirrel *Exilisciurus exilis* (a Bornean endemic) running along the boardwalk handrails on your way to Deer Cave. Spotting at night could produce some of the park's nocturnal inhabitants - Slow Loris *Nycticebus coucang* and Sunda Tarsier *Tarsius bancanus* are two you should watch for.

Access and accommodation

A few years ago getting to Mulu was an adventure in itself. First you had to get a taxi to take you from Miri to Kuala Baram, a village about 20 km north of Miri at the mouth of the Sg. Baram, then you had to take a 3 hr boat trip up the river to

Marudi. At Marudi you changed boats for another 3 hr trip up the Baram and Tutoh rivers to Kuala Apoh or Long Panai, then changed again to a smaller boat for the final 1-2 hr leg to Long Terawan or Mulu Park HQ (at each stage in the boat journey, the destination depended on the level of the river). In all, the trip from Miri to Park HQ could have taken a day or more.

These days you can fly from Miri direct to Mulu Park with Malaysia Airlines; there are several flights a day, the one-way fare is about M\$50, and the journey takes around 35 minutes. From the airstrip at Mulu it's only 15 minutes or so by boat to the HQ, thus you can get there from Miri in about one hour. At the time of writing, the main accommodation at Mulu consists of a resthouse with eight rooms containing six beds each. There are also several guesthouses and two hostels in the vicinity of Long Pala, on the Sg. Melinau about 15 minutes by boat from the HQ. Overnight charges range from about M\$80 per room at the HQ resthouse, to around M\$10 per person at the hostels. For meals, you can either take your own food and do your own cooking - there are kitchens in the resthouse and at the hostels or you can eat at the inexpensive canteen at the HQ (a much better alternative since carrying in all your food is a real chore). Bookings for accommodation should be made in advance through the National Parks and Wildlife Office, Forest Department, Miri 98000, Sarawak, phone 08536637 (the NP&W Office is situated off Jalan Kingsway in Miri). A visit to Mulu will not come cheap - by the time you've paid for the return air fare (or boat fares if you decide to go by river), a week's accommodation and food, plus various extras such as fees for permits and guides (you'll need a guide to take you into the caves, as well as to the Pinnacles and Gn. Mulu summit), you'll probably be looking at a total cost of between M\$400 and M\$600. Given the time and effort required to make your own arrangements for a trip to Mulu, you should consider paying a little more and going through a travel agency in Miri. The agencies handle all the arrangements, including bookings for accommodation and transport.

Birds: Gunung Mulu

Open areas, overhead:

GLOSSY SWIFTLET *Collocalia esculenta*
 MOSSY-NEST SWIFTLET *Collocalia salangana*
 BLACK-NEST SWIFTLET *Collocalia maxima*
 SILVER-RUMPEO SPINETAIL *Rhaphidura leucopygialis*
 MALAYSIAN EAREO-NIGHTJAR *Eurostopodus temminckii*
 PINK-NECKED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron vernans*
 ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis ptilorhynchus*
 BAT HAWK *Macheiramphus alcinus*
 CRESTED SERPENT-EAGLE *Spilornis cheela*
 BLACK-THIGHEO FALCONET *Microhierax fringillarius*
 PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*
 ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis*
 ASIAN GLOSSY STARLING *Aplonis panayensis*
 BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*
 PACIFIC SWALLOW *Hirundo tahitica*
 YELLOW-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus goiavier*
 EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*
 YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*
 DUSKY MUNIA *Lonchura fuscans*

Rivers:

STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER *Pelargopsis capensis*
 BLACK-CAPPEO KINGFISHER *Halcyon pileata*
 GREATER COUCAL *Centropus sinensis*
 BUFFY FISH-OWL *Ketupa ketupu*
 WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN *Amaurornis phoenicurus*
 COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*
 BRAHMINY KITE *Haliastur indus*
 LESSER FISH-EAGLE *Ichthyophaga humilis*
 STRIATED HERON *Butorides striatus*
 BLACK-AND-RED BROADBILL *Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus*

Ground, lower storey:

BLUE-BREASTED QUAIL *Coturnix chinensis*
 CRESTED FIREBACK *Lophura ignita*
 RUFIOUS PICULET *Sasia abnormis*
 DIARD'S TROGON *Harpactes diardii*
 BLUE-EAREO KINGFISHER *Alcedo meninting*
 BLACK-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx erithacus*
 RUFIOUS-BACKED KINGFISHER *Ceyx rufidorsa*
 RUFIOUS-COLLARED KINGFISHER *Actenoides concretus*
 COLLARED SCOPS-OWL *Otus bakkamoena*
 SPOTTED DOVE *Streptopelia chinensis*
 EMERALD DOVE *Chalcophaps indica*
 BLUE-HEADED PITTA *Pitta baudii*
 GARNET PITTA *Pitta granatina*
 PIED FANTAIL *Rhipidura javanica*
 SPOTTED FANTAIL *Rhipidura perlata*
 RUFIOUS-WINGED PHILENTOMA *Philentoma pyrhopterum*
 MAROON-BREASTED PHILENTOMA *Philentoma velatum*
 SUNOA WHISTLING-THRUSH *Myiophonus glaucinus*
 GREY-CHESTED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER *Rhinomyias umbratilis*
 RUFIOUS-TAILED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER *Rhinomyias ruficauda*
 GREY-STREAKED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa griseisticta*
 DARK-SIDED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa sibirica*
 RUFIOUS-CHESTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula dumetoria*
 MALAYSIAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis turcosus*
 SIBERIAN BLUE ROBIN *Luscinia cyane*
 WHITE-RUMPED SHAMA *Copsychus malabaricus*
 RUFIOUS-TAILED SHAMA *Trichixos pyrropyga*
 CHESTNUT-NAPEO FORKTAIL *Enicurus rufficapillus*
 WHITE-CROWNED FORKTAIL *Enicurus leschenaulti*
 STRAW-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*
 BLACK-AND-WHITE BULBUL *Pycnonotus melanoleucos*
 OLIVE-WINGED BULBUL *Pycnonotus plumosus*
 GREY-CHEEKED BULBUL *Alophoixus bres*
 YELLOW-BELLIED BULBUL *Alophoixus phaeocephalus*
 YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA *Prinia flaviventris*
 RUFIOUS-TAILED TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus sericeus*
 ASHY TAILORBIRO *Orthotomus ruficeps*
 WHITE-CHESTED BABBler *Trichastoma rostratum*
 FERRUGINOUS BABBler *Trichastoma bicolor*
 HORSFIELD'S BABBler *Malacocincla sepiarium*
 SHORT-TAILED BABBler *Malacocincla malaccensis*
 BLACK-CAPPEO BABBler *Pellorneum capistratum*
 GREY-HEADED BABBler *Stachyris poliocephala*
 BLACK-THROATED BABBler *Stachyris nigricollis*
 CHESTNUT-RUMPED BABBler *Stachyris maculata*
 CHESTNUT-WINGED BABBler *Stachyris erythroptera*
 STRIPED TIT-BABBler *Macronous gularis*
 YELLOW-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Prionochilus maculatus*

ORANGE-BELLIED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum trigonostigma*
 PURPLE-NAPE SUNBIRD *Hypogramma hypogrammicum*
 CRIMSON SUNBIRD *Aethopyga siparaja*
 LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera longirostra*
 GREY-BREASTED SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera affinis*
 GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*
 WHITE-BELLIED MUNIA *Lonchura leucogastra*

Middle storey, canopy:

RUFIOUS WOODPECKER *Celeus brachyurus*
 CRIMSON-WINGED WOODPECKER *Picus puniceus*
 MAROON WOODPECKER *Blythipicus rubiginosus*
 ORANGE-BACKED WOODPECKER *Reinwardtipicus validus*
 BUFF-RUMPED WOODPECKER *Meiglyptes tristis*
 BUFF-NECKED WOODPECKER *Meiglyptes tukki*
 GREAT SLATY WOODPECKER *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*
 GOLD-WHISKERED BARBET *Megalaima chrysopogon*
 RED-CROWNED BARBET *Megalaima rafflesii*
 RED-THRATED BARBET *Megalaima mystacophanos*
 YELLOW-CROWNED BARBET *Megalaima henricii*
 BLUE-EARED BARBET *Megalaima australis*
 BROWN BARBET *Calorhamphus fuliginosus*
 BLACK HORNBILL *Anthracoceros malayanus*
 RHINCEROS HORNBILL *Buceros rhinoceros*
 HELMETED HORNBILL *Buceros vigil*
 BUSHY-CRESTED HORNBILL *Anorrhinus galeritus*
 WREATHED HORNBILL *Aceros undulatus*
 RED-NAPED TROGON *Harpactes kasumba*
 SCARLET-RUMPED TROGON *Harpactes duvaucelii*
 DOLLARBIRD *Eurystomus orientalis*
 RED-BEARDED BEE-EATER *Nyctornis amictus*
 HODGSON'S HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus fugax*
 INDIAN CUCKOO *Cuculus micropterus*
 BANDED BAY CUCKOO *Cacomantis sonneratii*
 PLAINTIVE CUCKOO *Cacomantis merulinus*
 BRUSH CUCKOO *Cacomantis variolosus*
 VIOLET CUCKOO *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus*
 DRONGO CUCKOO *Surniculus lugubris*
 BLACK-BELLIED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus diardi*
 CHESTNUT-BELLIED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus sumatranus*
 RAFFLES'S MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus chlorophaeus*
 CHESTNUT-BREASTED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus curvirostris*
 BLUE-CROWNED HANGING-PARROT *Loriculus galgulus*
 GREY-RUMPED TREESWIFT *Hemiprocne longipennis*
 WHISKERED TREESWIFT *Hemiprocne comata*
 BROWN WOOD-OWL *Strix leptogrammica*
 BROWN HAWK-OWL *Ninox scutulata*
 LITTLE GREEN-PIGEON *Treron olax*
 LARGE GREEN-PIGEON *Treron capellei*
 JAMBU FRUIT-DOVE *Ptilinopus jambu*
 CRESTED GOSHAWK *Accipiter trivirgatus*
 CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus cirrhatus*
 WALLACE'S HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus nanus*
 BANDED BROADBILL *Eurylaimus javanicus*
 BLACK-AND-YELLOW BROADBILL *Eurylaimus ochromalus*
 GREEN BROADBILL *Calyptomena viridis*
 GOLDEN-BELLIED GERYGONE *Gerygone sulphurea*
 ASIAN FAIRY-BLUEBIRD *Irena puella*
 GREATER GREEN LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis sonnerati*
 LESSER GREEN LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis cyanopogon*
 BLUE-WINGED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*
 CRESTED JAY *Platylophus galericulatus*
 BLACK MAGPIE *Platysmurus leucopterus*
 SLENDER-BILLED CROW *Corvus enca*
 DARK-THROATED ORIOLE *Oriolus xanthonotus*
 BAR-BELLIED CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina striata*
 LESSER CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina fimbriata*
 BLACK-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE *Hemipus hirundinaceus*
 CROW-BILLED DRONGO *Dicrurus annectans*
 GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus paradiseus*
 BLACK-NAPE MONARCH *Hypothymis azurea*
 ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER *Terpsiphone paradisi*
 COMMON IORA *Aegithina tiphia*
 GREEN IORA *Aegithina viridissima*
 ASIAN BROWN FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa dauurica*
 PALE BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis unicolor*
 LARGE-BILLED BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis caerulatus*
 GREY-HEADED CANARY-FLYCATCHER *Culicicapa ceylonensis*
 HILL MYNA *Gracula religiosa*
 BLACK-HEADED BULBUL *Pycnonotus atriceps*
 CREAM-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus simplex*
 RED-EYED BULBUL *Pycnonotus brunneus*
 SPECTACLED BULBUL *Pycnonotus erythrophthalmos*
 HAIRY-BACKED BULBUL *Tricholestes criniger*
 BUFF-VENTED BULBUL *Iole olivacea*
 STREAKED BULBUL *Ixos malaccensis*
 ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*
 MOUSTACHED BABBLER *Malacopteron magnirostre*

