# Malaysia & Borneo

## Rail-babbler Quest

### *January to October (5 days)*



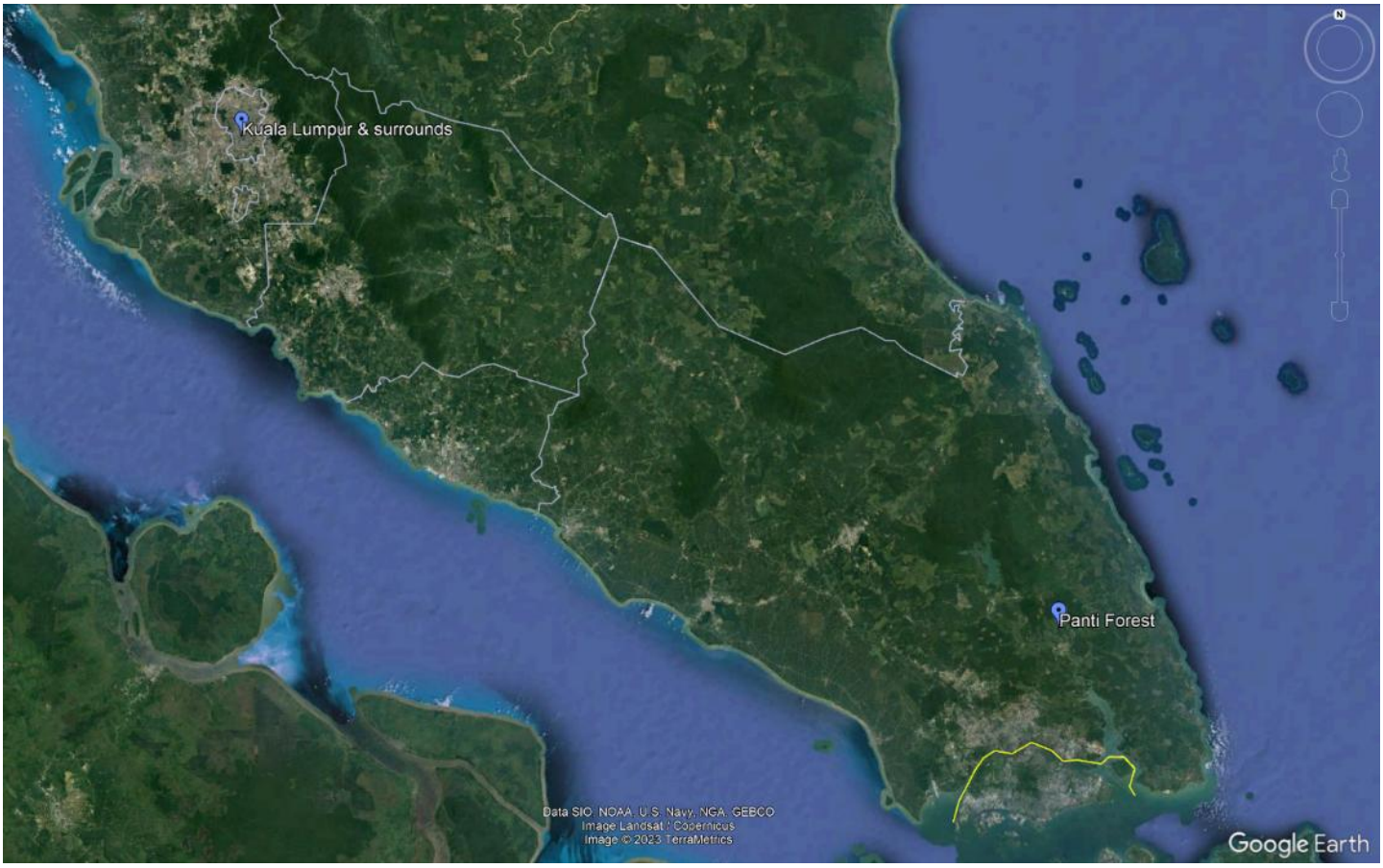
**Rail-babbler by Liew Weng Keong**

*This short tour to Malaysia is designed specifically to find Rail-babbler, the only representative of the Eupetidae family. Surprisingly, this monotypic species is most closely related to the mountain loving Rockjumper's of southern Africa. We have three and a half days at two of the most reliable sites in Malaysia to find our elusive, shy quarry.*

