

# BORNEO

**August 2 - 17, 2018**

or

**Aug. 25 - Sept. 9, 2018**

**16 Days / 15 Nights**

**\$5295**

**Single Supplement \$2000**



Borneo, the world's third largest island, is shared by the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak, the five Indonesian provinces of Kalimantan and the Kingdom of Brunei. Sabah, located on the northeastern part of the island, occupies an area of 73,631 square kilometers and is considered by eco-tourists to be the most interesting part of Borneo. Sabah is one of the few places left in the world where you can see Orangutans in the wild. While it's wonderful to see these incredible creatures at the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center, it is even more thrilling to see them in their natural habitat. Equally impressive are the troops of Proboscis Monkeys that are seen along the Kinabatangan River as they forage for food.

From a birder's point of view, obviously the best reason to visit Borneo is to observe the huge diversity of birdlife. The island is home to 688 species, of which 53 are endemic. Of this island population, 601 species can be found in Sabah, with 51 of them endemic to Borneo and 4 endemic to Sabah. Imagine birding in an area smaller than the state of South Carolina with a bird population that is roughly 2/3 that of the entire continent of North America!

Come with us as we take you to the best birding sites in Sabah, from Mount Kinabalu to Sepilok, from the Tabin Wildlife Reserve near Lahad Datu to the beautiful Kinabatangan region near Sukau. You'll see rare and beautiful birds while also enjoying sightings of primates and other denizens of the forests. With expert local guides, comfortable lodges and carefully prepared meals, this is truly a trip of a lifetime!

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1, August 2

Arrive Kota Kinabalu airport, where you will be met by a driver and transferred to Dreamtel Hotel for check-in. Depending on arrival times and weather, the group might visit Likas Wetland for a bit of birding before it gets dark. Because arrivals will be scattered throughout the day and evening, dinner will be on your own.

**O/N Dreamtel Hotel – Superior Room (no meals)**

### Day 2, August 3

We will be transferred from the hotel to Kota Kinabalu Airport for a short flight to Lahad Datu. Upon our arrival in Lahad Datu, we will drive to Tabin Wildlife Reserve, where we should arrive in time for lunch. After settling in to our rooms and taking a short rest, we will enjoy birding in the reserve with our birding guide and a local guide, giving us just a taste of the great birding that is to follow as we spend two full days at this amazing reserve.

**O/N Tabin Wildlife Resort (BLD)**

### Days 3 and 4, August 4 - 5

Tabin was declared a wildlife reserve because of the large numbers of wildlife inhabiting its jungle, many of which are endemic and endangered species. The three largest land mammals of Sabah - Asian Elephant, Sumatran Rhinoceros and Wild Buffalo (Tembadau) - are found within the forests of Tabin. Gibbons are not uncommon, and you might hear and/or see them from the lodge's boardwalk along the river. Tabin is a birder's paradise with an amazingly rich diversity of bird species, including 42 indigenous families representing more than 260 species, and including all 8 of Sabah's Hornbill species (Rhinoceros, Wreathed, Pied, White-crowned, Wrinkled, Bushy-crested, and Helmeted). A few of the target species for this area are Red-bearded Bee-Eater, Red-rumped Trogon, Dollarbird, Black-naped Monarch, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, and Asian

Paradise-Flycatcher, to name but a few. We should get our first sightings of Black-and-red and Black-and-yellow Broadbills here, and a couple of Malkohas (Raffles' and Chestnut-breasted) are also possible. Woodpeckers in Tabin include Rufous, Buff-necked, and Gray-and-Buff, several flycatcher species are local here, and Crested Serpent-Eagle is common. One of the most sought-after species here, and what the writer believes is the gem of this forest, is the Black-and-Crimson Pitta. The abundance of flowers provides an equal abundance of Flowerpeckers, Spiderhunters, and Sunbirds: Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker, Ruby-cheeked Sunbird, Plain Sunbird, Van Hasselt's Sunbird, Temminck's Sunbird, Crimson Sunbird, Long-billed Spiderhunter, Little Spiderhunter, and Yellow-eared Spiderhunter were all seen on our 2016 familiarization tour. The relatively low canopy with sufficient natural light makes birding and photography very rewarding here.