SOOTY-CAPPED BABBLER *Malacopteron affine*
 SCALY-CROWNED BABBLER *Malacopteron cinereum*
 RUFIOUS-CROWNED BABBLER *Malacopteron magnum*
 YELLOW-RUMPED FLOWERPECKER *Prionochilus xanthopygius*
 SCARLET-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Prionochilus thoracicus*
 PLAIN SUNBIRD *Anthreptes simplex*
 PLAIN-THROATED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes malacensis*
 RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes singalensis*
 LONG-BILLED SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera robusta*
 YELLOW-EARED SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera chrysogenys*

Difficult-to-find or rare species

BLACK PARTRIDGE *Melanoperdix nigra*
 CRESTLESS FIREBACK *Lophura erythrophthalma*
 GREAT ARGUS *Argusianus argus*
 MALAYSIAN HONEYGUIDE *Indicator archipelagicus*
 BANDED WOODPECKER *Picus miniaceus*
 CHECKER-THROATED WOODPECKER *Picus mentalis*
 OLIVE-BACKED WOODPECKER *Dinopium rafflesii*
 GREY-AND-BUFF WOODPECKER *Hemicircus concretus*
 ORIENTAL PIED-HORNBILL *Anthracoceros albirostris*
 WHITE-CROWNED HORNBILL *Aceros comatus*
 WRINKLED HORNBILL *Aceros corrugatus*
 BLUE-BANDED KINGFISHER *Alcedo euryzona*
 BANDED KINGFISHER *Lacedo pulchella*
 CHESTNUT-WINGED CUCKOO *Clamator coromandus*
 MOUSTACHED HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus vagans*
 RED-BILLED MALKOHA *Phaenicophaeus javanicus*
 SUNDA GROUND-CUCKOO *Carpococcyx radiceus*
 SHORT-TOED COUCAL *Centropus rectunguis*
 BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL *Hirundapus giganteus*
 FORK-TAILED SWIFT *Apus pacificus*
 ORIENTAL BAY-OWL *Phodilus badius*
 REDDISH SCOPS-OWL *Otus rufescens*
 LARGE FROGMOUTH *Batrachostomus auritus*
 RUDDY CUCKOO-DOVE *Macropygia emiliana*
 THICK-BILLED GREEN-PIGEON *Treron curvirostra*
 GREEN IMPERIAL-PIGEON *Ducula aenea*
 JERDON'S BAZA *Aviceda jerdoni*
 ORIENTAL DARTER *Anhinga melanogaster*
 MALAYAN NIGHT-HERON *Gorsachius melanolophus*
 STORM'S STORK *Ciconia stormi*
 HOODED PITTA *Pitta sordida*
 DUSKY BROAEBILL *Corydon sumatranus*
 MALAYSIAN RAIL-BABBLER *Eupetes macrocerus*
 LARGE WOODSHRIKE *Tephrodornis gularis*
 FULVOUS-CHESTED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER *Rhinomyias olivacea*
 VERDITER FLYCATCHER *Eumyias thalassina*
 WHITE-TAILED FLYCATCHER *Cyornis concretus*
 BORNEAN BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis superbus*
 VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH *Sitta frontalis*
 GREY-BELLIED BULBUL *Pycnonotus cyaniventris*
 PUFF-BACKED BULBUL *Pycnonotus eutilotus*
 FINSCH'S BULBUL *Alophoixus finschii*
 HOOK-BILLED BULBUL *Setornis criniger*
 GREY-BREASTED BABBLER *Malacopteron albogulare*
 CHESTNUT-BACKED SCIMITAR-BABBLER *Pomotorhinus montanus*
 BORNEAN WREN-BABBLER *Ptilocichla leucogrammica*
 STRIPED WREN-BABBLER *Kenopia striata*
 BLACK-THROATED WREN-BABBLER *Napothera atrigularis*
 FLUFFY-BACKED TIT-BABBLER *Macronous ptilosus*
 YELLOW-VENTED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum chrysorrheum*
 RED-THROATED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes rhodolaema*
 THICK-BILLED SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera crassirostris*



The next list is of additional species for those able to explore the more remote parts of the national park, particularly the section of the track to Gn. Mulu above Camp 3 (about 1,200m), and the track to the Pinnacles beyond Camp 5 (Melinau Camp). Most of the birds listed do not occur in the vicinity of the Park HQ.

Open areas, overhead:

MOUNTAIN SERPENT-EAGLE *Spilornis kinabaluensis*
 BESRA *Accipiter virgatus*
 BLACK EAGLE *Ictinaetus malayensis*
 BLYTH'S HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus alboniger*

Ground, lower storey:

RED-BREASTED PARTRIDGE *Arborophila hyperythra*
 CRIMSON-HEADED PARTRIDGE *Haematorityx sanguiniceps*
 BULWER'S PHEASANT *Lophura bulweri*
 REDDISH SCOPS-OWL *Otus rufescens*
 MOUNTAIN SCOPS-OWL *Otus spilocephalus*
 COLLARED OWLET *Glaucidium brodiei*
 MOUNTAIN IMPERIAL-PIGEON *Ducula badia*
 BLUE-HEADED PITTA *Pitta baudii*
 EVERETT'S THRUSH *Zoothera everetti*
 WHITE-BROWED SHORTWING *Brachypteryx montana*
 WHITE-BROWED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER *Rhinomyias insignis*
 SNOWY-BROWED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hyperythra*
 BLUE-AND-WHITE FLYCATCHER *Cyanoptila cyanomelana*
 PYGMY BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Muscicapella hodgsoni*
 FLAVESCENT BULBUL *Pycnonotus flavescens*
 OCHRACEOUS BULBUL *Alophoixus ochraceus*
 MOUNTAIN BLACKKEY *Chlorocharis emiliae*
 BORNEAN STUBTAIL *Urosphena whiteheadi*
 SUNDA BUSH-WARBLER *Cettia vulcania*
 MOUNTAIN TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus cuculatus*
 BARE-HEADED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax calvus*
 TEMMINCK'S BABBLER *Pellorneum pyrrogenys*
 MOUNTAIN WREN-BABBLER *Napothera crassa*
 EYEBROWED WREN-BABBLER *Napothera epilepidota*
 RUFIOUS-FRONTED BABBLER *Stachyris rufifrons*
 GREY-THROATED BABBLER *Stachyris nigriceps*
 WHITE-NECKED BABBLER *Stachyris leucotis*
 SCARLET SUNBIRD *Aethopyga mystacalis*

Middle storey, canopy:

MOUNTAIN BARBET *Megalaima monticola*
 GOLDEN-NAPE BARBET *Megalaima pulcherrima*
 BORNEAN BARBET *Megalaima eximia*
 WHITEHEAD'S TROGON *Harpactes whiteheadi*
 CINNAMON-RUMPED TROGON *Harpactes orrhophaeus*
 ORANGE-BREASTED TROGON *Harpactes oreskios*
 LARGE HAWK-CUCKOO *Cuculus sparverioides*
 ORIENTAL CUCKOO *Cuculus saturatus*
 LITTLE CUCKOO-DOVE *Macropygia ruficeps*
 LONG-TAILED BROADBILL *Psarisomus dalhousiae*
 HOSE'S BROADBILL *Calyptomena hosii*
 WHITEHEAD'S BROAEBILL *Calyptomena whiteheadi*
 BORNEAN WHISTLER *Pachycephala hypoxantha*
 SUNDA TREEPIE *Dendrocitta occipitalis*
 BLACK-AND-CRIMSON ORIOLE *Oriolus cruentus*
 SUNDA CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina larvata*
 GREY-CHINNEO MINIVET *Pericrocotus solaris*
 SCARLET MINIVET *Pericrocotus flammeus*
 BAR-WINGED FLYCATCHER-SHRIKE *Hemipus picatus*
 WHITE-THROATED FANTAIL *Rhipidura albicollis*
 ASHY DRONGO *Dicrurus leucophaeus*
 HAIR-CRESTED DRONGO *Dicrurus hottentottus*
 BLACK-BREASTED FRUIT-HUNTER *Chlamydochaera jefferyi*
 RUFIOUS-TAILED JUNGLE-FLYCATCHER *Rhinomyias ruficauda*
 LITTLE PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula westermanni*
 INOIGO FLYCATCHER *Eumyias indigo*
 HILL BLUE-FLYCATCHER *Cyornis banyumas*
 SCALY-BREASTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus squamatus*
 ASHY BULBUL *Hemixos flava*
 BLACK-CAPPED WHITE-EYE *Zosterops atricapilla*
 MOUNTAIN LEAF-WARBLER *Phylloscopus trivirgatus*
 YELLOW-BREASTED WARBLER *Seicercus montis*
 YELLOW-BELLIED WARBLER *Abroscopus superciliaris*
 SUNDA LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax palliatus*
 CHESTNUT-CAPPED LAUGHINGTHRUSH *Garrulax mitratus*
 WHITE-BROWED SHRIKE-BABBLER *Pteruthius flaviscapis*
 BROWN FULVETTA *Alcippe brunneicauda*
 CHESTNUT-CRESTED YUHINA *Yuhina everetti*
 WHITE-BELLIED YUHINA *Yuhina zantholeuca*
 BLACK-SIDED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum monticulum*
 WHITEHEAD'S SPIDERHUNTER *Arachnothera juliae*
 TAWNY-BREASTED PARROTFINCH *Erythrura hyperythra*

Sabah: an insight to Borneo's birds

Sabah is a semi-autonomous region within the federation of Malaysia located in the north-east corner of Borneo. Frequent direct flights from Kuala Lumpur make Sabah an ideal extension to a trip to Peninsula Malaysia, but more importantly a first-class destination in its own right. Sabah's relatively small size (roughly the size of Ireland), and much improved road network, offers the visitor an excellent itinerary for a three-week trip.

Sabah is dominated by the Crocker Range, a mountain chain running north-east to south-west, and dominated by the impressive Mount Kinabalu (4,094 m) which is the highest mountain in South-East Asia. Most birders visit Sabah between March and September, thus avoiding the wet season, though it is prone to rain at any time of year, particularly in the afternoons. Additionally, the precise timing will influence the variety and ease of seeing certain species. A visit during March-April or September-October will include a number of wintering and passage migrants, in particular waders, which in the spring appear to peak towards the end of March. Migratory passerines, especially flycatchers, will also be passing through at this time in spring. The breeding season for the majority of species is generally concentrated between March and April. During my visit in April the pitta species were on the whole silent and consequently rather difficult to see.

