

BORNEO | SABAH

Orang-utans & Bristleheads

Tue 4th – Tue 18th July 2017



(Photos, clockwise from top left): Doing exactly what is says on the tin! We saw both Orang-utan - (here at Kinabatangan)... • ...and Bornean Bristlehead (at Danum Valley)! • Red-bearded Bee-eater is always a great bird to see • Chestnut-crested Yuhina – often travelling about in noisy, good-sized parties • Another Bornean endemic, is Mountain Blackeye, this one at Timpohon Gate • Storm's Stork population is now as low as 320 birds – and we saw three! © Brian Small, Limosa

**report compiled by tour leader:
Brian Small**

BORNEO | Orang-utans & Bristleheads**Tour Leaders: Lee Kok Chung & Brian Small**

with Andy Baxter, Gary Elton, Sasha Foreman, Andrew Guest, Mike Johnson, Den Lambert, Colin Mackenzie-Grieve, Julia Mayne and Steve Vaughan

Trip Diary

What a tour! You could say that Limosa's inaugural tour to Sabah, in northern Borneo, went down a storm. With a tour subtitled 'Bristleheads & Orang-utans', Lee and I were under pressure right from the start to ensure we found both species – but you would never have guessed as it was hardly ever mentioned... There were one or two anxious moments, and these were alleviated a little when we found our first Orang-utan at Kinabatangan (though then it was pointed out it actually said 'Orang-utans – plural). However, we needn't have worried, as by the time we had left our final hotel – the superb and luxurious Borneo Rainforest Lodge ('BRL') we had finally achieved the two targets with great views of them both - plus a whole lot more!

Ultimately, and on reflection, it is hard to begin to sum up such a diverse destination, and our two-week trip encompassed everything from the montane forests of Tambunan and Mount Kinabalu to the towering lowland rainforests at Danum Valley. Besides the titular two, and under excellent guidance from Lee, we found no fewer than 40 of a likely 42 endemics to be found on our tour itinerary. The most popular ranged from the gaudy (yet secretive) Black-crowned and Blue-headed Pittas, tiny Yellow-rumped and Orange-bellied Flowerpeckers and heavily-streaked Whitehead's Spiderhunters (Thanks Sasha!), to the elusive Everett's Thrush and Bornean Wren Babbler. The endangered Storm's Stork was another major highlight – it is staggering to think its world population has declined to an estimated 300-400 individuals. Humungous hornbills – with the two Helmeted at Danum most admired, perhaps; scintillant sunbirds and brilliant barbets, especially the great views of Golden-naped Barbet at Mt Kinabalu all featured prominently amongst the numerous highlights. The two calling Mountain Serpent Eagles at Kinabalu were exciting as was the incredible encounter with the Bat Hawk one late afternoon as it flew just over the boat along the Kinabatangan River, having just seen Proboscis Monkeys and Bornean Pygmy Elephants. However, star of the show almost certainly goes to the party of Bornean Bristleheads at Danum Valley – quite superb and well worth the wait!



Mt Kinabalu with atmospheric clouds from our hotel at Pine Resort, Kinabalu © Brian Small, Limosa

Trip Diary**Tue 04/7 & Wed 05/7**

Our BA flight left pretty much on time, and a few meals, drinks and films later, we landed at Kuala Lumpur International Airport. A couple of hours waiting for our connecting flight to Kota Kinabalu was spent drinking, watching the sky and grass for a few birds – Germain's Swiftlet perhaps the most notable species – before finally boarding the plane. An imposing bank of cloud loomed large and we were glad to pull away ahead of it – as we tracked southeast the lightning that flashed through it was rather spectacular!

Arriving mid evening, we were met by Lee and transported to our hotel for the night, where check-in was all sorted and we got into our beds very smartly...not that many slept a lot with all the excitement lying ahead.

Thu 6/7

A great first full day in the field began early with a 04:30 depart from our hotel in KK. With the streets being quiet we made good time on the winding roads up to Tambunan, where we eventually stopped (just as it was getting light enough to birdwatch) by the Rafflesian Garden Centre. Of course everything was new: Pacific Swallow, Glossy Swiftlets and Little Cuckoo-doves zapped up and down the road; a Temminck's Babbler called from the bank opposite and after some coaxing eventually popped into view; the first of several active parties of Chestnut-crested Yuhinas appeared in trees by the road and just as quickly moved off; a couple of both Golden-bellied Gerygones and Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrushes moved into dense bushes and fed uncharacteristically secretively. A stunning scarlet male Temminck's Sunbird called persistently from a high treetop, with a Bornean Treepie and male Black-and-crimson Oriole close by. However, we were in 'barbet mode' and with patience managed to get good views of both the endemic specialities of Tambunan, Mountain and Bornean Barbets – species that are tough to see elsewhere.

Further along the road another busy spell started with a couple of Bornean Bulbuls, which were joined by several Sunda Cuckooshrikes, five Grey-chinned Minivets (including a couple of fiery orange males), two more Mountain Barbets and a pair of Temminck's Sunbirds. The parties of yuhinas were also joined by parties of Black-capped White-eyes but the Black-sided Flowerpeckers tended to be lone males that came and called briefly from the trees before piling off over the canopy. The final three Bornean endemics of our first walk proved more difficult to see: three Bornean Leafbirds came into the high part of a tree and one male showed well, especially the turquoise in the wing and the yellow round the mask; the two Bornean Spiderhunters were sadly much less co-operative and were only seen by a few of us. This first walk was punctuated by a couple of Dusky Munias in the seeding grasses by the road.

Back at the vehicles, before we headed off we managed to find a male and juvenile Little Pied Flycatcher in a large tree above the centre and watched them through the 'scopes. Eventually we drove to an area close to an antenna on a hill top, which produced some pretty good birding. First off, after the Ashy Drongo, was a very close male Temminck's Sunbird (time for sunglasses), but then followed by a small run of four new species in quick succession: a singing Yellow-breasted Warbler; a Mountain Leaf Warbler of the pale endemic subspecies *kinabaluensis*; two male Indigo Flycatchers – again of an interesting form that has a ochre-washed vent; and finally a Sunda Bush Warbler sat at close range and showing well – the first of several seen and heard. Walking downhill along the track yielded another Mountain Leaf Warbler as well as more Sunda Bush Warblers, but these were easily overshadowed by the two Mountain Blackeyes that came down to eye level for close looks.

Lunchtime approached so we returned to the main road for fried rice or noodles, but not before two Pale-faced Bulbuls appeared and sadly promptly disappeared – only to re-appear near the end of the meal. Finally we said farewell to the hills here and descended to the Mahua Waterfalls, stopping en route for fine White-breasted Woodswallows, where it was much hotter and the birds were not quite as co-operative. With patience we picked up an immature dark-crowned White-crowned Forktail on the rocks by the flowing water, a juvenile Orange-breasted and adult Yellow-vented Flowerpecker, several large raptors included at least one adult Blyth's Hawk Eagle, and finally two front-heavy Wreathed Hornbills flew over in perfect light. Two new species of bulbul showed well: initially a couple of Cinereous Bulbuls - with white throat, grey chest and yellow vent, then a singing Penan (Ochraceous) Bulbul puffed out its throat and sang. For us though we had put off departure long enough and finally made the last push east to the Kinabalu Pine Resort on the lower slopes of Mount Kinabalu.

With bags dropped and a quick freshen up we had a quick walk before the afternoon rains arrived, picking up many Olive-backed Sunbirds and Tree Sparrows, a Pied Fantail, and for one or two in the group a Pygmy White-eye. As the first heavy rain fell, we took this as a cue for a beer and quick wash before dinner. What a great first day; what would tomorrow bring...?

Fri 07/7

...quite a lot as it turned out! Our day started early, with breakfast before it got light – the first rays of light were just catching the clear summit of Mount Kinabalu as we left. After a relatively short 10-minute drive, through a bustling vegetable market, we arrived at the Kinabalu National Park just as it got light. Our first targets were two thrushes: Everett's Thrush is renowned for being an early morning bird, picking at leaf litter at the sides of the road in the half-flight before heading into the trees – sadly we were unlucky; Bornean Whistling Thrush, on the other hand, did us proud and showed nicely on a couple of occasions. A male Snowy-browed Flycatcher also posed for us – the colour rings on the legs showing brightly?!

A little lower down the road, and still trying for Everett's Thrush, the first vehicle had an Eyebrowed Jungle Flycatcher (now sometimes called 'Bornean Shade-dweller', as it is not a jungle flycatcher at all), but the whole group saw – after a bit of work – two more endemics, Mountain Wren Babbler and Bornean Stubtail. The first species, actually two calling birds, showed really well in the deep undergrowth by the road – eventually coming closer; the second called almost inaudibly until Gary tracked it down to an eye-level perch allowing 'scope views. Absolutely superb and for one of the leaders a dream bird!

At a nearby spot, on a slope just above the road, Crimson-headed Partridges called, but try as we might initially we could not get them to come closer. As we waited and pondered on things a small group of yellow Bornean Whistlers appeared and showed well with a White-throated Fantail and several Black-capped White-eyes. Later we were lucky to actually see the Crimson-headed Partridges well on the same slope – where we could appreciate why they are called 'Bloodhead' in some books. Close by, looking down the slope we also had brief but good looks - if you were in the right spot – at Red-breasted Partridge – another endemic. Finally a group of six Mountain Blackeyes came in high up in the canopy, before leaving pretty smartly – the birds not us!

Moving a little higher up the road, we managed to see a party of perhaps five Bornean Green Magpies, plus both Sunda and Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrushes. As the sun began to catch the trees and warm the air, another small flock containing White-throated Fantails and a pair of Blyth's Shrike-babblers was discovered. As we watched, a Sunda Cuckoo began to call its hoopoe-like three notes and then was found high in the treetops and with a bit of manoeuvring seen well. Distantly, through the trees, a strange almost junglefowl-like call could be heard and Lee called it as Mountain Serpent Eagle and suggested we tried to see them by driving to the lookout. Jumping in the vans we did just this and found two birds close together initially, but soon peeling apart and going their separate ways getting closer as they did so. Ace! The decision to go to the lookout was a good one as it gave excellent views of Mt Kinabalu, the sun shining on the huge, smooth granite inselberg, plus we could check out the swiftlets from above – one of which was most distinctly green and we felt confident it was a Bornean Swiftlet. Our final good birds here, found by Julia, were two Golden-naped Barbets close to the viewing area and showing well in the sun – another endemic.

Driving lower, we then had a walk of two kilometres, that was classic rainforest birding (ie, very quiet), past the reserve centre, where we got good views of Black-sided Flowerpeckers, Ochraceous Bulbuls and Bornean Treepies. However, the last birding before lunch produced good views of a flock found high in the canopy. We watched this group carefully and new birds slowly appeared: noisy Bare-headed Laughingthrushes; Hair-crested Drongos – a split waiting to happen (as 'Bornean Spangled'); two of both Chequer-throated Yellownape and Velvet-fronted Nuthatch; and finally a golden-bellied Cream-coloured Giant Squirrel. Lunch was much appreciated as was a brief siesta back at the hotel, when a male Orange-bellied Flowerpecker was seen.

The afternoon's birding was very much in contrast to the morning's, with heavy rain and resulting difficult birding. We tried hard and were patient allowing us to have about an hour in which we saw Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrikes along with Grey-chinned Minivets; Mountain Leaf Warblers with Black-capped White-eyes; good views of Sunda Laughingthrush and another Hair-crested Drongo; two Mountain Imperial Pigeons flew over. Just as we were about to give up a Bornean [White-browed] Shortwing started to sing – very different in voice to peninsular Malaysian birds – but sadly did not show and so we called it a day as the rain came down in sheets.