We will take one night drive and one night walk while we are in Tabin. We might see Buffy Fish Owl and Blyth's Frogmouth, with good chances to see Palm and Malay Civets, Leopard Cat, and Red Giant Flying Squirrels. We might even be lucky enough to spot a Colugo.

**O/N Tabin Wildlife Resort (BLD)**



### **Day 5, August 6**

We will take an early morning trek in search of birds before having breakfast at the lodge and have a bit of time after breakfast to try to sweep up any species we might have missed . We will drive 2 hours to Lahad Datu, where we will have lunch before continuing on to the Kinabatangan River with a stop at Gomantong Cave to watch the exodus of bats and the variety of raptors that come to feast upon them. We have the option of going inside the cave to see the Black-nest Swiftlets, Mossy-nest Swiftlets, and White-nest (aka Edible-nest) Swiftlets that nest inside the cave by the thousands. It's possible that we'll observe locals harvesting some of these nests, but this activity is not continuous throughout the year, so we can't guarantee this. In Sandakan, we will board boats that will take us to our lodge, where we should arrive in time for dinner.

### **O/N Borneo Nature Lodge (BLD)**

### **Days 6 and 7, August 7 - 8**

We will spend two days exploring the area surrounding the Kinabatangan River. This area is the largest swamp and riverine forest in Malaysia, and at 560 km, the Kinabatangan River is Malaysia's longest river. Our transportation while here will be by boat, and we will enjoy both a morning and afternoon cruise for birding and wildlife viewing today and tomorrow.



**Proboscis Monkey**

The Kinabatangan area is one of only two known places on Earth where 10 primate species can be found. As we cruise slowly along the river, we will watch the forest for Proboscis Monkeys, Pig-tailed Macaques and Long-tailed Macaques as well as Maroon Langur and Bornean Gibbon while we search for birds at the water's edge. We might be lucky enough to spot a python or Water Monitor, or the increasingly rare Estuarine Crocodile. Asian Elephants occur in the area, with an estimated population of around 100 ranging in the lower Kinabatangan River Region, and we hope to be lucky enough to spot some of them. Almost 200 species of birds live in this area, including 8 species of Hornbills. Storm's Stork is one of the rare species that is often seen here among the abundant water birds. A good variety of raptors are expected with Bat Hawk, Blyth's and Wallace's

Hawk-Eagles, and White-bellied and Gray-headed Fish-Eagles all possible. As you might expect, Kingfishers are fairly common here – Blue-eared, Rufous-backed, and Stork-billed all hunt along the river’s edge. Black-and-red and Black-and-yellow Broadbills nest along the river, and this is one of the most reliable spots for the rare and sought-after Bornean Bristlehead. The birding here is outstanding and, from our seats in the boat, nearly effortless.

**O/N Borneo Nature Lodge (BLD)**



**Storm's Stork**



**Large Frogmouth on nest**

#### **Day 8, August 9**

After breakfast at the lodge we will return to Sandakan by boat and then drive to Sepilok, arriving in time for lunch. After lunch, we will walk to the nearby Sepilok Orang Utan Rehabilitation Center. There, we will participate in an orientation, including a video about the plight of the Orang Utans and the ongoing rehabilitation efforts at the Rehab Center. Following this orientation, we will walk about ten minutes through the rainforest on wooden boardwalks to witness the feeding of the orangutans. When we have had our fill of watching this spectacle, we will continue to the newly-completed enclosed nursery area where we will observe young Orangutans. After dinner, we will enjoy a night walk at Sepilok.

**O/N Sepilok Nature Resort (BLD)**

#### **Days 9 and 10, August 10 - 11**

We will have two full days to explore the lowland forest around Sepilok, mostly at the Rainforest Discovery Center property, where an excellent canopy walkway and an extensive network of trails await us. The RDC encompasses 4,294 hectares and is home to 234 species of birds, including 13 near-endemic species and the endemic Bornean Bristlehead. The Kingfisher Trail, Ridge Trail, and Pitta Path are likely places to find Black-crowned Pitta and various Babblers. Other birds commonly seen at RDC include Bat Hawk, Wallace's Hawk-Eagle, Rufous-bellied Eagle, Red-naped Trogon, Orange-backed Woodpecker, Buff-necked Woodpecker, Black-and-yellow Broadbill, and Crested Jay. Many other species are also present, including flowerpeckers, sunbirds, and spiderhunters, to name but a few.



