



BORNEO

March 12 - 31, 2027

Borneo—the very name conjures images of teeming jungles and a profusion of strange and little-known plants and creatures. Giant flying squirrels, hairy primates, gliding snakes and flying frogs, orchid-like praying mantis, goggle-eyed tarsiers, the world’s largest flower, weird monkeys, carnivorous pitcher plants, and much more all characterize this fabulous island.

The tropical dipterocarp forests of Borneo are among the world’s oldest, supporting an amazing diversity of animal and plant life, surpassed only by the lowland communities of the Amazon Basin. The sheer number of charismatic species found here, including Bornean Orangutan, Bornean Pygmy Elephant, Proboscis Monkey, Bornean Clouded Leopard, Great Argus, eight species of hornbills and Bornean Bristlehead, endows these forests and provides their visitors with one of the most exciting tropical rainforest experiences anywhere on our planet. Borneo’s smaller birds are no less exciting, with numerous little-known endemics plus a plethora of tropical Asian pigeons, parakeets, cuckoos, trogons, kingfishers, barbets, woodpeckers, broadbills, pittas, bulbuls, babblers, flowerpeckers, sunbirds and more.



To see some of these wonders of Borneo, we will focus on four areas: the magnificent montane forests of Mount Trus Madi and Kinabalu National Park, the lowland tropical forest at Sepilok Reserve, the mangrove and swamp forests along the lower Kinabatangan River, and the incomparable primary rainforests of the Danum Valley. Between them they offer the full spectrum of the best of Borneo. Add to this great food and accommodations in a very friendly and pleasant multi-ethnic country and you have all of the makings for a great tour.

Towering over the surrounding landscape, the awe-inspiring granite peak of Kinabalu has long lured travelers and naturalists to explore her lush cloud-enshrouded forests. The highest landmark between New Guinea and the Himalayas, Mt. Kinabalu is virtually an island in the sky, and, as such, supports a number of extremely local endemic birds. Here we will search among the huge epiphyte-clad sentinels, lush and thick understory, and flowering rhododendrons for such specialties as the Crimson-headed Partridge, Whitehead's Trogon (rare), Golden-naped and Mountain barbets, the sumptuous Whitehead's Broadbill, Mountain Wren-Babbler, Bare-headed and Chestnut-hooded laughingthrushes, the diminutive Bornean Stubtail, and Whitehead's Spiderhunter.

From the mountain we will travel to the Sepilok Reserve, a wonderful introduction to the lowland forests of Borneo, including access to the canopy on a very sturdy walkway and a maze of forest interior trails. Then we transfer to boats for our explorations of the lower reaches of the Kinabatangan River, from the vast complex of mangrove forests at its mouth, upriver to the swamp forests along its banks. Numerous special creatures are found in this region, from Orangutan and Bornean Pygmy Elephant (if we are lucky) to the comical Proboscis Monkey, endangered Storm's Stork, a variety of raptors and many large hornbills.

The highlight of the tour will undoubtedly be our visit to the Danum Valley and the thrill of exploring these towering dipterocarp forests cannot be overstated. We will do so from the comfort of perhaps the finest and most beautiful lodge in the whole of Southeast Asia, the Borneo Rainforest Lodge, set in the heart of the Danum Valley amidst some of the most magnificent rainforest remaining on the island of Borneo. With three full days and four nights here, we will have an enviable chance to fully appreciate the richness of this forest haven and observe many of the fascinating birds and animals that live here.

March 12 - 14, Days 1 - 3: Travel to Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Borneo

Participants should plan to arrive in Kota Kinabalu on or before March 14. Please keep in mind that travel to Borneo from the USA requires crossing the International Dateline, which means the loss of one day in transit. Upon arrival at the airport in Kota Kinabalu (locally known as KK; airport code BKL), you will be met by a representative of our ground agent and escorted to our hotel. Please arrange your departure from home to ensure that you arrive in sufficient time to meet with the group and your leader in the hotel lobby bar area at **6:30 p.m. on March 14**, for a preliminary get together followed by dinner.

NIGHTS (Mar 12 & 13): In transit (overnight flight)

NIGHT (March 14): Shangri-La Tanjung Aru, Kota Kinabalu

March 15, Day 4: AM Kota Belud Area; PM Birding Around Kota Kinabalu

We must depart early this morning for the drive north to the coastal wetlands of Kota Belud and the Tempasuk Plain. Although largely altered by agriculture, these wetlands, associated scrub, and swamp forests support many species, which we are unlikely to encounter elsewhere: with a bit of luck Cinnamon, Yellow and perhaps Black bitterns; four species of egrets; Purple Heron; possibly Slaty-breasted Rail; White-browed Crake; Watercock; Oriental Pratincole – breeds occasionally; Little Green-pigeon; Pink-necked Pigeon; Lesser Coucal; Blue-throated Bee-eater; Paddyfield Pipit; Pied Triller; White-breasted Woodswallow; Ashy Tailorbird; Malaysian Pied-Fantail; Striated Grassbird; Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker; Olive-backed Sunbird; Asian Glossy Starling; and Dusky and Chestnut munias. With good fortune, we may find the recently discovered Buff-banded Rail, Australasian Grass-Owl or what was once regarded as a vagrant to Borneo, Black-winged Stilt.

