



Borneo
Nature
Foundation



SCHOOL

Expedition Brochure



WHAT IS BORNEO NATURE FOUNDATION?

Borneo Nature Foundation (BNF) is a not-for-profit conservation and research organisation. We were established in 1999 in Central Kalimantan (Indonesian part of Borneo) to study, protect and restore some of the most important tropical rainforests in Borneo, to safeguard the biodiversity found there and the important cultural values the forest has for indigenous people.

Our longest running programme is in the Sebangau Forest, a 600,000-hectare area of tropical peat swamp forest that is one of the most critical ecosystems in Borneo. Working together with UPT LLG-CIMTROP (Centre for International Cooperation in Sustainable Management of Tropical Peatland), BNF has been supporting and empowering community-led initiatives including anti-logging patrols, anti-poaching monitoring and fire-fighting teams. As a direct result of these efforts, illegal logging was stopped here over a decade ago. Our highly skilled field research teams have monitored the distribution, population status, behaviour and ecology of Borneo's two flagship primate species for generations, the Critically Endangered Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*) - Sebangau hosts the largest lowland Bornean orangutan population in the world - and the Bornean white-bearded gibbon (*Hylobates albibarbis*).





THE FOREST

Peat swamp forests are remarkably biodiverse and home to over 30% of the remaining population of wild orangutans in Borneo. Peat forms here under waterlogged conditions through the incomplete breakdown of organic matter – dead leaves, branches, fallen trees – which has built up over many thousands of years to create a thick peat layer up to 18m deep in places. Standing atop the peat is a rich tropical rainforest, with a huge diversity of plant life, including large timber trees, such as ramin and swamp meranti, pitcher plants and sustainable commercial species such as rattan and rubber trees.

Nine species of primate, including orangutan, white-bearded gibbon, red langur and pig-

tailed macaque are found in Sebangau along with clouded leopards, sun bears, bearded pigs, tree shrews, water monitors, pythons, over 200 species of bird including the rhinoceros hornbill, Wallace's hawk eagle and the endemic Bornean bristlehead, and a large and diverse invertebrate community.

Sebangau is a wild environment and animal encounters are unpredictable and cannot be guaranteed. However, BNF's long-term orangutan and gibbon research has led to the habituation of some individuals/groups which means they are less likely to move away when humans approach, which in turn means you will hopefully be able to see them in their natural habitat during your visit.



WHAT BNF OFFERS: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

Borneo Nature Foundation's school expeditions are open to schools from both within and outside Indonesia. BNF's educators and scientists will teach students, not only about peat swamp ecology, habitat monitoring techniques, biodiversity surveys and primate behavioural research, but also about the threats to the forest and the conservation strategies that are used to protect the forest against these threats.

We offer a variety of different options for school expeditions, depending on the needs of the school and the age of the students. For students and teachers alike, this represents a unique and rewarding opportunity to experience the plants and animals of the Sebangau peat swamp forest while being taught how to study and protect it. The Sebangau forest is an incredibly biodiverse and rich habitat and getting to experience it first-hand will make the theory of conservation come to life.

During your visit you will be able to:

- Learn about the flora and fauna living in peat swamp forest and the importance of protecting this valuable ecosystem
- Gain first-hand experience by joining the

BNF team in the forest and understanding how a conservation project works

- Learn from both local and international experts about forest conservation and what monitoring techniques can tell us about the forest
- Discuss the threats to the forest and strategies for peat swamp conservation to encourage students to share their own ideas and empower students to be facilitators of change in the future
- Join our Education Team and get involved in its environmental education programme with local children in Kereng Bangkirai village.

During your time in Sebangau, you will hopefully have a chance to observe some of the magnificent wildlife that calls this forest home, including orangutans, white-bearded gibbons, sun bears, bearded pigs, clouded leopards, water monitors, over 200 species of bird including the rhinoceros hornbill, Wallace's hawk eagle and the endemic Bornean bristlehead, and a large and diverse invertebrate community. Our advice: use all your senses and don't forget to check out the small stuff!



