

Cornell **CAU**
Education Vacations

Borneo: A Celebration of Earth's Biodiversity

Taught by Cole Gilbert and Linda Rayer from Cornell University's Department of Entomology



@Linda Rayer

Journey to the land of orangutans,
orchids & virgin rainforests

*A portion of the proceeds from this trip will
be donated by our study tour operator,
Distant Horizons, to the Bornean Sun Bear
Conservation Center in Borneo.*

Join outdoor enthusiasts and wildlife
specialists Linda Rayer and Cole Gilbert

Borneo: A Celebration of Earth's Biodiversity

- July 23–August 7, 2023
- Cornell faculty:
Linda Rayer & Cole Gilbert
- Moderately active
- Starts at \$9,560
- Open to travelers 15+ years

To register, contact Distant Horizons at JulieS@distant-horizons.com or call 1-800-333-1240

for a once-in-a-lifetime experience to one of the most ecologically diverse countries in the world: Borneo, the world's third-largest island and home to the most ancient rainforests on Earth.

Our carefully planned program will take us through wildly beautiful landscapes populated by inquisitive orangutans and troops of proboscis monkeys, pig-tail macaques, long tailed macaques, silver leaf monkeys/ langurs, gibbons, civets, giant flying squirrels, pygmy squirrels and monitor lizards. We'll also be astounded by the profusion and variety of bird species in this region including massive hornbills and flinting kingfishers.

Our exploration will not be limited to land – we'll cruise the Kinabatangan River and spend a night on a remote island, where we'll have opportunities to snorkel and to witness endangered green sea turtles and their tiny hatchlings in a protected habitat.

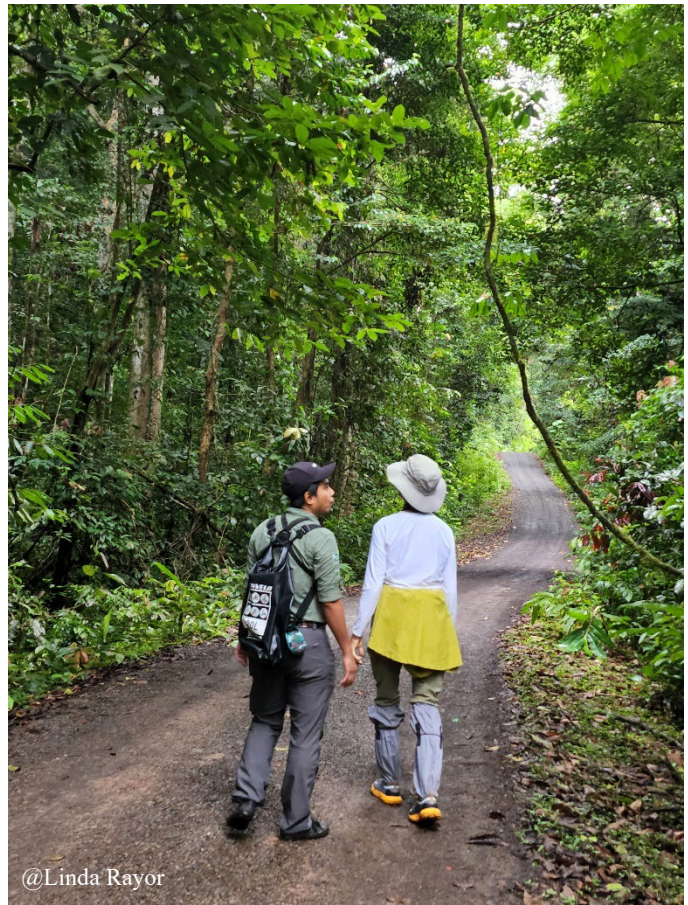
You'll enjoy nighttime Jeep excursions through jungle reserves, hiking along trails through lush forest and, for the patient observer, the chance to view rarely seen species.

Register now to explore the remote and stunning interior of Borneo with its vast rainforests and extravagant nature. Space is very limited.

Note: All travelers on this program will be required to be fully vaccinated and boosted or, in the event of a medical exemption, produce a negative COVID-19 test taken no more than 72 hours prior to departure. Non-vaccinated individuals and individuals with insufficient documentation will not be permitted to participate. Refunds will not be issued.