As the day heats up, we will make our way back to our lovely hotel on the edge of Kota Kinabalu. The grounds of the hotel are extensive, and, in addition to offering the opportunity to rest and relax around a series of very attractive swimming pools, they also host a number of interesting birds including Green

Imperial-Pigeon, the very localized Blue-naped Parrot, Collared Kingfisher, Sunda Woodpecker, Pied Triller, Common Iora, and Chestnut and possibly Dusky munias.

NIGHT: Shangri-La Tanjung Aru, Kota Kinabalu

March 16, Day 5: Trusmadi Bird Station and Drive to Tambunan

A full day at the Trusmadi Bird Station provides a window into a secret and rarely seen world. This is part of a newly established and well-equipped series of hides that feature comfortable chairs, a kitchen, and flushing toilet, ensuring a very pleasant experience and, importantly, an intimate setting to observe and photograph some of Borneo's most elusive and sought-after species.

The number one target here is the rare and unmistakable Bulwer's Pheasant. One of the least-known of the Bornean endemics and (previously) considered in the 'near mythical' category - but is a regular sighting at Trusmadi. Other notable species here would include Crested, Red-breasted & Crimson-headed Partridge, Bornean Banded Pitta, Malayasian Rail-babbler (uncommon), Siberian Blue Robin, Dayak Blue Flycatcher and Orange-headed Thrush. Some which we are unlikely to see elsewhere.



Bulwer's Pheasant – now a regular at Trusmadi Bird Station. Photo: Scott Baker

In addition to the avian highlights, there is a supporting cast of incredible mammal fauna, including: Squirrels (at least 10 species identified), Treeshrews and Chevrotains (Mouse-Deer) that frequent the

feed area. The rarely seen Tufted Ground Squirrel has also been detected, as has the Clouded Leopard (active only at night).

NIGHT: Padi View Resthouse, Tambunan

March 17, Day 6: Crocker Range National Park/ Gunung Alab

This morning, we will depart for the scenic drive into the Crocker Range National Park. Although access to this large reserve is sparse, we should be able to locate a handful of endemics and other specialties that are difficult to find within, or absent from, Kinabalu Park. With a bit of luck, we may encounter the diminutive Pygmy White-eye, in addition to Mountain Barbet and the rather uncommon but attractive Bornean Barbet, the Bornean Bulbul and the peculiar-sounding Whitehead's Spiderhunter. Other possibilities might include Mountain Serpent-Eagle (with luck), Mountain Imperial-Pigeon, Philippine (uncommon) and Little cuckoo-doves, Gold-whiskered (aka Gold-faced) Barbet, Bornean Leafbird, the glorious Temminck's Sunbird and the mysterious Mountain Black-eye to finish the day. Red-breasted and Crimson-headed partridges are another possibility. In addition, if we are very fortunate, we may also see *Rafflesia* in flowers. However, this is a rare event and often requires a long and rather steep walk.

NIGHT: Hill Lodge at Kinabalu Park, Sabah



Crimson-headed Partridge. (aka the 'Bloodhead') Is one of the many striking endemics we may encounter. Photo: Scott Baker

March 18 - 19, Days 7 – 8: Kinabalu National Park

Mt. Kinabalu is the highest mountain between the Himalayas and the Snow Mountains of New Guinea. This huge, granite massif rises to over 13,000 feet and totally dominates the surrounding landscape. Functioning as an ecological island, it supports a wealth of biota not found elsewhere or only shared with one or two nearby Bornean mountains. For example, over half the plants above 3,300 feet are endemic. There are approximately 1,200 species of orchids on the mountain and no less than nine species of pitcher plant (*Nepenthes*), including the world's largest, reputed to be capable of holding a quart of water! True montane forest begins above ca. 9,000 feet and is characterized by gnarled, stunted trees (including many rhododendrons – 24 species!) encrusted with mosses, lichens, and orchids which are nourished by the frequent mists and high rainfall. Finally, above the tree line, there is an open, subalpine area of bushes and dwarf shrubs below the formidable crags and gigantic rock buttresses of the summit.

