Peninsular Malaysia

Naturetrek Tour Itinerary

Outline itinerary

Day 1  Fly Kuala Lumpur
Day 2/3  Kuala Selangor
Day 4  Ulu Yam
Day 5  Bukit Tintgi
Day 6/8  Fraser’s Hill
Day 9/12  Taman Negara
Day 13  Kuala Lumpur/fly London
Day 14  Arrive London

Departs
September/October

Dates and Prices
See website (tour code MYS04) or brochure

Grading
Day walks only. Grade A/B

Focus
Birds

Highlights
- Pristine rainforest, wetlands & coastal mangroves
- Broadbills, laughing-thrushes, sunbirds, flycatchers, pittas, rail-babblers & much more
- Southeast Asian Endemics
- Glorious Galliformes - Mountain Peacock-Pheasant and Malaysian Peacock-Pheasant
- Chances of shy forest mammals such as Tapir, Smooth Otter & gibbons
- Erudite local naturalist guide
- Old-style colonial Hill Station
- Colourful butterflies & an exotic flora, including pitcher-plants

Images from top – Black and Yellow Broadbill, Silver Leaf Monkeys and Traditional and Modern Buildings (Mike Galtry)
Itinerary

Please note that the itinerary below offers our planned programme of excursions. However, adverse weather & other local considerations can necessitate some re-ordering of the programme during the course of the tour, though this will always be done to maximise best use of the time and weather conditions available.

Day 1

In flight

We fly from London to Kuala Lumpur on an overnight flight from London.

Day 2

Arrive Kuala Selangor

After arriving in Kuala Lumpur, we head straight for De Palma Eco-Resort Kuala Selangor, a comfortable hotel about an hour and a half away from the hustle and bustle of the city. The name Kuala Selangor means Estuary of Selangor River, and it’s in this coastal area that this tour begins its’ search for species. We will arrive in the evening with time to refresh before enjoying dinner and the opportunity to get a good nights’ rest before setting off early the following morning.

Day 3

Kuala Selangor

In the mangrove groves and scrub forest of Kuala Selangor Nature Park we search for the typical inhabitants of these unusual tide washed forests including such mangrove dependent species as; Mangrove Pitta, Mangrove Blue Flycatcher, Mangrove Whistler, Laced Woodpecker and the local race of Great Tit! Other species we hope to find here include; Buffy Fish Owl, Rusty-breasted Cuckoo, Chestnut-bellied Malkoha, Little Bronze Cuckoo, Flyeater, Pink-necked Pigeon, Pied Triller, Olive-winged Bulbul and Greater Goldenback amongst others. Three species of primate live here; Silver-leafed Monkey, Long and Pig-tailed Macaques, sharing the canopy with Plantain Squirrels and other small mammals. In the exposed mud at the base of the mangroves there are communities of crabs and mudskipper fishes which synchronise their activity to the movements of the tide. Smooth Otters can sometimes be seen fishing in the channels and huge Water Monitor lizards patrol the banks looking for anything edible in their path.

Open mudflats north of Kuala Selangor are frequented by flocks of terns and waders at low tide providing opportunities to see a fine selection of migrant shorebirds which might include several species of plover, sandpipers, stints, godwits and curlew along with numbers of terns. A few miles away at Sekingjang rice fields we might find Long-toed Stints, Greater Painted Snipe, Yellow and Cinnamon Bitterns, White-breasted Wood-swallow and Black Drongo inhabiting areas of wet paddy fields interspersed with stretches of more open cultivations and scrub. Spotted Eagles and Black-
winged Kite both occur here along with Lesser Coucal and a number of characteristic dwellers of open farmland such as Baya Weaver and Zitting Cisticola.

Day 4  Ulu Yam

After breakfast the first stop today will be at abandoned mining ponds and scrub at Ulu Yam where we could find White-browed Crakes, Purple Swamphen, Long-tailed Parakeet, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Pied Fantail, White-headed, Scaly-breasted and Chestnut Munias, Long-tailed, Brown and Tiger Shrike and various waterbirds amongst other species.