**O/N Sepilok Nature Resort (BLD)**

### **Day 11, August 12**

We will enjoy one last morning of birding before departing for Kinabalu Park. This, our longest drive, should take approximately 5 hours, and we will have lunch en route. We will check in at Zen Garden Resort upon arrival and, depending on the time, we might do some birding around the lodge, or we might have time to make our first foray into Kinabalu Park before dinner.

**O/N Zen Garden Resort. (BLD)**

### **Days 12 – 14, August 13 - 15**

We will have 3 days to bird Kinabalu and nearby Poring. Mount Kinabalu, located in the Crocker Range, is the highest mountain in the Malay Archipelago (13,435 feet in elevation). It is protected by the 754-square-kilometer Kinabalu Park, a World Heritage Site that is considered to be among the most important biological sites in the world with between 5,000 and 6,000 species of plants, 326 species of birds, and more than 100 species of mammals. There are four climate zones within the park that create an environment for a rich and diverse plant life: dipterocarp forest, montane forest, cloud forest, and the sub-alpine zone. We'll enjoy cooler weather at this elevation while we feast on

sightings of **Bornean Green Magpie**, Bornean Treepie, Sunda and Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrushes, Sunda Bush-Warbler, Bornean Stubtail, Bornean Whistling Thrush, Golden-naped Barbet, Chestnut-crested Yuhina, Indigo Flycatcher and a host of others. We'll make every effort to get the coveted Whitehead's Trio – Whitehead's Trogon, Whitehead's Spiderhunter and Whitehead's Broadbill –



that can be found in this area. On one of our days in this area, we'll go to nearby Poring Hot Springs for a bit of lowland forest birding in hopes of spotting Hose's Broadbill, Blue-banded and Bornean Banded Pittas, all of which are spectacular but all of which are rare and not easy to spot. Other birds possible in this area are Crested Jay, Moustached Babbler, Diard's Trogon, Red-throated Barbet, Bornean Forktail, Maroon-breasted Philentoma, Black-naped Monarch, and many others.

**O/N Zen Garden Resort. (BLD)**

### **Day 15, August 16**

We will depart in the morning after breakfast to the Tambunan Rafflesia Center, which is an excellent area for Bornean Bulbul, Long-tailed Broadbill, Bornean Leafbird, and many others. From here we will return to Kota Kinabalu where we will check in to our hotel to stage for tomorrow's international flights home. We will celebrate our time together birding on this wonderful island with a farewell dinner at the hotel.

**O/N Dreamtel Hotel – Superior Room (BLD)**



**Whiskered Treeswift**

**Day 16, August 17**

Transfer to Kota Kinabalu airport

**(B)**

## **Terms and conditions**

Deposit of \$1000 with registration form with balance due on or before April 1, 2018.

### **Included in the price:**

- ~ Meals during tour as indicated on itinerary - Breakfast on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 16
- ~ All entry fees to reserves in itinerary
- ~ All lodging
- ~ Bottled water
- ~ Expert English-speaking Malaysian guide throughout the tour, plus local guides as required
- ~ *Cheepers!* tour leaders, Jim and Cindy Beckman
- ~ Private transportation during tour
- ~ Transfers to and from airport\*
- ~ Farewell dinner in Kota Kinabalu
- ~ Pre-trip gift package, including customized checklist
- ~ Post-trip electronic checklist and photo dvd

### **Not Included in the price:**

- ~ International airfare to Kota Kinabalu
- ~ Internal airfare Kota Kinabalu – Lahad Datu
- ~ \* Surcharge for transfers to and from the airport scheduled between 11:00 PM and 6:00 AM
- ~ Optional night cruises
- ~ Gratuities
- ~ Items of a personal nature such as drinks other than water, laundry, phone calls, souvenirs, etc.
- ~ Travel insurance