The simplest method of travelling to Sabah is to fly to Kuala Lumpur in West Malaysia, and take a connecting two-and-a-half hour flight to Kota Kinabalu, the province's capital. The taxis are a little more expensive than in West Malaysia, but are still reasonably priced. Buses and mini-buses are cheap and plentiful on all the main routes, so car hire is not really necessary.

Sabah has a number of excellent birding sites, from coastal mudflats, lowland rainforest, through to montane scrub near the treeline on Mount Kinabalu. Here I detail the most popular destinations.

31

Kota Kinabalu

There are two good birding sites on the nearby coast and islands. The Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park is a group of five inhabited islands located just offshore from the city, a main attraction there being **Tabon Scrubfowl** *Megapodius cumingii*. This unobtrusive bird is quite common, creeping amongst the leaf litter, its presence betrayed only by the rustling of leaves. Monitor lizards *Varanus* sp. are very common and make a noise similar to the scrubfowls as they move about on the forest floor.

Palau Manukan is probably the most convenient of the five islands to visit and is reached by hourly launch, either from the jetty opposite the Hyatt International Hotel, or from the marina at Tanjong Aru. The trip costs M\$22 return and takes only twenty minutes. For those wishing to spend more time there are very comfortable chalets as well as a restaurant on the island.

There is a paved 1.5 km 'jogging' track along the forested edge of the island. Scrubfowls, **Mangrove Blue-Flycatchers** *Cyornis rufigastra*, **Pied Fantails** *Rhipidura javanica* and **Mangrove Whistlers** *Pachycephala grisola* are all common along there, whilst in the right weather conditions migratory passerines (including pittas) may be encountered. Frigatebirds can sometimes be seen soaring around the island, and **White-bellied Fish-Eagles** *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

are a common sight. During my visit to Palau Manukan there were surprisingly few waders, but fortunately there is an excellent area, Likas Bay, only 3 km north-east of Kota Kinabalu for those wishing to see waterbirds.

Likas Bay comprises a beach backed by a busy road, a series of tidal lagoons, and a river mouth. A major attraction is a wintering flock of some 20-30 **Chinese Egrets** *Egretta eulophotes* which are still present, albeit in smaller numbers but in full breeding plumage, in early April. They can be seen on any of the lagoons as well as the river mouth, but seem to concentrate on the southernmost lagoon. Other birds on the lagoons and beach include: **Pacific Reef-Egret** *E. sacra*, **Pacific Golden-Plover** *Pluvialis fulva*, **Malaysian Plover** *Charadrius peronii*, **Mongolian Plover** *C. mongolus*, **Greater Sand Plover** *C. leschenaultii*, **Rufous-necked Stint** *Calidris ruficollis*, **Long-toed Stint** *C. subminuta*, and **Grey-tailed Tattler** *Tringa brevipes*. The peak passage for the tattlers is probably around mid-March, and although this is over by early April, the area is still good for the other waders.

Likas Bay is easily reached by bus or taxi from Kota Kinabalu, where there is also plenty of accommodation, though cheaper alternatives may be available in Kampong Likas (Faridas Guest House charges between M\$15-30 per night). A visit to the paddyfields at Kota Belud located some 80 km further up the coast could be worthwhile if you have time.

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN NATIONAL PARK



'A great way to fly...!'



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39 Danum Valley

The Danum Valley Conservation Area is a protected forest concession of some 438 km²: a haven offering some memorable birding. The research station centre is located some 85 km west of Lahad Datu, sited on the Segama River. A grid system of well-marked trails radiates out from there, and is reached by crossing a suspension footbridge. There is also a nature trail starting immediately behind the field centre, which has a 30 m high tree platform that tests all but the strongest of nerves!

One of the most sought-after birds at Danum is **Bornean Bristlehead** *Pityriasis gymnocephala*, which can be encountered anywhere, including in the trees opposite the restaurant verandah and along the Rhino Ridge Trail. Striking in their black and crimson garb, bristleheads are not uncommon at Danum, and habitually roam the mid-canopy in small flocks uttering their varied contact calls. Pittas are well represented, with **Blue-headed** *Pitta baudii*, and **Black-crowned** *P. venusta* being the most common, whilst **Blue-banded** *P. arquata*, **Banded** *P. guajana*, and **Giant** *P. caerulea* are harder to see. The Elephant and Rhino Ridge Trails seem to be a good area for **Blue-banded** and **Banded**, the first species particularly favouring growths of bamboo. Both **Bornean** *Ptilocichla leucogrammica*, and **Black-throated Wren-Babblers** *Napothera atrigularis* are fairly common; it is worth looking around the stream gulley complex between W5 and W6. This area is also

particularly good for **Banded** *Lacedo pulchella* and **Rufous-collared Kingfishers** *Actenoides concretus*.

Other birds at Danum include: **Chestnut-necklaced Partridge** *Arborophila charltonii*, **Crested Partridge** *Rollulus rouloul*, **Malaysian Honeyguide** *Indicator archipelagicus*, **Black Hornbill** *Anthracoceros malayanus*, **Rhinoceros Hornbill** *Buceros rhinoceros*, **Helmeted Hornbill** *Buceros vigil*, **Wrinkled Hornbill** *Aceros corrugatus*, **Diard's Trogon** *Harpactes diardii*, **Hodgson's Hawk-Cuckoo** *Cuculus fugax*, **Short-toed Coucal** *Centropus rectunguis*, **Banded Broadbill** *Eurylaimus javanicus*, **Crested Jay** *Platylophus galericulatus*, **Maroon-breasted Philentoma** *Philentoma velatum*, **Grey-chested Jungle-Flycatcher** *Rhinomyias umbratilis*, **Pale Blue-Flycatcher** *Cyornis unicolor*, **Bornean Blue-Flycatcher** *C. superbis*, **Large-billed Blue-Flycatcher** *C. caeruleus*, **White-crowned Shama** *Copsychus stricklandii*, **Rufous-tailed Shama** *Trichixos pyrropyga*, **Chestnut-naped Forktail** *Enicurus rufficapillus*, **White-crowned Forktail** *E. leschenaulti*, **Horsfield's Babbler** *Malacocincla sepiarium*, **Chestnut-backed Scimitar-Babbler** *Pomatorhinus montanus*, **Grey-headed Babbler** *Stachyris poliocephala*, **Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker** *Prionochilus xanthopygius*, and the ubiquitous **Dusky Munia** *Lonchura fuscaus*. More thinly distributed are **Large Frogmouth** *Batrachostomus auritus*, **Malayan Night-Heron** *Gorsachius melanolophus*, **Chestnut-capped Thrush** *Zoothera interpres*, and **White-necked Babbler** *Stachyris leucotis*. The Bornean endemic **Bulwer's Pheasant** *Lophura*

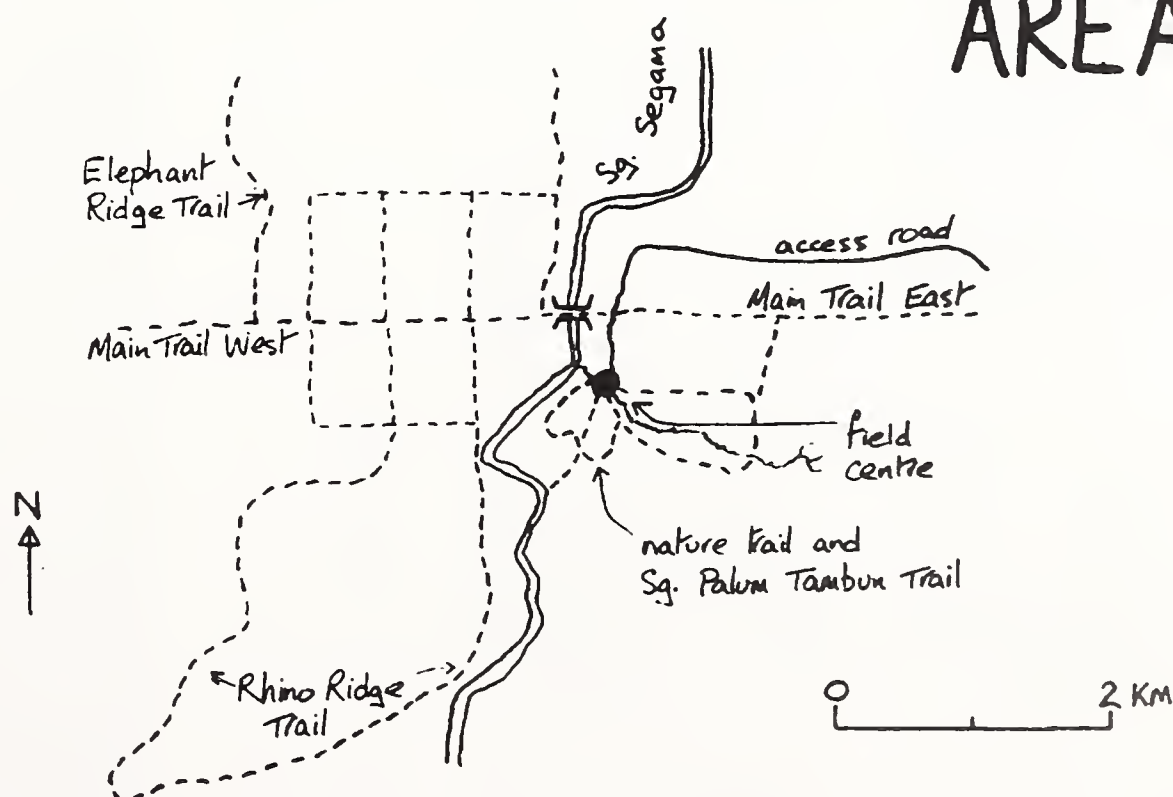
bulweri can, with considerable luck, be seen along the Rhino Ridge Trail, though it is worth remembering that the superficially similar **Crested Fireback** *Lophura ignita* is common at Danum.

One of the most memorable spectacles at Danum is the pair of **Buffy Fish-Owls** *Ketupa ketupu* which perform most evenings at the floodlit badminton court: they can even be seen feeding on the court's surface whilst play is still in progress! A pair of **Bat Hawks** *Macheiramphus alcinus* are a regular sight most evenings along the entrance road near the observation tower. This hide is also good for a variety of raptors during the mid-morning period.

The lily pond at the field centre is also worth a visit as there is often a wintering **Schrenck's Bittern** *Ixobrychus eurhythmus* present, whilst the surrounding flowering shrubs attract a good variety of spiderhunters in the early mornings.

Although the field centre is run principally for scientists it was possible for anyone to stay there. Now about 10 km from Danum, on the Danum River, the 'Borneo Rainforest Lodge' has opened as the main accommodation for visiting tourists, but this lodge might be out of the price-range for many people wishing to visit Danum. For up-to-date information on visiting Danum it is worth contacting Peter Chong or Clive Marsh of the Sabah Foundation at: Innoprise Corporation Sdn. Bhd., PO BOX 11622, 8817, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah (Tel +88 243 245/fax +88 243 244).