Trip highlights

- Enjoy river safaris on the Kinabatangan River and the Kelenanap Ox Bow Lake where the rainforest comes alive with orangutans, macaques, proboscis monkeys, crocodiles and many more.
- Observe the feeding of endangered orangutan species at the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre.
- View wild monkeys as they visit feeding platforms at the Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary and witness their reintegration into the surrounding mangrove forest.
- Spend time with the world's smallest bear species at the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Center, where rescued sun bears are rehabilitated and reintroduced into their natural environment.
- Overnight on Selingan Turtle Island, a protected habitat for endangered green sea turtles, and observe the release of the hatchlings.
- Drive through the Danum Valley Conservation Area with its thousands of acres of pristine rainforest and traverse one of the longest, most extensive canopy walkways in the world.



Faculty Experts

CAU adventures are accompanied by some of Cornell's most engaging faculty members. During your tour, these experts will provide lectures on the subjects about which they are most passionate; their enthusiasm shows in the rave reviews we receive from travelers. With extensive experience in both the focus and location of your trip, and access to behind-the-scenes tours, our faculty experts will help you delve deeply into the culture and history of the places you visit.

Linda Rayor

**Senior lecturer and senior research associate,
Department of Entomology, Cornell University**

Linda Rayor, Department of Entomology at Cornell University, specializes in spider behavior and science outreach. Linda has won numerous teaching awards for her courses on spider biology, insect behavior, and how to do effective scientific outreach, including a career teaching award from the hemispheric Animal Behavior Society.



She also directs a large K-12 science outreach program that emphasizes backyard biology and natural history in Central New York. Her behavioral research has focused on the costs and benefits of group living in predatory arthropods, particularly large Australian huntsman spiders.

Linda's a TV star, too! Linda appeared in the two seasons of *Monster Bug Wars* series on the Discovery Science channel, where she was one of two on-camera scientists talking about the behavior and biology of the show's featured creatures.

Cole Gilbert

**Professor and former director of undergraduate studies in
entomology, Department of Entomology, Cornell University**

Cole Gilbert is a professor in the Department of Entomology and the Hays and James M. Clark director of undergraduate biology at Cornell. He's been recognized for his teaching with awards from Cornell, the SUNY Chancellor, and the Entomology Society of America. He is interested in all manner of biology and has taught courses in neural mechanisms of behavior, comparative physiology, evolution and biodiversity, and entomology. He regularly gives field workshops for New York State Master Naturalists.



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Trip Day-to-Day Itinerary

Borneo: A Celebration of Earth's Biodiversity

July 23 – August 7, 2023

On the island of Borneo, Sabah's parks and wildlife preserves encompass some of the most pristine natural beauty in the world, with thousands of square kilometers of jungle, mountains, riparian lowlands, wetlands and valley bottoms that seem untouched by humans or technology.

July 23: Sunday.

Depart the USA on a late evening flight.

July 24: Monday. En route.

En route.

July 25: Tuesday. Kuala Lumpur.

Arrive Kuala Lumpur mid-afternoon and transfer to the *Le Meridien Kuala Lumpur*.

July 26: Wednesday. Kuala Lumpur.

B,D

Morning at leisure.

Early afternoon meet for a lecture by Cole Gilbert on *Islamic Science*. Continue on to the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia. Officially opened on December 12, 1998, the museum is the largest museum of Islamic arts in Southeast Asia with more than seven thousand artifacts from the Islamic world.



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Accompanied by Melissa Lua, continue on to explore the cultural melting pot that is Kuala Lumpur, we will learn more about the harmonious coexistence of Malay, Chinese, and Indian cultures including a visit to a Chinese Temple and Central Market, one of the city's prominent heritage buildings. It is a fine example of the 1930s Art Deco style with a stepped entrance design, unifying elements at the windows and doors as well as wrought iron panels. End the day at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak River where the city was founded.

Welcome dinner this evening.

July 27-29: Thursday-Saturday. Sukau.

3B,3L,3D

Morning flight to Sandakan Airport. Upon arrival the group will be met and driven to Sukau village to board a boat along the **Kinabatangan River**, a magnificent way to appreciate the wildlife of Sabah. At 560 kilometers long, the Kinabatangan River is Sabah's longest and Malaysia's second longest.