The magnificent Kinabalu National Park encompasses an area of 300 square miles and ranges in altitude from 1,000 to 13,455 feet, although the greater portion of the area lies above 4,000 feet. Approximately 300 species of birds have been recorded from the park, including several extremely local endemics. We will bird along forest-lined roads and forest trails in search of these specialties. Be aware that birding here can be extremely slow but rewarding. Although the purpose of most people visiting the park is to climb to the summit, we can see most of the specialties well below the high elevations. Characteristically in the mountains, it can suddenly become very chilly and wet; participants are advised to bring along warm clothes and wet weather gear.

We have three full days to sample some of Kinabalu's biological diversity, concentrating on mid-montane elevations and above, where we are likely to encounter the greatest degree of endemism. We can drive up to 6,100 feet and walk down the road to see canopy species, but we will also explore narrow forest trails to enjoy the full lushness of these forests and some of the more secretive denizens. One day we will visit the nearby Poring Hot Springs. This intriguing area provides access to an elevation and habitat that is otherwise difficult to explore in Borneo, plus it has a superb canopy walkway. With a bit of luck, we may turn up several species unlikely to be encountered elsewhere on the tour.



Mount Kinabalu is the highest mountain in Southeast Asia. Photo: Scott Baker

Birds that we hope to find in the Kinabalu region include Mountain Serpent-Eagle; Mountain Imperial-Pigeon; Little Cuckoo-Dove; Mountain Scops-Owl (with luck); Whitehead's Trogon – lovely but very scarce and elusive; Golden-naped and Mountain barbets; Checker-throated and Maroon woodpeckers; the fabulous Whitehead's Broadbill; Sunda Cuckoo-shrike; Gray-chinned Minivet; Bornean Whistler; Blyth's Shrike-Babbler; Black-and-crimson Oriole; Ashy and Hair-crested drongos; White-throated Fantail; Bornean Green-Magpie; Bornean Treepie; Pale-faced Bulbul; Mountain Tailorbird; Aberrant Bush Warbler; Mountain and Yellow-breasted warblers; Chestnut-crested Yuhina; Mountain Black-eye; Black-capped White-eye; Gray-throated Babbler; Mountain Wren-Babbler; Sunda, Chestnut-hooded and Bare-headed laughingthrushes; the endemic Eyebrowed Jungle-Flycatcher plus Indigo, Snowy-browed and Little Pied flycatchers; Black-sided Flowerpecker; Temminck's Sunbird; and Whitehead's Spiderhunter. With luck we may also find some of Kinabalu's more elusive species, such as Fruit-hunter, Everett's Thrush and Bornean Stubtail. Mt. Kinabalu also harbors a number of interesting although infrequently seen mammals including Malay Weasel – a gorgeous orange and white predator; two species of flying squirrels; and Whitehead's Pygmy Squirrel – with its comically long ear-tufts, plus a variety of other squirrels and tree-shrews.

NIGHTS: Hill Lodge, Kinabalu Park, Sabah



Whitehead's Broadbill is one of the most sought-after of the montane endemics. Photo: Scott Baker

March 20, Day 9: AM Birding Kinabalu Park; PM Drive to Sandakan and Sepilok

After the final morning of birding in Kinabalu Park, we will drive east to the Sandakan area. Once the capital of Sabah, Sandakan is a bustling port on Borneo's east coast with an imposing harbor. It is still the major commercial center for such forest products as rattan, timber, and bird nests (for bird's nest soup). Our lovely lodge lies not far from the city, but adjacent to the Sepilok Forest Reserve, and we should arrive in time to explore the bird-rich grounds a bit.

NIGHT: Sepilok Nature Resort, Sandakan, Sabah

March 21 - 22, Days 10-11: Sepilok Rainforest Discovery Centre

The Rainforest Discovery Centre with its superb canopy walkway and fine system of well-established trails will be a great start to our exploration of Borneo's magnificent lowland forests. The walkway is built of steel and consequently very stable and thus unusually good for birding and photography. We will work

at this facility in addition to the trails and forest edge in our search for Borneo's birds, mammals and other wildlife. This is one of THE sites for the incomparable Bornean Bristlehead, one of the weirdest and most exotic looking of all of Borneo's endemic birds—and we will make a special effort to find this very elusive species. For those who wish, there will be an opportunity for a forest night-walk during which we may encounter Slow Loris or some other surprising nocturnal mammal, Brown Hawk-Owl, and with patience and fortune, at least one species of frogmouth. During our 2018 tour we were treated with a wonderful show by a very obliging, Black-crowned Pitta. The family of pittas are called “jungle jewels” as they are difficult to come across but when you do, the reward is huge. We have good chance of finding one of these “jewels” in Sepilok!