Sat 08/7

After the rain the day dawned fine, but cooler and very humid, with the silhouetted summit of Mt Kinabalu again clear of cloud – a large hulk against a star-studded sky. Our early breakfast meant we could be along the road onto the lower slopes inside Kinabalu NP at first light: parking up we began to walk (puffing a little) up a steep section. The first birds were two Eyebrowed Jungle Flycatchers, seemingly an adult and a youngster: the adult was notable for a more prominent white blob in front of the eye and narrow white arch over the eye; the juvenile had a more subdued supercilium, but was marked above with neat pale shaft streaks on the crown and mantle, plus small spots on the coverts.

As we continued, Bornean Ground Squirrels scurried to-and-fro across the road, causing mild panic each time they did, but as we rounded a bend movement on the road this time was a thrush. For those with quick enough 'binoculars action' it was an Everett's Thrush, but was up and away for those not in the right place or too slow... We backed off and stood and waited, hoping it might come back out, but one member of the group, Sasha, was looking the other way and very quietly asked, "Is this a spiderhunter with a long curved bill?", or words to that effect. Well this caused more panic than a Bornean Ground Squirrel and we were soon watching a dark and streaky Whitehead's Spiderhunter – fantastic! The yellow rump and vent were obvious through the 'scopes as it

probed flowers on the tree, but it suddenly popped up out of sight and was not seen again.

Not to be outdone, we then turned our minds back to the thrush and over the next 30 minutes most of the group managed to get views of this amazingly skulking bird, either perched or on the leaf litter. Most views were brief, but you could see the pale olive-grey upperparts and orange underparts, plus quite large bill. After a while it became more elusive and then invisible, so we left it alone.



One of two Golden-naped Barbets and a female Little Pied Flycatcher at Timpohon gate © Brian Small, Limosa

It was time to head off to a new area of the park, so we drove to the Timpohon Gate at c. 1900m and parked up. Immediately, right above the road, we found a female Bornean Birdwing, flickering its wings as it perched on leaves and twigs, before we headed through the gates to view some fruiting shrubs and flowering trees. The latter had a good party of Mountain Blackeyes, the former a very showy Golden-naped Barbet. As we stood and waited various species came and went: a diminutive female Little Pied Flycatcher; a couple of Sunda Bush Warblers; parties of Black-capped White-eyes and Chestnut-crested Yuhinas and a pair of Temminck's Sunbirds. From the viewing platform at the gate we studied the swiftlets carefully again as they passed close to us and all those we watched were Bornean Swiftlets, glossed distinctly green above – almost dull olive-green in fact, plus we felt they were smaller and had a darker and more restricted throat/upperbreast patch...or at least we thought we felt they did...

Mid morning we descended the road, stopping again at c. 2 km from the gate, from which we had a fair walk down the hill in the hope that we might find our two main target species. Apart from the usual culprits – Black-capped White-eyes, Bornean Whistler and Black-sided Flowerpeckers – we saw little, until a largish, thrush-sized bird flew into a high tree and perched openly for a few seconds. The leaders' bins were up and Lee called "Fruithunter!" at which more panic set in. The bird flew almost immediately, but did reappear for a lucky few in the group before dropping down and out of view. Wow!

Sadly, this was the only real moment of joy as we took the largely birdless Silau Silau trail up to Bukit Burung; though a close encounter with a Bornean Shortwing was nice after that we really struggled. Sometimes forest birding is like this and it was clearly not our morning. We had had enough and went back for lunch at the same spot as yesterday, before returning to the hotel for another check for Pygmy White-eye, which was successful this time as we strolled about the grounds – foregoing a siesta. And that was basically that for the day, as although we ascended back into the park for the afternoon, by the time we had started birding the rain began to fall and after 30 minutes or so waiting in a shelter, we called it a day.

Sun 09/7

Our last whole day at Mt Kinabalu dawned clear, but the high cloud veiled the rising moon and cloud threatened to build up quickly. We again birded the first two kilometres of the park, stopping in our traditional spot and walking up the hill. This morning the two Eyebrowed Jungle Flycatchers were still present, but a thrush on the road proved to be Orange-headed Thrush and was typically very skittish. Both Red-breasted and Crimson-headed Partridges called – and a couple of the former showed briefly.



A little higher we birded about the upper end of the Silau Silau trail, picking up the usual things – though Andy had an Emerald Dove fly over and a Maroon Woodpecker called, we also had our best views of Bornean Spangled Drongo, showing its red eye nicely. As we watched a large trogon flew over and deep into the trees never to be seen again – despite our best efforts this was to prove to be the closest we got to seeing Whitehead's Trogon. Three Bornean Green Magpies showed really well on the road – their bright plumage only slightly blighted by the colour rings on their legs. Our final throw of the dice was well worth it as we walked along a rocky stream for c. 400metres and eventually got good views of two displaying Bornean Forktails – superb!

After a quick pit stop back at the hotel we set off for Poring Hot Spring at c. 10:00hrs, descending to a different habitat and much warmer temperatures. We had not got far before two Long-tailed Shrikes and a Striated Grassbird were found on roadside wires. En route we took in a fine *Rafflesia keithii* flowering at a roadside 'botanical garden' and were lucky to have a brief talk about the plant by David. Here too were several butterflies and we got views of our first Yellow-vented Bulbuls and more Dusky Munias. Arriving at Poring we took a very enjoyable lunch before entering the grounds of the park.

After about an hour we had walked little more than 100 metres, such was the onslaught of new species! A small fruiting bush and nearby tree acted as a magnet for many bulbuls and others and we stood and watched for some time. Our bulbul fest included Black-headed, Spectacled, Buff-vented, Streaked, Puff-backed, Grey-cheeked and Olive-winged (to name a few), but we also got many Everett's White-eyes, Greater and Lesser Green Leafbirds, Golden-whiskered (Gold-faced), Red-throated and Blue-eared Barbets, Little Green Pigeon and Dark-throated Oriole. Just metres away in a couple of large clumps of bamboo Lee found Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher, a nest-building pair of Pied Fantails, Chestnut-breasted Malkoha and Yellow-bellied Warblers. All the while, overhead Silver-rumped Spinetails were mixed in amongst the swiftlets. Finally, as we decided to walk away as we had seen all there was to see, Steve picked out one of the star birds of the trip – a fine Red-bearded Bee-eater that proceeded to catch an enormous Carpenter Bee and eat it - after a bit of an effort!

Up past the springs and bathing pools themselves (where we were notably over-dressed!) we finally picked up our first broadbill – a comical Black-and-yellow Broadbill just above our heads. A high flowering tree was busy with leafbirds and Yellow-vented Flowerpeckers, plus a high-flying Violet Cuckoo that Lee called in with his tape. The last species eventually came close and showed brilliantly, but most were still transfixed by the broadbill. A further short walk before the heavens opened produced richly coloured Grey-headed Babblers showing well in the sun and an Asian Fairy-bluebird high in a fruiting tree. The rain fell heavily for the rest of the day and we arrived back at the hotel buzzing after a superb afternoon.

Mon 10/7

Before departing, once more we tried for the two possible endemic species left for us on Mt Kinabalu, with two hours along the road and trails searching really hard but to no avail. We saw Bornean Spiderhunter really well, plus lots of great Yellow-breasted and Mountain Leaf Warblers, Bornean Whistler, Grey-throated babblers, etc., but left empty handed as far as the trogon and broadbill were concerned. Hey ho!

And so we left Mt Kinabalu heading south and east to Sepilok, via lunch at Telupid, arriving at our hotel at 14:30hrs. The rest of the afternoon was spent about the hotel grounds and at the Rainforest Development Centre seeing a whole array of new and exciting birds. The first were a couple of Black Hornbills, then some fine

male Crimson Sunbirds – we left the swiftlets unidentified as they are very difficult away from the nesting sites. It was very hot in the mid-afternoon sun and a short walk about the hotel found Little Spiderhunter, (not so) local race of Yellow-bellied Prinia, Scarlet-backed Flowerpeckers, Pied Fantails and Blue-throated Bee-eaters.

Moving on to the RDC, we spent a very enjoyable couple of hours about the lake and forest. First up by the lake was an Oriental Darter followed quickly by a pale immature Wallace's Hawk Eagle – we got views of an adult later; over the water were many Silver-rumped Spinetails and a Blue-eared Kingfisher zapped across the surface. Into the trees and Lee heard a Rufous-backed Dwarf Kingfisher and with a bit of patience it eventually perched for stunning views of this black-winged variant. Overhead we picked up a lovely group of Fiery Minivets, before another kingfisher was heard to call – this time Rufous-collared and again Lee produced the goods when a spotted female sat openly for us to admire. Sadly the calling Black-crowned Pitta remained a 'heard only'. Finally a noisy group of Bushy-crested Hornbills flew in and the adult Wallace's Hawk Eagle called an end to our walk. On the stroll back to the vehicles we got some fine views of Blue-throated Bee-eaters. Our day was not quite done and after the evening meal we set out for a bit of owling about the grounds. The very close Oriental Bay Owl called from a nearby but dense clump of bamboo, but remained unseen – as did everything else actually, so we called it a day!

Tue 11/7

Breaking with tradition, we had a pre-breakfast visit on a hot and humid morning to the RDC. As we pulled in we had great views of a Rhinoceros Hornbill in a distant tree with three Common Hill Mynas, whilst in the low bushes we saw our first Copper-throated Sunbirds. Up to ten Pink-necked Green Pigeons were also seen before we headed into the park.

Our walk along the trails and canopy walkway was interesting and we picked up our first endemic Brown Barbet, several parties of Long-tailed Parakeets as they flew over, Wallace's Hawk Eagle, five Black-winged Flycatcher-shrikes and a couple of Buff-rumped Woodpeckers that initially seemed to be heading off before coming back into a near tree. There was also the no small matter of the first Black-and-red Broadbill of the trip – more would come later and a small flock of Green loras were found in a high tree top as were more Fiery Minivets. We returned to the hotel for breakfast, during which a superb Stork-billed Kingfisher came in close, before heading off to Gomantang cave for the bats and swiftlets.



Bat Hawk that buzzed the boat on several occasions along the Kinabatangan River © Lee Kok Chung

Having parked, paid for camera permits and been shown the different types of nests for the four species of swiftlet nesting in the cave, we walked along the boardwalk to the site. The limestone cave itself has a large entrance and the floor is piled high with bat 'guano' and other creatures that crawl about... luckily you are on a walkway, but still it is not for the fainthearted. Lee showed us the four nests, with the white Edible-nest Swiftlet nests the least common, followed by Black-nest Swiftlets, Mossy-nest Swiftlets then Plume-toed Swiftlets. All the while Wrinkle-lipped Bats flew about and settled high up in the cavern; all in all it was a great experience (I think...)! In the trees about the cave we picked up Rufous-chested Flycatcher and three male Oriental Paradise Flycatchers – including two fine white birds, plus a Rufous Piculet.



Large Frogmouth and Chestnut-necklaced Partridge were both seen at Kinabatangan © Brian Small, Limosa

After a good drive, we arrived at the Kinabatangan River in a heavy rainstorm then crossed by boat and ate a late lunch at the Borneo Nature Lodge, our new home for two nights. As it was dry we took the opportunity to make our first boat ride on the river – and what a boat ride it was! First up came two smart Storm's Storks settled in trees by the river followed by Oriental Pied Hornbills and a Crested Goshawk preening in a tree. Following the flow down river, in addition to these we managed views of four more Rhinoceros Hornbills as well as Wrinkled, Black and Bushy-crested; Purple Herons flew over as did a single Great-billed Heron. However, the two real star sightings of the afternoon came as the light began to fade: taking a tributary we enjoyed a herd of at least 40 (and maybe as many as 50) Bornean Pygmy Elephants taking it in turn to bathe in the river – mainly females and their calves, whilst a lone male looked on from across the river. As we returned to camp a Grey-headed Fish Eagle was seen by the river and a party of Proboscis Monkeys sat in trees catching the last light of day, but these were easily beaten for 'awesomeness' by an amazing Bat Hawk that came across the river and buzzed the boat on several occasions! The final birding of the day took place after dinner, with Lee and Cintu picking out a calling Large Frogmouth just in the trees that fringed the camp, and very much a great end to the day.