DANUM VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA



37 Uncle Tan's Wildlife Camp

Uncle Tan, a local entrepreneur, operates a wildlife camp on the Kinabatangan River, some 30 km downstream from the road bridge on the Kota Kinabalu to Lahad Datu road. The camp's location is primarily renowned as the place to see **Storm's Stork** *Ciconia stormi*, a globally threatened species. The camp is reached by a one-hour boat trip which, as well as being a highlight of a visit to the camp, is also one of the best opportunities of seeing the stork. Although, as in much of Sabah, the river banks have been logged a good selection of birds can also be seen from the boat including a variety of raptors and hornbills. **Proboscis Monkeys** *Nasalis larvatus* occur in large concentrations and, along with **Grey Langurs** *Presbytis hosei* and **Crab-eating Macaques** *Macaca fascicularis*, are a common sight from the boat. The camp itself has quite an impressive species list. The forest there was logged some fifty years ago, and although it is beginning to re-establish itself, it is still nevertheless secondary growth; a fact borne out by the absence of leeches, a sensitive indicator of a healthy primary forest. However, there is some good habitat, and during the two days I spent at the camp I saw: **Storm's Stork**, **Buff-necked Meiglyptes tukki** and **Great Slaty Woodpeckers** *Mulleripicus pulverulentus*, **Blue-eared Alcedo meninting**, **Rufous-backed Ceyx rufidorsa** and **Stork-billed Kingfishers** *Pelargopsis capensis*, **Lesser Fish-Eagle** *Ichthyophaga humilis*, **Crested Goshawk** *Accipiter trivirgatus*, **Narcissus Flycatcher** *Ficedula narcissina* (a passage migrant), **Black-crowned Pitta** *Pitta venusta* (heard near the jetty), **Common Iora** *Aegithina tiphia*, **Bornean and Malaysian Blue-Flycatchers** C.

turcosus, **Horsfield's Babbler**, **Black-capped Babbler** *Pellornem capistratum*, **Sooty-capped Babbler** *Malacopteron affine*, **Black-throated Babbler** *Stachyris nigricollis*, **Crimson Sunbird** *Aethopyga siparaja* and **Thick-billed Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera crassirostris*. Birds seen by others have included **Chestnut-necklaced Partridge**, **Brown Barbet** *Calorhamphus fuliginosus*, **Wrinkled Hornbill** *Aceros corrugatus*, **Cinnamon-rumped Trogon** *Harpactes orrhophaeus*, **Rufous-collared Kingfisher** *Actenoides concretus*, **Reddish Scops-Owl** *Otus rufescens*, **Buffy Fish-Owl**, **Cinnamon-headed Green-Pigeon** *Treron fulvicollis*, **Jerdon's Baza** *Aviceda jerdoni*, **Wallace's Hawk-Eagle** *Spizaetus nanus*, **Malayan Night-Heron**, **Blue-headed and Hooded Pittas** *Pitta sordida*, **Bornean Bristlehead**, and **Brown-backed Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum everetti*.

Living conditions at the camp are to say the least primitive, comprising a ramshackle collection of straw huts with no electricity or running water. It is, though, undeniably cheap, costing only M\$15 a night with full board, the food being very good. The staff are very friendly and helpful and you may be able to negotiate a river trip further downstream. Neither birding nor living conditions can compare with Danum, but at least it does offer budget birding in a forest environment. The Wildlife Camp can either be visited from Uncle Tan's other enterprise, the Bed and Breakfast in Sandakan, or if arriving from Lahad Datu, you can meet the boatmen at the Kinabatangan crossing and arrange transport. The transportation cost is M\$130 return from Sandakan. Though it would not appear to be necessary to make any prior reservation, Uncle Tan can be contacted by writing to P.P.M 245 Elopura, 9000 Sandakan (Tel: 089 531639).

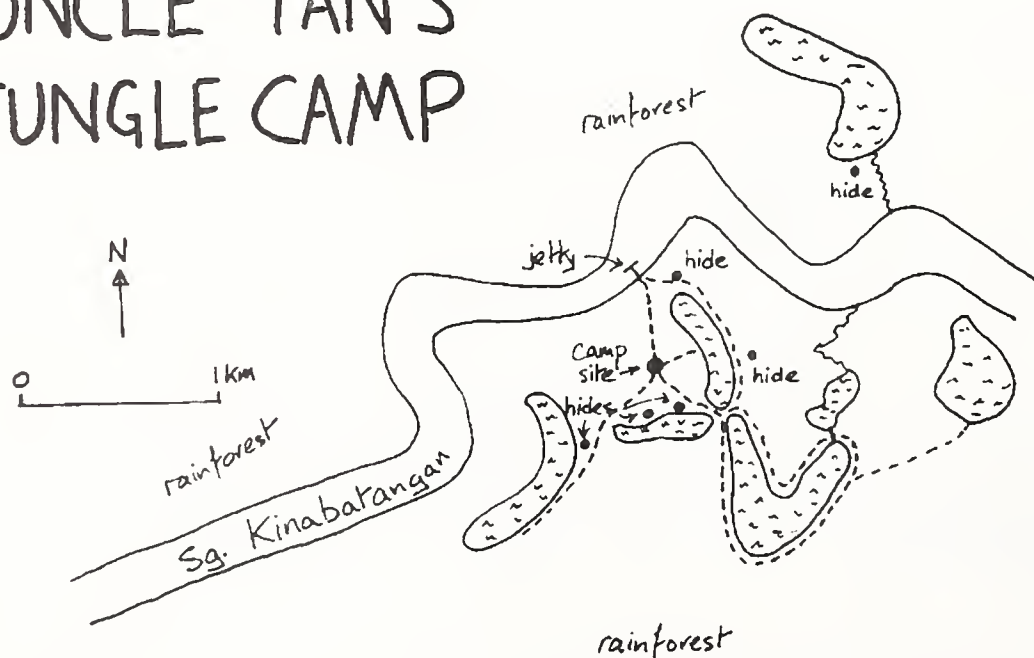
34 Mount Kinabalu

The Kinabalu National Park, covering some 754 km², is the focal point for any visitor's itinerary, with the fortress-like bare granite peak of Mount Kinabalu providing a spectacular backdrop to the park. The mountain also governs the climate of the surrounding area and the park experiences a great deal of rainfall in all seasons, particularly in the afternoons, so an umbrella is a particularly useful item to bring with you. For the birder the major attraction of the place is the high concentration of bird species endemic to the Bornean mountains. To have a chance of seeing them all means undertaking the gruelling climb to the limit of vegetation at 3,250 m. There is in addition an excellent network of well maintained trails which allow you to explore the surrounding forest around 1,500 m, which means that the majority of birds encountered will not have been seen at the other sites. Although thousands of people wishing to climb to the summit of the mountain visit the park each year, the trails are generally quiet in terms of people, but there is often a great deal of bird activity throughout the whole day.

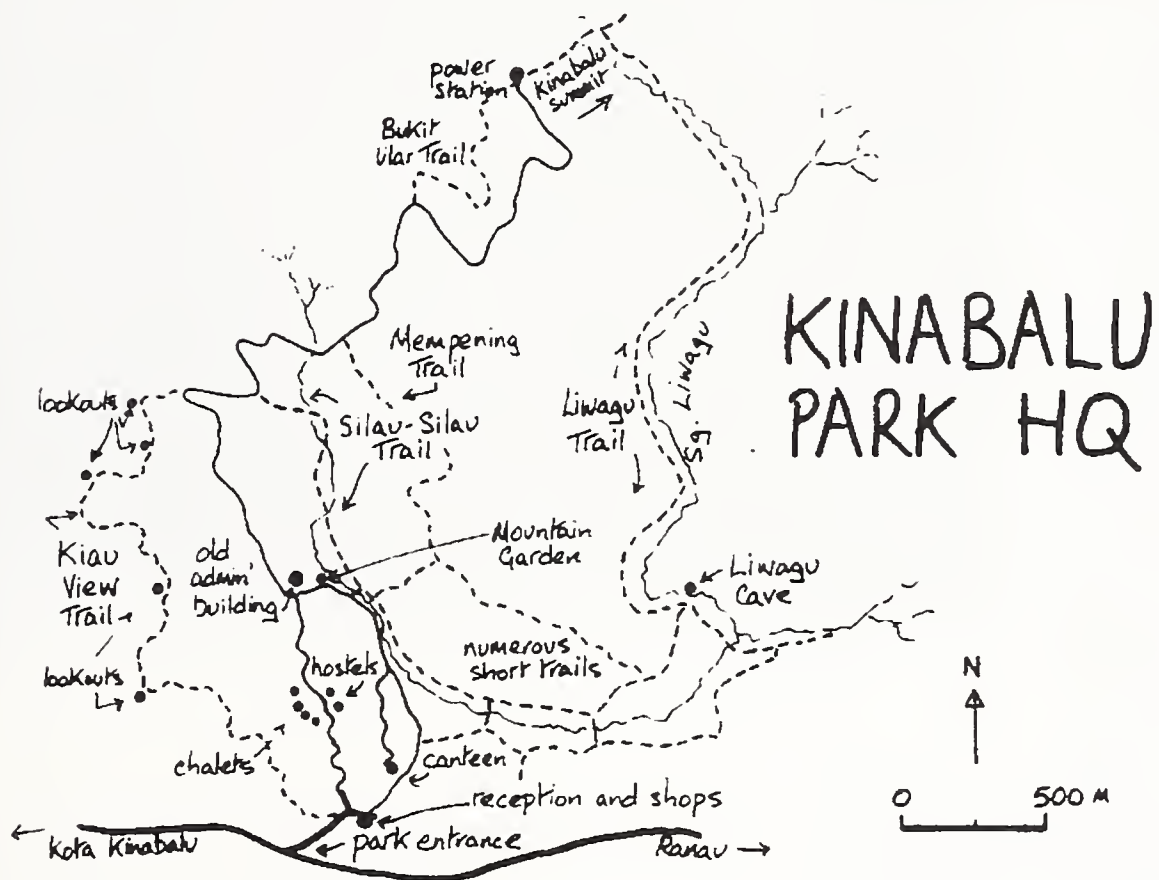
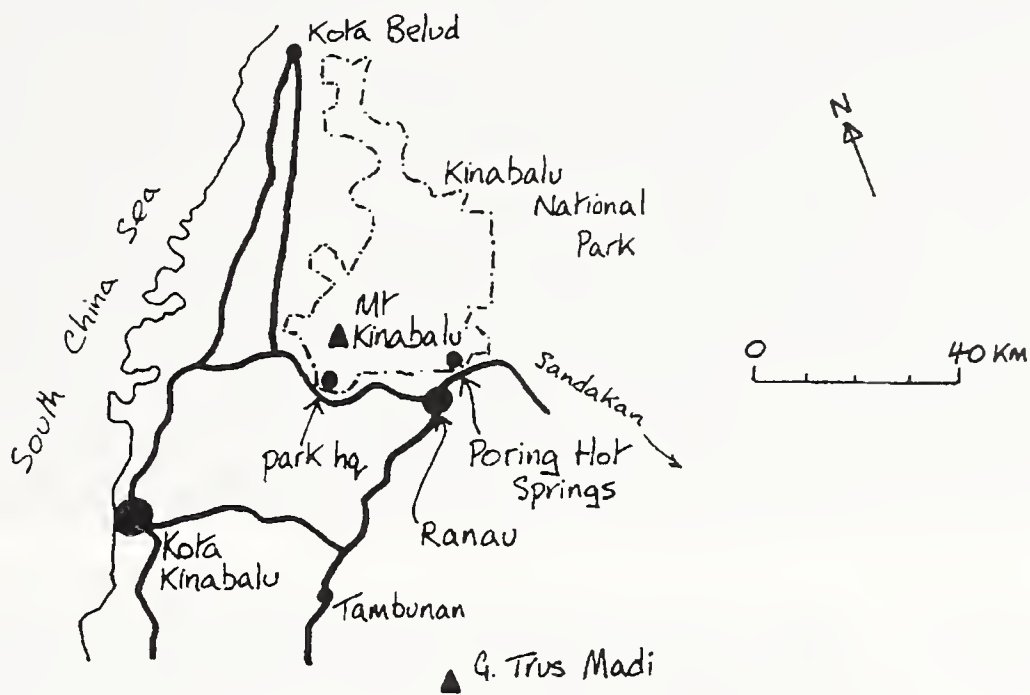
Upon arrival at the park's reception you will notice immediately the large numbers of **Glossy Swiftlets** *Collocalia esculenta*, whilst around the headquarter complex **Bornean Whistler** *Pachycephala hypoxantha*, **Ashy Drongo** *Dicrurus leucophaeus*, **Indigo Flycatcher** *Eumyias indigo*, **Black-capped White-eye** *Zosterops atricapilla*, **Mountain Leaf-Warbler** *Phylloscopus trivirgatus*, **Yellow-breasted Warbler** *Seicercus montis*, and **Scarlet Sunbird** *Aethopyga mystacalis* are all a common sight. **Sunda Bush-Warblers** *Cettia vulcania* are common amongst the roadside vegetation and **White-crowned Forktails** may be seen in the various roadside gullies.