NIGHT: Sepilok Nature Resort, Sandakan, Sabah



Black-crowned Pitta. Photo: Scott Baker

March 23, Day 12: AM Sandakan; PM Drive to Sukau Lodge

This morning, we will revisit the Rainforest Discovery Centre, undoubtedly finding many birds not seen the day before. After lunch we will make our way to the Kinabatangan River, and our accommodation at the award-winning Sukau Rainforest Lodge. Depending on scheduling we may make an early evening stop at the Gomantong Caves Forest Reserve. These enormous limestone caverns harbour a variety of

aerodramus Swiftlets (Black-nest, White-nest & Mossy-nest) as well as Plume-toed Swiftlet, in addition to an estimated 2 million bats (several varieties). Watching the bats emerge on dusk, in formation, attempting to evade Bat Hawks, Peregrine Falcons and Rufous-bellied Eagles gathered at the entrance is one of those epic and unforgettable nature spectacles.

NIGHT: Sukau Rainforest Lodge, Sabah

March 24 - 25, Days 13-14: Kinabatangan River Area

We will have two full days to explore the forests along the river, where we may encounter such specialties as Cinnamon-headed Pigeon and other green-pigeons, Crimson-winged Woodpecker, Malaysian Blue Flycatcher, and Copper-throated Sunbird, among many other birds. Nearby, a very attractive forest-lined oxbow lake may harbor the globally endangered Storm's Stork, Purple Heron, perhaps a raptor or two, and the huge and impressive Rhinoceros Hornbill.



The fabulous Rhinoceros Hornbill is often observed on the Kinabatangan River. Photo: Scott Baker

We will slip quietly by boat into a forest-lined creek that fringes the Kinabatangan, Sabah's largest river. Here we will search for such specialties as Lesser Fish-Eagle; the very handsome Black-and-red Broadbill; possibly the uncommon, White-crowned Hornbill; Diard's Trogon; Blue-eared and Stork-billed kingfishers; Wrinkled, Oriental Pied and Black hornbills; Hooded Pitta; and White-necked Babbler. This is also a superb area for Proboscis Monkeys and two species of macaques, as well as otters and Bearded Pigs. In addition, we have had some luck in recent years with the near-mythical Bornean Ground-Cuckoo, a huge

but very shy bird. As the day heats up and bird activity decreases, we'll return to our lodge to relax and take a *siesta*.

In the late afternoon we will again work the main river, which can be excellent for hornbills and hopefully bathing herds of Bornean Pygmy Elephants, as well as birds like Bat Hawk, Blue-throated Bee-eater, Dollarbird and many others. On one of our evenings at Sukau, we will take a night cruise on the river for a chance to spot some of the nocturnal prowlers, saltwater crocodiles and perhaps even some birds on their night roosts.

NIGHTS: Sukau Rainforest Lodge, Sabah

March 26, Day 15 Drive to Lahad Datu, transfer to Danum Valley

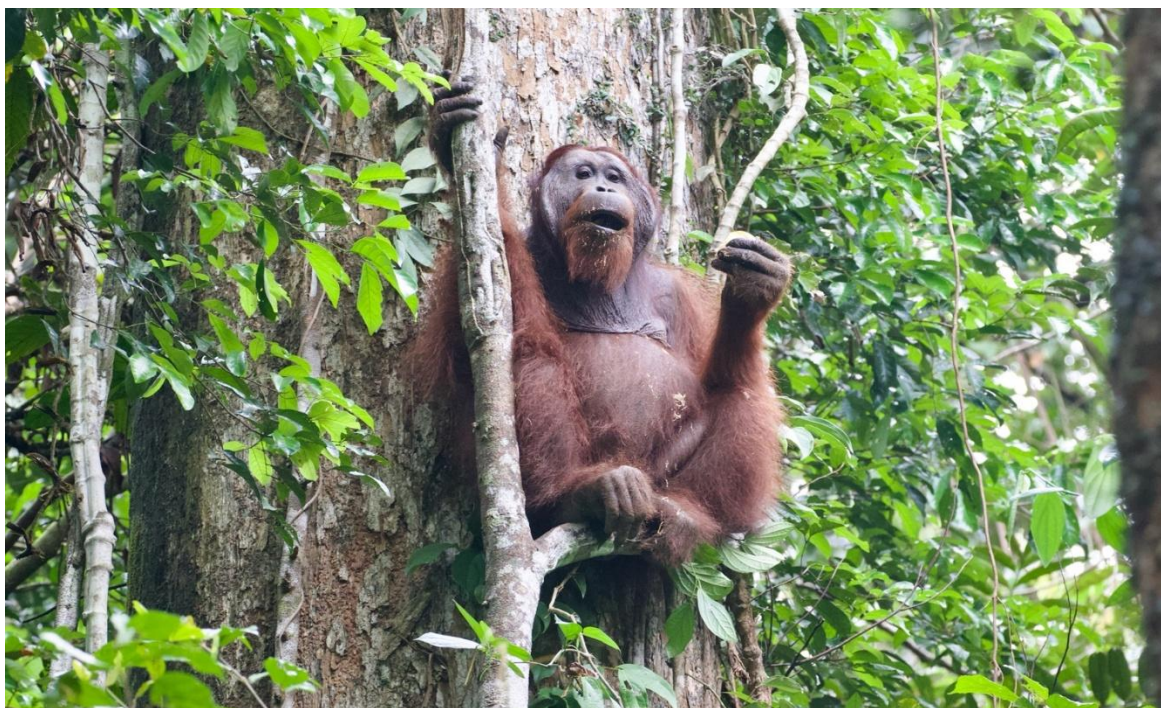
This morning, we will pack up early and leave Sukau. We will drive two hours Mt. Silam Blue-banded Pitta hide for a full day of birding with lunch and dinner at a local restaurant. We must be on the lookout for Bornean Pygmy Elephants, and we will make stops for any interesting bird species crossing our paths. After lunch we will walk one of the many interesting trails in search of the colorful birds in this millions of years old rainforest.