Wed 12/7



Rhinoceros Hornbill as it powers over, wings whistling, along the Kinabatangan River © Brian Small, Limosa

The itinerary today was nice and simple and relaxing: three boat rides on the Kinabatangan River. The first took place before breakfast (although we still had a pre-breakfast-boat-ride coffee and toast) and was up a tributary almost across from the camp, a very enjoyable two hours was spent peacefully cruising along taking in the new birds as they came along. A nesting pair of Black-and-red Broadbills were first up then followed by Dollarbirds, White-chested Babblers, Little Green Pigeons and fly-over Long-tailed Parakeets. Quietly pulling into the trees, most got views of a black-headed Hooded Pitta and a Chestnut-necklaced Partridge that lurked on the leaf litter but were both very elusive. Three different babblers were seen: several White-chested that typically lurked about the vegetation close to the river; Chestnut-winged – always smart with the slate-grey head and body contrasting with the rich chestnut wings; and Bold-striped Tit-babbler. A fine sculptural Oriental Darter was seen at really close range and as we headed back we saw Raffles's Malkoha and White-fronted Falconet, but best of all was a male Scarlet-rumped Trogon amazingly picked out by Lee in the trees!

Breakfast was welcome then it was off again, this time up river and with the sun now out fully it was certainly warm. Another Storm's Stork was picked out as were a grand total of ten Lesser Adjutants. A Mugger Crocodile was found sunning itself on a sandy bank – showing its teeth well – though Little, Intermediate and Great Egrets were seen on others but not that one (for some reason...). A Wrinkled Hornbill was seen in a tree showing its yellow neck and small wrinkled casque. Up a side channel a sub-adult Rufous-bellied Hawk Eagle soared, giving a good view, an immature Crested Serpent Eagle sat quietly and we also saw a Lesser Fish Eagle to compare with the Grey-headed yesterday. Again we weeded ourselves into a viewing area to watch a leaf-littered beach and Lee called out a very fine Chestnut-necklaced Partridge – giving much better views than earlier. On our return the Lesser Fish Eagle was perched by its nest in a large tree, but our morning's birding was done.

So to the final river trip of the day. There will be no surprise as to what the star of the afternoon was, but before we even got there Lee and Cintu had managed to find us a small group of fine, but odd-looking, White-crowned Hornbills. We tracked across the river from these and there he was, at last, a splendid old male Orang-utan sat about 30 metres up right next to river. Initially he rather huffily refused to turn round and show us his face, but by the end of the afternoon we had watched him hang about, feed and then (having gone down the river and come back) make a nest right at the very top of the tree – snapping many slim branches and pulling them in about him.

Birds were not completely ignored: Blue-eared and Stork-billed Kingfishers skimmed over the river and as well as the White-crowned we saw Rhinoceros, Oriental Pied, Black, Bushy-crested and Wrinkled Hornbills. A single Crested Honey Buzzard was found and a couple of similar Wallace's Hawk Eagles, illustrating nicely how the honey buzzard imitates the plumage of the larger raptor. Later after dinner we found a weird-looking Colugo clinging to the side of a tree and then again saw the Large Frogmouth and Cintu found a roosting Malaysian Blue Flycatcher – adding to the two seen earlier in the day.

Thu 13/7

The final morning at Kinabatangan started with a pre-breakfast river trip, again following the tributary close to the lodge. Most of the species were the same as the last visit – Little Green Pigeons, Chestnut-breasted Malkohas, Stork-billed Kingfishers, etc. – but we also picked up a few new species for our list.

The first was perhaps the most surprising, a fine Ruddy Kingfisher; initially seen crossing the water, Lee guided Cintu up a narrow creek where the kingfisher eventually showed well to us all. Banded Bay Cuckoo was also new and first found as it called from trees above us before finally settling on a relatively open perch for us to view it – a little distantly but enough to see the barring below and narrow down-curved eye-stripe. A party of four flighty Buff-necked Woodpeckers eventually showed quite well, too, as did our first Banded Broadbill of the tour. The latter was very much enjoyed, with the subtle maroon or purple grey colours complemented by the strong yellow lines on the drooping scapulars. Although we had seen one fly over before, to find three White-fronted Falconets perched atop an open bare snag was very much a bonus. That was pretty much our time done at Kinabatangan – we had stayed just the right amount of time and were ready to move on, so following breakfast and transport across the river we loaded the bus and headed to Lahad Datu for lunch and registration for entry to Danum Valley.

On the small airfield we managed to pick out Eastern Cattle Egrets, White-breasted Waterhen and a lone Zebra Dove, before making the ("about") 82.4km drive to the Borneo Rainforest Lodge (BRL) at Danum Valley. En route we picked up our first dapper Whiskered Treeswifts, two Bornean Crested Firebacks and another Orang-utan at the Km 72 toilet break. After more than 2.5 hours driving from Lahad Datu we arrived at the welcoming and luxurious BRL at the end of a long day's travel. We had a brief walk along the track and managed, despite the late afternoon light, to hear and then see our first pitta at Danum Valley. A Black-crowned Pitta called its mournful 'song' close by and Lee whistled back attracting it ever closer; then there it was a little obscured at first

but then more in the open allowing good views. Far less colourful birds were seen also, including Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker, Sooty-capped Babbler, Black-headed Bulbul, Oriental Paradise Flycatcher, but for most species we would have to wait until tomorrow...

Fri 14/7

We spent all day walking the main track into the resort (not further than 2km from BRL), broken only by lunch and brief siesta. The weather was classic tropical rainforest fare – cloudy, misty, hot and very humid with some sun, but with very heavy rain late afternoon. Breakfast at dawn was accompanied by the calls of several unseen Bornean Gibbons and Rhinoceros Hornbills flying from roost.

Walking the track through the huge emergent trees rising to over 70m at times above the canopy and dense understorey meant that light was low as we began to hear and see our first new species. A Spotted Fantail whisked away by the pond, sadly only glimpsed by most, but then we began to pick out more as it lightened. Three Raffles's Malkohas, Brown Barbets, a couple of Buff-rumped Woodpeckers and even perched Blue-rumped Hanging Parrots! The Black-crowned Pitta called at the same spot as yesterday, but then Lee heard two other species close together: Blue-headed and Bornean Banded. His efforts over the next 30 minutes resulted eventually in us seeing the Blue-headed nicely but the Banded just would not show. Lee heard Bornean Black Magpies calling and we managed to get views of five as they passed through the high branches.



Double pitta! Black-crowned and Blue-headed Pittas along the main track, Danum Valley © Brian Small, Limosa

It was neck-aching work at times as many species stayed high in the uppermost branches: Greater and Lesser Green Leafbirds, barbets, Rufous-winged and Maroon-breasted Philentomas were thankfully a little lower. There was no choice but to join them and so took the canopy walkway – much to Andy's delight – hoping to get eye-level views. First up came a Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker for those at the rear, but a Bornean Banded Kingfisher for those at the front was briefly seen. A splendid Black-and-yellow Broadbill perched at really close range posing for the photographers, whilst other new species included Lesser Cuckooshrike, Dark-throated Orioles, a small party of Black-winged Flycatcher-shrikes, Green loras and several mobile bulbuls, including Streaked, Hairy-backed but were mainly Buff-vented, Red-eyed and Spectacled. It was a little quiet and so with the BRL truck waiting we ended the morning being driven back to camp.

After lunch, during which various bulbuls kept on visiting the fruiting tree by the verandah – these included the first Grey-bellied and Straw-headed - and a brief siesta, we gathered by the front of the lodge and set off on another walk...only to beat a hasty retreat as the rains began to fall. After an hour they had died down enough to carry on, but they continued to fall lightly as we walked. The first new birds appeared as first one then another Helmeted Hornbill flew into the trees above the track and preened a little after the rain. These completed our hornbill 'set' with a grand total of eight species and were a fine way to end – seriously threatened by hunting for their casques, their numbers are declining rapidly.

Our search for the bristlehead continued – were the leaders getting worried?...maybe a little... A fine Banded Broadbill was some consolation, but the Green Broadbills were more so, even if the gloomy light meant that views were less than optimal. Another group of bulbuls were picked out high in the canopy and amongst them this time were two or three Finsch's Bulbuls – our 14th species of bulbul for the trip, whilst lower we managed views of both Dark-necked and Rufous-tailed Tailorbirds. Small groups of Scaly-crowned and Sooty Babblers were found, while Brown Fulvettas were also seen and their simple five-note song heard, and a challenging pair of blue flycatchers were eventually seen well enough to conclude they were Pale Blue Flycatchers. Sadly the rain became a little heavier and the light a lot worse so at this point we returned to camp.

Later, after dinner, a few ventured out for a successful owling session, during which Lee's and Azmil's skills produced great views of both Brown Wood Owl by the camp and a superb Buffy Fish Owl perched on the volleyball posts of the staff quarters.

Sat 15/7

After the heavy rain overnight the forest was covered with atmospheric mist and low cloud, which eventually cleared. Our focused walk this morning took us along the track into camp, with fine views of an adult and an immature Wallace's Hawk Eagle perched openly on bare trees. Walking slowly and listening we still searched for the elusive species many wanted to see... a Violet Cuckoo was found as was a female Red-naped Trogon, the enormous form of a White-bellied Woodpecker was found but it scooted off quick rapidly, though a flighty Maroon Woodpecker was seen a little better near to the track. A fine, pale-eyed Large Woodshrike was also seen, our first proper views and our first Fiery Minivets for a while fed high in the canopy (where else?). We still had one or two species missing on our list and with admirable skill Lee found one of the most-wanted, when he heard the machine-gun-fire call of a Crested Jay – not really a jay at all. These are secretive birds and so it was good to get the views we did - in Borneo it is the brown-black morph with a different call (faster). He also found a couple of Short-tailed Babblers that came out onto the leaf litter by the track and showed well.



Looking puzzled, a Black-and-yellow Broadbill along the canopy walkway, Danum © Brian Small, Limosa

Reaching the start of the canopy walkway, it was decided that our best chance of Bristlehead was to take the Hornbill Trail into the forest – a muddy track (with leeches) – but one along which our chances would be higher. The first section uphill was quiet for birds, but as it leveled off and began to wind down hill we began to pick up a few good birds: a male Scarlet-rumped Trogon was smart, but the calling Bornean Wren Babblers better. The latter took some patience as they called from very dense understorey and fallen logs; slowly they came closer until two duetted side-by-side on the track in front of us – ace birds. The next was better – far better – as we found ourselves in the territory of a Bornean Banded Pitta, with another calling from a short way in the trees. Again with patience it finally appeared on the leaf litter, an absolutely amazing bird with a yellow and black head pattern, rufous back and white line on the wing, fine black bars below and deep blue tail. An easy contender for bird of the trip!

It was going to take an amazing encounter to surpass the last two species and as we descended towards the road we found just that. Lee heard some bird calling from ahead of us and thought it was Azmil playing a recording, but surely he would be too far away to us to hear? With some excitement and incredibly we realised that what we could hear were indeed Bristleheads and not far off. Once again Lee's amazing eyesight found them above us, and we watched in pure delight as a small flock of five birds fed noisily above us. The time we had spent searching – watching and listening – meant that to finally see them was a mixture of relief and joy, as we soaked up their plumage and rather weird appearance. Finally we left, but to say we were buzzing after the past hour's birding would be an understatement.

