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MALAYSIAN PARKS NEWSLETTER

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July 2007

Royal Belum State Park Gazetted

The Royal Belum State Park was officially gazetted under the Perak State Park Corporation Enactment 2001 by the Perak State Government on 17 April 2007.

Established in 2003, it was conferred a Royal status the same year by the DYMM Paduka Seri Sultan Perak Sultan Azlan Shah. The gazetted park covers an area of 117,500ha and is part of the contiguous forest block, known as the Belum-Temengor forest complex (BT complex) covering about 300,00ha. It is now the third largest park in Malaysia (overtaking the recently-gazetted Selangor Heritage Park – see issue 01/2007 of this newsletter) after Taman Negara National Park and Crocker Range Park which cover 434,351ha and 139,919ha respectively.



Royal Belum State Park, Perak

Identified as an Environmentally Sensitive Area under Malaysia's National Physical Plan 2005, the BT complex is home to several globally threatened wildlife species including the Sumatran rhinoceros, Malayan tiger, Asiatic elephant, Malayan tapir and the white-handed gibbon. It also harbours the highest concentration of hornbills in a single forest complex with over 2,000 plain-pouched hornbills (classified as

Vulnerable under the IUCN Redlist) recorded in just one evening. *Rafflesia cantleyi*, endemic to Perak, Pahang and Terengganu is one of the flora highlights of the park.

The Perak State Government, Perak State Parks Corporation, Malaysian NGOs and the corporate sector have been working steadily towards realising the conservation goals of Royal Belum State Park.

The Royal Belum is currently enjoying much attention from the scientific community. The Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia is organising a third scientific expedition to the Royal Belum. Perak State Parks Corporation, WWF-Malaysia and other government agencies are embarking on a 5-year Sumatran rhino conservation project while the Malaysian Nature Society is expanding its Temengor hornbill survey to also cover the Royal Belum.

NEWS FLASH

The Malaysian Parks Newsletter is now available online at the WWF-Malaysia website as well as the FRIM Biological Diversity Clearing House Mechanism, Malaysia website.

Individual issues can be downloaded for free from www.wwf.org.my/media_and_information/publications_main/index.cfm and www.frim.gov.my/CHM/Index.htm

INSIDE: A special feature on Perlis State Park and the stump-tailed macaque.



Lata Kasih, a waterfall on limestone

IN BRIEF

Second Marine Park in Sarawak

The second marine park in Sarawak was gazetted on 28 February 2007. The Miri-Sibuti Coral Reefs National Park covers an area of 186,930ha that spans across both the Miri and Sibuti district. Other national parks in the area include Lambir Hills National Park, Niah National Park and Sibuti Wildlife Sanctuary.

The first marine park to be gazetted was the Talang Satang National Park in 1999, in Sematan and Telaga Air, near Kuching which is a turtle landing site and is now equipped with a hatchery. The Miri-Sibuti Coral Reefs National Park will be governed by the National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance, 1998 and managed by SARAWAK FORESTRY.

Free IUCN download

The journal 'Parks', published by IUCN 3 times a year is now available online and individual issues can be downloaded for free from <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/parks.htm#143>

Protecting Mangroves a National Priority

YAB Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Badawi launched a national coastal mangrove replanting project in Kota Kuala Muda, Kedah early February in conjunction with World Wetlands Day.

As part of fulfilling international agreements such as the Ramsar Convention, several states in Malaysia have begun gazetted mangroves under their respective State Forestry Enactments. Protecting mangroves demonstrates Malaysia's commitment to conservation.

The government plans to embark on a major project in the replanting and rehabilitation of the mangroves along Malaysia's coastal areas.

Protected Areas Conference

The 2nd ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference and the 4th Regional Conference on Protected Areas in South East Asia were held on 23-27 April 2007 at Le Meridien, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Jointly organised by The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), Birdlife International, IUCN-World Commission on Protected Areas in South East Asia (IUCN-WCPA SEA) and Sabah Parks, the conferences were attended by more than 200 participants comprising representatives of national heads of protected area agencies, NGOs, local, regional and international protected area practitioners and government dignitaries from ASEAN countries.