@Linda Rayor

The river begins at the mountains in southwest Sabah and crosses different forests, lakes, swamps, and mangroves ending in the sea near Sandakan. It is home to one of the richest ecosystems in Borneo.

Part of the river is a protected area, featuring secondary riverine forest and freshwater swamp forest with rich wildlife. Animals, such as orangutans, proboscis monkeys, macaque monkeys, gibbons, tarsiers, slow lorises, pygmy elephants, snakes, crocodiles, sharks, dolphins, and plenty of birds populate these areas.

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This evening enjoy a night walk on the grounds of the ***Sukau Rainforest Lodge***, an award winning lodge nestled on the banks of one of Borneo's most important waterways, the Kinabatangan River. Immerse yourself in the tranquility of the rainforest and the cacophony of its inhabitants.

Sukau Rainforest Lodge offers the rare comfort and luxury in the midst of the Borneo Rainforest whilst retaining an Eco-Lodge ethos. (Superior rooms have been booked.)

Our time here will include early morning and late afternoon river safaris up the Kinabatangan to the Kelenanap Ox Bow Lake to experience the rainforest coming to life as the sun rises. Following the narrow channel to the large lake, there will be a chance to spot wild animals, such as orangutans, macaques, proboscis monkeys, crocodiles, snakes, and lizards.



July 30: Sunday. Sepilok Nature Resort.

B,L,D

Return to Sukau village by boat and then drive to Sepilok.

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After lunch visit the **Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center**. This inspiring, world-famous center welcomes orphaned and injured orangutans for rehabilitation before returning them to forest life. There are around 200 living in the reserve, though only a few are regular visitors to the feeding platform. At the outdoor nursery, a short walk from the feeding platform, you can watch orphaned youngsters at play. Our time here will allow us to observe two feedings over two visits.



Our overnight is at **MY Nature Resort**, a lovely property set amongst a veritable treasure trove of tropical plants, grasses, huge trees and a spectacular 150 variety of orchid species adjacent to the **Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve**. Wildlife sightings within the grounds of the resort are quite common. Some of the animals that have been spotted at the resort include macaque monkeys, gibbons, orangutan, tarsier, monitor lizards, civets, various species of flying squirrels and a range of birdlife including hornbills.

It provides great access to the **Rainforest Discovery Centre** which is a 10-minute walk away.

July 31: Monday. Sepilok Nature Resort.
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B,L,D

Early morning visit to the **Rainforest Discovery Center**, one of the most accessible natural rainforests in Sabah. It sits by a lake at the edge of the Kabili-Sepilok Forest. Our visit here provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the rich biodiversity of a rainforest ecosystem and the uniqueness and importance of Borneo's rainforests.

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Cornell travelers at Danum (from left to right): Linda Rhodes, Linda Kennett and Chris Schluter

Continue on to visit the **Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary** which offers a safe haven for the indigenous wildlife isolated by the Sulu Sea to the north and encroaching palm oil plantations to the south.



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As trees withered and fresh water sources dried up during the 1997-98 El Nino drought and palm oil development closed in, the Lee Brothers began to enact a simple feeding program to supplement the monkey's diet and eventually converted part of their land holdings into Sabah's first Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary. Over the years, the sanctuary has been expanded to 500 acres of coastal mangrove forests via land acquisition, and the restoration of degraded forests. Labuk Bay currently houses one of the largest isolated populations of proboscis monkeys on the Borneo islands.

This afternoon we will explore **Sandakan** including the Puh Jih Shih Buddhist Temple which offers a breathtaking view over Sandakan Bay. Other stops include the **Agnes Keith House**, home to the American author of "Land below the Wind" and "White Man Returns". Today the home has been turned into a heritage house providing interesting insight into life during British North Borneo. Explore the **Sandakan Central Market** and the **Sim-Sim Water Village** where houses are all built close to the water surface, which at that time was a narrow, uninhabited coastal fringe of jungle and mangroves.

End the morning at the **Sandakan Memorial Park**, a lovely memorial site built in the former grounds of the horrific Sandakan POW camp where Australian and British prisoners of war were held by the Japanese within the sight of Allied victory in the Pacific war. The site witnessed the death of approximately 2,400 Australian and British prisoners of war.

August 1: Tuesday. Selingan Turtle Island.