Continuing inland through the lush green countryside we gradually ascend into Bukit Tinggi sub-montane habitat for an exciting search for spectacular species; Mountain Peacock Pheasant, Ferruginous Partridge, Silver-breasted and Long-tailed Broadbills, Fire-Tufted and Black-browed Barbets, Orange-breasted and Red-headed Trogans.

Day 5  Bukit Tinggi

Today we have the whole morning to enjoy birding at the Bukit Tinggi sub-montane forest, going for species that we may have missed yesterday afternoon. After lunch we depart for Fraser’s Hill to search for a whole range of species.

Days 6 - 8  Fraser’s Hill

The old colonial hill-station of Fraser’s Hill (1220m asl) was much beloved by the British who found the cool air and tree-clad hills a welcome contrast to the heat of the lowlands. Tea is grown at these elevations and there are many reminders of the British connection in the place names. During our stay we will attempt to escape from the busier areas and concentrate our birdwatching in the excellent tracts of pristine sub-montane forest found in the vicinity. As in all forests, the success of each excursion often depends on the appearance of a mixed species feeding flock working through the trees but if we strike lucky the components of such flocks include some of the most spectacular and beautiful of Malaysia’s birds such as the Long-tailed Broadbill, a green jewel of a bird which all too quickly slips away from view into the canopy. The range of species to search for during our stay in these hill forests include; Long-tailed and Silver-breasted Broadbills, Helmeted, Rhinoceros & Wreathed Hornbills, Blyth’s Hawk-Eagle, Silver-eared Mesia, Green Magpie, Red-headed and Orange-breasted Trogons, Blue Nuthatch, Malayan Whistling Thrush, White-hooded Babbler and Red-bearded Bee-Eater. Other species to look for include the diminutive Pygmy Wren-Babbler, Bay Woodpecker, Green-billed Malkoha, Fire-tufted Barbet, Sultan Tit, and a miscellany of babblers and laughing-thrushes. Although early in the season, wintering

![Pitcher Plant (Nepenthes sp.)](image)
birds from Northern Asia may include Siberian Thrush, Mugimaki Flycatcher and the skulking Pallas’ Grasshopper Warbler. If the birds are unpredictable in their appearances we will have less trouble finding a delightful selection of orchids, pitcher plants and other tropical flora whilst the forest Mammals we hope to see include Siamang, Banded-leaf Langur, Pig-tailed Macaque, Himalayan Striped and Mountain Red-bellied Squirrels, Yellow-throated Marten and Wild Boar.

Day 9

Depart for Taman Negara

After breakfast we embark on a journey by road to Taman Negara National Park. Formerly the final part of the journey to Taman Negara was made by long-boat but the construction of a new paved highway has now made it possible to reach the reserve by road and we will thus continue by vehicle to the Park accommodation Kuala Tahan where we shall be based in comfortable tourist chalets for the next four nights. Any time left after our journey will be used to commence our search for the huge array of species we have chance of in the amazing Taman Negara.

Days 10 – 12

Taman Negara

Over 360 bird species have been recorded in Taman Negara, a staggering list for a lowland forest. Evolution has been under way for so long in these forests that the majority of animals have specialised in a particular niche, creating a remarkable diversity of life. Here the number and variety of birds seen is related to the birding techniques employed rather than the amount of ground covered.

Fruiting and flowering trees occur sporadically in the forest and attract a wealth of bird life. During a quiet observation of a flowering tree we can hope to see, amongst other species: Malaysian Hanging Parrot, Black-headed Oriole, four species of spiderhunter and three species of leafbird. Visitors to fruiting trees depend upon the size of the fruit available, the larger varieties appealing to broadbills and the spectacular hornbills. The commonest representatives of the latter are Black and Southern Pied but we should also find Bushy-crested, Rhinoceros and Helmeted. The smaller barbets, bulbuls and green pigeons flock to those trees bearing ripe fruits of a size more suited to their less capacious gullets.