A couple of mornings can be spent venturing no further than the main road which circuits the HQ complex where, at first light, a number of species are voraciously feeding on the moths attracted to the roadside lights the previous night. Of particular interest are the lights around the Old Hostel and in front of the chalets. Both **Sunda Laughingthrush** *Garrulax palliatus* and **Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush** *G. mitratus* are regular visitors, along with **Grey-throated Babbler** *Stachyris nigriceps*, **Hair-crested Drongo** *Dicrurus hottentottus*, **White-throated Fantail**

UNCLE TAN'S JUNGLE CAMP



KINABALU NATIONAL PARK



Rhipidura albicollis, **Sunda Treepie** *Dendrocitta occipitalis*, and **Chestnut-crested Yuhina** *Yuhina everetti*. All of these birds are common at Kinabalu, but this is an excellent place to see them well and to take photographs. After 07h00, the forest birds start to become active, and the endemic **Whitehead's Spiderhunter** *Arachnothera juliae* is worth looking for where they habitually perch in the dead trees behind the Rajah Lodge, uttering their distinctive nasal disyllabic call. It is often prudent to keep to the main road until the sun catches the trails, as certain birds like **Little Cuckoo-Dove** *Macropygia ruficeps*, **Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike** *Coracina striata*, **Short-tailed Magpie** *Cissa thalassina*, and **Grey-chinned Minivet**

Pericrocotus solaris are easier to see at this time of day. During my visit magpies were regularly seen, their cacophonous cackling call often being heard in the early morning along the main road near the administration building. The diminutive **Black-sided Flowerpecker** *Dicaeum monticulum* is also active in the early morning and can often be seen making aerial sorties, and feeding on the flowering shrubs around the administration building.

Of all the trails, I found the Silau-Silau to be consistently the most rewarding. **White-browed Shortwings** *Brachypteryx montana*, although quite common, are rather difficult to see and often the only clue to their presence is their distinctive

warbling song, almost skylark-like in tone. Other common species to be seen include: **Sunda Whistling-Thrush** *Myiophonus glaucinus* (especially near the generator), **Snowy-browed Flycatcher** *Ficedula hyperythra*, **Indigo Flycatcher** *Eumyias indigo* and **Yellow-breasted Warbler**. With patience **Crimson-headed Partridge** *Haematortyx sanguiniceps*, **Whitehead's Trogon** *Harpactes whiteheadi*, **Besra Accipiter** *virgatus* and **Temminck's Babbler** *Pellorneum pyrrogenys* can all be seen, and with luck so can **White-browed Jungle-Flycatcher** *Rhinomyias insignis* and **Black Laughingthrush** *Garrulax lugubris*.

The other trails should not be ignored however. Seen at the power station end of the Kiau View Trail were **Maroon Woodpecker** *Blythipicus rubiginosus*, **Mountain Wren-Babbler** *Napothera crassa* and **Bornean Stubtail** *Urosphena whiteheadi*, and it is also possible to see **Red-breasted Partridge** *Arborophila hyperythra* there. The Bukit Ular Trail is also good for **Mountain Wren-Babbler**, and **Everett's Thrush** *Zoothera everetti* has been seen there in the past. **Bornean Stubtail**, a Bornean endemic, is not uncommon but like **White-browed Shortwings** they are secretive. They are best seen by following up their distinctive call, a very high-pitched drawn-out whistle, preceded at close range by a couple of sharp 'ticks'. Perhaps the easiest place to find the stubtail is from the top end of the Liwagu River Trail where the path zig-zags down the hillside. Reminiscent in many ways of a tiny brown and white pitta with a bold, peachy supercilium, this gem of a bird is certainly one of the avian highlights of Kinabalu.

To see the high-altitude species it is necessary to climb beyond the power station, which at 1,950 m is the limit of the tarmac road from the HQ, a distance of 4.5 km. A bus service operates from the park's reception to this point. **Golden-naped Barbet** *Megalaima pulcherrima*, **Little Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula westermanni* and **Mountain Tailorbird** *Orthotomus cuculatus* are all common, whereas **Wreathed Hornbill** *Aceros undulatus* may be encountered from the power station lookout. A constant eye should be kept on the skies, for **Mountain Serpent-Eagle** *Spilornis kinabaluensis* occurs there, but a sighting is far from guaranteed, even if it were not for the low cloud which is a common problem at this altitude. To climb beyond the power station, a permit costing M\$10 is required. To obtain a



Lowland frugivores

1: Thick-billed Green-Pigeon *Treron curvirostra* (Photo: Frank Lambert). 2: Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 3: Straw-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus zeylanicus* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam). 4: Brown Barbet *Calorhamphus fuliginosus* (Photo: Allen Jeyarajasingam). 5: Red-crowned Barbet *Megalaima rafflesii* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography).

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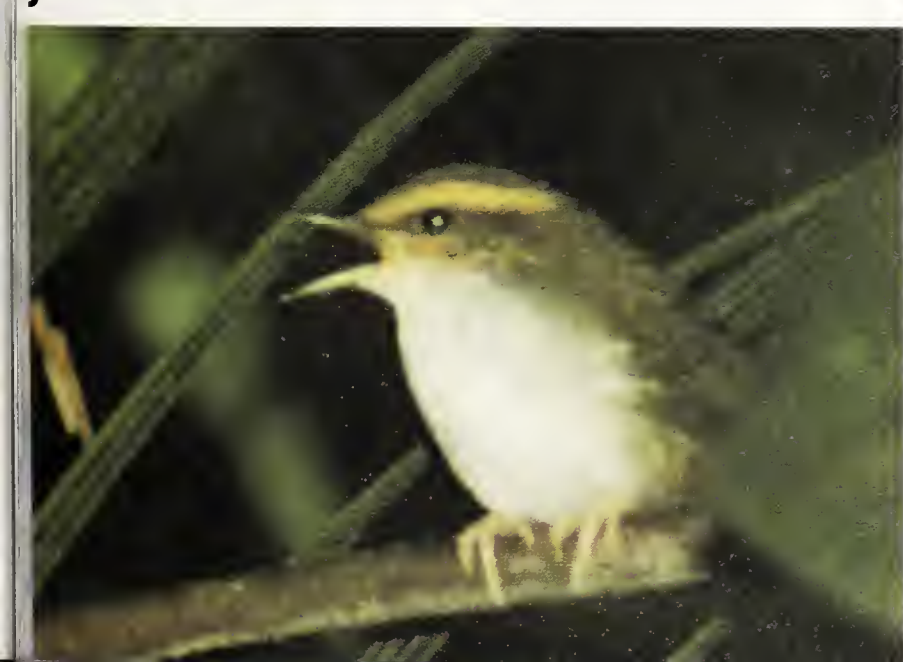
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2
Bornean montane endemics
 1. Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush *Garrulax mitratus* of the Peninsular race (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 2. Chestnut-capped Laughingthrush of the Bornean race (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 3. Male Black-breasted Fruit-hunter *Chlamydochaera jefferyi* (Photo: Nick Pope). 4. Female Black-breasted Fruit-hunter (Photo: Pete Morris). 5. Bornean Stubtail *Urosphena whiteheadi* (Photo: Pete Morris). 6. Sunda Treepie *Dendrocitta occipitalis* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography).



permit a guide must be hired, which costs a further M\$50. Though our permit was never checked, you are conspicuous without a guide, and it was only through personal permission of the Chief Warden that the 'services' of a guide were waived. Though there is no logical reason for a guide to escort visitors to reach the overnight accommodation at Laban Rata, should you wish to climb to the summit a guide is imperative as the final section is completed in the dark in order to reach the summit of Mount Kinabalu at sunrise. The climb is very steep in places, and although the trail is well maintained it is nonetheless quite tiring, requiring a reasonable degree of fitness. The weather can rapidly deteriorate at this altitude, making walking conditions more unpleasant.

The **Friendly Bush-Warbler** *Bradypterus accentor* occurs in forests above 2,150 m. Just before sunrise is a good time to see them, and although years of disturbance from climbers has dispelled any illusions of their confiding nature, they can still be seen by venturing a few metres off the trail and listening out for their song, a high-pitched buzzing *trp trp trrrzzz....*

By far the most 'comfortable' way of seeing the warbler is to stay at Laban Rata, a collection of shelters centred around a well-appointed hostel, complete with heating and hot water and a restaurant. It costs M\$25 a night, and is somewhat more pleasant than the hostels at the bottom. To stay at Laban Rata, the authorities will insist that a climbing permit is obtained.

On the Summit Trail between the power station and Laban Rata, large numbers of **Mountain Blackeye** *Chlorocharis emiliae* will be encountered, along with **Island Thrush** *Turdus poliocephalus*, especially higher up. **Black-breasted Fruit-hunter** *Chlamydochaera jefferyi* may be seen in the fruiting trees in the forested zone, while **White-browed Shrike-Babbler** *Pteruthius flaviscapis* will never be too far away. **Flavescent Bulbul** *Pycnonotus flavescens*, **Sunda Bush-Warbler**, and **Mountain Leaf-Warbler** occur all along the trail, right up to the tree line.

