

FIELD STATION REPORT

Project Barito Ulu Rekut Camp, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

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Project Barito Ulu was set up in 1989 as a co-operative project between University of Cambridge and the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry. Research is carried out at the Muara Rekut base-camp in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, situated at the headwaters of the Barito River in the geographical centre of Borneo.

The base-camp is situated in a beautiful location at Muara Rekut where the Rekut, a black-water river, joins the larger Busang. There is a wide diversity of forest types surrounding the camp, lowland evergreen rain forest, heath forest



(*kerangas*) and intermediate forest types as well as shifting cultivation fallows up to 60 years of age. Over fifty permanent plots (mostly 0.25 ha) have been set-up and there is an extensive trail system within the main 400 ha study site. Recent botanical research has looked at plant-soil relationships including a large-scale forest fertilisation experiment and explaining the occurrence of the locally common heath forest formation and examining forest succession following shifting cultivation. Zoological research is centred around understanding the ecology and systematics of the hybrid gibbons (*Hylobates muelleri* x *agilis*) found at the study site, but has also focussed on birds, bats and other large mammals. A phenological study now in its thirteenth year currently has over 200 trees monitored monthly.

The camp has facilities for up to 18 researchers in three houses; there is also an office, dining area, showers and toilets and a laboratory with a library and extensive herbarium containing specimens from the research area. Electricity is provided by a generator in the evenings which recharges batteries for use during the day. Personal computers and specialist equipment should be brought by individual researchers. There are four full-time camp staff members with more recruited from the village of Muara



Bakanon where an association has been in place since the start of the project. The camp is in regular radio contact with Jakarta and also has a satellite phone, both in case of emergencies should helicopter evacuation need to be arranged.

Travelling to the camp takes two to four

days from Jakarta. There are a variety of modes of transport but the most pleasant is to take public boats up-river. For the final three hours of the journey a speedboat must be chartered to negotiate the rapids in the upper parts of the river before arriving at the camp. It is sometimes possible



to take the Mission Aviation Fellowship plane to Muara Joloi, the nearest village to Rekut camp which is around one hour downstream.

The camp costs are currently £9.50 per day with a reduced rate for Indonesian researchers. Researchers interested in working at Barito Ulu are invited to contact the Project Manager, Rupert Ridgeway (barito@rad.net.id), the scientific director, David Chivers (djc7@cam.ac.uk) in relation to zoological work or Francis Brearley (brearlef@tcd.ie) in relation to botanical work.

MEETINGS CALENDAR 2006

THIRD INTERNATIONAL TAPIR SYMPOSIUM, 26-31 January, 2006, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Organized by the IUCN Species Survival Commission Tapir Specialist Group, the Fundación Temaikén, Argentina, and the Houston Zoo Inc., United States. For more information, see <http://www.tapirspecialistgroup.org/symposium/index.html>

SOCIETY FOR TROPICAL ECOLOGY (GTÖ) 19th annual meeting at the University of Kaiserslautern, 21-24 February, 2006. The theme will be "**Connecting microbes, plants, animals and human impact**". See the meeting web site at <http://www.uni-kl.de/gtoe2006/>

XI INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ROTIFERA, 11-18 March, 2006, Mexico City, Mexico, Sponsored by the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Campus Iztacala. More information at <http://www.iztacala.unam.mx/rotiferaXI/>

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL TREE SQUIRREL COLLOQUIUM AND FIRST INTERNATIONAL FLYING SQUIRREL COLLOQUIUM. 22-29 March 2006, Periyar Tiger Reserve, India. Including Conservation Priorities Workshop: Tree and Flying Squirrels in the Developing World. Contact: Nandini R (nandinirajamani@yahoo.co.in) National Institute of Advanced Studies Indian Institute of Science Campus Bangalore 560 012 INDIA Tel: 91-94431 42296 web: <http://www.squirrelcolloquia.co.in> or <http://www.iisc.ernet.in/nias/itsc.htm>

IX CONGRESS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY (IX CONGRESO LATINOAMERICANO DE BOTÁNICA). 19-25 June, 2006, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic – Web <http://www.botanica-alb.org/index2.html>

SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY 20TH ANNUAL MEETING, Conservation Without Borders, 24-29 June 2006, in San Jose, California. See more at <http://conbio.org/2006/>

HELICONIA SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL 2006 CONFERENCE, 24 June – 1 July, 2006, in Darwin, NT, Australia. More information from Jan Hintze, email hintze@ozemail.com.au.

ASSOCIATION FOR TROPICAL BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION ANNUAL MEETING, 18-21 July 2006, Xishuangbanna, China. At the Harbour Plaza-Kunming, hosted by the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical