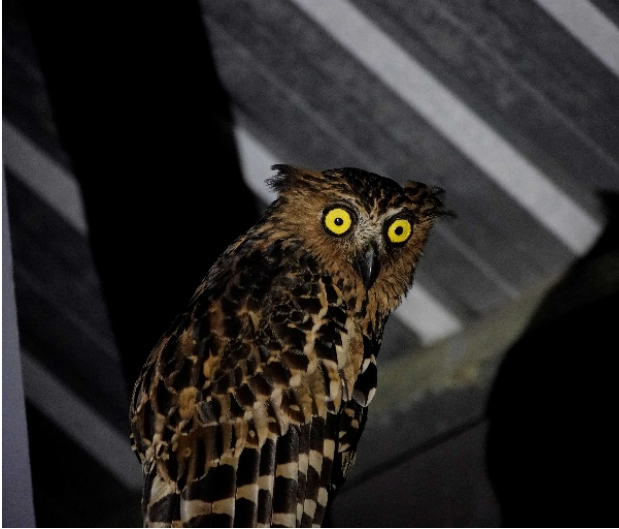


# Birding Borneo – The Best of Sabah

Naturetrek Tour Report

20th September – 1st October 2023

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Buff-breasted Fish Owl



Black and Yellow Broadbill



Orange-bellied Flowerpecker



Blue-eared Kingfisher

Tour report and photos by Dean Jais



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Tour participants: Dean Jais (leader) with 12 Naturetrek clients

## Day 1

**Wednesday 20th September**

Our tour began at London's Heathrow, heading to Sandakan airport via Kuala Lumpur.

## Day 2

**Thursday 21st September**

The group arrived on time in Sandakan airport and our journey to Sepilok was accompanied by heavy rain until arrival at the My Nature Resort, Sepilok. First birding activity were commenced one hour after check-in and although it was raining, everyone was so excited and we got to see some Greater Green Leafbird, Brown-throated Sunbird, Rufous Woodpecker, a few other birds and a Red Giant Flying Squirrel. We ended our day with dinner, checklist, and everyone went to their room and retired for the day.

## Day 3

**Friday 22nd September**

We started our day with an early morning birding visit to Rainforest Discovery Centre's 620 Metre Canopy Skywalk at 6am. Bird sightings in the morning were some nice Red-throated Sunbird, Purple-naped Spiderhunter, Black and Yellow Broadbill and a few others before we went back to the resort for breakfast. After breakfast, we continued our trip with a visit to the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre and the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre.

Afternoon birding continued with a second visit to the Rainforest Discovery Centre, and we covered the trail part this time, aiming for more chances of finding understorey birds. Highlights of this walk were Diard's Trogon and we continued our activity with a night walk and managed to find a Philippine Slow Loris.

Went back to the resort before dark and had dinner and did the checklist before everyone went to bed.

## Day 4

**Saturday 23rd September**

Our day started with birding around the resort area before breakfast. Went to the backyard compound of the resort and we managed to spot a good number of species including the endemic White-fronted Falconet. Other birds that we saw were Crimson Sunbird, Peregrine Falcon, Dollarbird, Oriental Pied Hornbills, and Greater Racket-tailed Drongo. During breakfast we saw a troop of Pig-tailed Macaque and we left to Sukau, Kinabatangan at 10am, stopped at a petrol station to use the facilities and buy some snacks. Managed to arrive Borneo Nature Lodge, Kinabatangan at 12.30am for lunch.

Our first afternoon cruise was slightly delayed due to bad weather conditions, and during the first cruise, we saw excellent numbers of raptors such as Wallace's Hawk-eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Brahminy Kite and White-bellied Sea Eagle. We saw some hornbills too such as Wrinkled Hornbill, Oriental Pied Hornbill and Black Hornbill. We returned to the lodge at 6pm, had dinner and did the checklist.

After dinner, while everyone was having a chat at the dining area, Janu (the boatman) and I, tried our luck in trying to find the resident Large Frogmouth and we managed to see one. We called everyone in the dining area and everyone managed to see it!