BASE CAMP

You will be based in the Laboratorium Alam Hutan Gambut (LAHG) research site which is managed by our Indonesian counterparts, UPT LLG-CIMTROP at the University of Palangka Raya. Camp is located just inside the Sebangau forest edge and is approximately one hour by car, boat and - uniquely - small train, from the provincial capital of Palangka Raya.



Facilities in camp are basic but comfortable, including:

- Accommodation in shared single-sex rooms with 2 bunk-beds per room (4 rooms) for students; twin rooms with single beds for teachers/chaperones
- Local style shower and toilets (only one western-style toilet)
- Clothes washing facilities
- Communal study and relaxation areas
- Kitchen and dining room where our amazing cooks produce food that can cater to varied dietary requirements such as gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian, as long as we have the relevant information prior to the visit
- Drinking water, tea, coffee
- Solar panels that provide electricity for all areas of camp



ACTIVITIES

Schools will work with the BNF team to create a schedule of activities that fits with the objectives of their visit. Please find below the different activities you can choose from to build the schedule for your visit, and some suggestions for one-, two- and four-day “packages” you might want to consider.

Please note: All visits to LAHG Sebangau camp begin with a session on health and safety protocols and hazard awareness to ensure that all those entering the forest are fully aware of the potential dangers and how to avoid them. Neither groups nor individuals are permitted to enter the forest without at least one member of BNF staff accompanying them.

All of BNF's activities will be carried out in English and/or Indonesian so all students and teachers/chaperones must have a good working knowledge of one or both of these

languages, particularly for health and safety purposes.

All participants will be required to read and sign a “Hazard Awareness” form. For students under 18, a parent/guardian will be required to sign the form on their behalf prior to the visit.





1. Discover Sebangau camp (2h)

This activity will introduce all participants to the LAHG Sebangau research camp to learn how a research camp works, going over BNF's rules and policies (including health and safety and hazard awareness) and meeting the research team that will join you during the visit. This is a compulsory activity for all groups at the beginning of the visit.



2. Introduction to Sebangau forest (3h)

During this activity, the students will experience the wonder of Sebangau while learning how to navigate the forest. During a scavenger hunt-style activity, they will search for research-related items which have been hidden in the forest and learn about how these items are used. This activity is always done on the first day as an introduction to the forest.



3. What's the big deal with insects? (2-3h)

Learn about the importance of insects (butterflies and damselflies/dragonflies) as ecological indicator species for the health of the forest ecosystem. The students will also learn how to identify the species and sex of the individuals, and about the life cycle of these fascinating insects.



4. Discover the secret species of Borneo using technology (1-2h)

Students will learn about the importance of camera traps in assessing biodiversity, and how to identify species living in Sebangau forest using BNF's camera trap photos and videos.



5. Learn about our closest relatives (1h)

In this activity, the students will learn about BNF's three focal primate species: orangutans, gibbons and red langur monkeys. Monitoring the behaviour and ecology of these key primate species in Sebangau is one of BNF's long-term research objectives. Over the years, BNF has collected a vast amount of information about these primates, and will share some of our discoveries with the students.



6. The songsters of the forest (3-4h depending how long the gibbons sing)

Students will learn how to identify gibbon group locations and estimate population density using gibbon song. Students will have the opportunity to go into the forest at dawn and listen to the gibbon great calls and duets. Back at camp, students will learn how to determine the number of groups detected. This activity starts around 4am.



7. Orangutan sleeping habits (2h)

Orangutan nest surveys are used to calculate orangutan population. Students will learn about orangutans' sleeping behaviour while joining the BNF team who will show them orangutan nests in the forest. They will learn how to classify the size, height, age and position of the nests.



8. Flora in focus (3h)

Students will learn why surveying vegetation plots is important to understand forest structure and flora species composition, and how to identify several key characteristics (seedlings, saplings, lianas, orchids, ferns, canopy density etc.).