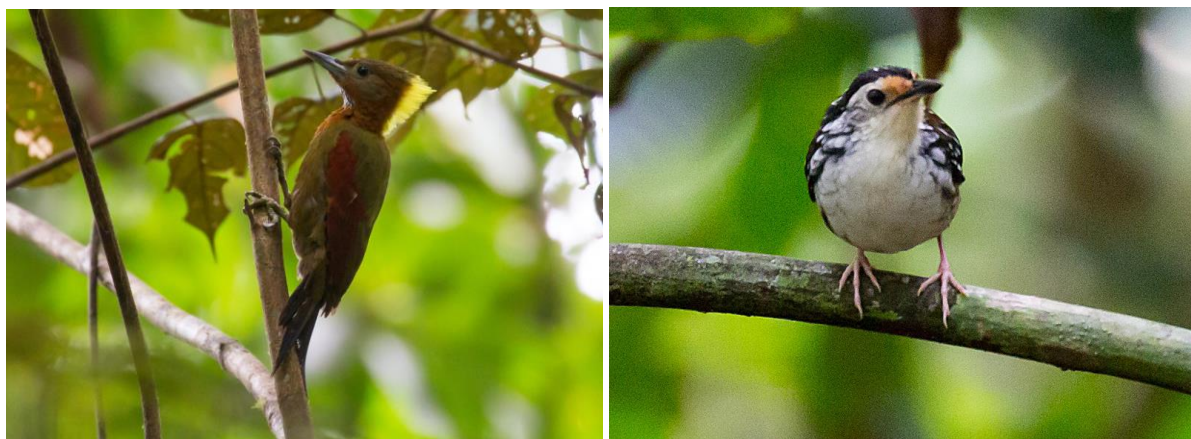
Lunch again was interrupted by some excellent 'bulbul action' with two smart species being Grey-bellied and Scaly-breasted (perhaps the neatest of all bulbuls), whilst the torrential downpour just after meant that some

could not even get to their rooms for a while. The heavy rain caused the river to swell dramatically; in waiting some were lucky to see a Great-billed Heron. It did not desist until 16:00hrs, so we had limited time for a brief walk late afternoon during which time we saw a smart pair of Red-bearded Bee-eaters, Azmil found a couple of Velvet-fronted Nuthatches and in looking at these we saw another Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker for those that had missed the last one. The pair of Pale Blue Flycatchers showed better this afternoon and we also saw Red-throated Sunbird well. After dinner we again went out, this time for a night drive. Heading out towards the gates, we first saw a Large Flying Fox licking nectar from flowers, while out near the buildings saw three species of owl in quick succession: Brown Wood, Buffy Fish and (new for us) a fine Barred Eagle Owl. Small-toothed Palm Civet and Bornean Slow Loris were seen in the trees, but the star was a lovely Malay Civet that crossed the track as we watched the owls.

Sun 16/7

Our last whole day at BRL and Danum Valley started with early mist that burned off quickly and then it was sunny, hot and very humid all day – no rain! Following breakfast we walked to the canopy walkway for a final check from the platforms, hoping perhaps for the Banded Kingfisher to re-appear or that the Bristleheads might come by. We actually saw our first new species before we had arrived, with Chestnut-rumped Babbler near the trail. At the walkway it was pretty busy and we saw Chestnut-breasted Malkoha, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Large Woodshrike, Green lora, our first Scarlet Minivets and several Dark-throated Orioles chasing about. Steve picked up a white Oriental Paradise Flycatcher below us, whilst we also found Ferruginous and Scaly-crowned Babbler. As we returned to the truck that would take us back to camp, Lee's sharp ears heard a Bornean Blue Flycatcher, and soon we had good views of a male that sang from above before it was joined by a richly coloured female – another endemic clinched for the group.

Back at BRL, some decided that they would have a more restful morning pottering about the lodge grounds while others were more adventurous and took a steep and at times tough trail up above to search for the last pitta species, Blue-banded. Underfoot the track was less muddy than yesterday's, but the leeches were more prevalent (though not too bad!) and at times we were clambering over fallen trees, however, we made it to the spot despite being diverted by two Blue-headed Pittas and a calling Diard's Trogon that did not show. Almost instantly the Blue-banded Pitta started to call from above us and patiently we waited...and waited...and waited, but the calling bird seemed to be keeping the same distance from us despite moving slightly. Eventually we realized it was a lost cause, but it was most certainly worth a go.



Chequer-throated Yellowname and Striped Wren-Babbler along the Coffin Trail © Brian Small, Limosa

On the descent, we found a few more species than on the way up: the best being the singing Striped Wren Babbler – a real stunner and another new species for the group; White-crowned Forktail, Spotted Fantail and Maroon-breasted Philentoma also showed; while the Chequer-throated Yellowname was a really smart bird and worth looking at closely. Back near to BRL we tried for Sunda Blue Flycatcher, but while Lee heard it on arrival we could not see it and made do with Rufous-winged Philentoma and a Short-tailed Babbler by the stream. Those that had stayed at camp had been entertained by a superb encounter with an Orang-utan, with one of the group taking a very interesting selfie of himself and it – we of course had to look twice to see which was which!

Following our final lunch and siesta and with the sun still shining we walked along the track for the last time in the hope of Bristleheads – Lee had reced a trail over the siesta but could not find the group. While we made a short walk together to try for the Sunda Blue after lunch, some again chose to relax back at base, so a small group checked out various spots. The best bird was the fine Black-crowned Pitta that called and showed well, but in the heat it was quiet and we called it a day early so as to prepare for our day of travel tomorrow.

Mon 17/7

After breakfast, settling bills and saying cheerio to Azmil, we set off back to Lahad Datu and our late-morning flight to Kota Kinabalu. At the airfield we saw our first Paddyfield Pipits of the tour, with several feeding on the grassy fringes to the runway, while Chestnut Munias formed small flocks and White-breasted Woodswallows sat about on wires. Our flight left on time and (as the pilot had warned) as we came into land the weather at KK was “interesting”, with the persistent heavy rain apparently the result of a typhoon that had passed into China.

We lunched locally, and mused that with Lee and David’s great organisational skills it would soon stop. Though we watched the Blue-naped Parrots, Sunda Pygmy Woodpeckers and Pied Triller in the rain it was easing and indeed it soon ceased. Amongst the houses along the shore we failed to find the Nankeen Night Herons, but a Striated Heron and Great Egret were good, as were several terns offshore – Little and Black-naped Terns fed beyond the boats, but came closer at times. Lee had another spot for the herons and so in the centre of KK we found three Nankeen Night Herons roosting in the trees of a residential area. Our final throw of the birding dice failed to produce the hoped-for Malaysian Plovers, with the tide covering the beaches, but at least some picked out the last new bird for the tour, Black-winged Kite.

Having gone full circle – it seemed a long time ago that we had arrived late on our first evening – we returned to KK airport, checked in and said our farewells and thanks to Lee. What a leader and what a trip!

I sincerely hope that you enjoyed the tour as much as I did and that we will meet again soon - at some far-flung location, maybe...

Brian Small



Ruby-cheeked Sunbird at Borneo rainforest Lodge, Danum © Brian Small, Limosa

ANNOTATED LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED (n=268)**Red-breasted [Bornean] Partridge *Arborophila hyperythra* - E**

Seen and heard on four dates on Mt Kinabalu, 7/7-10/7, often quite elusive in leaf litter beside the road

Chestnut-necklaced Partridge *Arborophila charltonii*

Having had obscured views along a tributary of the Kinabatangan River in the morning of 12/7, we managed much better views in the afternoon

Crimson-headed Partridge *Haematortyx sanguiniceps* - E

When we finally got good looks at this on Mt Kinabalu, 7/7, it was obvious why they are sometimes called 'Bloodhead'; also noted on the following three days

[Bornean] Crested Fireback *Lophura [ignita] nobilis*

Seen each day at BRL, with our first being two males on the road into the forest, 13/7; at least one male roosted near the chalets. A likely split...

Great Argus *Argusianus argus*

Heard only on two dates at BRL: once from the lodge itself and then from the Canopy walkway, 15/7 and 16/7

Storm's Stork *Ciconia stormi*

With only c. 350 individuals estimated to exist we were lucky to get such good views of three on our first boat trip along the Kinabatangan in the afternoon of 11/7; another was noted the next day

Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*

These monsters were seen well along the Kinabatangan, with ten seen on 12/7 and one the next day

Nankeen Night Heron *Nycticorax caledonicus*

We enjoyed some good views of these at their daytime roost in Kota Kinabalu, 17/7

Striated Heron *Butorides striata*

One flew right then came back again left as we checked out the terns offshore at KK, 17/7

Eastern Cattle Egret *Bubulcus coromandus*

Noted only at Lahad Datu on 13/7, with ten on the airfield

Great-billed Heron *Ardea sumatrana*

One flew along the Kinabatangan River at dusk, 11/7, then another seen on the rain-swollen river at BRL, 15/7

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

One at Kuala Lumpur – 05/7, two at Kinabatangan, 11/7

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea manilensis*

Several seen flying to roost on Kinabatangan River, 11/7 and 12/7, then more at Kota Kinabalu, 17/7

Great Egret *Ardea alba modesta*

Noted on four dates along the Kinabatangan River, then a couple at Kota Kinabalu on 17/7

Intermediate Egret *Ardea intermedia*

Just two seen on the boat ride upriver at Kinabatangan, 12/7

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Seen on three days in low numbers

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*

Singles at the Rainforest Development Centre (RDC), 10/7, then a close encounter at Kinabatangan, 12/7

Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus vociferus*

Just one seen on the last day at Kota Kinabalu, 17/7

Crested Honey Buzzard *Pernis ptilorhynchus*

Noted on three days with singles at Kinabatangan, 11/7 and 12/7; then six en route to Lahad Datu, 13/7 – the plumage mimics the larger raptors in the region. Resident populations may well be 'split' from migratory forms

Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela*

Low numbers were seen on five dates in lowland areas around palm plantations

Mountain Serpent Eagle *Spilornis kinabaluensis* - E

Having first heard two distant birds, we raced to the lookout and found them soaring about at eye level, 07/7

Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus*

One of the moments of the trip – one appeared above the boat along the river at Kinabatangan at dusk, 11/7; what a bird and against the towering rain clouds the moment was truly memorable

Blyth's Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus alboniger*

Just four singles noted on four dates, the first at Mahau Waterfall, 06/7, with others at Mt Kinabalu – 08/7, then BRL on 14/7 and 16/7

Wallace's Hawk-Eagle *Nisaetus nanus*

Slightly more numerous than the previous species, but still only noted on four dates. The first were an adult and juvenile at Sepilok – 10/7, and one of the same the next day; a couple along the Kinabatangan River 12/7 then at least two more at BRL on 15/7

Rufous-bellied Hawk-Eagle *Lophotriorchis kienerii*

Surprisingly seen fairly regularly, with up to three seen on four dates

Black Eagle *Ictinaetus malaiensis*

Up to three seen on five dates, with the highest number being three at BRL on 16/7 and the first two – an adult and immature - along the Kinabatangan 12/7

Crested Goshawk *Accipiter trivirgatus*

Low numbers on four dates, with the first views actually the best when we had two perched in river-side bushes along the Kinabatangan, 11/7

Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus*

Just one, an adult, at RDC, Sepilok, 10/7

White-bellied Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Three seen at RDC on 11/7

Lesser Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus humilis*

Singles found along the Kinabatangan – one with a nest – Then perhaps the same bird flew along the river at BRL on three different dates

Grey-headed Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus ichthyaetus*

Just one at Kinabatangan, 11/7

Little Tern *Sternula albifrons sinensis*

Four seen off Kota Kinabalu, 17/7, then a few landing on the airfield whilst we waited to catch the flight to KL

Black-naped Tern *Sterna sumatrana*

It was smart to see these feeding off KK, 17/7, with their smaller tern like structure and sandwich Tern-like pale plumage. At least three showed the almost translucent white remiges as they flew about

Feral Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Noted on three dates in larger towns

Spotted Dove *Spilopelia chinensis*

Noted on nine dates, often on roadside wires and on the ground; often over-looked and some only caught up with them on their last day...