## Day 5

## Sunday 24th September

We had a light breakfast at 05.30am and went out for more birding at 6am in the search for more birds. Our morning cruise was delightful with several sightings of Proboscis Monkeys, Silvered Langur and many Macaques. This morning we were lucky to see the endangered Storm's Stork, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Blue-eared Kingfisher, and others. Went back for breakfast and went out again, and again we were lucky to find the endemic Bornean Ground Cuckoo.

Our afternoon cruise was another lucky trip for us where we saw a single bull Bornean Pygmy Elephant crossing a stream just a couple metres away from the boat. Went back for dinner and checklist update and went out for a night cruise with some encounters of Buffy Fish Owl, roosting kingfishers, and an incredibly lucky sighting of a Philippine Slow Loris. The night cruise ended around 9pm and everyone went back to their room and retired for the day.

## Day 6

## Monday 25th September

We headed out for another morning cruise before breakfast and left Borneo Nature Lodge for Tabin Wildlife Reserve at 9am. We arrived in Tabin at lunch time and headed out for our first activity which was a dusk drive. During this activity, we managed to see some birds such as the White-crowned Hornbill, Bushy Crested Hornbill, Oriental Honey Buzzard and Verditer Flycatcher. On our way back, we did some night spotting and we saw a Leopard Cat and Island Palm Civet. Came back to the resort for dinner and checklist update, before everyone went to bed.

## Day 7

## Tuesday 26th September

We started our day with an early breakfast and headed out to a road for birding. Today was quite productive as we saw a wild Orangutan, gibbons, and some birds such as Great Slaty Woodpecker, Banded Woodpecker, Maroon Woodpecker, Scarlet-rumped Trogon and Brown Fulvetta. The afternoon was spent on the main road closed to the resort; it was a rainy afternoon where we didn't see many birds but we managed to see a snake which was a Bornean Keeled Pit Viper.

We went out for a night drive activity after dinner and checklist update, and managed to see a Brown Wood Owl, Barred Eagle Owl, and another Leopard Cat

## Day 8

## Wednesday 27th September

Today we went out to the Lipad Mud Volcano Trail and on our way, stopped for birds and managed to find some such as Chestnut-rumped Babbler, Banded Broadbill and the endemic Blue-headed Pitta. Went back to the resort for lunch and headed out again on the main road where we saw the endemic Black-headed Pitta, Rhinoceros Hornbill, Wreathed Hornbill and Yellow-bellied Bulbul.

In the evening after dinner and checklist update, we went out for a night walk and managed to find some frogs such as File-eared Tree-Frog, Dark-eared Tree Frog and Harlequin Flying Frog.

## Day 9

## Thursday 28th September

Early morning birding commenced around the main road before breakfast and we managed to see some birds such as Rufous-tailed Tailorbird, Black and Red Broadbill, Chestnut Munia, Dusky Munia, Yellow-bellied Prinia and a Lesser Coucal. We came back for breakfast and left Tabin at 10am. We arrived Lahad Datu airport at 11.30am to catch a 13.45hrs flight to Kota Kinabalu. At the airport, we managed to spot a Paddyfield Pipit.

We arrived Kota Kinabalu International Airport at 1430hrs, and continued our journey to Kinabalu National Park. Along the journey, we stopped by at a petrol station for snacks, and stopped again at Pekan Nabal to get a chance of finding the Bornean Swiftlet. After that stop, we continued the journey and arrived at the national park at 5pm, checked in to the rooms and had dinner around 6.30pm. After dinner and checklist update, everyone went back to their room and retired for the day.

## Day 10

## Friday 29th September

We went out at 6am to do birding along the main road of Kinabalu National Park, and started with bird sightings including Bornean Treepie, Bornean Green Magpie, Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush, and the endemic Whitehead's Trogon and Whitehead's Broadbill. We went out again after breakfast and managed to spot Bornean Shortwing, Little Pied Flycatcher, Golden-naped Barbet and Mountain Tailorbird.