B,L,D

Begin the day at the **Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre (BSBCC)**, a sun bear rescue and rehabilitation facility.

Malayan sun bears are the smallest bears in the world and are only found in Southeast Asia. These bears continue to be threatened by forest degradation, illegal hunting for bear parts and poaching to obtain young cubs for pet trade. The results of these threats have caused young sun bears found to be living in unnatural captive conditions in Sabah, with no access to outdoor areas. There are currently 43 rescued ex-captive sun bears and one captive born residing at the BSBCC. The facility includes large forest enclosures to provide a natural environment suited to the needs and welfare of the sun bears and facilitate their rehabilitation back into the wild. We will request a private tour of the center with founder **Wong Siew Te**, whom CNN lauded as a Hero of 2017, calling him a "Superman saving the sun bears of Malaysia" or one of his close conservation colleagues.



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Lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch board a speedboat to ride to **Selingan Turtle Island**, one in a group of uninhabited islands in the Sulu Sea. As one of three main turtle nesting sites in Borneo, Selingan's long beaches and coastal mangroves are protected habitat for endangered green sea turtles pushed to the brink of extinction by trawling, coastal development, and consumption. The island is the site of Malaysia's first sea turtle hatchery, established in 1966.



Enjoy a relaxing afternoon of birdwatching or snorkeling in the warm turquoise waters. This evening, alongside rangers who patrol the beach, we observe turtles swimming ashore to lay their eggs, and we may see tiny hatchlings as they are released into the sea. Eventually retire to our simple chalets – the only accommodations on the island – knowing we are among very few visitors to savor this rare opportunity.

Overnight in simple chalets at the ***Selingan Turtle Island Chalets***. The sole accommodation these simple chalets offer the unique opportunity to observe nesting green turtles up close and assist in releasing hatchlings into the clear Sulu Sea.

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Return to the mainland and drive about three and a half hours to Lahad Datu this morning. Our plan is to stop at a museum site past **Kota Kinabatangan** which includes four main caves, agop suriba (lower) on the forest floor, agop lintaga (middle), agop sawat (upper) between 12-15m high, and agop dimunduk. Collectively they are part of the Agop Batu Tulug Museum.

Inside the middle and upper caves are more than a hundred carved wooden coffins dating back 500 to 900 years ago, watched over by bats and swallows. The coffins resemble different animals associated to the beliefs of the Orang Sungai and the hill including the cave has become an important archaeological site in Sabah.

After arriving at Lahad Datu and registering at the Rainforest Lodge headquarters, drive along a bumpy gravel road for three hours (in 4WD) to Sabah's largest protected lowland forest, the **Danum Valley Conservation Area** where the primeval jungle really does look like Jurassic Park.

Visitors often spot pygmy elephants, wild orangutans, snakes, and clouds of birdlife. Some people, though, don't actually see any animals at all, as the jungle is so thick it can cloak fauna mere meters from where you're standing. But that's part of Danum's enchanting and timeless appeal, as is the opportunity to watch the sun's first rays illuminating the mist-shrouded forest from a lofty observation tower.

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Danum Valley spans 438 square kilometers (170 square miles) making it the largest remaining area of virgin undisturbed lowland rainforest in Malaysia. Danum is recognized as one of the world's most complex ecosystems, lying within the upper reaches of Sabah's second largest river, the Segama, and its tributaries.

Research in Danum has revealed a tremendous variety of plants and a full range of Sabah's lowland fauna including rare and endangered species like the Sumatran rhino, Asian elephant, Clouded leopard, and Orangutan. In fact, this pristine rainforest is also home to more than 320 species of birds, 124 species of mammals, 72 species of reptiles, 56 species of amphibians and a staggering 200 species of plants per hectare.

Some of the endemic bird species that can be found here are the Bornean Bristlehead, Bornean Ground-Cuckoo, Bulwer's Pheasant, Black-throated Wren-Babbler, Dusky Munia and many more others! Astonishingly, a new species of plant or animal is found by scientists here every week.



Spend the balance of our three days here exploring this area of virgin rainforest 108, 232 acres/438 square kilometers in the middle of the Sabah part of Malaysian Borneo. There has never been any permanent human settlement in this area which has resulted in incredible biodiversity and thick, thick jungle with incredibly tall trees and voracious vines!

