

CITIZENS of the FOREST



Bornean gibbon

FACT FILE

A two week trip to Indonesia or Borneo including flights and a trip to a rehabilitation centre would cost from £2,000 per person. For details on Borneo please contact Vanessa, Jack, Sid, James or Nick on 01993 838 120. For Indonesia please contact Neil or Sarah on 01993 838 110.



Malaysia and the less developed islands of Indonesia are home to some of the most elusive and threatened primates in the world. Joanne Poole, Southeast Asia Regional Manager, discusses the various species and where to find them.

While orang-utans are the big draw to this part of the world, the region's other primates are equally fascinating. Proboscis monkeys, found only in Borneo, inhabit coastal mangrove forests and the lowland forest around inland rivers. The males have been given the name 'Dutchman' by the locals who spotted the resemblance they have to certain tourists with large red noses and pot bellies! They are remarkable looking creatures with their orange fur and white rumps: the females have delicate upturned noses and are much smaller than the males with their fleshy, bulbous noses and ginger 'toupé' hairstyles. A dominant male will have a harem of females with juveniles, and groups of over 20 individuals are not uncommon in some areas. A boat trip at dawn or dusk provides a superb opportunity to observe a family feeding and grooming in the branches overhead. You might even spot a troupe on a swimming lesson as they cross the river in search of new feeding or sleeping grounds. Bako National Park, the Garama wetlands, Labuk Bay and the Kinabatangan River area are some of the last strongholds of the proboscis monkey and can easily be incorporated into a Borneo itinerary.



You will often hear the calls of a gibbon family in the dipterocarp rainforests of Southeast Asia but living high up in the canopy they are difficult to spot. To catch a glimpse of one of these graceful tree dwellers it pays to be out in the jungle as the sun comes up. Your local guide will know where trees are fruiting and where the gibbons are likely to be feeding, but even when focused on the most important meal of the day the gibbons will see you well before you see them. Macaques present far less of a challenge for wildlife enthusiasts as they combine terrestrial and arboreal living. Long-tailed macaques are the rebels of the forest, their inquisitive nature leading to a rapid loss of fear of humans and they can be thought of as pests in certain areas. Pig-tailed macaques are larger but more reserved and tend to be seen alone or in groups of just a few individuals.

Langurs, or leaf monkeys, are some of the most endearing of the primates and five species are found in Borneo alone. The silver langur is a firm favourite for its shimmering coat, and if you are staying in Bako National Park in Sarawak you may wake to find one on the terrace.

On a night walk or safari drive you may spot a tarsier or slow loris. Both have the huge eyes that are characteristic of a nocturnal lifestyle and as



Male proboscis monkey

they move far more slowly than their diurnal cousins you are more likely to form a lasting image of these gentle primates. Bohol in the Philippines has a number of centres where you can see tarsiers that have been rescued or surrendered by individuals keeping them illegally. We try to ensure that Audley clients support the centres that make a valuable contribution to the species' conservation.

The best known of Asia's primates is our close relative the orang-utan or "man of the forest". Once widely distributed in Southeast Asia the largest of the tree dwelling primates is now confined to parts of Sabah, Kalimantan and northern Sumatra. Sumatran and Bornean orang-utans are different species and a trained eye can easily tell them apart. Sumatran orang-utans have lighter coats with longer, finer hair. They are taller and thinner with longer faces whilst the male Bornean orang-utans have broader cheek flanges. The threat to orang-utans comes from many angles: illegal hunting and trading, habitat destruction for farm land and plantations, and the encroachment of humans on their forests. Steps are being taken to protect these magnificent creatures and the Semengok and Sepilok rehabilitation centres in Malaysian Borneo,



Long-tailed macaques



Pig-tailed macaques

Bohorok in Sumatra, and Camp Leakey in Kalimantan are superb places to learn about the natural history and conservation of orang-utans. We can recommend rainforest stays in these areas where sightings of wild orang-utans are common.

Joanne Poole
Southeast Asia Regional Manager

WEB PLUS
www.audleytravel.com/group-tours
For details of our escorted group tour to Borneo in spring 2008



Rare tarsier monkey, Bohol