Along the network of well-maintained trails through the forests we shall employ stop and wait tactics in the hope of seeing some of the more elusive dwellers of the forest floor. Possibilities include; Great Argus and Crested Fireback Pheasants, Malaysian and Mountain Peacock Pheasant, Crested Partridge, Garnet, Banded, Blue-winged & Hooded Pittas, Malaysian Rail-Babbler, Striped-Wren, Large, Black-capped
and Short-tailed Babblers but locating some of these more retiring inhabitants of the forest requires a careful approach and a certain element of luck.

The composition of bird species in the sub/mid canopy level of the forest at Taman Negara is very different to those encountered in the montane forests. Typically of a higher population density these forests contain such species as; Banded Kingfisher, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Buff-necked Woodpecker, Red-naped, Diard’s, Cinnamon, and Scarlet-rumped Trogons, Banded, Black& Yellow, Dusky, Black & Red Broadbills, Rufous-capped Babbler, Spotted Fantail, Asian Paradise Flycatcher and Black-naped Monarch.

At lower levels we can hope to find; Black-backed and Rufous-backed Kingfishers, Chestnut-winged, Chestnut-rumped, Black-throated and White-necked Babblers.

The small-pebbled Tahan River with its crystal clear waters (stained whisky-brown by peat) is among Malaysia’s most beautiful rivers with huge, buttressed Neram trees lining the banks and in places leaning forward to form a continuous canopy overhanging the water. The river and bankside vegetation support yet another selection of birds and we may employ a boat to explore some of the enticing creeks in search of the rare Masked Finfoot, Blue-banded Kingfisher, Lesser Fish-Eagle, Malaysian and Tickell’s Blue Flycatchers. Approaching along the waterways is a good way of obtaining views of various birds and mammals frequenting the forest edge and if we are fortunate we may spot a Smooth Otter or perhaps a Sambar nervously drinking.

Whilst the birds are the most obvious residents of Taman Negara the reserve also boasts a very impressive mammal list. The difficulty of finding mammals in such a vast area of forest combined with the secretive and often nocturnal behaviour of many species ensure that most visitors (including us!) have little contact with these animals but the ‘official’ list records; Tiger, Clouded Leopard, Leopard, various cat species, Elephant, three species of deer, Tapir, Malaysian Honey-Bear, five species of monkey, two species of Gibbon, a number of squirrels and a considerable variety of lizards. Added to these are a profusion of exotic flowers, magnificent rainforest trees and dancing clouds of colourful butterflies which combine together to create one of the most idyllic and tranquil wildlife sites in Asia.

**Day 13**

**Return to Kuala Lumpur**

We can enjoy a whole morning’s birding in the forest of Taman Negara before returning to Kuala Lumpur after lunch to depart on a late evening flight back to London.
Day 14

We arrive back in London early in the morning.

Tour grading

A/B This is a standard birdwatching tour with no prolonged treks although hot and humid conditions may make some of the walks seem more arduous than suggested by distances. At Fraser’s Hill because of a one-way traffic system we may walk down the hill to meet the tour coach, birdwatching at the road edge as we make our way down.

Weather

Tropical climate with very warm days and cooler nights. Humidity of about 70% can be expected. The temperatures at Fraser's Hill will be somewhat cooler. Showers may occur and whilst there should not be prolonged rain at this season.

Food & accommodation included in the price

All accommodation, meals and tipping for porters, boatmen, and drivers are included.

How to book your place

In order to book your place on this holiday, please give us a call on 01962 733051 with a credit or debit card, book online at www.naturetrek.co.uk, or alternatively complete and post the booking form at the back of our main Naturetrek brochure, together with a deposit of 20% of the holiday cost plus any room supplements if required. If you do not have a copy of the brochure, please call us on 01962 733051 or request one via our website. Please stipulate any special requirements, for example extension requests or connecting/regional flights, at the time of booking.

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