Malaysia & Borneo

Sarawak & Sabah Endemics



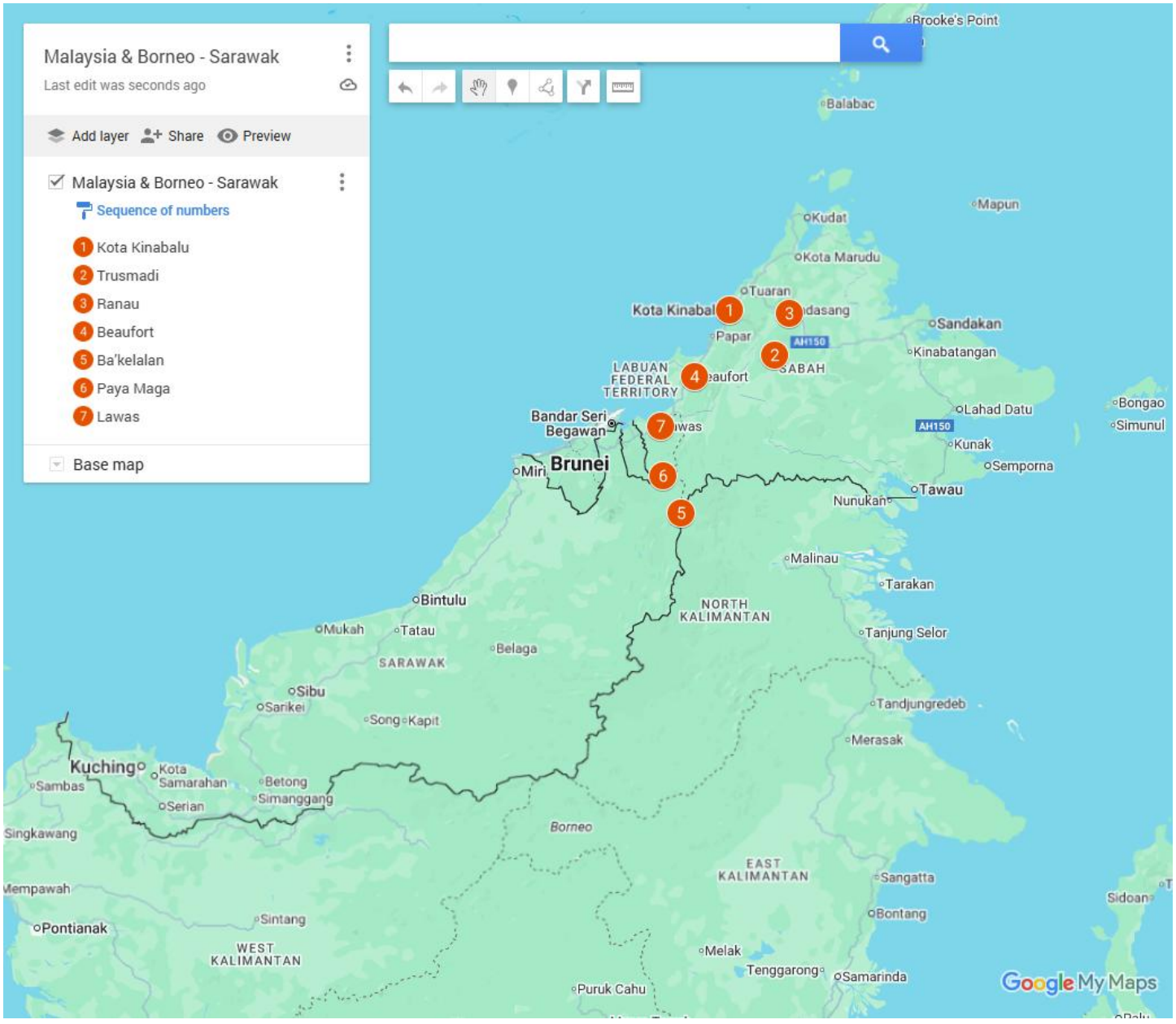
Bornean Peacock-Pheasant by Glen Valentine

