

# **Borneo Wildlife Photo Expedition**

In Ancient Rainforests, Photograph Orangutans & Other Rare & Endangered
Wildlife





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## **Trip Details:**

**Days** 13 Days / Apr–Oct

Price From \$16495 (+Air)

# **Borneo Wildlife Photo Expedition**

In Ancient Rainforests, Photograph Orangutans & Other Rare & Endangered Wildlife

Borneo, the world's third-largest island, harbors some of the oldest and tallest rainforests on Earth. And they hold a trove of fascinating wildlife species that will delight nature photographers. Sheltered beneath their dense canopies are jungle rivers, waterfalls and a host of unique creatures that leap, dart and crawl in the emerald depths. Endangered orangutans thrive in the lush vegetation, sharing branches and vines with leaf monkeys, wild gibbons, flying lemurs and more than 300 vibrant bird species. Rare proboscis monkeys are at home in coastal mangroves where hornbills and sea eagles soar above. In the forest beneath Mount Kinabalu's prominent peaks, pygmy elephants lumber through the underbrush while monitor lizards sunbathe on the banks of the Kinabatangan River. Alongside our Expedition Leader, learn to spot wildlife and get expert personalized coaching on how to capture memorable shots in the tropical forest.

# **Trip Highlights**

Photograph wild orangutans living freely in the rainforest, and get close shots on visits to two different orangutan conservation and rehabilitation centers

With a guided look behind the scenes, hear the inspiring success story of how the world's smallest bear was brought back from the brink of extinction

In the depths of the Danum Valley, seek photos of proboscis monkeys, gibbons and the rare slow loris, plus pygmy elephants along the Kinabatangan River





## **Itinerary At A Glance**

#### Day 1

Kuching, Borneo—Semenggoh Orangutan Center

#### Day 2

Private Boat Cruise to Bako National Park

#### Day 3

Sandakan / Kabili-Sepilok Nature Reserve

#### Day 4

Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary / Private Tour of Sun Bear Conservation Center

#### Day 5

Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary / Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary

#### Day 6

Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary
—Private River Cruise

#### Day 7

Kinabatangan River / Sukau Rainforest

# **Borneo Wildlife Photo Expedition Itinerary**

In Ancient Rainforests, Photograph Orangutans & Other Rare & Endangered Wildlife





#### Day 1: Kuching, Borneo—Semenggoh Orangutan Center

Our adventure begins in Kuching, the capital of the East Malaysian state of Sarawak and the largest city on the island of Borneo. Kuching is one of the most multicultural cities in Malaysia, melding Chinese, Malay, Indian and Indonesian cultural groups and languages. Transfer to our 5-star hotel in the city center and have lunch, then visit Semenggoh Orangutan Center to observe the afternoon feeding. The center provides some of the best opportunities for close-up orangutan photography. It was established in 1975 to care for wild animals found injured or orphaned in the forest, or ones that were previously kept as illegal pets. Since its founding, the center has cared for more than 1,000 animals, and its orangutan rehabilitation mission has been so successful that the surrounding reserve has now reached its carrying capacity. While rehabilitation continues elsewhere, today Semenggoh focuses on the study of orangutan biology and behavior while providing a safe and natural haven for dozens of semi-wild orangutans that are graduates of the rehab program. It is also home to numerous babies, born in the wild to rehabilitated mothers, a further testament to the program's success. This evening, learn more about the adventures to come at a welcome dinner with our Expedition Leader.







#### **Itinerary At A Glance**

#### Day 8

Sukau—Private Sunrise River Cruise / Gomantong Caves / Night Cruise

#### Days 9 - 11

Rainforest Photography in the Danum Valley

#### Day 12

Danum Valley / Lahad Datu / Kota Kinabalu

#### Day 13

Kota Kinabalu / Depart

#### Day 2: Private Boat Cruise to Bako National Park

Embark on a short boat ride this morning to Bako National Park, reachable only by sea on the tip of a peninsula where the Bako and Kuching rivers meet. Millions of years of erosion have carved the sandstone cliffs and rocky headlands into fantastically shaped arches, striated with colored layers formed by iron deposits. White sandy beaches edge the coast below, while inland, the compact reserve abounds with wildlife. Photograph proboscis monkeys in the trees, along with long-tailed macaques, silvered leaf monkeys and numerous tropical bird species. A walk along the lush mangrove trails may also reveal smooth-coated otters and Bornean bearded pigs. Though Bako is one of the smallest national parks in Sarawak, its multiple biomes harbor a great diversity of species. Bring lenses for both landscape and macro shots as we explore rainforest, jungle streams and secluded beaches along a network of trails, before returning to Kuching.

