



## CHEESEMAN'S ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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### Borneo

#### *Primates of the Ancient Forest*

May 3 to 19, 2022



Orangutan  
© Charlie Ryan

## SAFARI OVERVIEW

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Explore an island with pristine ecosystems, home to charismatic and rare wildlife and one of the oldest rainforests in the world. Visit an orangutan sanctuary where these charming gentle giants feed and socialize. Take in breathtaking views atop the rainforest canopy while watching birds weave their way through the foliage. Cruise the Kinabatangan River with pygmy elephants bathing along its riverbanks. Visit Mount Kinabalu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, known for its diverse habitats and incredible diversity of flora and fauna, including 18 endemics. Participate in game drives and jungle walks through various habitats to observe orangutans, Bornean gibbons, proboscis monkeys, maroon langurs, and so much more! Discover one of the most species-rich equatorial rainforests on this unique island.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre and observe orangutans visiting feeding grounds in the rainforest.
- Explore the Kinabalu National Park, a birdwatcher's paradise with 326 bird species.
- Discover the Gomantong Caves and experience the million-bat exodus.
- Marvel atop the Danum Valley as the sunrise burns off the morning mist, revealing the forest canopy below.

**LEADER:** Charlie Ryan.

**DAYS:** 17, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 8.

**COST:** \$10,440 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Lahad Datu to Kota Kinabalu), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 5.

**TRANSPORTATION:** In open-air trucks that allow for wildlife viewing along the way. The river safaris are in private boats that are stable and wide, which are great for photography.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
May 3–4	Travel to Sandakan, Sabah, Borneo.		
May 5	Arrive in Sandakan, Sabah, Borneo. Enjoy a welcome dinner.	Sepilok Nature Resort, Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve	D
May 6	Explore the Sepilok Forest Reserve. Visit the Orangutan Sanctuary and Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre.	Sepilok Nature Resort, Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve	B, L, D
May 7–9	Spend two full days of birding, jungle walks, and river safaris through the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. Explore nearby Gomantong Caves and watch the bat exodus cloud the sky.	Sukau Rainforest Lodge, near Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary	B, L, D
May 10–11	Discover the Tabin Wildlife Reserve with afternoon and nighttime exploration and game drives. Hike to a mud volcano for stunning views of the surrounding forest.	Tabin Wildlife Resort, Tabin Wildlife Reserve	B, L, D
May 12–14	Travel to Danum Valley and contemplate the undisturbed rainforest and its pristine, diverse ecosystems.	Borneo Rainforest Lodge, Danum Valley Conservation Area	B, L, D
May 15	Enjoy breakfast as the sun rises over Danum Valley. Optional morning trek before flying to Kota Kinabalu.	Kota Kinabalu Marriott Hotel	B, L, D
May 16–17	Drive to Kinabalu National Park and explore this UNESCO World Heritage Site.	Hill Lodge, Kinabalu National Park	B, L, D
May 18	Spend one last morning birding and walking through the park. Return to Kota Kinabalu for flights homeward.		B, L
May 19	Arrive home.		

## LEADER

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### **Charlie Ryan**

After signing up for a volunteer program in Indonesia in 2008, Charlie was re-routed to Sabah, Borneo where he helped set up community initiative programs for the Abai village. He has resided in Sabah ever since. Charlie guides for the National Geographic Adventure groups in Borneo and helps train nature guides, providing them with first-hand knowledge and experience. He is also an avid photographer, which compliments his passion for wildlife, culture, and travel.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

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### **May 3–4 ~ Travel to Sandakan, Sabah, Borneo**

Depart for Malaysian Borneo.

### **May 5 ~ Arrive in Borneo**

Arrive in Sandakan, Sabah, Borneo. You will be greeted at the airport and transferred to the Sepilok Nature Resort, located amongst the forest not far outside of the city. Once settled in, your guide will give you a trip briefing, followed by a welcome dinner. After dinner, head out for an optional night walk in the forest to search for nocturnal wildlife.

### **May 6 ~ Sepilok Forest Reserve**

Spend the next two days exploring the Sepilok Forest Reserve and its surroundings. You will participate in early morning canopy walks, searching for birds and mammals unique to this region. Visit the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre and witness these gentle primates feed and interact in the rainforest. Enjoy day and night treks through the forest to observe wildlife including giant red flying squirrels emerging from their nests and “flying” up to 500ft between trees. You will also get a behind-the-scenes tour with the founder of the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre and learn about the Bornean sun bear.



Orangutan  
© Charlie Ryan

### **May 7–9 ~ Kinabatangan River and Wildlife Sanctuary**

Continue to the Kinabatangan River, home to one of the highest concentrations of wildlife in all of Borneo. After settling into your lodge for the next few days, go on a dusk cruise in search of orangutans, hornbills, slow lorises, western tarsiers, civets, proboscis monkeys, and more. Watch the sun rise as you embark on an early morning river safari cruise to explore this region’s natural beauty and rich wildlife diversity. Before lunch, enjoy another walk through the jungle to search for wildlife accompanied by a talk from an orangutan expert. After lunch, you will embark on a short boat ride and transfer to the famous Gomantong Caves to spend the afternoon exploring these caves and their surroundings. At dusk, you will get a chance to see a mind-boggling bat exodus, where over one million bats emerge from the cave to feed in the night. After dinner, head back out for a night cruise in search of nocturnal wildlife on the riverbanks.