This exciting tour takes us deep into the vast and remote ocean of forest that cloaks the Sarawak and Sabah provinces of Borneo. There, using recently made tracks and trails to gain access to these forests, we will endeavour to find several of the island's seldom-seen endemics, including the once-mythical Bornean Peacock-Pheasant, Bulwer's Pheasant, Black Oriole, and Dulit Frogmouth. We also have excellent chances of finding additional much-desired specials such as Whitehead's and Hose's Broadbills, Whitehead's Spiderhunter, Crested Partridge, Bornean, and Mountain Barbets, Blue-banded and Bornean Banded Pittas, Bornean Frogmouth, Pygmy White-eye, Mountain Serpent Eagle, the monotypic Rail-babbler and Crested Jayshrike, Bornean and Hook-billed Bulbuls and Bornean Leafbird, among many other fabulous birds!

On its own, this tour offers a chance at seeing around half of the island's endemics, while as an add-on to our Malaysia & Borneo – Rainforest Mammals and Birds tour, the combination could add nearly 95% of the island's endemics to your list!

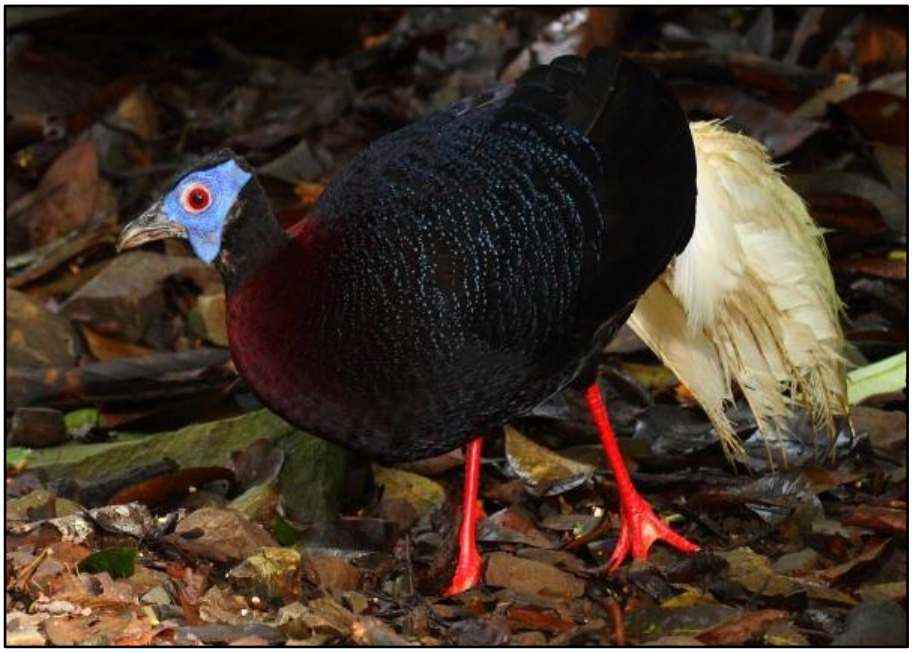
Itinerary & Map

Day 1	**Arrival in Kota Kinabalu, transfer to Trusmadi Mountain**
Day 2	**Trusmadi to Ranau area**
Day 3	**Bornean Peacock-Pheasant quest**
Day 4	**Ranau to Beaufort**
Day 5	**Beaufort to Ba'kelalan via Klias Wetland Park**
Days 6 & 7	**Ba'kelalan area**
Day 8	**Ba'kelalan to Paya Maga area**
Day 9	**Paya Maga**
Day 10	**Paya Maga to Kota Kinabalu via Lawas; final departure**



Birding sites in detail

Trusmadi Mountain. Our focus here will be on pheasants, specifically some of the most rarely observed, once-mythical species; Bulwer's Pheasant, Great Argus and Crested Partridge that will hopefully come into the strategically situated hides/blinds that we'll be visiting. Other high-quality species that frequently visit these hides include the gorgeous and endemic Bornean Banded Pitta, Dayak Blue Flycatcher, White-crowned Shama, Temminck's, Short-tailed, Bornean Black-capped and rarely-seen White-necked Babblers, Brown Fulvetta, Penan Bulbul, and with extreme luck, perhaps the shy Chestnut-capped Thrush.