NIGHT: My Inn Hotel, Lahad Datu, Sabah

March 27 - 29, Day 16-18: Danum Valley

The Danum Valley is a vast area of rolling lowland rainforest set aside as a reserve by the Sabah Foundation. Some of the forest is old growth (famous for its towering trees), while along the entry road to the area are selectively logged and secondary forests. All combine to make an incredible mélange of habitats that protect the full spectrum of Bornean lowland species, including a healthy population of Bornean Orangutans (we have a very good chance of seeing these spectacular primates here). The lodge itself is perhaps the finest in all Southeast Asia and the setting along the Danum River is undeniably gorgeous. There is an extensive system of trails giving access to the forest interior, a wonderful canopy walkway with observation towers, and lots of activity in general around the lodge and access road. We will bird all of these habitats by day and will also have the chance to make night drives where anything

could turn up. Civets and giant flying squirrels are the most likely, but who knows? We may get lucky and encounter Bornean Pygmy Elephants or even the enigmatic Bornean Clouded Leopard (closest living relative to the extinct Saber-toothed Tiger). Around the lodge lights, we may find a grazing Sambar Deer or even the impressive Buffy Fish-Owl or Brown Wood-Owl.



Bornean Orangutan is undoubtedly one of the star attractions of the Danum Valley. Photo: Scott Baker

We will have three full days in which to explore these magnificent lowland dipterocarp forests. Some of the birds possible include Crested Fireback (a stunning pheasant); Great Argus; Bat Hawk; Crested Goshawk; Pink-necked Pigeon, Thick-billed Pigeon, and Little Green-Pigeon; Moustached and Malaysian hawk-cuckoos; Violet and Banded Bay cuckoos; five species of malkohas; Diard's, Scarlet-rumped and Red-naped trogons – all spectacular but elusive; Rufous-backed Dwarf-Kingfisher, Banded and Rufous-collared kingfishers – all deep forest dwellers; Red-bearded Bee-eater; White-crowned (elusive), Wreathed, Black, Rhinoceros and Helmeted hornbills (surely one of the greatest of Oriental birding spectacles); Red-throated, Blue-eared, Yellow-crowned and Brown barbets; Rufous Piculet; Banded, Crimson-winged, Olive-backed (rare), White-bellied, Buff-rumped, Buff-necked, Maroon, and Orange-backed woodpeckers; White-fronted Falconet; Blue-rumped Parrot; Blue-crowned Hanging-Parrot; Blue-headed and Black-crowned pittas (two of the most beautiful members of this notoriously difficult family); Banded, Green, Black-and-yellow and Dusky broadbills; Fiery and Scarlet minivets; Spectacled, Hairy-

backed, Cream-vented, Buff-vented, Streaked and perhaps Finsch's bulbuls; Greater Racket-tailed Drongo; Ventriloquial Oriole; Black-capped, Short-tailed, White-chested, Ferruginous, Horsfield's, Moustached, Sooty-capped, Gray-headed, Black-throated and Chestnut-winged babblers; Striped and Black-throated wren-babblers (wonderful songsters that are sometimes remarkably confiding but at other times are the very devil to find and see); Asian Fairy-bluebird; Crested Jayshrike (shy); Bornean Black Magpie; Sunda Flycatcher and Bornean Blue Flycatchers; Gray-chested Jungle-Flycatcher; Common Hill Myna; Red-throated and Crimson sunbirds; Little, Bornean, Yellow-eared, Purple-naped, and Long-billed spiderhunters (they rarely eat spiders); Scarlet-backed, Yellow-rumped, Yellow-breasted, and Orange-bellied flower peckers; and the endemic Dusky Munia.