The main objective of the conference was to strengthen the management of the network of protected areas in the ASEAN region by identifying and formulating a Regional Action Plan towards fulfilling the Durban Accord, and commitments to the Programme of Work on Protected Areas from the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Vientiane Action Plan (2004-2010) to collectively achieve the WSSD 2010 target of reducing biodiversity loss.

The conference started with a welcome session by representatives of the organisers and a keynote address delivered by the Director of Sabah Parks, Y.Bhg. Datuk Lamri Ali. The next session commenced with the Protected Area Status country reports from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Phillipines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

To provide better understanding of the management effectiveness of protected areas, participants were taken on a one-day field trip to one of the three protected areas within Sabah Parks. Participants were given the opportunity of choosing from Kinabalu Park (a World Heritage Site), Crocker Range Park, where a Community Use Zone has been demarcated to allow local communities to continue their livelihoods, or Tunku Abdul Rahman Park which is made up of five islands covering a total area of 4,929ha.



A visit to Ulu Senagang, (in the district of Keningau), one of the proposed Community Use Zones in Crocker Range Park.

WWF-Malaysia/E. Liew

It is hoped that the Regional Action Plan formulated at the end of the conference will be presented during the 2nd meeting of the Working Group on Protected Areas in February 2008 and at the 9th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity.



Key note address by the Director of Sabah Parks, Y.Bhg. Datuk Lamri Ali

Sabah Parks

Workshop on The Future of Tanjung Piai

On 31 May 2007, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, in collaboration with Wetlands International and the Johor National Parks Corporation organised a workshop titled 'The Future of Tanjung Piai Ramsar Site' at Tanjung Piai Johor National Park.

The workshop was a platform for inviting the corporate sector to contribute to the setting up of a 'Ramsar Conservation Fund' to address the erosion problem and to fund CEPA (communication, education and public awareness) programmes at Tanjung Piai Ramsar Site. The organisers presented the challenges faced by the Tanjung Piai Ramsar Site, based on the hydrology study carried out by Wetlands International, funded by the Ramsar Bureau in 2006.

Attended by 20 people, the participants were given a first hand look at the affected site. They witnessed damage caused by relentless wave and tidal action which has resulted in the collapse of boardwalks and a viewing tower, while simultaneously decimating several stretches of mangroves within the park. The erosion is estimated to be proceeding at a significant rate of 5m a year.

The increasingly serious erosion problem is threatening the local fishing and ecotourism industries that depend on a healthy mangrove ecosystem protected by this park located at the southern-most tip of mainland Asia.



The collapsed viewing tower at Tanjung Piai Johor National Park

JNPC

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

18-19 July

Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia is organising the Seminar on the Bukit Bauk Scientific Expedition. For details, please call En. Azman at (+6) 03-2616 4488 or email azman@forestry.gov.my.

25 June-10 Sept

The Department of Wildlife and National Park is organising several biodiversity inventories in the following protected areas:

25 June-5 July: Sungkai Wildlife Reserve

27 July-9 Aug: Taman Negara; Tasik Kenyir, Terengganu

30 Aug-10 Sept: Endau-Kota Tinggi West Wildlife Reserve

For more details please contact Cik Rahmah at (+6)03-90752872 or email at rahmah@wildlife.gov.my

7-8 August

The Ministry of NRE along with Pahang Economic Planning Unit (EPU), UNDP-GEF/ FRIM Peat Swamp Project, Malaysia Second National Communication to UNFCCC Project and British Petroleum (BP) Malaysia are jointly organising an 'East Coast Stakeholder Consultation on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Land Degradation' to be held in MS Garden Hotel Kuantan. For details, please call Cik Bazlin at (+6) 03-8886 1667 or email Bazlin@nre.gov.my.

3-4 Sept

Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia is organising the Seminar on the Gunung Pantu Scientific Expedition. For details, please call En. Azman at (+6) 03-2616 4488 or email azman@forestry.gov.my.