Little Cuckoo-Dove *Macropygia ruficeps*

Seen in low numbers in the highlands, with our first at Tambunan on 06/7; often seen in rapid flight, we managed perched views of a few with their golden body colour and heavily streaked chest most notable

Common Emerald Dove *Chalcophaps indica*

Just the one seen by Andy on Mt Kinabalu, 09/7

Zebra Dove *Geopelia striata*

The three seen on 13/7 were all at Lahad Datu included one right by the road as we walked to the office for the BRL; then other there on our return on 17/7

Little Green Pigeon *Treron olax*

The first two were at least green, with two females at Poring on 09/7, but then others seen at Kinabatangan and Danum included many fine (not green) males

Pink-necked Green Pigeon *Treron vernans*

Ten were seen well at the car park for the RDC, Sepilok, 11/7, then also near the beach at KK on 17/7

Green Imperial Pigeon *Ducula aenea*

Noted on eight consecutive days from 10/7, often in flight but also some nicely perched birds notably by the river at Kinabatangan, when the green mantle and wings sometimes shone in the sun

Mountain Imperial Pigeon *Ducula badia*

Big and pale but often only seen in flight at Mt Kinabalu, 07/7-09/7

Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*

More often heard than seen at Kinabatangan on three days, with a couple of decent views from the boat; also noted at Danum Valley as we departed on 17/7

Raffles's Malkoha *Rhinortha chlorophaea*

We encountered this smart species on four days. The first, a female, was seen along the Kinabatangan, 11/7, then we saw another two (a male and a female) the next day along a tributary in the morning. Three were found at BRL on 13/7, with one the next day

Red-billed Malkoha *Zanclostomus javanicus*

Just the one was seen along a tributary of the Kinabatangan on 13/7

Chestnut-breasted Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus curvirostris*

Noted on five dates, this is a smart species to encounter and our first were three at Poring on 09/7; we then saw them at Kinabatangan and Danum

Black-bellied Malkoha *Phaenicophaeus diardi*

One was found along the main track at Danum on 15/7

Violet Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus*

A high-flying male at Poring, 09/7, was halted in its tracks by Lee, at which point it turned round and eventually flew into the bushes by the path, giving excellent views; another male was seen at Danum on 15/7

Banded Bay Cuckoo *Cacomantis sonneratii*

As we pootled along the tributary at Kinabatangan on 13/7, one was calling in bushes and coaxed out to show in flight then perched high in an open tree

Sunda Cuckoo *Cuculus Lepidus insulae*

A common call on Mt Kinabalu, we heard it on five dates, but was only seen well on 07/7; the form *insulae* ('Kinabalu Cuckoo') may well be split as its voice is subtly but distinctly different from the nominate

Oriental Bay Owl *Phodilus badius*

We got close to seeing this at Sepilok, but the one discovered by Lee and David in a bamboo clump simply would not show

Barred Eagle-Owl *Bubo sumatranus*

Our night drive at Danum produced the goods when three species of owl performed in quick succession just outside the main gate near the guards block, 15/7; this the last of them showed its bushy eyebrows nicely

Buffy Fish Owl *Ketupa ketupu*

Having missed them at Kinabatangan, it was great to catch up with this at Danum. One was seen near the staff quarters as it sat on the netball posts looking for food, 14/7, and then one was picked out on the night drive the next day

Brown Wood Owl *Strix leptogrammica*

Heard at Kinabatangan near our lodge, but seen on two evenings at Danum: near BRL on 14/7 then near the gates on the night drive, 15/7

Large Frogmouth *Batrachostomus auritus*

A truly splendid bird was found expertly by Lee and Cintu two nights running at Borneo Nature Lodge by the Kinabatangan and offered fine views – 11/7 and 12/7

Grey-rumped Treeswift *Hemiprocne longipennis*

We probably saw these earlier on in the tour, but the first confirmed views were on 09/7 at Poring and Mt Kinabalu; subsequently seen on the next two days

Whiskered Treeswift *Hemiprocne comata*

Always a smart species to see, so even though it was raining we still stopped for the first one on the drive to Danum on 13/7; over the next few days we saw more, with great views of perched views near BRL

Plume-toed Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta*

Though called as 'Glossy Swiftlet' throughout the tour, actually this has recently been split into three or four species, with those on Borneo called 'Plume-toed' on account of feathering on its rear toe... We never saw this feature but we did see them on 10 dates

Bornean Swiftlet *Collocalia dodgei* - E

Very similar to Plume-toed, but said to be more glossy green above, we only confidently identified a handful at higher altitudes on Mt Kinabalu and under optimal viewing conditions

Mossy-nest Swiftlet *Aerodramus salangana*

On confidently identified at Gomantang Cave, 11/7, where a few nests were seen. This and the next three species are probably all but identical in plumage

Black-nest Swiftlet *Aerodramus maximus*

Again spotlighted by Lee at Gomantang, where a handful of nests were seen well and at close quarters

Edible-nest Swiftlet *Aerodramus fuciphagus*

The white nests are valued very highly – at the airport at KK they were on sale for £150 for four! Sadly this has resulted in unregulated over harvesting and a decline in numbers – we saw just two nests at Gomantang, but probably some of those seen along the rivers, etc were of this species, too

Germain's Swiftlet *Aerodramus germani*

Only really noted with any confidence at KLIA, where these are very numerous

Silver-rumped Spinetail *Rhaphidura leucopygialis*

A smart, short-tailed swift with distinctly shaped wings, we first noted them at Sepilok, 09/7, but then daily over the next seven days; good views at BRL

Brown-backed Needletail *Hirundapus giganteus*

One at Sepilok seen by Steve, 11/7

House Swift *Apus nipalensis*

Compared to the swiftlets these were easy to pick out, with the first views at Tambunan on 06/7; but then on just two subsequent days, with the best numbers near the mosque in KK

Asian Palm Swift *Cypsiurus balasiensis*

Just two noted at Poring, 09/7, then two the next day

Red-naped Trogon *Harpactes kasumba*

A female showed well at Danum, 15/7

Diard's Trogon *Harpactes diardii*

Heard only along the Coffin Trail, Danum, 16/7

Scarlet-rumped Trogon *Harpactes duvaucelii*

The first bright male was found in riverside trees at Kinabatangan, 12/7; another male was seen on 15/7 just before we saw the Bornean Banded Pitta, then another the next day

Oriental Dollarbird *Eurystomus orientalis*

Recorded on three days at Kinabatangan in trees bordering the river, but the best views were gained at a service station en route to Lahad Datu, 13/7

Rufous-collared Kingfisher *Actenoides concretus*

Having heard one calling, it was really good to get close views of a female at RDC, Sepilok, 10/7

[Bornean] Banded Kingfisher *Lacedo pulchella melanops*

Quite marked plumage differences suggest this may well be a future 'split', so it was good for some to see it along the canopy walkway at Danum on 14/7

**Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis***

Seen on for dates, with some brilliant views – notably at breakfast – at Sepilok, but also at Kinabatangan

Ruddy Kingfisher *Halcyon coromanda*

One showed well close to the river at Kinabatangan on 13/7 – initially elusive it eventually sat still for some time for us to admire it

Collared Kingfisher *Todiramphus chloris*

A common roadside kingfisher along the roads through the date-oil plantations

Blue-eared Kingfisher *Alcedo meninting*

Seen mainly in flight across water, at RDC, Sepilok, 11/7, then regularly at Kinabatangan

Oriental Dwarf Kingfisher *Ceyx erithaca motleyi*

If spilt this may be called 'Rufous-backed Dwarf Kingfisher', but in Borneo it has a black back... First seen at RDC, Sepilok, 10/7, then others zapping past at Kinabatangan and Gomantang

Red-bearded Bee-eater *Nyctyornis amictus*

The first was found by Steve at Poring and showed brilliantly as it ate large black bees, 09/7; a pair was seen a couple of times along the road at Danum, 15/7 and 16/7

Blue-throated Bee-eater *Merops viridis*

Noted on seven dates: the first on 06/7 on roadside wires near Mahau, then fairly commonly en route to Poring and in other lowland area near Kinabatangan and Danum

White-crowned Hornbill *Berenicornis comatus*

Only seen on one date but it was worth it, with a handful performing in river-side trees at Kinabatangan, 12/7

Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros borneoensis*

A superb species seen on six dates and very much enjoyed on every one of them! The form on Borneo has a

'horn' that is more strongly curved than others

Helmeted Hornbill *Rhinoplax vigil*

A seriously threatened species and becoming even rarer due to heavy hunting, so we were really pleased to find a pair near BRL that perched and gave good 'scope views on 14/7

Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris*

The most common hornbill, though only noted on three dates we saw several good-sized parties, with at least 10 seen on 11/7

Black Hornbill *Anthracoceros malayanus*

First seen at Sepilok by the hotel, 10/7, then on the next six days, most notably along the Kinabatangan

Bushy-crested Hornbill *Anorrhinus galeritus*

Fair numbers in quite noisy parties on four days – from 10/7 at Sepilok to 13/7 at Kinabatangan

Wreathed Hornbill *Rhyticeros undulatus*

Our first two flew over high at Malau Waterfall, 06/7, then we waited until 15/7 for the next at Danum, when a pair sat in a tree showing the sexual dimorphism well, and 16/7, when three were seen

Wrinkled Hornbill *Rhabdotorrhinus corrugatus*

Only seen from the boat along Kinabatangan River on 11/7 and 12/7, when presumably the same two – an adult and an immature were seen at the same site on both dates

Golden-whiskered Barbet *Psilopogon chrysopogon chrysopsis*

The Bornean endemic form is sometimes treated as Gold-faced Barbet, but is generally weakly differentiated genetically and vocally. In any case we saw our first of this large and hefty billed species at Poring, 09/7, then seen and heard regularly at Danum on three dates

Red-throated Barbet *Psilopogon mystacophanos*

Seen and/or heard on six dates, its arhythmic song a good guide as to when it was about; first seen at Poring in the frenzy of barbets and bulbuls about the fruiting bushes

Mountain Barbet *Psilopogon monticola* - E

Only seen on one day, our first, at Tambunan, when three were seen on 06/7; then heard on Mt Kinabalu, where it is often difficult to find

Yellow-crowned Barbet *Psilopogon henricii*

Frustratingly heard only on all three days at Danum – looked for, but in sticking to the highest part of the canopy on the tallest trees did not help anyone's neck!