### May 10–11 ~ Tabin Wildlife Reserve

Drive to one of the most biodiverse regions of Borneo, the Tabin Wildlife Reserve, which boasts an impressive 220 bird species as well as the wild banteng cattle. You will explore the reserve in 4x4 off-road vehicles in the hope of witnessing leopard cats, marbled cats, flying squirrels, and binturong bearcats in their natural habitats. Participate in a morning trek to the mud volcano, where salt-enriched mud bubbles up and attracts many different animals. Climb an observation tower and soak in the stunning views of the surrounding forest canopies. You will meet the executive director of the Borneo Rhino Alliance who will teach you about current Sumatran rhino conservation efforts. Here, you will also take part in nightly game drives to find nocturnal wildlife.



Clouded Leopard  
© Charlie Ryan

### May 12–14 ~ Danum Valley

Travel to Danum Valley, known for its 150 square miles of virtually undisturbed primary rain forest. You will spend your time exploring the local nature trails on your own or with a guide. Stretch your legs with a moderately challenging hike to a nearby waterfall or go on a canopy walk in the treetops surrounding the lodge. Bird life is especially diverse, with more than 275 recorded species. You will have a chance to witness rare species such as pygmy elephants, clouded leopards, endemic Bornean gibbon, and endemic maroon langur. Witness a dazzling sunrise over the valley from atop an observation tower. You will also go on a guided night walk to experience the forest when it is buzzing with activity.

### May 15 ~ Danum Valley Sunrise and Kota Kinabalu

Wake up before dawn for a drive to the top of Danum valley to enjoy breakfast while watching the sunrise. As the sea of mist dissipates, it reveals the forest in the valley below. Upon return to the lodge, join an optional trek before checking out and driving to Lahad Datu for your flight to Kota Kinabalu. Once checked into your hotel, enjoy a dinner altogether to celebrate the incredible journey through the jungle.



Proboscis Monkey with Baby  
© Charlie Ryan

### May 16–17 ~ Kota Kinabalu and Kinabalu National Park

You will travel the scenic road up to Kadamaian Valley on the way to Kinabalu National Park. Enjoy an afternoon birding in the park. Kinabalu National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its incredible diversity of flora and fauna. The park's Mount Kinabalu is a granite intrusion formed 15 million years ago and thrust up one million years ago from tectonic movements that continue to shape its landscape today. It contains a wide range of habitats including rich tropical lowland and hill rainforest to tropical mountain forest, sub-alpine forest, and scrub on the higher elevations.

Enjoy a full day exploring the various trails at the base of the park while birding. This park is a birdwatcher's paradise with about 326 species recorded, representing over half the bird species in Borneo (18 are Bornean endemics). As you traverse the beautiful scenery, try spotting some of the endemics (found only in Borneo) which include the mountain black eye, the mountain blackbird, the Bornean treepie, the Kinabalu friendly warbler, the Kinabalu serpent eagle, the Bornean mountain whistler, the Everett's thrush, and the whitehead's trio.

### May 18 ~ Fly home

Spend the morning birding and walking in the park. Depart Kota Kinabalu for flights homeward.

## May 19 ~ Arrive home

Arrive home today depending on your flight schedule.

## COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

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### Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$10,440
Single Supplement	\$3,340

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Lahad Datu to Kota Kinabalu), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

### Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$500
Second	June 15, 2021	\$2,000
Final	November 15, 2021	Remaining balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

### Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another trip if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

### Included

- All leaders, transport, camera fees, park entry fees, landing fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- One-way flight from Lahad Datu to Kota Kinabalu.
- Accommodations for the nights of May 5 through May 17.
- Meals from dinner on May 5 through lunch on May 18.
- Transfer from Sandakan Airport to Sepilok Nature Resort on May 5 and to Kota Kinabalu Airport on May 18.
- Non-alcoholic bottled beverages throughout the trip and snacks during travel between destinations.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.
- Lectures from an orangutan expert and from the executive director of the Borneo Rhino Alliance.
- Private access to Sun Bear Centre.

- Mammals of Borneo book.

### **Not Included**

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Airfare is approximately \$1,000 to \$3,000 from the US to Sabah, Borneo and back to US from Kota Kinabalu, depending on origin.
- Passport and visa fees.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$335 to \$355 total per participant for the entire trip.
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance and trip cancellation insurance. For more information see [www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance](http://www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

## **SIGN UP**

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Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Email: [info@cheesemans.com](mailto:info@cheesemans.com)

Website: [www.cheesemans.com](http://www.cheesemans.com)

WhatsApp: (408) 741-5330 | Skype: CheesemansEcologySafaris

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## **OTHER DETAILS**

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### **Climate**

Temperatures vary greatly. The lower altitudes are often hot, while the forests and higher altitudes can be surprisingly cool. In May, the average daytime temperature in Borneo is in the mid 80s°F (28°C), with highs in the low 90s°F (33°C); the evenings get down into the mid 70s°F (24°C). Temperatures in the forest and at higher altitudes are only slightly cooler, averaging 75 to 85°F (25 to 29°C). Although May is considered the dry season, rain can be encountered at any time of year.

### **Fitness Level**

Most wildlife viewing is done from small boats, vehicles, and on foot. Walks to search for wildlife are generally less than an hour long and along relatively flat trails or gravel roads. You have the option to split into smaller groups based on desired level of exercise. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

## **Flights**

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Sandakan, Malaysia (SDK) anytime on May 5. Depart from Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (BKI) after 5:00pm on May 18.

Flights we book for you: The one-way flight from Lahad Datu to Kota Kinabalu is included in the trip cost.

## **Terms and Conditions**

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

## **Conservation**

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project ([www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/](http://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/)).