Bulwer's Pheasant by Glen Valentine

A strong supporting cast of Helmeted, Wreathed and Rhinoceros Hornbills, Mountain, Bornean, Red-throated and Golden-whiskered Barbets, Temminck's Sunbird, Bornean, Streaked and Cinereous Bulbuls, Rufous-fronted Babbler, Sunda Scimitar-Babbler, Chestnut-breasted, Red-billed and Black-faced Malkohas, Spotted Fantail, Bornean and Greater Green Leafbirds, Orange-bellied, Black-sided and Yellow-rumped Flowerpeckers, Pygmy White-eye, Maroon-breasted Philentoma, Pale Blue Flycatcher, Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrush and Bornean Treepie will keep us entertained.

Bornean Peacock-Pheasant quest. Most of our time will be dedicated to seeing the previously mythical Bornean Peacock-Pheasant. From the trail head, we'll walk for just over a mile on a muddy trail, first through oil palm plantations and then through good-quality secondary forest to a purpose built hide from where we'll wait for our quarry to appear. We also have chances for Oriental (Rufous-backed) Dwarf Kingfisher, several species of bulbul, and if we are very fortunate, a Bornean Banded or Giant Pitta might walk in.



Crested Partridge by Glen Valentine

Klias Wetland Park. This great little park, set up to protect a patch of the regionally vulnerable peat swamp, is serviced by an excellent network of boardwalks.

Ambling slowly through the peatswamp along the boardwalks is a wonderful way to access this otherwise

rather inaccessible environment and provides us with the opportunity to see some species that can be very difficult to find outside of this habitat. Chief amongst these are Red-crowned Barbet and Hook-billed Bulbul, while a chance also exists to see the scarce Chestnut-bellied Malkoha and the rare and elsuive but brilliant Scarlet-breasted Flowerpecker. Other noteworthy species may include Ashy Tailorbird, Green Iora, Greater Green Leafbird, Ruby-cheeked and Van Hasselt's Sunbirds, Fluffy-backed and Bold-striped Tit-Babblers, while Long-tailed Parakeet and Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot are often seen flying overhead.



Hose's Broadbill by Glen Valentine

Ba'kelalan area (Pulong Tau National Park). The park is situated between 900m and 1700m in altitude, along the well-forested slopes and hills that surround the broad, fertile valley where the small village of Ba'kelalan is nestled. Our key target in this area will be the near-mythical Dulit Frogmouth, a species that was only recently rediscovered after being lost to science for over a hundred years! Other fantastic birds that we'll be searching for during our time in the area include the elusive Whitehead's and Hose's Broadbills, Mountain Serpent Eagle, Philippine Cuckoo-Dove, Bornean Frogmouth, Whitehead's Spiderhunter, Golden-naped, Mountain and Bornean Barbets, Bornean, Penan, Charlotte's and Cream-eyed Bulbuls, Chestnut-crested Yuhina, Bornean Leafbird, the rare and elusive Cinnamon-rumped Trogon, the seldom-seen Fruithunter, Bornean Stubtail, Bornean Treepie, Bare-headed and Chestnut-hooded Laughingthrushes, the brilliant but very shy Blue-banded Pitta, Banded, Black-and-yellow and Duksy Broadbills, Yellow-rumped and Black-sided Flowerpeckers, Dayak Blue Flycatcher, Pygmy White-eye, . We also hope to encounter several other notable species such as Checker-throated Woodpecker, Sunda Scimitar Babbler, Black-thighed Falconet, Bar-bellied and Lesser Cuckooshrikes, Hair-crested (Bornean Spangled) Drongo, Sunda, Indian and Banded Bay Cuckoos, Cinereous and Scaly-breasted Bulbuls, Dusky and Chestnut Munias, the stunning Temminck's Sunbird, Black-bellied Malkoha, Black and Rufous-bellied Eagles, Orange-breasted and Scarlet-rumped Trogons, the impressive Wreathed and Rhinoceros Hornbills, Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher, Grey-throated Babbler and the electric Asian Fairy-bluebird.