After dinner and checklist update, we went for a short night walk and managed to find a Bornean Striped Palm Civet.

## Day 11

## Saturday 30th September

This morning, we went out to the Timpohon Gate with a van and managed to see some birds such as Ashy Drongo, Bornean Treepie, Sunda Laughingthrush, and Snowy-browed Flycatcher. The weather was very misty and drizzly and we decided to go back for breakfast after that. We were planning to go out again, but the rain poured heavily so everyone decided to go back to their rooms and pack before our departure back to Kota Kinabalu International Airport at 12 noon to catch their flight to Kuala Lumpur, then to Heathrow at 1730hrs. We arrived at the airport at 3pm and said farewell to the group.

## Day 12

## Sunday 1st October

Our overnight flight arrived back in the UK in the early morning.

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Oriental Darter (left), Stork-billed Kingfisher (right)

## Species lists

Birds (H = Heard only)

1. Large Frogmouth
2. Grey-rumped Treeswift
3. Whiskered Treeswift
4. Plume-toed Swiftlet
5. Bornean Swiftlet
6. Black-nest Swiftlet
7. Silver-rumped Spinetail
8. Greater Coucal
9. Lesser Coucal
10. Spotted Dove
11. Philippine Cuckoo-Dove
12. Little Cuckoo-Dove
13. Zebra Dove

14. Little Green Pigeon
15. Pink-necked Green Pigeon
16. Green Imperial Pigeon
17. Mountain Imperial Pigeon
18. White-breasted Waterhen
19. Common Sandpiper
20. Gull-billed Tern
21. Storm's Stork
22. Oriental Darter
23. Black-crowned Night Heron
24. Striated Heron
25. Eastern Cattle Egret
26. Purple Heron
27. Great Egret
28. Little Egret
29. Crested Honey Buzzard
30. Crested Serpent Eagle
31. Bat Hawk
32. Wallace's Hawk-Eagle
33. Changeable Hawk-Eagle
34. Rufous-bellied Eagle
35. Crested Goshawk
36. Brahminy Kite
37. White-bellied Sea Eagle
38. Grey-headed Fish Eagle
39. Brown Boobook
40. Buffy Fish Owl
41. Barred Eagle-Owl
42. Brown Wood Owl
43. Diard's Trogon
44. Whitehead's Trogon
45. Scarlet-rumped Trogon
46. White-crowned Hornbill
47. Rhinoceros Hornbill
48. Oriental Pied Hornbill
49. Black Hornbill
50. Bushy-crested Hornbill
51. Wreathed Hornbill
52. Wrinkled Hornbill
53. Oriental Dollarbird
54. Stork-billed Kingfisher
55. Collared Kingfisher
56. Blue-eared Kingfisher
57. Red-bearded Bee-eater
58. Blue-throated Bee-eater
59. Golden-naped Barbet
60. Blue-eared Barbet
61. Brown Barbet
62. Rufous Piculet
63. White-bellied Woodpecker
64. Banded Woodpecker
65. Maroon Woodpecker
66. Rufous Woodpecker
67. Buff-rumped Woodpecker
68. Great Slaty Woodpecker
69. White-fronted Falconet
70. Long-tailed Parakeet
71. Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot
72. Black-and-red Broadbill
73. Black-and-yellow Broadbill
74. Whitehead's Broadbill
75. Blue-headed Pitta
76. Black-crowned Pitta

77. Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike
78. Rufous-winged Philentoma
79. White-breasted Woodswallow
80. Green Iora
81. Fiery Minivet
82. Scarlet Minivet
83. Lesser Cuckooshrike
84. Bronzed Drongo
85. Greater Racket-tailed Drongo
86. Hair-crested Drongo
87. Ashy Drongo
88. White-throated Fantail
89. Malaysian Pied Fantail
90. Black-naped Monarch
91. Bornean Green Magpie
92. Bornean Treepie
93. Slender-billed Crow
94. Hairy-backed Bulbul
95. Yellow-bellied Bulbul
96. Grey-cheeked Bulbul
97. Penan Bulbul
98. Bornean Bulbul
99. Cream-vented Bulbul
100. Asian Red-eyed Bulbul
101. Straw-headed Bulbul
102. Yellow-vented Bulbul
103. Pacific Swallow
104. Barn Swallow
105. Mountain Tailorbird
106. Aberrant Bush Warbler
107. Yellow-breasted Warbler
108. Mountain Leaf Warbler
109. Yellow-bellied Prinia
110. Dark-necked Tailorbird
111. Rufous-tailed Tailorbird
112. Ashy Tailorbird
113. Pygmy White-eye
114. Black-capped White-eye
115. Bold-striped Tit-Babbler
116. Fluffy-backed Tit-Babbler
117. Chestnut-rumped Babbler
118. Grey-throated Babbler
119. Sooty-capped Babbler
120. Rufous-crowned Babbler
121. Bornean Black-capped Babbler
122. Temminck's Babbler
123. Brown Fulvetta
124. Sunda Laughingthrush
125. Chestnut-hooded laughingthrush
126. Asian Fairy-Bluebird
127. Velvet-fronted Nuthatch
128. Asian Glossy Starling
129. Common Hill Myna
130. Javan Myna
131. Oriental Magpie-Robin
132. White-crowned Shama
133. Dark-sided Flycatcher
134. Asian Brown Flycatcher
135. Indigo Flycatcher
136. Verditer Flycatcher
137. Bornean Blue Flycatcher
138. Malaysian Blue Flycatcher
139. Bornean Forktail

140. Eyebrowed Jungle Flycatcher
141. Bornean Shortwing
142. Snowy-browed Flycatcher
143. Little Pied Flycatcher
144. Greater Green Leafbird
145. Lesser Green Leafbird
146. Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker
147. Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker
148. Orange-bellied Flowerpecker
149. Black-sided Flowerpecker
150. Ruby-cheeked Sunbird
151. Plain Sunbird
152. Brown-throated Sunbird
153. Red-throated Sunbird
154. Olive-backed Sunbird
155. Crimson Sunbird
156. Temminck's Sunbird
157. Purple-naped Spiderhunter
158. Little Spiderhunter
159. Thick-billed Spiderhunter
160. Long-billed Spiderhunter
161. Spectacled Spiderhunter
162. Yellow-eared Spiderhunter
163. Bornean Spiderhunter
164. Eurasian Tree Sparrow
165. Scaly-breasted Munia
166. Dusky Munia
167. Chestnut Munia
168. Grey Wagtail
169. Paddyfield Pipit

## Mammals

1. Bornean Pygmy Elephant
2. Sunda Leopard Cat
3. Small-toothed Palm Civet
4. Malay Civet
5. Bornean Sun Bear
6. Asian Small-clawed Otter
7. Lesser Indo-Malayan Chevrotain
8. Large Flying Fox
9. Sunda Colugo
10. Philippine Slow Loris
11. Long-tailed Macaque
12. Southern Pig-tailed Macaque
13. Proboscis Monkey
14. Red Langur
15. Silver Langur
16. East Sabah Grey Gibbon
17. Bornean Orangutan
18. Plantain Squirrel
19. Prevost's Squirrel
20. Least Pygmy Squirrel
21. Red Giant Flying Squirrel
22. Cream Coloured Giant Squirrel
23. Jentink's Squirrel

## Amphibians

1. Cricket Frog
2. Dark-eared Tree Frog

3. File-eared Tree Frog
4. Frilled Tree Frog
5. Harlequin Tree Frog
6. Brown Tree Frog

## Reptiles

1. Saltwater Crocodile
2. Asian Forest Tortoise
3. Crested Green Lizard
4. Flying Lizard Species
5. Barking (Green-eyed) Gecko
6. Red-throated Skink
7. Water Monitor Lizard
8. Bornean Keeled Pit Viper
9. Slug-eating Snake

## Others

1. Stick Insect species.
2. Tree Nymph Butterfly
3. Planthopper
4. Forest Tree Crab
5. African Giant Snail
6. Spiny-backed Stick Insect