*This tour can be taken at any time from mid-January through mid-October. One should avoid November and December, which is the height of the Northeast monsoon.*

## *Itinerary & Map*

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| **Day 1** | **Arrive in Kuala Lumpur, transfer to Panti Forest** |
| **Day 2** | **Panti Forest** |
| **Day 3** | **Panti Forest to Kuala Lumpur area** |
| **Day 4** | **Kuala Lumpur area** |
| **Day 5** | **Final departure from Kuala Lumpur** |



## *Birding sites in detail*

**Panti Forest.** Situated in the southern part of Peninsular Malaysia, Panti Forest is known as the best place to find the monotypic Rail-babbler. This enigmatic species is found here at an unusually high density, and coupled with the typically sparse undergrowth - provides birders with the best chances of seeing it (and maybe even photographing it). There are a good number of known, accessible territories that we'll work our way through slowly, hoping to watch our quary strutting their stately walk and puffing their blue cheek pouches out.



**Rufous-winged Philentoma by Keith Valentine**

Aside from Rail-babbler, this fabulous birding location also gives a fair chance of finding Crested Shrikejay, a species that has just recently been elevated to its own unique family (2021) - Platylophidae. The forests here also hold many other quality species such as Red-bearded Bee-eater, Red-crowned Barbet, Rufous Piculet, Rufous-winged Philentoma, Diard's and Red-naped Trogons, Wrinkled Hornbill, Banded Kingfisher, Red-billed Malkoha, and Fiery Minivet. Panti is also well regarded as one of the better sites to try and find Brown-backed Flowerpecker, a fairly non-descript but highly elusive species and the equally elusive Scarlet-breasted Flowerpcker. The understorey is home to the magnificent Great Argus while understorey mixed flocks hold a vast selection of species including Moustached, Short-tailed, Chestnut-winged, Black-throated, Scaly-crowned, Black-capped, Sooty-crowned, Chestnut-rumped, and the uncommon White-necked Babblers, Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler, Crow-billed Drongo, Banded and Dusky Broadbills, the uncommon Finsch's Bulbul, and Purple-naped Spiderhunter. Woodpeckers are also in good supply and we may well see species such as Maroon, Checker-throated, Rufous, Banded, the massive White-bellied, Olive-backed and Orange-backed.



**Checker-throated Woodpecker by David Hoddinott**

**Kuala Lumpur area.** We'll visit a hill station near to Kuala Lumpur in our quest for Rail-babbler. Should we already have had good views of the bird, then we may seek to enjoy the many other fabulous hill country species of this montane forest such as Silver-breasted Broadbill, Buff-rumped, Grey-and-buff and Crimson-winged Woodpeckers, Sultan Tit, Golden-whiskered, Sooty and Blue-eared Barbets, the beautiful Orange-breasted Trogon, Black-crested and scarce Scaly-breasted Bulbuls, Rufous-fronted and Buff-breasted Babblers, White-bellied Erpornis, Pin-striped Tit-Babbler, Blue-winged Leafbird and White-rumped Shama, the highly nomadic Pin-tailed Parrotfinch and extremely shy Ferruginous Partridge. We may also encounter troops of Dusky Leaf Monkeys foraging in the mid-canopy while strolling slowly along the forested road.

## *Financial Arrangements and Important Notes*

This tour is made available through Birding Direct. To explore this offering further for pricing, day to day itinerary, inclusions & exclusions, or to tailor the tour to your personal requirements, please follow this direct link to the Rail-babbler tour page.

## *Arrival and Departure Information*

The tour departs from and concludes at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (IATA: KUL).

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.