We will also make a special effort to find some of Borneo's most elusive specialties, such as Wallace's Hawk-Eagle; Chestnut-necklaced Partridge; the spectacular endemic Bornean Ground-Cuckoo; Oriental Bay-Owl; Large Frogmouth; Giant Pitta (extremely elusive); Blue-banded Pitta (a tough bird to find, but without a doubt one of the real jewels of the Orient); Bornean Wren-Babbler; and the incomparable Bornean Bristlehead.

NIGHTS: Borneo Rainforest Lodge, Danum Valley

March 30, Day 19: Fly to Kota Kinabalu

Sadly, this morning we will take our leave of the Borneo Rainforest Lodge to drive and bird our way back to the coastal town of Lahad Datu, where we will take a late afternoon flight back to Kota Kinabalu for our farewell dinner.

NIGHT: Shangri-La Tanjung Aru, Kota Kinabalu

March 31, Day 20: International Flights for Home

Participants may schedule their flights home from Kota Kinabalu at any time today. Check-out time from the hotel is noon.

ESSENTIAL TOUR INFORMATION

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 8 participants.

TOUR LEADER: Scott Baker with the assistance of local guides



Scott Baker's interest in wildlife began early on while growing up in the leafy, outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne which, although a highly urbanized environment, retained significant tracts of remnant natural woodland. It was here at the age of 11 that he got his first pair of binoculars and began what was to become a lifetime quest to identify all the birds in an ever-expanding neighborhood. By the age of 15 he was running weekly bird walks and talks and became a founding member of the very successful Yarran Dheran Junior

Field Naturalists Club. In 1988 he was named the Nunawading Young Citizen of the Year in recognition of his contribution to natural history and conservation. Pursuing mutual interests in life science and fine art, Scott went on to hold various roles in business, education, and environmental consultancy. This has facilitated opportunities to explore the wild places and wildlife of Australia and beyond. In 30 plus years he has travelled extensively throughout the continent with a major focus on birds. He loves the rare and sometimes challenging, cryptic varieties but also shorebirds and seabirds, having spent many days at sea. To date he has recorded (and photographed) almost all of the regular and resident land birds and pelagic species likely in the country. Scott has a passion for wildlife, not just birds, and conducts studies and regular surveys for mammals, reptiles, and frogs. His fieldwork will often involve additional nocturnal spotlighting sessions, requiring late nights and early mornings to maximize the “tetrapod” options, when possible. Scott is a well-regarded member of the Australian birding community, a moderator on several birdwatching forums and rare bird committees, and, since 2017, has run birdwatching and nature tours within Australia and parts of southeast Asia. He currently resides in Victoria but frequently interstates or abroad.

TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION:

TOUR FEE: The fee for the tour is **\$18,125.** per person in double occupancy from Kota Kinabalu. **\$19,825** for a person requiring single accommodation. This includes all meals beginning with dinner on Day 3 to breakfast on Day 20, lodging during the tour, all internal ground, water and air transportation during the tour, and guide services provided by the tour leader/s. The tour fee does not include round trip flights to

Kota Kinabalu, airport departure taxes, gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small party supplement may have to be charged.

REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT: You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The initial deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. At 180 days VENT will collect a second deposit that brings the total deposit amount to 40% of the tour price. We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (November 12, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TIPPING: An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support

staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are not included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and not sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

CURRENCY & MONEY MATTERS: Malaysian Ringgit (MYR). The Ringgit is often referred to as the Malaysian Dollar. Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express are widely accepted throughout Malaysia.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:

CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:** A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:** No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:** Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

CANCELLATION BY VENT:

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant with a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement.

A “**Force Majeure**” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are

required to obtain it through another provider. Please read the remainder of this section for additional information.

SUGGESTED OPTIONS: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a "Cancel for Any Reason" benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour

fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

About Medjet’s MedjetAssist Plan

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company’s primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

AIR TRAVEL: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air

arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.

*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

BAGGAGE: Please limit your luggage to one medium-sized roller duffel or soft-sided suitcase, or two small duffels. Dress is informal throughout and most people find that they have brought too much, especially since laundry can be done at a reasonable cost at all of the lodges at which we spend more than one night. Extra bags not needed on the tour may be stored at the Hyatt Centric Kota Kinabalu, Kota Kinabalu. As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars (always), a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications, and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag.

