

ANNUAL REPORT: BORNEO NATURE FOUNDATION PRIMATE BEHAVIOUR 2019 FIELD SCHOOL

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Students learning how to measure trees for forest growth.

The 2019 Borneo Primate Behavior Field School first and foremost, aimed to give students an experience that would inform them about the biodiversity of peat-swamp forests, enhance their research techniques and conservation strategies, and give them the tools to promote environmental awareness and appreciation. Secondly, to educate the students about primate's behavior, conservation, ecology, diversity; and the different techniques to survey primates. Thirdly, to promote cultural understanding and exchange among international students, local researchers and children from the Anak Sebangau Programme. Lastly, to further develop the profile of NLPSF as a Centre of Excellence for research, conservation and education.

Students were welcomed with a CIMTROP presentation, ultimately an introduction lecture about BNF (What is BNF, our missions, our research activities) and a presentation about Sebangau primates. Soon after, students were introduced into their field site, students slept on bunk beds in single-sex dormitory style rooms, equipped with mosquito nets, pillows, mattresses and sheets provided by BNF. Lectures were daily, they were informal yet informative. The lectures fostered field training and precautions that were necessary in navigating the forest with ease and confidence. At the beginning, the forest walks were accompanied by a GPS/compass game to enhance student's forest orientation. Every member of

the staff was an ecologist of sorts, each with unique skills in wildlife observation and technical expertise that they were happy to share with students.

By using specific BNF primate data sheets, students were able to take note of the difference between sampling types of groups vs. individuals. Students got to train to observe primates and learn the behavioral data collection techniques throughout the field school session. Observation work started early mornings, from nest to nest for orangutans and from sleeping tree to sleeping tree for gibbons. Forest monitoring methods involved surveying primates: transects, nest counts; call triangulation, drones, passive acoustic monitoring and camera traps. Students studied the activity budgets, diet and energetics, social behavior, reproduction and development, and the triangulation patterns of gibbons, red langurs, and the Borneo Orangutans by doing primate follows. It was critical to take ethical precautions before going on a follow, due to the sensitivity of the all the primate species, this year was overall very successful in doing so.

Students were also able to take a field trip and explore the Kaja Island and visit the Nyaru Menteng rehabilitation center.

Data collected during the 2 weeks will contribute to work being presented at the 5th [Indonesian Primate Congress](#) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia from 18-20 September 2019.