#### Day 3: Sandakan / Kabili-Sepilok Nature Reserve

This morning, fly to Sandakan, Sabah. Our destination is the Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve, home to endangered orangutans. The 10,000-acre protected area, named for the two main rivers that flow through it, comprises tropical highland forest, sandstone ridges and lowland mangrove swamp. In addition to orangutans, search the forest for gibbons, macaques, mouse deer, wild boar and bright-colored kingfishers. We stay on the very edge of the reserve surrounded by huge trees and lush tropical plants. This afternoon we visit the Rainforest Discovery Center, an environmental education center run by the Sabah Forestry Department, to learn more about our intensely biodiverse environment. Explore the Plant Discovery Garden and get a look at life high in the canopy on an elevated walkway more than a third of a mile long. The area has been declared an Important Bird Area (IBA) and is often the host for the Borneo Bird Festival, which draws birders from around the world. After dark, head into the forest on a guided night walk to hear and see an array of nocturnal creatures.





#### Day 4: Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary / Private Tour of Sun Bear Conservation Center

Make two visits today to Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center, established in 1964 to protect orphaned baby orangutans and rehabilitate them for return to the wild. We go early to photograph the orangutans' morning feeding, then return for their afternoon feeding. Most orphans were seized from illegal captivity after having been taken from their mothers as infants to be kept as pets. Staff help them learn basic survival skills such as how to find food, build nests and climb trees. The center also aids adults that have sustained injuries or require medical care before being returned to their natural habitat. Since the center was established, more than 100 orangutans have been successfully released. Its mission has grown to include research, conservation education and support for other endangered species. During our visit we'll get close-up photos of the orangutans, learn about the rehabilitation process, and hike on boardwalks through the rainforest as we watch youngsters swing from vines to feeding areas where they receive their daily fruit and milk. Keep an eye out, too, for long- and pig-tailed macaques leaping through the treetops.

Next, we visit the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Center. Founded in 2008, the center provides care, rehabilitation and release of orphaned and captive sun bears, and increases awareness about the plight of this little-known bear. Our private tour of the center is either with founder Wong Siew Te, whom CNN lauded as a Hero of 2017, calling him a "Superman saving the sun bears of Malaysia," or one of his close conservation colleagues. The Malayan sun bear, found only in Southeast Asia, is the world's smallest bear species. While Borneo remains a stronghold for this vulnerable animal, it is seriously threatened if not extinct in many areas of mainland Asia, where forest destruction and poaching have dramatically reduced its numbers.

#### Day 5: Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary / Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary

This morning we visit Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary, a coastal mangrove reserve that offers a close-up view of these leaping primates named for their large, fleshy noses—and which are found nowhere outside Borneo. Then depart by boat for the dense mangrove forests of Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. The Kinabatangan River at the center of the reserve is the longest river in Sabah, providing a lifeline for inhabitants of this vital ecosystem. Our remote jungle lodge along the riverbank is inaccessible by road, offering exceptional privacy and solitude. Take guided nature walks in the surrounding rainforest and cruise up the Kinabatangan River by day and at dusk to see, hear and photograph nocturnal creatures such as crocodiles and night birds. A hike on the boardwalk behind the lodge offers chances for birding and macro photography. There are no villages for miles, and the only human presence is a few local shrimp fishermen on the river, whose catch often provides a fresh dinner at the lodge.





#### Day 6: Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary—Private River Cruise

Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary is home to one of the highest animal concentrations in Southeast Asia, in an area where human population is unusually sparse—we've thus devoted a whole day here to pursue outstanding wildlife photography opportunities as we cruise the Kinabatangan River, observing wildlife in the trees and along its banks. Lush vegetation provides camouflage for many species, but we'll hope to see and photograph plenty of the wild residents including the elusive orangutan, proboscis and leaf monkeys, gibbon, macaque, pygmy elephant, wild boar, otter, river crocodile, monitor lizard and a great array of birdlife—rhinoceros hornbill and kingfisher are common sightings. Since palm oil plantations surround the reserve on all sides, it provides especially critical habitat for these species threatened by habitat loss. A special focus today is macro photography, with numerous enticing small subjects among flora and fauna alike.