The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your airline to find out specific weight restrictions. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

PASSPORTS: A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure date is required for United States citizens to enter Borneo. **If it is not valid throughout this period, you need to get it renewed. You will also want to make sure that you have at least one blank page in your passport for stamps.**

Effective December 1, 2023, all foreign travelers entering Malaysia are required to complete the Malaysia Digital Arrival Card at <https://imigresen-online.imi.gov.my/mdac/main>. This is an online pre-arrival form that must be submitted within three days prior to arrival in Malaysia. U.S. citizens with permanent residence status in Malaysia are exempt from this requirement.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING: Remember that dark-browns, dark-blues and dark greens are less likely to startle birds and mammals and are the preferred colors for rainforest birding. **PLEASE, no bright colors or loud, crackling plastics.** Bring light-weight and predominantly cotton or new synthetic field clothing that dries easily; a warm sweater or jacket for our mornings on Kinabalu and perhaps thermal underwear to sleep in; a hat with a good brim to keep the sun off while you are seated in a boat; a waterproof poncho, jacket or the like; a good, strong, dark-colored collapsible **umbrella is ESSENTIAL**; comfortable water-resistant hiking boots or hiking shoes with rugged soles – tennis shoes are NOT sufficient for this trip; and you may consider lugging rubber boots with you, as the trails can be muddy sometimes and they do help to repel leeches. Even flat trails can become slippery when wet. You should also have relatively thick socks to cushion your feet during long walks of four to five hours in the Danum Valley. It is ideal that you buy them calf-length so that you can tuck the bottoms of your trousers into them as protection against “bugs.”

SPECIAL NOTE: Leeches can be a nuisance at times, most notably in the Danum Valley, especially if there has been recent rain. While spraying your socks and trousers with insect repellent is some help, a pair of leech-socks is much more effective.

A website that sells anti-leech socks is www.mosquitohammock.com, based in Philadelphia.

EQUIPMENT: You should pack a pair of binoculars (in your carry-on baggage) that are in good condition along with a belt or day pack (good for carrying books, sunscreen, camera, etc.). Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so (**we encourage you to do so, especially if you wish to digi-scope**). Other items to bring should include a flashlight or headlamp, alarm clock, sunglasses and sunscreen lotion.

DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS

CLIMATE: Most of our time will be spent in tropical lowland and mid-montane forest. The lowlands are generally hot (90°F) and humid except during the early morning hours and at night. However, much of

our time in the lowlands will be spent in the shade of the forest. Most days we will take a siesta break in the mid-afternoon before going out again. On Mt. Kinabalu it can be quite cool and night-time temperatures can fall below 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Although this is one of the drier months in Sabah, we will almost certainly encounter some rain, especially in the afternoons and at night.

CONDITIONS: Be aware that Borneo is a geographically dynamic landscape, and even the lowlands can be hilly. Much of our time at Mount Kinabalu is spent birding the roadside. (Where practical) we drive to a higher point and work our way down the slope but keeping in mind that sometimes the road is closed to car traffic and is not guaranteed that we have this option. The trails throughout, including the Borneo Rainforest Lodge in the Danum Valley are generally very good; however, we may, at times, need to negotiate short stretches of trail that could be steep or muddy – and these are always optional. One of the most challenging aspects of tropical birding is humidity, is definitely something to be aware of, it affects everyone differently. Our itinerary, typically, requires early morning starts and 4-5 hours in the field, at a gentle, comfortable ‘birdwatching pace’.

CURRENCY: Malaysian Ringgit (MYR). The Ringgit is often referred to as the Malaysian Dollar. Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express are widely accepted throughout Malaysia.

ELECTRICITY: 220 volts, 50 cycles

LANGUAGE: Malaysian, English, Hindi and Chinese

TIME: 12½ to 13 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time

INTERNET: Complimentary internet/Wi-Fi is available in rooms at the Hyatt Centric Kota Kinabalu, Kota Kinabalu. It is also available at Sepilok Nature Resort (in the restaurant); at Sukau Rainforest Lodge (in Gecko Lounge and Gomantong Hall) and Borneo Rainforest Lodge (in the main lodge). Please note that service can be inconsistent.

LAUNDRY: Laundry services are available on a 24-hour basis at all the places where we stay more than one night and are generally reliable and fairly inexpensive.

HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH: Kota Kinabalu and other major Malaysian cities are generally free from most diseases associated with the Far East. Tap water from the municipal water systems is considered safe. In smaller towns and

rural areas, assume the water is unsafe and stick with bottled or boiled drinks. Bottled water is widely available, and we will carry a supply with us in the vehicle. Sanitation throughout Malaysia is very good compared to most tropical areas of the world. Most hot, freshly cooked food is safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating and make sure meat is cooked thoroughly. Be sure to bring all necessary prescription drugs, as well as aspirin, antacids, and a supply of antihistamines should you develop a cold.

Insects such as mosquitoes, sand-flies and leeches can be a problem very locally. This is best dealt with by wearing long-sleeved shirts of sufficient thickness and density of weave that the “bugs” cannot bite through, and long trousers tucked into long socks. We also recommend *CUTTER LOTION* in the squeeze bottle or pump-style *OFF!* or a similar insect repellant.

VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up to date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over the counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance for avoiding COVID-19.

INSECT REPELLENTS: There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- **DEET** (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- **Picaridin**: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- **Herbal insect repellents**: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- **Permanone® (Permethrin)** is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for **pre-treatment** of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.
- **Insect Shield® apparel**: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-

hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at www.cdc.gov/travel. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html (click on travel health).

SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

Myers, S. *A Field Guide to the Birds of Borneo: Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei and Kalimantan*. London: New Holland Publishers, 2009. **Perhaps the best choice of field guides, as it is compact and easily carried in the field, plus it has excellent plates (but less text than the next).**

Phillipps, Q & K. *Phillipps' Field Guide to the Birds of Borneo*. Princeton University Press, 2014 (Third Edition). **Packed with interesting ecological and location information in addition to being a good field guide. A good choice but a bit heavier to carry in the field.**

FIELD GUIDES TO OTHER SUBJECTS:

Otsuka, K. *A Field Guide to Butterflies of Borneo and South-east Asia*. Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia: Hornbill Books, 2001. A fine photographic guide to the 200 most commonly encountered butterflies in Borneo.

Payne, J. et al. *The Mammals of Borneo*. Kuala Lumpur: The Sabah Society with the W.W.F., 1985. **This is a superb field guide and one we heartily recommend, especially as we typically see 30-35 species of mammals on our Borneo tour.**

Additional Reading Material:

Alexander, J, Eliot, J. and D. Gardner. *Footprint Borneo*. Bristol, UK: Footprint Books, 2006.

Beebe, W. *Pheasant Jungles*. New York, 1927. A wonderful account of this naturalist's travels collecting data for this fine book on the pheasants.

Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. Melbourne, Australia: Lonely Planet, most recent addition. An excellent introductory guide to this fascinating region.

Caulfield, C. *In the Rainforest*. London: Heinemann, 1984. An exceptionally accurate and insightful account of who is doing what to our rainforests—and the repercussions.

Chapman, F.S. *The Jungle is Neutral*. London: Corgi books, 1949. The classic on jungle warfare during World War II in Malaysia.

Earl of Cranbrook (editor). *Malaysia*. Key Environment Series. Oxford: Pergamon Press in collaboration with I.U.C.N., 1986.

Fauconnier, H. *The Soul of Malaya*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965. A powerful invocation of the seduction of Malaysia.

Hoi-Sen, . *Malaysian Butterflies: An Introduction*. Kuala Lumpur: Tropical Press, 1987.

Hoi-Sen, Y. *Magnificent Plants*. Malaysia: Tropical Press, 1981.

Luping, D.M., Wen, C.L. and E.R. Dingley (editors). *Kinabalu Summit of Borneo*. Sabah Society Monograph. Kota Kinabalu: Sabah Society, 1978. A superb, detailed account of the Kinabalu National Park.

MacKinnon, J. *Field Guide to the Birds of Borneo, Sumatra, Java and Bali*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

MacKinnon, J. *In Search of the Red Ape*. London: Collins, 1974.

McNeely, J. and P. S. Wachtel. *Soul of the Tiger*, 1988. An exceptional book, quite unlike anything else written. Put together by two international conservationists who know the people and nature of the Orient as well as any.

Polunin, I. *Plants and Flowers of Malaysia*. Singapore: Times Editions, 1988.

Richards, P.W. *The Tropical Rain Forest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Rubeli, K. *Tropical Rain Forest in South-East Asia: A Pictorial Journey*. Malaysia: Tropical Press, 1987.

Ryan, N.J. *A History of Malaysia and Singapore*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Smythies, B.E. and G.W.H. Davison *The Birds of Borneo*. Kota Kinabalu: Natural History Publications (Borneo), 1999. This superb book is really too heavy to carry on the tour; however, it is an essential read for anyone with an interest in Bornean birds. This majorly revised edition is a huge improvement over the previous edition and contains a great deal of interesting information.

Wallace, A.R. *The Malay Archipelago*. Revised edition. New York: Dover Publications, 1962.

Whitmore, T.C. *Tropical Rain Forests of the Far East*. London: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Whitmore, T.C. *Palms of Malaya*. 2nd edition. Kuala Lumpur: O.U.P., 1977.

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY APPS & ONLINE RESOURCES:

eBird: Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool in promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one only need accept a shared list and it will upload to your files! **Highly recommended.**

MERLIN BIRD ID: Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate bird watchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions regarding his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer's responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin's Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app, followed by the appropriate regional "pack." For this trip, please download the pack for **Borneo**.

TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the

arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on July 21, 2026, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

BR:20270312

07/28/22-MV

07/21/26-PN/RS