

Wild Borneo (10 Days)



Departs anytime (2018 – 2019)



Please note: This itinerary can be modified in any way to best suit your school's particular aims, learning objectives and budget.

Please contact us detailing any changes you'd like to make.

Whilst Borneo's Dayak groups stopped headhunting long ago, the ancient customs and ceremonies of this intriguing corner of Asia remain a great lure for those looking for a fun & physical Asian adventure. This 10-day trip to East Malaysian (Borneo) is specifically designed for students intrigued by environmental issues, animals and anthropology.

Highlights of this adventure will include a challenging 3-day hiking activity, an up-close encounter with Borneo's enigmatic orangutans, visits to less travelled tribal regions and an excursion to the incredible Mulu caves - the largest and most accessible of their kind in the world.

This trip is further intended to provide students with a social and cultural understanding of Malaysia and the island states that make up this always welcoming and amazing Asian nation.



David Eales
Asia Manager

Day 1

Kuching



The varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds of Borneo's people have made this island (also occupied by Indonesia and the Sultanate of Brunei) a melting pot of diversity that we will soon learn more about on arrival.

After being greeted by our tour leader on arrival in Kuching, we will be escorted to our hotel and begin a quick orientation tour.

Meaning 'cat' in Malay, Kuching is a pleasant and green city, once home to the infamous White Raja of Sarawak, whose mysterious rule in this remote corner of the world sparked the imagination of many people who dreamt of becoming royalty.

This evening we will enjoy a stroll around this city's vibrant waterfront home to a plethora of hawker stalls and a thriving fish market. Here we will enjoy our first takes of fine Malaysia cuisine this evening - *Sarawak laksa*, *Kolok mee* and *roti chanai*. (lunch, dinner)

Day 2

Bako National Park



After breakfast, we will depart for the fishing village of Kampung Bako where we will catch a local boat up the coast to Bako National Park. Bako is the oldest national park in Sarawak and features rainforest, abundant wildlife, jungle streams, waterfalls, interesting plant life, secluded beaches and trekking trails. Millions of years of erosion formed a coastline of steep cliffs, rocky headlands and stretches of white, sandy bays. Waves have carved the cliffs into fantastically shaped sea arches and sea-stacks, with coloured patterns formed by iron deposits. Here we will enjoy an energetic walk (2-3 hours) to the beautiful beach at Telok Pandan Kecil.

The trail climbs through the forest before emerging onto an open plateau covered in scrub, from where curious pitcher plants can sometimes be discovered, as well as the quirky proboscis monkeys up in the trees. Our accommodation this evening will be in comfortable but simple park lodgings (fan cooled, dormitory style rooms (separate for female & male students). This evening we will enjoy a visit to a beach to observe wildlife at sunset, which may include turtles and other aquatic animal before returning to our lodge accommodation for dinner. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 3

Kuching



After breakfast, we will return to Bako Village by boat and then back to Kuching this morning. Later this morning we will visit the Semenggoh Orangutan Sanctuary – a government-funded rehabilitation centre set in lush surrounds. The centre was set up to help re-introduce these wonderful creatures back into the wild after a life of domestication or having been orphaned. Here we will head into the jungle where we can observe the region's most iconic species as they swing into view and eat the supplementary diet of bananas and milk that is laid out for them twice a day.

We will return to Kuching this afternoon, enjoy lunch and then famous Sarawak Museum (one of the most popular attractions here), and later head out to one of the many Chinese-influenced hawker markets for dinner and experience the range of local delicacies. (breakfast, lunch)

Day 4

Kuching Miri

A short flight today will take us to the far-flung town of Miri. (*Note: We will need to carry your own backpack out to the longhouse and along the head-hunters trail in Mulu*). On arrival, we will travel to Niah National park, a place where the oldest human remains in South East Asia have been unearthed, dating back 40,000 years. Here we will visit a small museum before starting our four kilometres walk through the rainforest to Niah Caves – famous for its bats and moreover, the ancient cave paintings and signs of early human settlement that can be found here. We

will continue a further two kilometres to an Iban longhouse where we will spend the night. On arrival, our tour leader will introduce us to our hosts.

This is a very traditional and authentic experience, so please be aware that the sleeping and bathing arrangements are very basic. In the afternoon we will wander around the village or help your host family with dinner preparations. In the evening we may be invited to watch a culture performance by the local village followed by a rustic, local dinner. *NB: Our main luggage will be sent ahead whilst we will need to carry our day packs for the next 3 days. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)*

Day 5

Miri Mulu National Park



Our adventure continues this morning as we travel deeper into the Borneo interior, farewelling our hosts and then returning to Miri for our 30-minute flight to Mulu. On arrival in Mulu, we will head into the heart of one of the most spectacular national parks in Asia – Gunung Mulu National Park. We transfer the short distance to Mulu HQ where we'll stay for the next two nights. Later we will enjoy a highly enjoyable treetop adventure on the world's longest tree-based canopy walkway. At dusk, we will enjoy a night walk to search for some weird and wonderful insects and reptiles. Tonight, we'll stay in the park headquarters where we will be retiring to our dormitory style accommodation. (breakfast,

lunch)

Day 6

Mulu National Park



Today we will board longboats and travel up river to explore the 180-million-year-old rainforest and caves for which this park is duly famous. The World Heritage-listed park is recognised for its unparalleled cave networks, rock pinnacles, and sublime limestone geology. This system is the largest known and navigable cave system in the world. It is formed when surface waters worked its way through the rock, carving through gigantic passages.

Perhaps the most famous of all caves is the Deer Cave, which at some two kilometres long and 220 metres tall is the biggest internal cavern so far

discovered.

After a light lunch, we will take a refreshing swim in a cave feed river (designated swimming area) and then later enjoy a mass exodus of bats as they emerge for their nightly feeding, like a seemingly endless black plume of smoke twisting across the sky. In the nearby Lang cave, you can appreciate the work that the water does on the limestone, sculpting waves on the ceiling, drawing stalagmites, columns and stalactites. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 7

Mulu National Park



We will farewell park HQ this morning and venture deeper into the Borneo interior, en route exploring the amazing Clearwater and Wind caves, which contain Asia's longest underwater river. The system gets its name from the bright jungle pool at the base of the steps that lead up to the cave mouth. Wind Cave draws a cooling breeze through its lengths and features some of Gunung Mulu's best cave formations. We will continue our journey by longboat downriver before disembarking to hike through undisturbed jungle to Camp 5, nestled at the end of Melinau Gorge (approximately 8 kilometres).

During the dry season, we may at the time have to disembark our boats to help push them over stone and obstacles in the river so we will need to wear strap on sandals or shoes that can get wet. At Camp 5 we will sleep in these wonderful surrounds; mats on raised open-air platforms in a mixed gender dormitory. Dinner will be a basic yet tasty affair this evening. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 8

Mulu National Park



Today we'll tackle the infamous Headhunters' trail. Located in an isolated area of the Borneo jungles, this 12-kilometre (approximately 5 hours) trail takes its name from its historical role as the route taken by warring parties between the Tutoh and Limbang rivers. The trek journeys through the dense jungle along a well-defined, mainly flat track, although the way can be muddy during the rainy season. We'll also have to cross some streams by rope bridges, wooden walkways - surrounded by stunningly diverse flora, massive bird-filled trees, and the magical sounds of the forest – a hornbill flapping its wings, the cries of monkeys, and the pulse of cicadas and crickets.

This afternoon we will board our boat from Kuala Trekian to Kuala Medamit, a journey of around 3-4 hours, depending on how much rainfall there has been. This challenging but rewarding day will finish as we disembark our boat for our bus transfer to the town of Limbang. Here, comfortable hotel accommodation awaits us with our luggage and dinner ready. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Day 9

Kota Kinabalu



We will leave Limbang by ferry this morning travelling about two hours before boarding another ferry to Kota Kinabalu. Modern-day 'KK' is a vibrant modern metropolis, having recovered from World War II bombings. Time permitting, we will have a chance to see some of KK's places of interests including its state mosque, a Chinese temple and the Sabah Museum to learn of the region's indigenous people.