Golden-naped Barbet *Psilopogon pulcherrimus* - E

This fine endemic was seen only at My Kinabalu; our first were found by Julia in fruiting bushes close to the lookout and showed superbly in the morning sun, 07/7, then others were seen at Timpohon Gate the next day

Blue-eared Barbet *Psilopogon duvaucelii*

Noted on six days: the first again at Poring, 09/7, then regularly over the next few days

Bornean Barbet *Psilopogon eximius* - E

Like Mountain Barbet, we only saw these at Tambunan on 06/7 – they are a tough bird to find

[Bornean] Brown Barbet *Caloramphus fuliginosus* - E

Now that Brown and Sooty Barbet are split, this has become another Bornean endemic: first seen distantly from the canopy walkway at RDC, Sepilok, 11/7, we then gained better views at Kinabatangan, with up to 10 on 12/7, and Danum

Rufous Piculet *Sasia abnormis*

Our first was at Gomantang as we walked to the cave, 11/7, then also seen on three dates at Danum

Grey-and-buff Woodpecker *Hemicircus concretus*

Just the one was found on our walk at Sepilok in the afternoon of arrival, 10/7

Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus canicapillus*

Twos were found on two dates at Danum, 14/7 and 15/7, with most getting views of those that Azmil found high on a bare snag with Velvet-fronted Nuthatches

Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker *Yungipicus moluccensis*

Our extra birding at the coast, 17/7, allowed us to find three showy birds near the beach car park at KK

White-bellied Woodpecker *Dryocopus javensis*

Just the one of these large woodpeckers showed briefly at Danum on 15/7

Chequer-throated Yellownape *Chrysophlegma mentale*

When seen well it is obvious why this is better named as yellownape; two were seen by some on 07/7 at Kianbalu, but better views were gained along the Coffin Trail at Danum, 16/7

Maroon Woodpecker *Blythipicus rubiginosus*

Having been heard at Mt Kinabalu, 09/7, it was nice to actually see one at Danum on 14/7 and 15/7 – even though for most it was largely in flight

Buff-rumped Woodpecker *Meiglyptes tristis*

Heard on 09/7, but then two high-flying birds at RDC, Sepilok, were called back and landed in a nearby tree to give good views from the canopy walkway

Buff-necked Woodpecker *Meiglyptes tukki*

Our last morning's boat ride produce several new species and these included four close birds by the boat, 13/7; another was seen at Danum, 16/7

White-fronted Falconet *Microhierax latifrons* - E

This tiny falcon is an endemic and we had flight views of firstly one along a tributary at Kinabatangan River, 12/7, but three posed in a bare tree the next day near the same spot

Blue-rumped Parrot *Psittinus cyanurus*

Just two seen at Sepilok on the afternoon of 10/7

Blue-naped Parrot *Tanygnathus lucionensis*

On 17/7 we saw several noisy birds calling from the palms near the beach at KK; they showed well but it was raining a little

Long-tailed Parakeet *Psittacula longicauda*

I am not sure if we actually saw any perched birds, though parties that flew over numbered up to 15: seen at Sepilok and Kinabatangan on 11/7 and along the river the next day

Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot *Loriculus galgulus*

It took us until 14/7 to get decent views of perched birds having had views of several calling birds as they flew over at My Kinabalu and Kinabatangan

Green Broadbill *Calyptomena viridis*

Two were found by Lee at Danum, 13/7, but in the misty late afternoon light views were 'sub-optimal'

Black-and-red Broadbill *Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus*

Our first was at RDC, Sepilok, on 11/7, but the best views were along the river at Kinabatangan the next two days, when several birds posed near their hanging nests or fed at low level

Banded Broadbill *Eurylaimus javanicus*

Another stunner and we spent some time trying to describe the soft colours of their plumage. First seen along the river at Kinabatangan, 13/7, then one or two found at Danum the next couple of days

Black-and-yellow Broadbill *Eurylaimus ochromalus*

A delightful (and a little comical-looking) bird, this was our first broadbill species of the tour – one at Poring by the swimming lakes, 09/7; seen and heard at Sepilok, 11/7, then each day at Danum, with multiple sightings on 15/7, but the close encounter along the canopy walkway, 14/7 was perhaps the best

Blue-headed Pitta *Hydrornis baudii* - E

You could write "Wow!" for all of the pittas we saw! We got some good looks at this species along the main track at Danum on three dates, with one on 14/7 particularly obliging

Bornean Banded Pitta *Hydrornis schwaneri* - E

Having heard one close by along the main track, but unable to lure it out, on 14/7, for those that were fortunate enough to be along the Hornbill Trail, 15/7, had stunning views of this superb species as it circled us (and another called low down the slope). Top five, surely!

Blue-banded Pitta *Erythropitta arquata* - E

Not wow for this one as sadly we only heard it along a leech-infested trail high above BRL, 16/7 – all our efforts were not rewarded this time

Black-crowned Pitta *Erythropitta ussheri* - E

Heard at RDC – quite close at times – so it was great to eventually see one or two well along the approach road at Danum. Heard on four dates, but seen well on three, 13/7, 15/7 and 16/7

Hooded Pitta *Pitta sordida*

Though heard on three dates, it was good to get views at Kinabatangan, 12/7, on a leaf-littered beach. The black-headed resident form here differs from the migrant, chestnut-crowned form we see in Malaysia

Golden-bellied Gerygone *Gerygone sulphurea*

Seen on our first morning at Tambunan, by the road on 06/7; then two more (presumably not the same birds...) at Danum from the canopy walk on 16/7

Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus picatus*

Lively mobile flocks are typical of this species and we saw several birds feeding in mixed flocks by the road at Mt Kinabalu on 07/7 and 08/7

Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike *Hemipus hirundinaceus*

A handsome (and perhaps a little chunkier) species with similar habits, but seen in more mature rainforest. Noted on four dates – the first five at RDC from the canopy trail but also at Danum on three dates

Large Woodshrike *Tephrodornis virgatus*

A smart species, with singles seen at Danum on two dates high in the tallest trees – again...

Rufous-winged Philentoma *Philentoma pyrhoptera*

Only seen at Danum on two dates: two on 14/7 along the approach road and another (a young male) on 16/7 by the river

Maroon-breasted Philentoma *Philentoma velata*

At first glance just a charcoal- or blue-grey bird, but in good light the maroon bib really stands out: seen well at

Danum on three dates, with up to four noted on 16/7

Bornean Bristlehead *Pityriasis gymnocephala* - E

Well, what can you say about this? Top billing layered the pressure nicely and this was certainly building at Danum, but when we finally found a group of five along the Hornbill Trail, 15/7, it was certainly worth the wait. The brilliant scarlet heads, black ear spot and golden-yellow crowns stood out against the rich green foliage

White-breasted Woodswallow *Artamus leucorhynchus*

Up to ten were seen as we drove from Tambunan to Kianabalu, via Mahau, on 06/7; a few more were noted again en route or from the boat along the Kinabatangan from 10/7-13/7

Common Iora *Aegithina tiphia*

Low numbers seen on three days mostly at Kinabatangan

Green Iora *Aegithina viridissima*

Our first three were from the canopy trail at RDC, 11/7, then several more at Danum – again high in the canopy, on three dates

Sunda Cuckooshrike *Coracina larvata*

At Tambunan on our first morning we saw several feeding along the forest edge by the road – often with Grey-chinned Minivets, then the next day at Mt Kinabalu.

Bar-bellied Cuckooshrike *Coracina striata*

Found high in the tallest trees (where else?) at Danum on 15/7, but elusive

Lesser Cicadabird *Lalage fimbriata schierbrandi*

Previously treated as a *Coracina* cuckooshrike, this is actually a *Lalage* and best called 'Lesser Cicadabird'. In either case we gained good views of a pair at Danum on 14/7

Pied Triller *Lalage nigra*

A smart and barred male at the beach car park, KK, on 17/7 was much admired

Fiery Minivet *Pericrocotus igneus*

All the minivets we saw were bright red, but these are especially bright orange. Seen on four dates, with the first six at Sepilok, 10/7, and more the next morning; also seen at Danum in fair numbers. The females of these and the next two species are often the best way to tell the males apart...

Grey-chinned Minivet *Pericrocotus solaris cinereogula*

Seen well on our first morning at Tambunan, where we had a party of five, 06/7, then the next three days on Mt Kinabalu – often in flocks with sunbirds, bar-winged Flycatcher-shrikes and Black-capped White-eyes

Scarlet Minivet *Pericrocotus speciosus*

Just the pair found at the canopy walkway, Danum, in the morning of 16/7

Bornean Whistler *Pachycephala hypoxantha* - E

A nice, bright endemic and one of the easier and more regularly seen ones. Found every day in fair numbers at Mt Kinabalu, with 10 noted on 07/7

Long-tailed Shrike *Lanius schach bentet*

Noted on three dates, often just singles, but three on 11/7. The two near Kinabalu were the ones most studied and the black forehead grading into a charcoal-grey crown is distinct of the race *bentet*

Blyth's Shrike-babbler *Pteruthius aeralatus*

Seen and heard regularly from the first morning at Tambunan, then on three dates at Mt Kinabalu; males are notably smart and have a distinct and far-carrying voice

Dark-throated Oriole *Oriolus xanthonotus*

Seen well at Poring, 09/7, then even better and in good numbers at Danum, notably from the lunch table or from the canopy walkway, where several territorial males chased about on 16/7

Black-and-crimson Oriole *Oriolus cruentus*

Just the two seen at Tambunan on the first morning, 07/7 – still smart though!

Ashy Drongo *Dicrurus leucophaeus*

Also seen on our first morning at Tambunan, but then just singles on Mt Kinabalu the next two days

[Bornean Spangled] Hair-crested Drongo *Dicrurus [hottentottus] borneensis*

A 'split' waiting to happen, we saw this well on Mt Kinabalu, notably 08/7

Greater Racquet-tailed Drongo *Dicrurus paradiseus*

The distinct song of this species is always surprising coming from a drongo. Seen and heard on four dates: at RDC, Sepilok, 10/7 and 11/7, then at Danum on two dates. None had racquet tails – in American language the tails are apparently very noisy!

White-throated Fantail *Rhipidura albicollis*

Seen on five dates in the highlands, from Tambuana, 06/7, to Mt Kinabalu, 10/7

Malaysian Pied Fantail *Rhipidura javanica*

Seen almost every day at lower elevations, often in singles with mixed flocks, but most numerous at Danum

Spotted Fantail *Rhipidura perlata*

The first view at Danum, in the early light of 14/7, was brief to say the least, so to find two more along the Coffin Trail, 16/7, was good

Black-naped Monarch *Hypothymis azurea*

More often heard than seen, our first were a pair attentively feeding three young at RDC, Sepilok, on 10/7. Others were seen on three dates at Danum, with some fine males

Oriental [Blyth's] Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone affinis*

The English name is up for discussion and is likely to become Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher following a split of the 'Asian Paradise Flycatcher' complex. We saw two white male morphs together at Gomantang, 11/7, squabbling over a red female; also seen on three dates at Danum, where both white and red morph males were found

[Bornean] Crested Jay [Jay-shrike] *Platylophus [galericulatus] lemprieri*

Seen and heard at Danum on 15/7. Sorry for all the square brackets, but the taxonomic treatment of this interesting species is all rather confused. Firstly it is not a jay at all and is actually a shrike so perhaps best called 'Jay Shrike', secondly the rufous form on Borneo is distinct in voice - with the 'machine gun' call more rapid fire and the high whistle heard from those in peninsular Malaysia never heard on Borneo.

[Bornean] Black Magpie *Platysmurus [leucopterus] aterrimus*

The Black Magpies on Borneo differ from those in peninsular Malaysia in lacking white in the wing, having a different structure to the crest and a different voice... A group of five were seen well, close to BRL on 14/7

Bornean Green Magpie *Cissa jefferyi* - E

Called Short-tailed Green Magpie in the past, we very much enjoyed these noisy birds at Mt Kinabalu on four days. Often secretive, we got great views of a family feeding on the ground on 10/7

Bornean Treepie *Dendrocitta cinerascens* - E

We saw several on our first day at Tambunan, 06/7, with a party found near the antenna; then noted every day at My Kinabalu – oddly hard to get a good view of...