A week is probably the minimum time required to see most of the specialist birds of Kinabalu. However, the two barbets endemic to Borneo (**Mountain** *Megalaima monticola* and **Bornean Barbets** *M. eximia*) and the endemic **Pygmy White-eye** *Oculocincta squamifrons*, which occur in the park, are difficult to see. It is more of a

matter of luck whether or not you see the barbets. The white-eye appears to inhabit the mid-elevation (and hence heavily deforested) slopes and is seen only by a few people; though when seen, these birds are highly vocal and gregarious in their behaviour.

It is advisable to book accommodation at Kinabalu well in advance, as it can be very busy at weekends. The postal address of the park (including Poring - see below) is: Sabah Parks Office (Reservations), PO Box 10626, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah (Tel/fax 088-211585). The hostel, though cheap (M\$10 a night), can be very noisy at times (insomniac schoolchildren) and, if there is a group travelling together, I would strongly recommend considering staying at one of the chalets in the park which, although more expensive, do have hot water, heating (it can get cold there), and a degree of privacy and security not possible at the hostels.

35 Poring Hot Springs

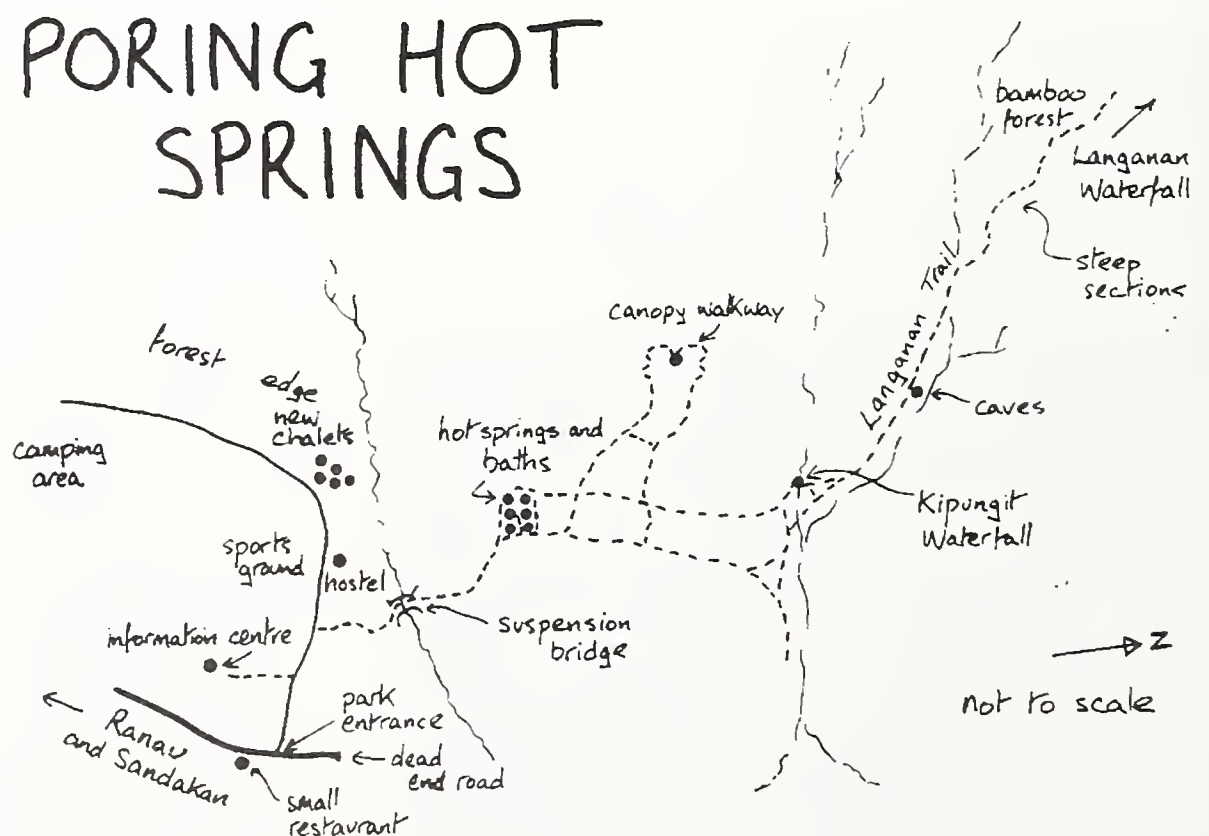
The Poring Springs are located within Kinabalu National Park some 43km from the headquarters. The nearest town is Ranau which is on the main Kota Kinabalu to Sandakan road. The hot springs were developed by the Japanese during the Second World War and comprise a collection of baths fed by a supply of hot sulphurous water. They are a major attraction to both locals and tourists and as a result can be quite crowded at weekends and public holidays. There is a maze of trails within

the vicinity of the springs, and it doesn't take too long to get out into the surrounding forest, which is generally ignored by the majority of visitors. The altitude at Poring is approximately midway between that at Danum and the HQ area of Kinabalu, and accordingly offers the chance to see some different birds.

Early morning is the best time to explore the area immediately around the hot springs, where the profusion of flowering and fruiting trees is a major attraction to many birds. Typical species include **Gold-whiskered Barbet** *Megalaima chrysopogon*, **Blue-banded Kingfisher** *Alcedo entyza*, **Blue-crowned Hanging-Parrot** *Loriculus galgulus*, **Ruddy Cuckoo-Dove** *Macropygia emiliana*, **Emerald Dove** *Chalcophaps indica*, **Crested Jay** *Platylophus galericulatus*, **Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike** *Hemipus hirundinaceus*, **White-crowned Shama**, **White-crowned Forktail**, **Scaly-breasted Bulbul** *Pycnonotus squamatus*, **Everett's White-eye**, **Horsfield's Babbler**, **Black-capped Babbler**, **Chestnut-backed Scimitar-Babbler** *Pomatorhinus montanus*, and **Plain Sunbird** *Anthreptes simplex*.

As the crowds start to arrive it is time to head for the hills, and one trail that is particularly worth exploring eventually arriving at the impressive Langanan Waterfalls. As you pass by the Kipungit falls, it is worth remembering that **Chestnut-capped Thrush** has been seen there in the past. The trail slowly winds up the gradient on the way to the Langanan Falls passing through some excellent forest and offering fine birding. Birds to look out for include: **Rufous Piculet** *Sasia abnormis*, **Buff-rumped**

PORING HOT SPRINGS



Woodpecker *Meiglyptes tristis*, Red-throated Barbet *Megalaima mystacophanos*, Bornean Barbet, Red-naped Trogon *Harpactes kasumba*, Banded Kingfisher, Red-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyorhis amictus*, Glossy Swiftlet, Banded Pitta, Green Broadbill *Calyptomena viridis*, Blue-winged Leafbird *Chloropsis cochinchinensis*, Orange-headed Thrush *Zoothera citrina*, Rufous-tailed Jungle-Flycatcher *Rhino-myias ruficauda*, White-tailed Flycatcher *Cyornis concretus*, Bornean Blue-Flycatcher, Scaly-breasted Bulbul, Yellow-bellied Warbler *Abroscopus superciliaris*, Moustached Babbler *Malacopteron maguirostre*, Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler *Napothera epilepidota*, Chestnut-crested Yuhina, White-bellied Yuhina *Yuhina zantholeuca*, Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker *Prionochilus xanthopygius*, and Scarlet Sunbird. Particular attention should be paid to patches of bamboo as they are the favoured habitat of Blue-banded Pitta, a Bornean endemic. Once the 2-3 hour trek is completed, you can relax in the rock pools at the foot of the Langanan Falls, which are truly magnificent and well away from the hordes of visitors lower down.

The grounds around the accommodation areas of Poring Springs are also worth exploring, in particular the road leading to the generator. This area is especially interesting in the late afternoon and is particularly good for woodpeckers and barbets, as well as: Lesser Cuckoo *Cuculus poliocephalus*, Jambu Fruit-Dove *Ptilinopus jaambu*, White-fronted Falconet *Microhierax latifrons*, Asian Fairy-Bluebird *Irena puella*, Dark-throated Oriole *Oriolus xanthouotus*, Yellow-rumped

xanthopygius, Yellow-vented *Dicaeum chrysorrheum* and Orange-bellied Flowerpecker, Grey-breasted Spider-hunter *Arachnothera affinis*, and Bornean Spiderhunter *Arachnothera everetti*. Another good spot to look for the falconet is around the dead trees 700 m back along the main access road, where a pair has nested in the past. Oriental Magpie-Robins *Copsychus saularis* are worth looking at carefully as, unlike the birds on the rest of Borneo and in mainland South-East Asia, the males have all-black bellies.

The accommodation at Poring is at one of two hostels, both of which are clean and comfortable, and are only likely to be crowded at weekends and at holiday times. Nevertheless, it is advisable to make your reservation through the Sabah Parks Office in advance. Options will shortly be extended with the completion of a number of chalets. The charge for either hostel is M\$10 a night, and there are cooking facilities available. It is, however, possible to eat in the small restaurant just outside the entrance gate, as the park does not close until 19h30 in the evening. The weather at Poring can be somewhat unpredictable and sometimes a whole day can be lost as far as birding is concerned, so be prepared.

There are plenty of mini-buses available for the 19 km drive from Ranau to the hot springs, and apparently it is quite easy to hitch in the morning when the locals drive up to the springs. On the return to Ranau, in order to guarantee getting there, it is necessary to wait for returning vehicles fairly early in the morning.

Summary

Sabah is a most rewarding destination complete with breathtaking scenery, excellent cuisine, and most of all its stunning flora and fauna. Species that can be quite difficult to see in West Malaysia are in many instances surprisingly easy to see on Sabah, and visitors can expect fabulous views of Crested Jays, Banded Broadbills, Bat Hawks and Diard's Trogons to name but a few! Sabah offers endless possibilities, and if combined with a few days in West Malaysia (Genting Highlands, Fraser's Hill, Kuala Selangor, etc.), a good number of species can be seen in a three- or four-week holiday. It is possible to see twenty-nine of Borneo's endemics in Sabah, though some like Hose's Broadbill *Calyptomena hosii* and Pygmy White-Eye are highly localised and others like Dulit Frogmouth *Batrachostomus harterti* and Black Oriole *Oriolus hosi*, may not occur there.

Finally, should anyone be considering a visit to Sabah or West Malaysia, I shall of course be pleased to offer any assistance.

Acknowledgements

I wish to extend my thanks to Dave Showler for kindly providing much invaluable information, to Phil Heath for his in-depth knowledge whilst at Danum, and to Alan Pearson for helping in arranging the trip and for commenting on an earlier draft of this article.

Nick J. N. Pope, Flat 2, 38 Carshalton Grove, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 4LZ, U.K.



Batu Punggul Virgin Forest Reserve, Sabah, Malaysia

If you want to get off the well-worn circuit of Sabah's birding sites, the spectacular and little-visited reserve of Batu Punggul is an excellent choice writes Phil Heath.