#### Day 7: Kinabatangan River / Sukau Rainforest

After breakfast, we board a boat for a 90-minute cruise up the Kinabatangan River to Sukau Rainforest Lodge, surrounded by some of the very best wildlife photography opportunities in Borneo. As we travel upstream, we notice the vegetation around us changing from swampy mangrove habitat to lowland rainforest. On arrival, we have lunch and check in to our deluxe jungle villas, then cruise the river in search of more wildlife along the banks—the Sukau region offers our best chance to photograph pygmy elephants, as we are in the very heart of their range. Plenty of animals live in close vicinity to the lodge, and we often see orangutans, proboscis monkeys, silvered leaf langurs and macaques on the property. We return in time for dinner, then head into the forest on a night walk with our Expedition Leader.

#### Day 8: Sukau—Private Sunrise River Cruise / Gomantong Caves / Night Cruise

Wake before dawn for coffee and a snack before departing on a sunrise river excursion, as the birds and other rainforest creatures are waking up. Return to the lodge for breakfast, then walk with our Expedition Leader on the network of trails around the lodge to search for orangutans, proboscis monkeys, silver leaf langurs, colugos and more. After lunch, depart for Gomantong Caves, which we reach via a short boat ride and drive to arrive at the forest reserve. A resident orangutan population lives near this vast cavern system, and we keep an eye toward the trees in hopes of capturing photos of them.

After exploring the main cave chamber, it's time to prepare for Gomantong's most famous phenomenon: the nightly mass bat exodus at dusk. Witness it at eye level from a new boardwalk and viewing platform strategically positioned near the top of the cave. It's an exciting vantage point, as we also get close-up shots of the feeding frenzy by birds of prey picking off bats as they fly out of the cave. Wallace's hawk eagles, bat hawks, and occasionally pied hornbills wait to hunt them in mid-air as hundreds of thousands of bats exit the cave chamber. Return to the lodge for dinner, then take a night cruise to photograph nocturnal wildlife along the riverbanks.





#### Days 9 - 11: Rainforest Photography in the Danum Valley

Rise early to leave the Kinabatangan region, driving on a logging road through the nearest town, Lahad Datu, then on to Borneo Rainforest Lodge within the Danum Valley. Danum Valley Conservation Area is Sabah's largest area of undisturbed lowland forest, with more than 200 species of trees that tower to 160 feet. This spectacular tract of ancient primary rainforest holds exceptional status. Before it received full protection in 1995, there were no human settlements within the area, meaning that hunting, logging and other human activities had not disturbed the habitat.

Danum Valley is one of the planet's most complex ecosystems, containing an astoundingly diverse array of flora and fauna, including clouded leopard, orangutan and proboscis monkeys. Amid dense vegetation, explore on foot via elevated walkways through the canopy and the network of trails that surrounds our secluded lodge. The extensive system of boardwalks and paths provides varied options based on personal interests and fitness levels, with expert guidance from our Expedition Leader, local guide and lodge naturalists. One morning, we rise early for a sunrise shoot at a watchtower, capturing mist drift across the rainforest canopy during the golden hour. On night drives in quiet, open-top electric safari vehicles, watch and listen to the rainforest's inhabitants become animated after dusk. After full days of photo shoots in the jungle, our Expedition Leader offers photography workshops and post-processing assistance back at the lodge in the evenings.

#### Day 12: Danum Valley / Lahad Datu / Kota Kinabalu

This morning, enjoy an easy nature hike or birdwatching on the canopy walkway before we depart. Here in the treetops we may be able to get photos of great slaty woodpeckers, black-and-red broadbills and giant pittas among a multitude of species. Then transfer by road to Lahad Datu, where we depart by plane for Kota Kinabalu, capital of Malaysia's Sabah state in the northern part of Borneo. This coastal city, partly surrounded by rainforest, is known for its classic markets, modern boardwalk, beaches and lively waterfront. Our Borneo adventure comes to a close this evening with a farewell dinner.

#### Day 13: Kota Kinabalu / Depart

Transfer to the airport this morning for homeward flights.