9. Save the Sebangau forest! (2-4h depending on what activities are included)

Students will learn about the causes and impact of fires and other factors threatening peat swamp forests, and the restoration and conservation techniques used to protect and aid regeneration of the forest. The session can include visiting an area which was burned in 2015 to see first-hand the damage done by fire. This will be followed by a brainstorming session with the students – “How can you help?” – during which they will discuss what they can contribute to conservation.



10. Education for conservation (all day)

The BNF Education team will come to camp to introduce students to BNF's environmental education programme and explain why local environmental education is vital for forest conservation. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in BNF environmental education activities with “Anak Sebangau”, a group of local children from Kereng Bangkirai, the village closest to camp, and introduce the children to their traditions while learning about Dayak culture.

Schools are welcome to bring resources and activities already prepared to share during this activity.



11. Night-time activities (1h)

- Night walk: Using boardwalks, go into the forest in small groups to experience the nocturnal hum of Sebangau and hopefully see some of the forest's most elusive wildlife. Silence and head-torches essential! This can be done several times during your visit if you bring a large group, or if students are keen and have the energy.
- Documentary: As a group, we will watch a documentary to raise students' awareness of the plight of orangutans and the threats to their survival in the wild, followed by a discussion to encourage students to share their perception of the situation and brainstorm solutions for animal and forest conservation.



12. Optional extras (all these activities are done in Palangka Raya and each is costed separately)

- Day trip to a local orangutan sanctuary, including pre-release island tour and visit to the information centre (full morning)
- Dayak dancing session (3h)
- Batik painting (students must be 16 years old or older) (4h)

EXAMPLE PACKAGES TO CONSIDER

The packages outlined below will hopefully give you an idea of how your visit could look, but our International Visits team will be happy to work with you to create a package that is tailored to your needs:

TWO DAY PACKAGE	day 1	day 2
Morning	Discover Sebangau camp	<i>Breakfast</i> What's the big deal with insects? Discover the secret species of Borneo using technology
Afternoon	<i>Lunch</i> Introduction to Sebangau forest	<i>Lunch</i> Save the Sebangau forest and "How can you help?"
Evening	<i>Dinner</i> Night walk	-

FOUR DAY PACKAGE	day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4
Morning	Discover Sebangau camp	<i>Breakfast</i> Flora in focus	The songsters of the forest <i>Breakfast</i> Orangutan sleeping habits Rest	<i>Breakfast</i> Education for conservation
Afternoon	<i>Lunch</i> Introduction to the Sebangau forest	<i>Lunch</i> What's the big deal with insects? Learn about our closest relatives	<i>Lunch</i> Save the Sebangau forest and "How can you help?"	<i>Lunch</i> Anak Sebangau
Evening	<i>Dinner</i> Night walk	<i>Dinner</i> Rest	<i>Dinner</i> Documentary	-

COSTS

Please contact us to discuss a personalised schedule and quote. The cost of the visit is dependent upon group size, schedule and inclusion of any “optional extras”.

All quotes include:

- Airport transfer to/from Palangka Raya
- All food and accommodation in town and at camp
- Local transport from Palangka Raya to camp (car/bus, boat, lori (dry season only))
- BNF staff support throughout the duration of your visit
- BNF has a fully stocked First Aid Kit at camp in case of an emergency, but we require all schools to bring their own medical supplies, including small kits to take to the forest
- Contribution to support the long-term conservation projects of Borneo Nature Foundation and our partners at the University of Palangka Raya including support for the Sebangau Patrol and fire-fighting teams.

Quotes do not include:

- Visa costs
- International and domestic airfares
- Travel insurance
- Other personal costs such as toiletries, extra drinks, snacks and souvenirs

CONTACT DETAILS

If you are interested in bringing a group of students to Sebangau to learn about research and conservation in a peat swamp forest, please contact join@borneonature.org for further details.

Address

Borneo Nature Foundation
Jalan Bukit Raya No. 17
Palangkaraya 73112
Central Kalimantan
Indonesia

For more information please check the BNF website at www.borneonaturefoundation.org/en/school-expeditions/

We look forward to hearing from you and working together to create an incredible experience for you in Sebangau!



Borneo Nature Foundation

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