Batu Punggul Virgin Forest Reserve is a small area of primary, lowland dipterocarp rain forest extending over 2,000 ha, and bisected by the Sapulut River in the Labang Valley of Sabah (Figure 1). It is surrounded by more extensive tracts of dense regenerating secondary forest. At the heart of this superb reserve towers the impressive limestone pinnacle of Batu Punggul, the focus of many legends and tales to the local Murut tribes.

Access is via the small settlement of Sapulut, reached by occasional jeeps along the logging road from Keningau for M\$20. From there it is a 3-5 hour canoe trip upriver, depending on the state of flow in the river, and how often you need to get out and push the canoe over shallows and rapids. This return boat journey costs M\$200, but is divisible between up to six people. Ideally the boat, accommodation and meals should be booked in advance at the main Korporasi Pembangunan Desa (KPD – Rural Development Corporation) offices in Kota Kinabalu, so that a boatman and provisions can be arranged. If you need to stop off overnight at Sapulut, the staff at the KPD office there will direct you to a newly built and comfortable rest house.

The reserve is run by KPD as a 'resort centre' to promote ecotourism. A full range of facilities is provided for visitors, but few come because of its remoteness, cost and difficult access. You can choose from a rest

house at M\$30-150/night, native huts at M\$24-32/night, or an impressive mock longhouse at M\$6/night. Camping is another cheap alternative at M\$2/day. Meals can be provided at the very reasonable rate of around M\$5, or you can do your own cooking, for which utensils can be hired at M\$10 for your stay, provided you bring in all your own food. Most packaged and canned foods are available in Sapulut; fresh vegetables and fruit should be bought in Keningau.

Visitors to Batu Punggul have been few, and naturalists fewer. The following account is based on a visit by Phil Hurrell in August 1992 and myself in May 1993, so there is plenty of scope for additional exploration.

To date only four of the 30 plus Borneo's endemic birds have been recorded but these include the highly sought-after **Hose's Broadbill** *Calyptomena hosii*. Additionally, many scarce lowland forest species occur. Mammals seem to be poorly represented and those present, notably the primates, are shy, probably because they are regularly hunted by the Murut families living near the reserve. Mammals recorded include **Crab-eating Macaque** *Macaca fascicularis*, **Pig-tailed Macaque** *M. nemestrina* and the endemic **Bornean Gibbon** *Hylobates muelleri*. Among the smaller mammals are several species of treeshrews, **Yellow-throated Marten** *Martes flavignola*, and various squirrels including the spectacular endemic **Tufted Ground-Squirrel** *Rheithroscinrus macrotis*.

The first wildlife will be seen on the canoe journey along the river into the reserve. Indeed, providing there is a reasonable depth of water, it would be worthwhile hiring one of

the camp's canoes with a boatman and exploring upriver. Common birds include hawking flocks of **Glossy Swiftlets** *Collocalia esculenta* and **Silver-rumped Spinetails** *Raphidura leucopygialis*. The river provides a natural gap amongst the surrounding forest for viewing raptors, and as well as the ubiquitous **Crested Serpent-Eagle** *Spilornis cheela*, **Rufous-bellied Eagles** *Hieraaetus kienerii* frequent the area. **Black-and-Red Broadbills** *Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus* are common, and their woven nests suspended from branches over-hanging the water are a familiar sight during the canoe trip. Other species to look for in the riverside trees are **Malaysian Blue-Flycatcher** *Cyornis turcosus*, **Straw-headed Bulbul** *Pycnonotus zeylanicus* and **Rufous-tailed Tailorbird** *Orthotomus sericeus*, whereas **White-chested Babblers** *Trichastoma rostratum* forage on exposed mud close to the river bank. The various flowering trees and vines are feeding areas for **Little Spiderhunters** *Arachnothera longirostra*, **Crimson Sunbirds** *Aethopyga siparaja* and **Red-throated Sunbirds** *Anthreptes rhodolaema*. Around cleared patches of forest near the few small settlements are small flocks of the **Dusky Munia** *Lonchura fusca*, a Bornean endemic.

The small clearing around the longhouse and campsite is a good area to look for forest-edge species such as **Violet Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus*, **Plaintive Cuckoo** *Cacomantis merulinus*, **Moustached Hawk-Cuckoo** *Cuculus vagans*, and **Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike** *Hemipus hirundinaceus*. Visitors to flowering vines and mistletoes are spiderhunters, **Yellow-breasted**

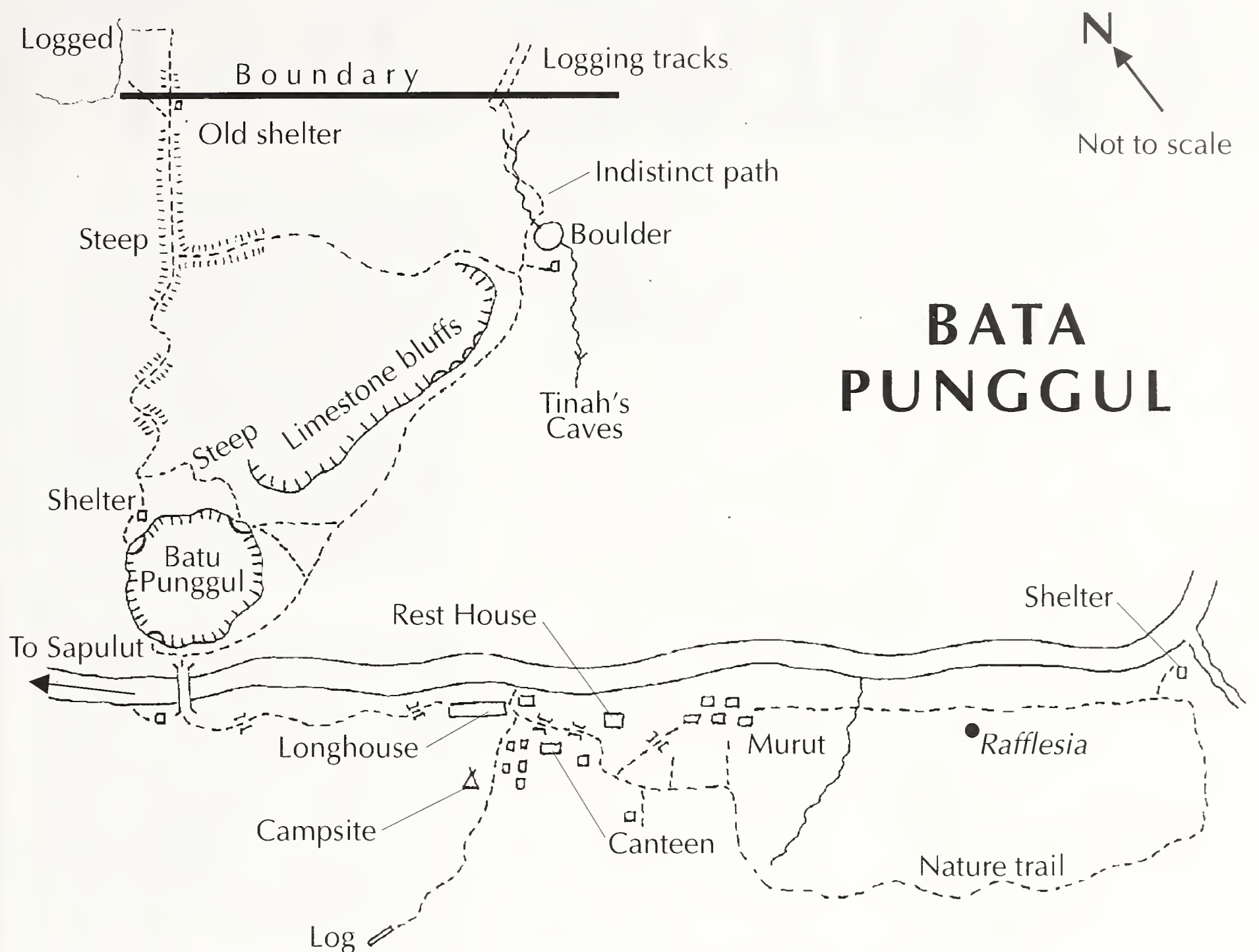


Figure 1. Map of Batu Punggul, Sabah.

Flowerpeckers *Prionochilus maculatus* or the Bornean endemic **Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker** *P. xanthopygius*. A well-maintained 2 km nature trail runs eastward from the accommodation area, then doubles back to the camp, running parallel with the river. Once along the nature trail, species to look and listen for include **Scarlet-rumped** *Harpactes duvancelii*, **Red-naped** *H. kasumba* and **Diard's Trogons** *H. diardi*, and **Orange-backed** *Reinwardtipicus validus* and **Olive-backed Woodpeckers** *Dinopium rafflesii*. Denser stands of undergrowth may hold the **White-crowned Shama** *Copsychus stricklandii* (a Bornean endemic), the diminutive **Rufous Piculet** *Sasia abnormis*, or a foraging pair of **Chestnut-backed Scimitar-Babblers** *Pomatorhinus montanus*.

Around the reserve 11 species of babbler occur, often feeding in noisy

mixed flocks through the smaller trees and undergrowth. Where the forest is more open and the floor viewable, you may encounter pairs of **Short-tailed Babblers** *Malacocincla malaccense*, **Black-capped Babblers** *Pellorneum capistratum* and **Striped Wren-Babbler** *Kenopia striata*, or a stunning **Blue-headed Pitta** *Pitta baudii*. Between the two paths of the trail are a few examples of the monstrous parasitic *Rafflesia keithii* plants, and their occasional flowers can be found with the help of a Murut guide.

A short trail leads from the accommodation area to a suspension bridge over the river. The trail then runs below a couple of large limestone bluffs, from one of which the huge Batu Punggul pinnacle projects. The pinnacle can often be viewed from the longhouse clearing, and at dusk a **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco*

peregrinus of the dark local race *ernesti* can be watched flying around it, while flights of **Wreathed Aceros undulatus**, **Bushy-crested Anorrhinus galeritus**, **Helmeted Buceros vigil** and **Rhinoceros Hornbills** *B. rhinoceros* pass by to roost.

This area west of the camp and below the limestone bluffs held many figs and fruiting trees during my visit in May, and any with ripening fruit are well worth a vigil. The prize visitor could be **Hose's Broadbill**, which is larger than the more widespread **Green Broadbill** *Calyptomena viridis*, and has striking brilliant blue underparts contrasting markedly with the rest of the bird's bright green plumage. Other regular visitors to the fruiting trees as well as the broadbills are trogons, several barbets including **Red-throated Megalaima mystacophanos** and **Gold-whiskered** *M. chrysopogon*, and 13

species of bulbul including **Scaly-bellied** *Pycnonotus squamatus*, **Grey-bellied** *P. cyaniventris*, **Puff-backed** *P. eutilotus*, **Finsch's** *Criniger finschii*, and **Streaked** *Ixos malaccensis*. Another notable visitor is **Chestnut-backed Thrush** *Zoothera interpres*, which seems to be locally common.

The forest below the bluffs has a fairly open canopy and thus is a good place to see flycatchers such as **Bornean Blue** *Cyornis superbus*, **Rufous-chested** *Ficedula dumetoria* and the Bornean race of **White-tailed Flycatcher** *Cyornis concretus* which lacks the white tail flashes of those elsewhere in South-East Asia.