Bornean Banded Pitta by Glen Valentine

Paya Maga. We start the hike from the road-side at 800m above sea level and climb up to 1050masl where the camp is situated. Our key target in this area will be the rare Black Oriole, a species only rediscovered in 2010 but is now regularly sighted in the area right

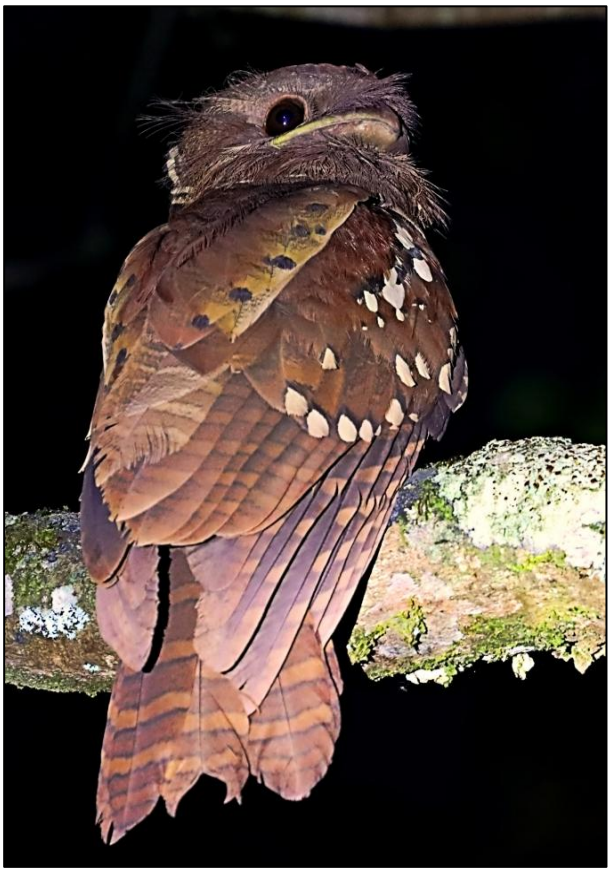
around the camp. We will also have the opportunity to see a good number of other very special species that are often difficult or impossible to locate in the more-frequented Sabah province. These include Hose's Broadbill, Rail-babbler, Bornean Leafbird, Bornean and Scaly-breasted Bulbuls, Bornean and Mountain Barbets, Helmeted Hornbill, Pygmy White-eye, Blue-banded and Bornean Banded Pittas, Black-and-white Bulbul, Malaysian Hawk-Cuckoo, Black-throated Wren-Babbler, White-tailed Flycatcher (the endemic Bornean subspecies has an all-blue tail!), the distinctive and rarely-seen endemic subspecies of Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler, Temminck's Babbler and Asia's toughest trogon, the very rare, shy and elusive Cinnamon-rumped Trogon.



Bornean Leafbird by Glen Valentine

The forest surrounding the camp we will provide a back-up chance of seeing Bornean Frogmouth should we have missed it at Ba'kelalan.

Crocker Range & Gunung Alab. If we see the Bornean Peacock-Pheasant early, we'll have time to visit the Crocker Range and high elevation forest of Gunung Alab for several high-altitude forest specials, some of which overlap with the higher elevations of Pulong Tau National Park, while others will be new for the tour. Targets here include Mountain Black-eye, Mountain Wren-Babbler, Bornean Shortwing, Chestnut-hooded and Sunda Laughingthrushes, Black-capped White-eye, Bornean Leafbird, Temminck's Sunbird, Black-sided Flowerpecker, Bornean Swiftlet, Blyth's Hawk-Eagle, Bornean Treepie, Bornean Green Magpie, Mountain Tailorbird, Yellow-bellied, Yellow-breasted and Mountain Leaf Warblers, Crimson-headed and Red-breasted Partridges, Bornean Whistler, Aberrant Bush Warbler and Velvet-fronted Nuthatch.