One morning we will rise early to hike to the Borneo rainforest canopy walkway which is a walk along a boardwalk, suspension bridges and towers high in the canopy of the trees. This is great for bird watching and increases chances of seeing orangutans and monkeys, which are often high in the trees.

Our accommodation for three nights will be at the award-winning ***Borneo Rainforest Lodge (standard rooms)*** nestled in a magnificent setting alongside the Danum River flowing through the lowland Rainforest.

Dinner this evening at the lodge.

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August 5: Saturday. Kota Kinabalu.	B,L,D
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Retrace your steps to Lahad Datu in time for an afternoon flight to Kota Kinabalu, capital city of Malaysia's Sabah state. This coastal city, partly surrounded by rain forest, is known for its classic markets.

After an orientation tour enjoy a farewell dinner.

Overnight at the ***Kota Kinabalu Marriott*** which enjoys panoramic vistas of the South China Sea from spacious guest rooms infused with natural light.

August 6: Sunday. Kuala Lumpur.	B
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Return to Kuala Lumpur and rooms are reserved at the ***Sama Sama Airport Hotel***.

August 7: Monday.

Arrive back in the USA.

Accommodations

- Le Meridien Kuala Lumpur
- Sukau Rainforest Lodge
- MY Nature Resort
- Selingan Turtle Island Chalets
- Borneo Rainforest Lodge
- Kota Kinabalu Marriott
- Sama Sama Airport Hotel

Note: Given the remote locations on our itinerary, some of our rainforest lodging may be modest by CAU standards.

Prices

Deposit

A deposit of \$1,500 per person to Distant Horizons is required to reserve a space on this trip. Deposits are applied to your full program charge. Register now as spots are limited.

Price

Prices for Borneo are as follows:

- Double occupancy: \$9,960
- Triple occupancy: \$9,560
- Single supplement: \$2,360 (very limited availability)

Final payment deadline

Final payment of the full program charge is due by April 23, 2023.

If registering after this date, payment of the full program charge is due at time of registration.

What's included?

Unless otherwise specified, program charges include

- The full educational program
- Expertise of the CAU faculty participants
- Pre-trip reading materials
- All accommodations during the program

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- Meals specified on the itinerary
- Welcome and farewell receptions
- Site visits and entrance fees
- Guides
- All internal train, bus, or air travel, including airport transfers on program arrival/departure dates
- All taxes and gratuities for staff, guides, drivers, and other personnel

What's not included?

Unless otherwise specified, program charges do not include

- Airfare to and from your destination
- Visa and passport fees
- Luggage, cancellation, and accident insurance
- Meals and beverages not specified in the itinerary
- Personal expenses such as laundry, telephone calls, and email service

Refunds & cancellations

If you need to cancel your registration, you must send written notification of your wish to withdraw to Julie Scott from Distant Horizons at JulieS@distant-horizons.com. Your official date of withdrawal will be the date on which this email is sent.

- For cancellations at or more than 90 days prior to departure, the cancellation charge is \$750.

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- For cancellations between 89 days and 61 days prior to departure, the cancellation charge is \$3,000.
- No refunds shall be issued for cancellations received less than 60 days prior to departure date.
- No refunds shall be issued after the tour has commenced.
- No refunds shall be issued for occasional missed meals, added sightseeing tours, or any unused services.

Refunds do not include the cost of international or domestic airfare.

We strongly advise you to purchase trip cancellation insurance in case you must cancel your registration after you have made full payment. Tour operators can rarely recover money paid in your name after the program's refund deadline.

Travel Policy

While Cornell is pleased to facilitate travel opportunities for its alumni and friends with tour operators that specialize in high-quality educational travel, please be aware that Cornell does not conduct, manage or operate these travel experiences, or act as an agent for travelers interested in tours. Tour operators and travelers are responsible for making their own safety decisions concerning this travel, and, as a facilitator between travelers and the tour operators with whom travelers make arrangements for completing travel, Cornell's role and liability are strictly limited. Specific tour operator and national health and safety protocols will apply to each trip, and travelers should review all protocols and trip terms and conditions, including terms and conditions regarding cancellations, refunds, health and safety, and insurance prior to making a reservation. Cornell is not responsible for changes to trips or travel arrangements or for losses, expenses, damages, or injuries resulting from travel.