Featured Park: Perlis State Park

The state of Perlis is the smallest and northern-most state of Peninsular Malaysia, covering an area of 81,063ha. However, despite its small size, Perlis has the longest continuous range of limestone hills in Peninsular Malaysia. Composed of the oldest limestone formation in the country with an extensive network of caves including Gua Kelam II, the range, known as the Nakawan Range, is where Perlis State Park is located.

Establishment of Perlis State Park

After the biological survey of Mata Ayer and Wang Mu Forest Reserves by WWF-Malaysia in 1992, the state of Perlis agreed in principle to establish 1,000ha of the Mata Ayer Forest Reserve as Wang Kelian State Park in 1993 and the proposed area was later extended to 5,000ha to also include Wang Mu Forest Reserve. Subsequently the Perlis State Forestry Department proposed the gazettelement of the two forest reserves as the Perlis State Park.

In 2001, the Perlis State Forestry Enactment was amended to allow the Perlis State Forestry Department to manage the Park. This was historical not only for Perlis but for Peninsular Malaysia as it was the first time that the Forestry Department became the management authority of a state park.



The Nakawan Range where the Perlis State Park is located

The re-discovery of the stump-tailed macaque or 'Beruk Kento' at Perlis State Park is a significant find as the species was thought to be extinct in Malaysia. Other notable wildlife species occurring in the park include the 'Kambing Gurun', leopard, the Malayan tapir and the white-handed gibbon.

How to Get There

From the North-South Highway, take the Alor Setar Utara exit and follow the signboards to Kangar, using Route 7. Alternatively, you can also exit via Changlun and take the Changlun-Kuala Perlis Highway to Kangar. From Kangar, continue on Route 7 heading towards Padang Besar. About 30km or so from Kangar, you'll pass Timah-Tasoh Lake on the left. Soon after, you'll see a turning on the left with a signboard saying 'Gua Kelam 8.5km'. Take this turning and then head for Kaki Bukit.

After about 5-10 minutes, you will reach Kaki Bukit Town. From here, turn right and you will be on Route R15 heading towards Kampung Wang Kelian. Soon, you will be climbing uphill along a windy road. Keep on this road which will take you to the top of a ridge and down again on the other side. At the bottom of the ridge, at Kampung Wang Kelian, there is a T-junction. Turn right and after about 3km, you will see the Park Visitor Centre on the right. For more information, contact the visitor centre at (+6) 04-976-5966/ 945-7898.

Attractions and Activities

The limestone habitats of the park harbour many rare and endangered plants including the cliff-dwelling Perlis cycad or bogak, the gouty balsam, a fanpalm endemic to the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia and southern Thailand and a new species of fern. In addition, Perlis State Park also has a rich orchid flora particularly at Bukit Rongkit and Bukit Pelarit.

FACTS & FIGURES

Year established: 2000

Area size: About 5,000ha

Management authority:

Perlis State Forestry Department

Species Watch:

Macaca arctoides

The stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*) is a rare primate species, endemic to Perlis and Kedah. Easily distinguished by its reddish face and extremely short tail, the 'Beruk Kento' usually forages in the forest and along river banks for fruits, seeds, flowers, birds and small animals. Classified as Vulnerable under the IUCN Redlist, it is indeed a rare moment if you do spot the stump-tailed macaque.





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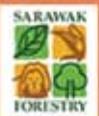
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News Updates

Pioneer Batch of Licensed Guides in Sarawak

The Certificate in Park Guiding Course was successfully conducted by Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) and SARAWAK FORESTRY on 3-18 May 2007 resulting in 18 graduates.

The certificate course consisted of modules on theoretical knowledge of tourism and ecotourism, Totally Protected Areas and biodiversity management, national parks and nature reserves as tourism products, risk management in national parks and nature reserves and principles of thematic interpretation. The 18 graduates are expected to deliver quality services to visitors as a way to add value to the tourism products available in the parks.