House Crow *Corvus splendens*

Only seen at KLIA, 05/7. In Malaysia it is an introduced species

Slender-billed Crow *Corvus enca compilator*

Perhaps better to be called 'Sunda Crow' as Slender-billed Crow *sensu lato* is likely to be broken up into four species based on vocal and mtDNA differences. We saw this regularly away from the highland region often in small groups that followed each other about the forests

Straw-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus zeylanicus*

Treated by BirdLife as Endangered due to 'relentless trapping' by the bird trade, it is thought there maybe as few as 2500 individuals left in the wild. This sorry state of affairs made the two seen near BRL on three dates – coming to a fruiting tree – even more special

Black-headed Bulbul *Pycnonotus atriceps*

A smart species found in small groups, but often quite secretive. The first were noted at the bulbul-fest at Poring, 09/7, but then seen daily at Danum

Bornean Bulbul *Pycnonotus montis* - E

Only seen at Tambunan, where four were seen on 06/7.

Scaly-breasted Bulbul *Pycnonotus squamatus*

Perhaps the smartest of all the bulbuls, we got stunning close views in the fruiting bush beside the lunch table at BRL on 15/7 and 16/7. The final and 19th species of bulbul we found

Grey-bellied Bulbul *Pycnonotus cyaniventris*

Also richly olive above – contrasting with slate-grey below – we also only saw these at Danum and again best of all by the lunch table

Puff-backed Bulbul *Pycnonotus eutilotus*

Singles found at Poring on 09/7 then at Danum on 13/7. A crested species, with rufous back

Pale-faced [Flavescent] Bulbul *Pycnonotus [flavescens] leucops* (E)

The form on Borneo *leucops* only superficially resembles Flavescent Bulbul to the north in SE Asia and is best treated as a full species when it then becomes another Bornean endemic. Only seen at Tambunan, 06/7, in bushes near the lunch stop

Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus goiavier gourdini*

Seen widely on nine dates, the group's first were at the *Rafflesia* botanical garden en route to Poring, 09/7

Olive-winged Bulbul *Pycnonotus plumosus hutzi*

First seen at Poring (of course) on 09/7, then Sepilok and Kinabatangan to Danum

Asian Red-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus brunneus*

Noted on five dates, firstly at Poring but with especially good views near the dining room at BRL

Spectacled Bulbul *Pycnonotus erythrophthalmos*

Firstly seen at Poring, then frequently encountered at Danum

Finsch's Bulbul *Alophoixus finschii*

It was nice to see this species along the main track at Danum on 14/7, when three or four performed in trees above us when the pale yellow throat stood out

Penan [Ochraceous] Bulbul *Alophoixus [ochraceus] ruficrissus* (E)

Like Pale-faced Bulbul there is a strong case for treating Penan Bulbul as a separate (endemic) species, based on morphological (it is so much more richly rufous coloured above and ventrally) and apparently genetic grounds. Seen at Mahau Waterfall and then at Mt Kinabalu each day, with especially good views on 07/7, and then one at Danum on 15/7

[Guttural] Grey-cheeked Bulbul *Alophoixus bres gutturalis*

Seen at Poring, 09/7, Gomantang, 11/7, and Danum on three dates. This is yet another bulbul with vocal, morphological and genetic differences that suggest it probably deserves specific status as Guttural Bulbul

[Sabah] Yellow-bellied Bulbul *Alophoixus phaeocephalus connectens*

Found on three dates at Danum, the form on Borneo has a pale buff throat and bright yellow underparts. Again may well be treated as a separate species in future

Hairy-backed Bulbul *Tricholestes criniger*

Seen briefly at Poring on 09/7, but then commonly and well at Danum on three days, with those visiting the fruiting bush by the meal table the best

Buff-vented Bulbul *Iole olivacea*

Commonly seen at Danum on three dates, but the first were at Poring, 09/7.

Streaked Bulbul *Ixos malaccensis*

Seen and heard frequently at Danum but also at Poring, 09/7. Remember the streaked (very slightly warm-coloured) crown and chest

Cinereous Bulbul *Hemixos cinereus*

Two in trees at Mahau waterfall on our first day

Pacific Swallow *Hirundo tahitica*

Seen daily – the only species we did – throughout the tour, with juveniles seen at many sites

Yellow-bellied Warbler *Abroscopus superciliaris*

Not really a 'warbler' as such so perhaps best called Bamboo Bush Warbler and it was amongst the bamboo that we saw two at Poring on 09/7

Mountain Tailorbird *Phyllergates cuculatus*

Singles at Tambunan (by the antenna) on 06/7 and then on Mt Kinabalu the next day

Sunda Bush Warbler *Horornis vulcanius oreophilus*

Close views of several at Tambunan, 06/7, near the antenna, then at Timponon Gate, Mt Kinabalu, on 08/7

Striated Grassbird *Megalurus palustris forbesi*

One on a roadside wire, having stopped to see Long-tailed Shrikes near Kinabalu, 09/7, was a nice surprise

Bornean Stubtail *Urosphena whiteheadi* - E

This tiny endemic has a three-note song that is almost inaudible (to older ears especially...), but showed well near the top of the Silau Silau trail on 07/7 and was again heard there on 09/7. Small but beautifully formed

Mountain Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus trivirgatus kinabaluensis*

Seen on five dates in highland areas, notably at Tambunan and best of all on Mt Kinabalu where several were seen in mixed parties, with Black-capped White-eyes and Yellow-breasted Warblers. Paler than those seen on peninsular Malaysia

Yellow-breasted Warbler *Seicercus montis*

A bright and very vocal species, seen in good numbers at Tambunan and Mt Kinabalu

Yellow-bellied Prinia *Prinia flaviventris latrunculus*

Though heard on four dates, it was not until 10/7 that we finally saw this at Sepilok

Dark-necked Tailorbird *Orthotomus atrogularis*

Seen well at Sepilok on 10/7, then daily at Danum, 14/7-16/7

Rufous-tailed Tailorbird *Orthotomus sericeus*

A long-billed and short-tailed tailorbird seen on three days at Danum; an adult was feeding a youngster near to BRL on 16/7

Ashy Tailorbird *Orthotomus ruficeps*

A widespread and numerous tailorbird, being noted on seven dates and the first at Poring on 09/7

[Sunda] Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler *Pomatorhinus [montanus] bornensis*

Heard at Sepilok on 11/7 and heard at Danum on two dates, 15/7 and 16/7, but was only seen in flight as one flew into a thick vine high on the trunk of a tree but refused to show. Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler may well be split into two species Sunda (as on Borneo) and Javan

Grey-throated Babbler *Stachyris nigriceps borneensis*

Seen at Tambunan, 06/7, but well at Mt Kinabalu on two dates, 07/7, and 10 on 10/7

Grey-headed Babbler *Stachyris poliocephala*

Three of this richly coloured species with bright yellow eye were seen in the afternoon at Poring, 09/7, as the sun caught them in a tangle of vines

Chestnut-rumped Babbler *Stachyris maculata*

Just a couple at Danum on 16/7 along the main track – Lee saved these 'til last

Chestnut-winged Babbler *Stachyris [Cyanoderma] erythroptera*

Seen on five dates, this is similar in a way to Grey-headed, but has a blue area round a dark eye

Rufous-fronted Babbler *Stachyridopsis [Cyanoderma] rufifrons poliogaster*

Just the one along the canopy walkway at Danum on 16/7

Bold-striped Tit-Babbler *Macronus bornensis*

Sometimes lumped with Pin-striped Tit-Babbler, we saw this species well at Kinabatangan and Danum in thick river- or track-side bushes – quite vociferous at times

Fluffy-backed Tit-Babbler *Macronus ptilosus reclusus*

Just one was seen at RDC, Sepilok, 10/7

[Bornean] Brown Fulvetta *Alcippe [brunneicauda] eriphaea*

Only seen at Danum, where mobile parties moved through the vines, and sometimes sang. There is a likelihood that *eriphaea* will be separated from nominate as Bornean Fulvetta

Bornean Wren-Babbler *Ptilocichla leucogrammica* - E

This extremely elusive endemic was heard along the main track on 14/5, but failed to show itself despite Lee's best efforts. However, the next day along the Hornbill Trail was a different story, as a vocal pair showed themselves (with a great deal of patience on our part) brilliantly and duetted side-by-side in full view. Finally heard again on 16/7

Black-throated Wren-Babbler *Napothera atrigularis* - E

Another difficult-to-see species, so the one seen and heard on 13/7 was very much appreciated, even though it never came close

Mountain Wren-Babbler *Napothera crassa* - E

This endemic wren-babbler was actually the first one we saw on Mt Kinabalu, 07/7 when two showed well at the same spot as the Bornean Stubtail – the only downside was the number of colour rings on its legs

Short-tailed Babbler *Malacocincla malaccensis*

This ground-dwelling species was seen well along the main track at Danum on 15/7, with two coming out and calling; another showed the next day

Sooty-capped Babbler *Malacopteron affine*

The default babbler at Danum, we saw several parties on four days with good views from the canopy walkway

Scaly-crowned Babbler *Malacopteron cinereum*

Seen on two dates at Danum: up to four on 14/7 and then several on 16/7

Rufous-crowned Babbler *Malacopteron magnum*

Four seen at Danum on 15/7

White-chested Babbler *Trichastoma rostratum*

We enjoyed good views along Kinabatangan River and tributaries on 12/7 and 13/7, with many good views as they fed and sang by the water's edge – on one occasion as we sat very quietly looking for pitas one almost landed on the boat; oddly, perhaps singles were also seen at Danum on two days

Ferruginous Babbler *Trichastoma bicolor*

Three days at Danum produced ones or twos of this species similar in many ways to the last species in being very pale below

Striped Wren-Babbler *Kenopia striata*

One of the stars of our unsuccessful walk along the Coffin trail for Blue-banded Pitta, as one was seen and heard as we descended on 16/7 – it sat and sang at us for a bit showing its lovely plumage off well and even posed for a few photos

Temminck's Babbler *Pellorneum pyrrogenys*

Twos were seen on three dates from 06/7, Tambunan and Mt Kinabalu – along the Silau Silau trail

Sunda Laughingthrush *Garrulax palliates schistochlamys*

Several parties of this large laughingthrush we seen on five consecutive dates from 06/7 onwards. The first were as we walked down from the antenna at Tambunan, but the best views were of parties feeding by the edge of the road on Mt Kinabalu

Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush *Garrulax treacheri* - E

Seen at the same sites as Sunda Laughingthrush but often higher in the trees at Tambunan and Mt Kinabalu. A lovely species but perhaps a little shy

Bare-headed Laughingthrush *Garrulax calvus* - E

Another endemic laughingthrush, we saw just five in a mixed flock on the lower slopes of Mt Kinabalu on 07/7

Chestnut-crested Yuhina *Yuhina everetti* - E

A very charismatic species as parties numbering over 30 at times sweeping through noisily then promptly flying off. We picked these up firstly at Tambunan then the next four days on Mt Kinabalu

Pygmy White-eye *Oculocincta squamifrons* - E

A rather localised and elusive species, we only saw these on two dates at our hotel at Kinabalu

Mountain Blackeye *Chlorocharis emiliae* - E

We were pleased to get great views of three on our first morning at Tambunan, 06/7, but we then saw more

on Mt Kinabalu the next two days, with fine looks at Timpohon Gate on 08/7

Black-capped White-eye *Zosterops atricapilla*

A common bird at Tambunan and on Mt Kinabalu with the chance of many good looks at roadside flocks on five dates from 06/7

Everett's White-eye *Zosterops everetti tahanensis*

Several were seen at Poring on 09/7, but that was it!