#### **Accommodation Details:**

Sepilok Nature Lodge
Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort
Sukau Rainforest Lodge
Borneo Rainforest Lodge
Hyatt Centric Kota Kinabalu
Hilton Kuching

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/asia-adventure-travel/borneo-wildlife-photo-expedition/accommodations

# **Borneo Wildlife Photo Expedition Accommodations**

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#### **Sepilok Nature Lodge**

The consummate jungle lodge, Sepilok Nature Lodge's tall wooden bungalows are hidden amid dense tropical vegetation, within easy walking distance of Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary.



#### **Kinabatangan Wetlands Resort**

This remote jungle ecolodge, inaccessible by road, offers an exceptionally secluded location from which to explore the wildlife-rich mangrove and forest wilderness of the Lower Kinabatangan region.



#### **Sukau Rainforest Lodge**

Sustainably built on the Kinabatangan River, this deluxe ecolodge is an optimal base for exploring the adjacent wildlife sanctuary, home to orangutans, proboscis monkeys, pygmy elephants and more.







#### **Borneo Rainforest Lodge**

Secluded luxury chalets in the remote Danum Valley overlook the last vestiges of Borneo's virgin primary forest, with a central lodge standing on columns of Borneo's famous ironwood.



### **Hyatt Centric Kota Kinabalu**

In the heart of the coastal capital's vibrant waterfront district, this new 5-star design hotel offers luxe amenities and stunning sea views.



#### **Hilton Kuching**

Set along the Sarawak River, this 5-star hotel features panoramic views, modern room, a riverside pool and diverse dining options including Cantonese cuisine and an awardwinning steakhouse.





# Borneo's Best Wildlife Photo Safari—Here's Why!

Our multifaceted itinerary maximizes your chances to capture exciting images of Borneo's diverse and endangered wildlife. Read about what makes this experience so distinctive:

More Diverse Wildlife Viewing in Widely Varied Settings

This is a comprehensive nature survey of Borneo, encompassing diverse ecosystems: the lowland jungle sanctuaries of Sepilok, Semenggoh and Kinabatangan, mangroves in Bako National Park, and virgin rainforest in the Danum Valley. We explore from sunrise to nightfall in these contrasting locales, searching for the endangered orangutan, pygmy elephant, Bornean bearded pig, smooth-coated otter, long- and pig-tailed macaques, monitor lizard, proboscis monkey, rhinoceros hornbill, silvered leaf monkey, numerous tropical bird species, and an array of nocturnal creatures.

- Photograph Orangutans at Two Different Sanctuaries & in the Wild

  A chance to photograph orangutans is a big reason for coming to Borneo. In addition to opportunities to capture images of them in the wild along the Kinabatangan River and from our remote ecolodges, we ensure you get shots at the Sepilok and Semenggoh nature reserves. Semenggoh focuses on the study of orangutan biology and behavior while providing a safe and natural haven for dozens of semi-wild orangutans that are graduates of its original rehabilitation program.
- Private Guided Tour of the Bornean Sun Bear Center

  An inspiring conservation success story, the center provides care, rehabilitation and release of orphaned and captive Malayan sun bears. Its mission is also to increase awareness about the plight of this little-known endangered bear, the world's smallest. We have a private tour of the center either with founder Dr. Wong Siew Te or one of his close conservation colleagues.
- Photography Within One of the World's Oldest & Tallest Rainforests

  The Danum Valley is a special inclusion on our adventure—to truly experience the primeval biodiversity of Borneo's deepest rainforest recesses, the Danum Valley is an essential stop—and not all itineraries include it. It's home to a stunning array of unique creatures, which we look for with our expert naturalist guide.
- Capture Images of Bats Emerging rom Gomantong Caves

  Not included on typical Borneo itineraries, Gomantong Caves beckons the nature photographer with its resident orangutan troop and nightly mass exodus of bats at dusk, accompanied by the feeding frenzy of birds of prey from eye level as the bats take flight.





6 A Small Group Ensures Better Photo Prospects

Wildlife encounters happen most meaningfully in an intimate context. Our Photo Expeditions are limited to just ten guests, facilitating a quiet, low-impact experience.