There is a series of caves at the base of the limestone bluffs and cliffs with many species of bat present. Those in the base of Batu Punggul have a number of **Tailless Fruit Bats** *Megaerops ecaudatus* just inside the entrance, while a large colony of several hundred fruit-bats in the central chamber seem to be **Dusky Fruit Bats** *Penthetor lucasi*.

Other bird species in this area include **Horsfield's Babbler** *Malaccincla sepiarium*, **Rufous-tailed Shama** *Trichixos pyrrhopygas*, **Brown Fulvetta** *Alcippe brunneicauda*, **Spotted Fantail** *Rhipidura perlata* and **Velvet-fronted**



Hose's Broadbill *Calyptomena hosii*
by Alan Pearson

Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*. By a large boulder on this trail it is possible to follow a Murut hunting track which leaves the reserve and enters an area with an extensive network of old logging trails. These are a good locality to find **Black-and-Yellow Broadbills** *Eurylaimus ochromalus*, and feeding among the tangled creepers on the remaining and regrowing trees, leafbirds, **Raffles' Malkoha** *Phaenicophaeus chlorophaeus* and **Chestnut-breasted Malkoha** *P. curvirostris*.

The main trail circles uphill over the limestone outcrops and along a series of steep-sided ridges. Two birds often heard calling there, but difficult to see are **Great Argus** *Argusianus argus* and **Black-crowned Pitta** *Pitta venusta*. The last species can sometimes be brought into view by imitating its pure whistled call. Also easy to hear but harder to locate is **Malaysian Honeyguide** *Indicator archipelagicus*, which holds territory along the ridges, giving its strange mew and nasal rattle call for hours on end. This is a good area to see **Bornean Gibbon**, **Pale Giant Squirrel** *Ratufa affinis* and **Yellow-throated Marten**.

Finally, unless you are planning to climb Batu Punggul with the help of a guide, the trail drops steeply down a series of steps to the suspension bridge.

For further information about visiting the area contact The General Manager, Korperasi Pembungunan Desa, Beg Berkunci 86, 88998 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

Phil Heath, 73 Cozens Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR1 1JP, U.K.

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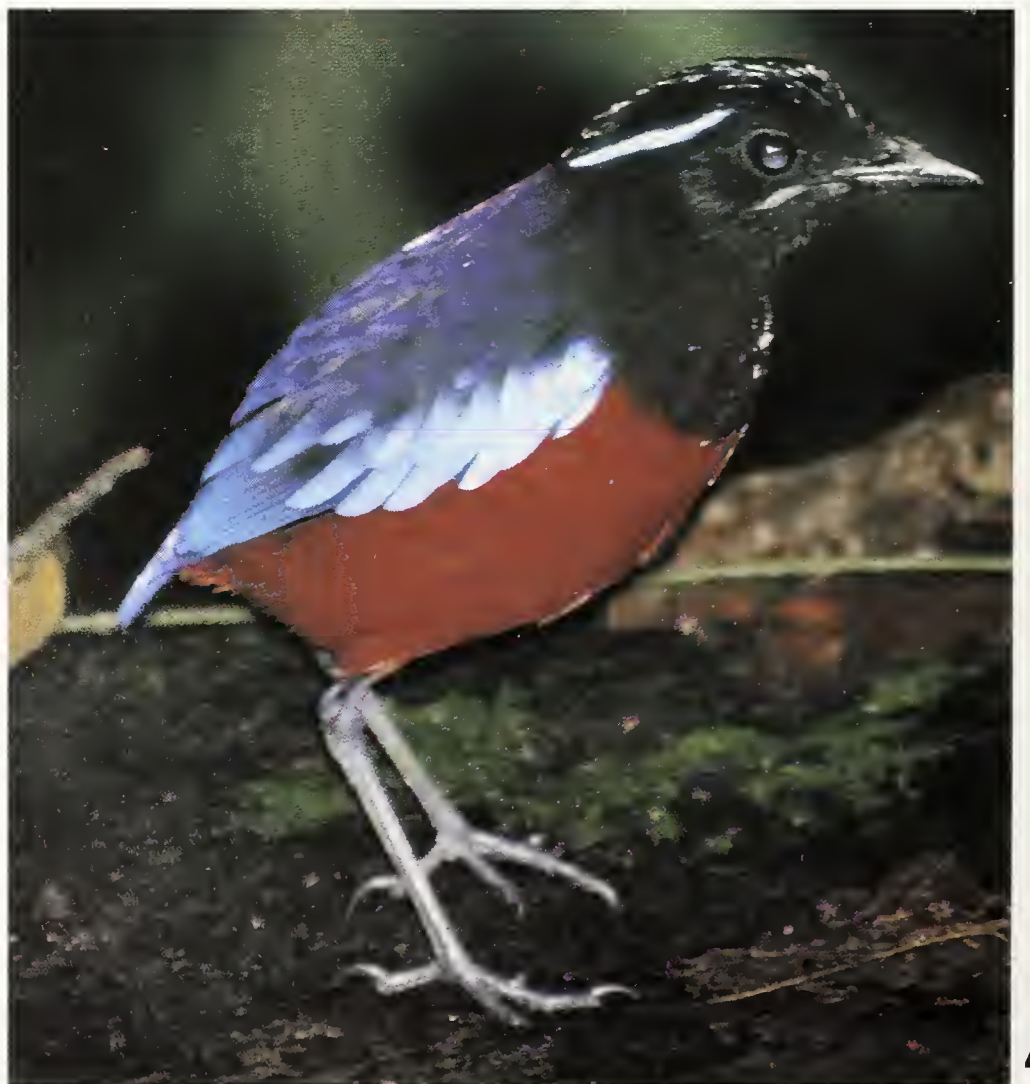
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Lowland ground-dwelling species

1: Striped Wren-Babbler *Kenopia striata* (Photo: Simon Harrap). 2: Black Partridge *Melanoperdix nigra* (Photo: Frank Lambert). 3: Garnet Pitta *Pitta granatina* (Photo: Frank Lambert). 4: Black-crowned Pitta *Pitta venusta* (Photo: Frank Lambert).





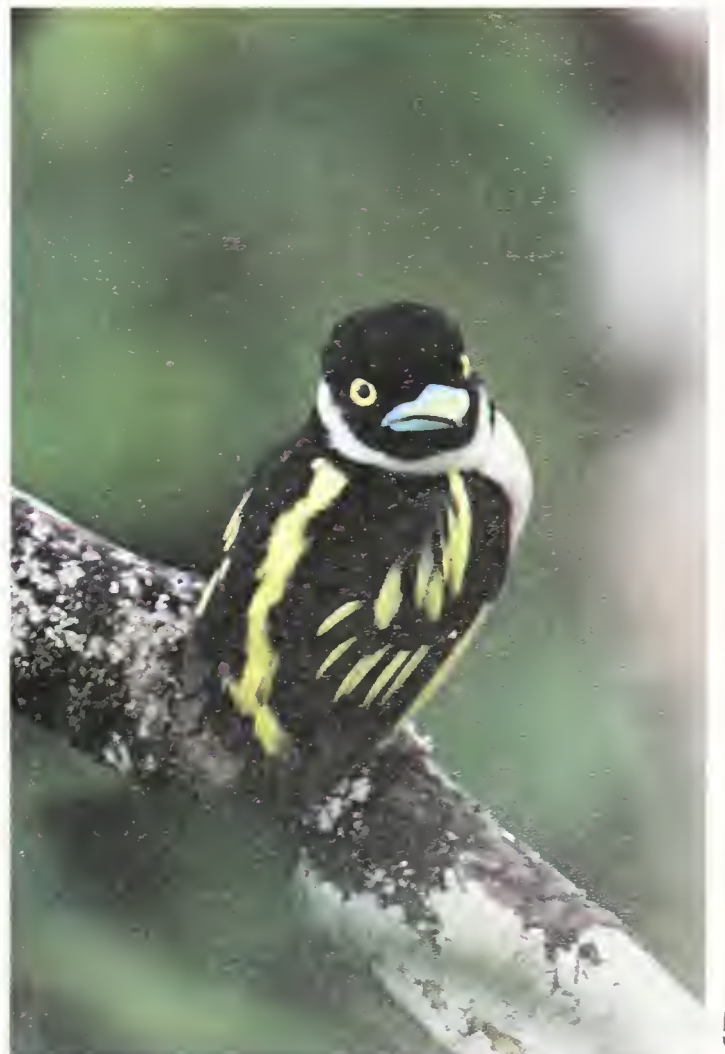
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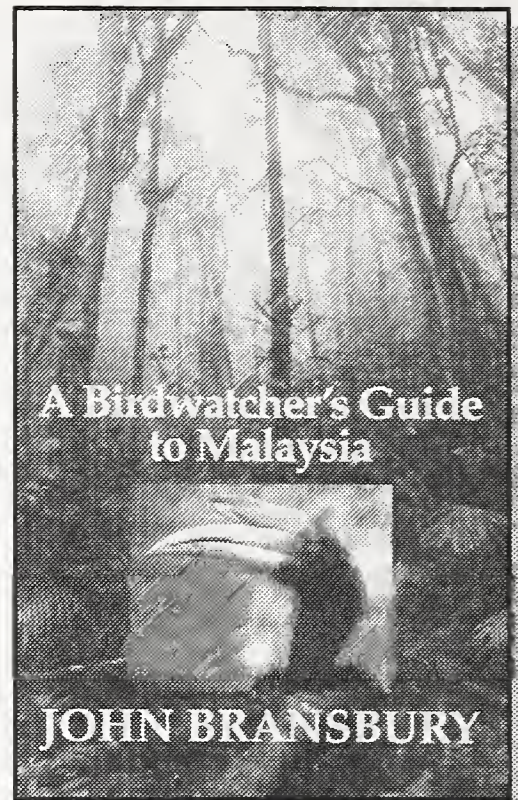
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Lowland species

1: Diard's Trogon *Harpactes diardii* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 2: Blue-crowned Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus galgulus* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 3: Buff-rumped Woodpecker *Meiglyptes tristis* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography). 4: Sultan Tit *Melanochlora sultanea* (Photo: Simon Harrap). 5: Black-and-yellow Broadbill *Eurylaimus ochromalus* (Photo: Morten Strange/Flying Colours Photography).



5



A Birdwatcher's Guide to Malaysia by John Bransbury, 1993. Waymark Publishing. 282pp., £14(sb) ISBN 0-646-14559-2. World distribution by Natural History Book Service Ltd, 2-3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5XN UNITED KINGDOM. Tel 01803-865913282 Fax 01803-865280

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CREDITS

Authors:

John Bransbury, Nick Pope, Phil Heath

Editing:

OBC Editorial Committee

Design and production:

Rob Still, Rubythroat Publications

Colour separations:

Bob and Scott Hibbert

Cover line drawing

A scene from Mount Kinabalu: Whitehead's Spiderhunter, Bornean Stubtail, pitcher plant *Nepenthes villosa* and Kinabalu Horned Toad *Megophrys baluensis*. Dave Showler



Rubythroat Publications

6 Corinthian Close,
Basingstoke,
Hants RG22 4TN