Asian Fairy-bluebird *Irena puella*

One was seen on Mt Kinabalu, 07/7, but then better views gained at Poring, 09/7, and at Danum on two dates – notably from the canopy walkway

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch *Sitta frontalis*

One on Mt Kinabalu as we searched for Sunda Cuckoo, 07/7, but then two at RDC on 11/7 and six at Danum on 15/7, three of which fed alongside Grey-capped Pygmy Woodpeckers

Asian Glossy Starling *Aplonis panayensis*

Noted on just four dates, the first en route to Sepilok, 10/7, where we saw them well, then also en route to Lahad Datu, 13/7 and back to KK, 17/7

Common Hill Myna *Gracula religiosa*

Three sat in a bare tree at the car park for the RDC, Sepilok early on 11/7 – with a Rhinoceros Hornbill for scale... heard at Danum, 15/7

Javan Myna *Acridotheres javanicus* I

Six dates and all in or around built up areas, this introduced species is now very common in many places

Common Myna *Acridotheres tristis*

Seen by some at KLIA, 05/7 and then as we drove to RDC, 10/7

Orange-headed Thrush *Geokichla citrina aurata*

A typically brief encounter with this shy species low on Mt Kinabalu on the road early morning, 09/7

Everett's Thrush *Zoothera everetti* - E

Another very shy species, we saw this just the once near the Silau Silau trail, 08/7. First pushed off the road, then feeding on leaf litter or perched on trunks deep in the understorey, sadly some even struggled to see it.

David took delight at telling us of the two he watched on the road below us as we walked downhill on 10/7

Fruithunter *Chlamydochaera jefferyi* - E

This was a surprise and exasperatingly brief sighting from the road at Mt Kinabalu, 09/7. Having flown into some tall trees a male showed two or three times before finally disappearing leaving us wanting more...

Oriental Magpie-Robin *Copsychus saularis*

Lee tended to wear his 'anti-magpie-robin' glasses so we only picked out a few for the group to see: noted on five dates, many only caught up with them on the last day

White-crowned Shama *Copsychus stricklandii* - E

Another endemic and recorded on seven dates in low numbers. Good views were gained at Poring (our first), 09/7, then at RDC, but the best views were of birds by the BRL, Danum

Pale Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis unicolor*

A pair seen twice along the main track at Danum, 14/7 and 15/7 – they took a little while to sort out as they rather elusive at first

Bornean Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis superbus* - E

We kept our ears and eyes out for this species and were suddenly rewarded by a pair that showed nicely at the beginning of the canopy walkway at Danum on 16/7 – the male sat above us and was then joined by a richly rufous (almost orange) female

Malaysian Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis turcosus*

Two fine blue-and-orange males were seen along the Kinabatangan River on 12/7 then later that evening Cintu found a roosting male in the dark as we looked for Large Frogmouth; another was seen the next day

Fulvous-chested Jungle Flycatcher *Cyornis olivaceus*

Restricted to just a few sites in northern Borneo, we had views of just one at Poring on 09/7

[Verditer Flycatcher *Eumyias thalassinus*

A leader-only male sat in a tree at BRL, just as we were going to our rooms on arrival on 13/7]

Indigo Flycatcher *Eumyias indigo cerviniventris*

We got some very nice views of this species starting with our first at the antenna at Tambunan on 07/7 then had up to five on Mt Kinabalu and one at RDC, Sepilok, 10/7

[Bornean] White-browed Shortwing *Brachypteryx [Montana] erythrogena* (E)

Another putative split, based on voice and distinct female plumage, we firstly heard one as it rained on Mt Kinabalu, 07/7, then saw a male the next day, with a male and female seen along the Silau Silau Trail on 09/7

Eyebrowed Jungle Flycatcher *Vauriella gularis* - E

Not really a flycatcher at all, we managed views of this endemic on four dates on Mt Kinabalu, with the best being of an adult and youngster at the same spot three days running

White-crowned Forktail *Enicurus leschenaulti*

An immature was found on the river at Mahau Waterfall on 06/7 – it was greyer and lacked the cap of an adult

Bornean Forktail *Enicurus borneensis* - E

Takes the place of White-crowned Forktail at higher altitudes in Borneo and we got superb views of two displaying birds on a stream on Mt Kinabalu on 09/7, with another heard the next day

Bornean Whistling Thrush *Myophonus borneensis* - E

Another endemic restricted to the highland areas, we saw this daily on Mt Kinabalu, with good views of several notably in the early morning

Rufous-chested Flycatcher *Ficedula dumetoria*

A lovely male was seen well and another heard as we walked to Gomantang caves on 11/7

Snowy-browed Flycatcher *Ficedula hyperythra sumatrana*

A lovely flycatcher and sometime hard to see, so we did well to get nice views of single males on 06/7 at Tambunan and 07/7 at Mt Kinabalu

Little Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula westermanni*

Another tiny *Ficedula* that we saw on three dates: a male and immature at Tambunan on 06/7; a male and female on Mt Kinabalu, 07/7, then two females at Tambunan, 08/7

Greater Green Leafbird *Chloropsis sonnerati zosterops*

Seen at Poring on 09/7, Kinabatangan on a boat ride on 12/7, then at Danum on two dates.

Lesser Green Leafbird *Chloropsis cyanopogon*

We saw these at Poring for the first time, 09/7, and at RDC the next day; finally three dates at Danum where these were more numerous than Greater

Bornean Leafbird *Chloropsis kinabaluensis* - E

Only seen at Tambunan on 06/7 where three fine males perched in a tree above the road

Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker *Prionochilus maculatus*

One was seen at Borneo Nature Lodge on 12/7, but then more frequently at Danum Valley

Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker *Prionochilus xanthopygius* - E

Most missed the first male at RDC, Sepilok on 10/7, so were keen to see this endemic flowerpecker; the male in the morning at Kinabatangan on 13/7 calmed their nerves and then after that we saw several at Danum

Yellow-vented Flowerpecker *Dicaeum chrysorrheum*

One at Tambunan, 06/7, then several in a tall flowering tree at Poring Hot Springs, 09/7

Orange-bellied Flowerpecker *Dicaeum trionostigma dayakanum*

Only a few were seen in the highlands, but in the lowlands this was the most numerous flowerpecker by far

Black-sided Flowerpecker *Dicaeum monticolum* - E

Found on our first day at Tambunan and Mahau, though the males seemed incredibly mobile; on Mt Kinabalu this species was very numerous

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker *Dicaeum cruentatum nigrimentum*

For the group just the three seen at near the hotel at Sepilok in the afternoon of 10/7, though a male had been seen by one of the leaders at Kinabalu on 06/7

Ruby-cheeked Sunbird *Chalcoparia singalensis borneana*

A female at Kinabatangan on 12/7 then several males, females and young at Danum on a couple of dates

Plain Sunbird *Anthreptes simplex borneanum*

Seen on just two dates: Poring on 09/7 and Danum 16/7

Brown-throated Sunbird *Anthreptes malacensis*

Found at Sepilok on our afternoon and morning walks at RDC, 10/7 and 11/7; also seen at KK on 17/7

Red-throated Sunbird *Anthreptes rhodolaemus*

Males and females at Danum on three dates – often high in the canopy again though

Copper-throated Sunbird *Leptocoma calcostetha*

Several males were seen on flowering bushes and trees in the car park at RDC on 11/7

Olive-backed Sunbird *Cinnyris jugularis ornatus*

Many seen at Tambunan to Mt Kinabalu, with many feeding on the flowers at our hotel, and some even nesting, offering fantastic views

Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja*

Several (including some bright males) at the hotel at Sepilok, 10/7 then also at RDC the next day; a male was seen at Kinabatangan on 12/7

Temminck's Sunbird *Aethopyga temminckii*

Several seen on five dates in the highlands, with good looks at the antenna at Tambunan, 06/7

Purple-naped Spiderhunter *Arachnothera hypogrammicum*

Until recently placed in the sunbirds, but now known to be a spiderhunter. Seen only at RDC on 10/7 and 11/7

Little Spiderhunter *Arachnothera longirostra*

A single on our afternoon walk near the hotel, Sepilok, 10/7, then one more at Kinabatangan, 12/7; however fairly numerous at Danum on three dates

Thick-billed Spiderhunter *Arachnothera crassirostris*

Singles seen on two dates along the main track at Danum, 14/7 and 15/7

Long-billed Spiderhunter *Arachnothera robusta*

Just the one from the boat at Kinabatangan on 12/7

Spectacled Spiderhunter *Arachnothera flavigaster*

Singles noted on two days: at Kinabatangan 12/7; at BRL, Danum on 14/7

Bornean Spiderhunter *Arachnothera everetti* - E

Recorded on six dates from the first two by the road at Tambunan on 06/7, then also at Mt Kinabalu in the same tree on 09/7 and 10/7; also seen at danum on three dates

Whitehead's Spiderhunter *Arachnothera juliae* - E

Thanks to Sasha at least we got one 'Whitehead's'. Found feeding about a flowering mistletoe above the road on Mt Kinabalu, to say we were pleased (well at least one of us) is an understatement

Eurasian Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Seen every day in the highlands and about towns, but missing from the rainforest

Dusky Munia *Lonchura fuscans* - E

Our first were about 10 at Tambunan, 06/7, the again at the Rafflesia botanical garden, 09/7; quite numerous in grassy roadside edges from 12/7 onwards

Scaly-breasted Munia *Lonchura punctulata cabanisi*

Only seen at our hotel on Kinabalu, 10/7

White-bellied Munia *Lonchura leucogastra palawana*

One found by Julia at Sepilok on 10/7

Chestnut Munia *Lonchura atricapilla jagori*

One near the Kinabalu hotel as we arrived on 06/7, then five at the hotel on 08/7, but our best views were at Sepilok and RDC on 10/7 and 11/7

Paddyfield Pipit *Anthus rufulus*

Several we seen feeding on the grass at Lahad Datu airfield on 17/7



Rajah Brookes's Birdwing at Danum Valley © Brian Small, Limosa

MAMMALS

Mountain Treeshrew *Tupaia montana*
 Large Flying Fox *Pteropus vampyrus*
 Wrinkle-lipped Free-tailed Bat *Chaerephon plicata*
 Malayan [Sunda] Colugo *Galeopterus variegatus*
 Bornean Slow Loris *Nycticebus borneanus*
 Bornean Gibbon *Hylobates muelleri*
 Maroon Langur [Red Leaf Monkey] *Presbytis rubicunda*
 Proboscis Monkey *Nasalis larvatus*
 Long-tailed (Crab-eating) Macaque *Macaca fascicularis*
 Southern Pig-tailed Macaque *Macaca nemestrina*
 Bornean Orangutan *Pongo pygmaeus*
 Cream-coloured Giant Squirrel *Ratufa affinis*
 Prevost's Squirrel *Callosciurus prevostii*
 Borneo Black-banded Squirrel *Callosciurus orestes*
 Plantain Squirrel *Callosciurus notatus*
 Jentink's Squirrel *Sundasciurus jentinki*
 Low's Squirrel *Sundasciurus lowii*
 Least [Plain] Pygmy Squirrel *Exilisciurus exilis*
 Tufted Pygmy Squirrel *Exilisciurus whiteheadi*
 Bornean Mountain Ground Squirrel *Dremomys everetti*
 Malay Civet *Viverra zibetha*
 Small-toothed Palm Civet *Arctogalidia trivirgata*
 Bornean Pygmy Elephant *Elaphas maximus borneensis*
 Bornean Bearded Pig *Sus barbatus*
 Sambar *Rusa unicolor*
 Southern Red Muntjac *Muntiacus muntjak*

OTHERS

Crested Green Lizard at Kinabatangan

Saltwater Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus*
 Red-sided Keelback Snake *Xenochrophis trianguligera*
 Painted Mock Viper *Psammodynastes pictus*
 Horsfield's Parachute Gecko *Ptychozoon horsfieldii*
 Horned Flying Lizard *Draco cornutus*
 Crested Green Lizard *Bronchocela cristatella*
 Common Sun Skink *Eutropis multifasciata*
 Water Monitor *Varanus salvator*
 Bornean Pill Millipede *Glomeris connexa*
 Long-legged Centipede *Scutigera spp.*
 Giant Forest Ant *Camponotus gigas*
 Chan's Megastick *Phobaeticus chani*