Tonight, we will head out for a final meal to celebrate your Borneo adventure – the night market is filled with fresh grilled seafood. (breakfast, dinner)

Day 10

Kota Kinabalu ✈ Home

This morning there will be a short time to explore the town's fascinating natural history museum before our we transfer to the airport for flight back home. Our tour leader will escort us to the airport and assist us with all our onward travel arrangements and wave us farewell. (breakfast)

Ascent of Mt. Kinabalu option (alternative option to 3-day hike)



As an alternative to the three-day hiking activity from Mulu National park to Limbang, students can elect to do a 2-day visit to Mulu national park and then transfer to Mt. Kinabalu for a 2-day climbing activity.

Please contact us for a full alternative itinerary.

Mt. Kinabalu (Mountain ascent) Awaking early this morning, we will enjoy a big breakfast before we depart Kota Kinabalu and head to the Kinabalu National Park to begin our rewarding (and challenging) 2 day climb to the summit of the tallest (4095m) mountain in South-East Asia guided all the way by our knowledgeable local guides. Fortunately, Mt Kinabalu is one of the

easier peaks in the world to conquer, and students do not need any previous experiences in mountain climbing. However, there is an expectation to a reasonable standard of fitness. After an easy start, the eight-kilometre trail to the top gradually becomes steeper whilst all along the trail are rest huts every kilometre or so. Later in the day as the rainforest canopy becomes increasingly dense, we will arrive at Labuan Rata (3345m) hill station for dinner and a very early (and much anticipated) night's sleep. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Mt. Kinabalu (Mountain descent) Poring Hot Springs

Beginning at about 4:00 am (!) we will enjoy a very light breakfast as we head off into the darkness. After seemingly endless flights of stairs and ascents up the rocky trail, we will emerge on to a small rocky plateau for our final assault on Low's Peak (summit). As we trudge further, the views out over the clouds and the valleys below are simply breathtaking, making all the effort worthwhile as we finally reach the top of Low's Peak, enjoying incredible views in all directions across the South China Sea to the Philippines. Arriving at the base of the mountain around midday we will enjoy a well-earned meal before heading south this afternoon to bathe our wiry bones in some delightful Sulphur springs.

(breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Summary

Grading

Challenging; Students will be required to be in good health to get the most out of this trip whilst any one of reasonable fitness will be able to take part. There are no real physical difficulties however students will be expected to walk every day. You will also be expected to be able to participate in a hiking activity. It will be necessary for you to carry your own luggage throughout the trip but only for short distances.

Accommodation

Student accommodation is on a twin/triple share basis. Teacher accommodation is on a single room basis. Hotels hold a 3-star equivalent rating.

Transport

Modern air-conditioned bus, plane, long boat, ferry bicycle.

Group Size

Minimum group size 20 students & 2 staff members travelling *free of charge*.

▲ [Smaller group sizes can be quoted upon application](#)

Your Tour Leader

Your tour leader is probably the person who most influences the success of your trip. Thus, Student Educational Adventures employs our own team of meticulously trained student dedicated, local tour leaders - not foreigners, imported at your students' expense with no language skills or insight into your host culture.

These nationals are not only the best folk to show you their country. They are your teachers, translators and an enthusiastic purveyor of authentic experiences. They are there to facilitate your immersion into new cultures and are the bridge between you and the world of education and new experiences.

Your tour leader is always with your students throughout your trip and is thoroughly versed in safety protocols and duty of care responsibilities. This ranges from assisting in the most basic of health and safety measures to ensuring that teachers & students are always safe during our trips. All have been chosen because of their ability to deal with the needs and unique issues associated with escorting young people through this wonderful and at times, most foreign of regions.

Wild Borneo (10 Days)

Inclusions

- All accommodation, transport, activities, entrance costs and other programs as describe in the itinerary
- *Student Educational Adventures* tour leader throughout the trip & additional specialist guides
- **2 internal flights; Kuching – Miri, Miri – Mulu National Park**
- Meals (+ drinking water) as listed in the daily itinerary
- Pre-departure support, briefings & planning meetings for students and parents
- 24/7 in-country support
- Tips for local guides & drivers

Exclusions

- International flights to/from Malaysia
- Some meals
- Camera, video fee at some sites
- Malaysia visa (Not required by most nationals)