Dulit Frogmouth by Glen Valentine

Prince Philip Park. As with the Crocker Range, a visit to Prince Philip Park in Kota Kinabalu very much depends on time availability. This park provides good views and photographic opportunities for several interesting species, some of which may not have been seen anywhere else on the tour. Highlights may include Nankeen and Black-crowned Night Herons, Little Tern, Pacific Reef Heron, Sunda Pygmy Woodpecker, Collared Kingfisher, Olive-backed Sunbird, Blue-naped Parrot, White-breasted Woodswallow, Chestnut Munia and the handsome Long-tailed Parakeet that nests in the park.

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Difficult at times, easy on some days. This a Mega style tour designed for the dedicated lister & serious birder. Not suitable for dedicated or avid photographers, inexperienced birders or anyone with mobility or health challenges.
Birding Ease		Demanding at times, easy and rewarding on many days. Bird densities alternate from low to high. Many visuals are high in the canopy or of understory skulkers. Several rare & challenging target species.
Accommodation		Basic facilities in some locations (very basic at Paya Maga), good hotels in main centres.
Walking / Trails		Reasonably easy with most birding along back-roads. Paya Maga trail can be very muddy but gradual (not steep) in hilly terrain (+-3mi/5km walk in each direction base to camp). The hike to the Bornean Peacock-Pheasant site is around 2mi/3km in each direction on a muddy trail with a gradual ascent.
Vehicles / Roads		Moderate. Some long, winding drives but in comfortable, spacious vehicles (4x4s or minibuses). Roads are mostly good in Sabah, average to poor in Sarawak.
Photography		Challenging at times but generally worthwhile. Sometimes very good & rewarding. A few dedicated blinds / hides make for excellent photo ops on occasions.
Annoyances		Potential for land-leeches. Not many biting insects or mosquitos. Malaria & dengue infection are rare.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from breakfast on day 1 to lunch on day 10;
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- All ground transportation during the tour;
- All reserve entrance fees;
- All guiding services;
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights;
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels);
- Optional excursions;
- Special gratuities;
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If you feel that they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes made need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

- Accommodation
    - The Paya Maga lodge is a single hall with outside ablution facilities. Large luggage cannot be taken to the lodge and will be stored at our local homestay. Porters will be on hand to help carry small day packs, plastic bags with extra clothes and other belongings that you'll require for two nights, drinking water and food. An overnight bag, along with wellington rubber boots and rain gear are essential as trails here are often very muddy. The only things the basic camp at Paga Maya supplies is a mattress (that will be placed on the wooden floor of the building and a sleeping bag. You will need to bring along a pillow of sorts or make a make-shift pillow with your extra clothes. Please also bring a towel with as these are not provided. If you have a portable mosquito net you should bring one with too as no mosquito nets are provided.

  - Fairly basic but clean, adequate, and comfortable homestay accommodation at Ba'kelalan has shared bathrooms. En suite bathrooms at all other hotels that are fairly simple but are clean and comfortable with air-conditioning and hot water showers.
- It is important for the comfort of your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg (+-18kg) for hand luggage.
- Fitness: this tour DOES require a high level of fitness, and participants should be in good general health as most of the birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours at a time. The hike to the Paya Maga camp is 5km each way in hilly country. Should you have any physical limitations, please notify us in advance of departure.
- For much of the tour you will be far away from modern medical facilities.

Arrival and Departure Details

The tour departs from Kota Kinabalu on day 1 and concludes here in the late afternoon of day 10.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

Kota Kinabalu International Airport (IATA: BKI) is the main port of entry and departure for international flights on this tour and is serviced by several international carriers.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.