The pioneer batch of graduates of the Certificate in Park Guiding Course

World Wetlands Day 2007

The World Wetlands Day, 2007 held on 4 March at the Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary in Perak was organised by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP). The event commenced with a welcome speech by the Director-General of DWNP followed by a speech by Y. Bhg. Dato' Sazmi Miah, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE), who officiated the occasion on behalf of the Minister. In his speech, the Minister reiterated that the NRE, guided by the National Policy on Biological Diversity, will assist the state governments in enhancing the sustainable management of wetlands if they show commitment to protect these sites, especially those that have been identified as potential RAMSAR sites.

The celebration started off with a 3-day environmental education programme participated by 40 students selected from several secondary schools around the Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary. On the actual carnival day, DWNP, Forestry Department, Department of Environment and several NGOs, including Wetlands International, the Malaysian Nature Society, Global Environmental Centre and SABOT (a local community-based organisation from the Tasek Bera Ramsar site) set up exhibition booths. Various activities were held and amongst them were boat rides to observe sea birds surrounding the Kuala Gula area, colouring competition and quizzes. About 800 people, mainly from the surrounding local communities participated in the celebration. The World Wetlands Day is to create public awareness on the importance of wetlands ecosystem for water resources protection, flood mitigation, prevention of shore erosion, tourism and the conservation of biodiversity.

Ekspedisi Taman Bukit Tawau 2007

Ekspedisi Saintifik Taman Bukit Tawau telah dianjurkan bersama oleh pihak Taman-Taman Sabah dan Universiti Malaysia Sabah pada 14-25 Februari 2007 bertempat di Taman Bukit Tawau, Tawau. Seramai 30 orang peserta dari pihak Taman dan 43 orang pensyarah serta pelajar dari Universiti Malaysia Sabah telah terlibat dalam ekspedisi tersebut. Ini merupakan ekspedisi besar-besaran dianjurkan di Taman ini selepas ekspedisi pertama pada tahun 1989.

Tujuan ekspedisi ini dianjurkan adalah untuk menjalinkan kerjasama erat di antara Taman-Taman Sabah dan Universiti Malaysia Sabah serta memperkukuhkan kegiatan penyelidikan yang berkaitan. Ekspedisi ini juga bertujuan untuk membina usahasama jangka panjang di antara kedua belah pihak dan mendokumentasikan kepelbagaian flora serta fauna khususnya di laluan kemuncak ke Gunung Lucia (1,202m) dan Gunung Magdalena (1,312m) yang baru sahaja dibuka untuk pendakian.

Penyelidikan yang dijalankan dalam ekspedisi ini telah dibahagikan kepada 4 kategori iaitu penyelidikan tumbuhan peringkat rendah (bryofita, ginger dan paku-pakis); tumbuhan peringkat tinggi (diterokarpa, orkid dan gaharu); vertebrata (mamalia, burung, reptilia, amfibia dan ikan) dan invertebrata (semut, kupu-kupu, kumbang, odonata, anai-anai dan siput). Semua hasil penyelidikan dalam ekspedisi ini telah dibentangkan dalam sesi pembentangan pada 23 Februari 2007.



Sesi fotografi bersama Y.Bhg. Prof. Datuk Dr. Mohd. Noh Dalimin, Naib Canselor Universiti Malaysia Sabah berlatarbelakangkan pokok tropika tertinggi di dunia, berketinggian 88.32m dari spesies Seraya Kuning Siput (*Shorea faguetiana*).

Kemuncak ekspedisi ini adalah sesi pertemuan peringkat tertinggi antara pihak pengurusan Taman-Taman Sabah dan Universiti Malaysia Sabah dalam Mesyuarat Bersama pada 24 Februari 2007 yang telah dipengerusikan bersama oleh Y.Bhg. Datuk Lamri Ali, Pengarah Taman-Taman Sabah, dan Y.Bhg. Prof. Datuk Dr. Mohd. Noh Dalimin, Naib Canselor Universiti Malaysia Sabah.