- Internal Flights Enhance Comfort & Offer More Time with Wildlife
  Rather than subject you to long, winding, often bumpy drives, we use air transfers for comfort and efficiency. Two internal flights get you between destinations faster, giving you more time to photograph nature and wildlife.
- From Riverside to Rainforest, Stay Closer to Borneo's Wildlife
  Our accommodations are selected for their quality, atmosphere and secluded locations, getting you as close as possible to nature in the most comfortable settings. From our ecoresort near an orangutan sanctuary to a remote ecolodge on the Kinabatangan River and our lodge in Danum Valley that overlooks primary growth rainforest, you are immersed in wild Borneo.
- Travel with a Top Photo Expedition Leader Plus Local Guides

  Benefit from the experience of our professional photographer Expedition Leader, an expert naturalist guide and wildlife tracker who helps you spot elusive animals in the dense rainforest—and get the best possible photos of them! No matter your ability level, you'll get personalized photography tips and techniques for challenging rainforest conditions as you shoot alongside your expert guide. Our Nat Hab Expedition Leaders also receive special training and resources provided by WWF scientists. They are assisted by Borneo's best local guides during each segment of our trip. See Expedition Leader bios and traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.
- Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures You'll Have an Outstanding Photo Safari
  With Natural Habitat Adventures, you receive our exclusive guarantee, which clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company.
- Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

  We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home.

  Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.
- Natural Habitat Adventures is WWF's Travel Partner

  Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat Adventures its worldwide travel partner—a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!



# Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices: From \$16495 (+Air)

**Group Size:** Limited to ~10 Travelers

# **Borneo Wildlife Photo Expedition Dates, Pricing & Info**

In Ancient Rainforests, Photograph Orangutans & Other Rare & Endangered Wildlife

2026 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
May 19, 2026	May 31, 2026	\$16895 USD (+internal air)
Jun 3, 2026	Jun 15, 2026	\$16895 USD (+internal air)
Jul 7, 2026	Jul 19, 2026	\$16895 USD (+internal air)
Aug 11, 2026	Aug 23, 2026	\$16495 USD (+internal air)
Sep 8, 2026	Sep 20, 2026	\$16895 USD (+internal air)
Oct 2, 2026	Oct 14, 2026	\$16495 USD (+internal air)

#### 2027 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Apr 24, 2027	May 6, 2027	\$17995 USD (+internal air)
May 16, 2027	May 28, 2027	\$17495 USD (+internal air)
Jun 13, 2027	Jun 25, 2027	\$17495 USD (+internal air)
Jul 4, 2027	Jul 16, 2027	\$17495 USD (+internal air)
Aug 8, 2027	Aug 20, 2027	\$17495 USD (+internal air)
Sep 5, 2027	Sep 17, 2027	\$17495 USD (+internal air)
Oct 6, 2027	Oct 18, 2027	\$17495 USD (+internal air)









#### **Pricing**

See https://nathab.com/asia-adventure-travel/borneo-wildlife-photo-expedition/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

#### **Included**

- ➤ Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s) and local guides, all meals from lunch on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, private boat cruises at Bako National Park and Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.
- > Internal air cost includes: All flights within the itinerary (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

#### Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, camera fees for lenses 500mm and larger and professional video camera fees paid to the parks, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline baggage fees, required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

## **Important Information About This Trip**

Most of our guests travel to Borneo for encounters with the island's wildlife. While the nature experiences here are indeed remarkable, there is a fundamental difference between a safari in the Bornean jungle and a typical safari in Africa. At times, guests lured to Borneo by tourist brochures promising "jungle safaris" can be disappointed to see fewer animals than they expected, or at least fewer than they might normally see in Africa. It is not that the surviving jungles are thinly populated with wildlife, but, similar to places like Costa Rica where the forest is thick with vegetation, the creatures have mastered the art of camouflage and deception and can be difficult to spot. At Nat Hab we design our itineraries to capitalize on the best conditions to spot orangutans and other wildlife. But various factors can affect potential sightings, including the occurrence of inclement weather. The secret to a successful Borneo nature adventure lies with the expertise of our Expedition Leaders and local guides, as well as knowing what to expect, and in understanding that the privilege of stepping into a wild and untouched natural realm is a reward in itself.

# **Mandatory Insurance**

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least \$250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.





## **Getting There & Getting Home**

This trip begins in Kuching and ends in Kota Kinabalu. Because this is a long international journey, we recommend that you arrive the night before Day 1 to rest from your travels and begin the trip refreshed. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

If you plan to arrive on Day 1, you must arrive in Kuching by 8 am in order to meet your group at 10 am for an orientation and lunch, followed by afternoon guided activities.

#### You may depart Kota Kinabalu at any time on the final day.

Our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.





#### Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.