



Ministry of
Natural Resources
and Environment
(NRE)

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MALAYSIAN PARKS NEWSLETTER

Issue #4/07 (Free distribution - not for sale)

Dec 2007

5-year Marine Conservation Project Launched

The Department of Marine Park Malaysia, of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) was officially established on 16 July 2007. Formerly known as the Marine Park section under the administration of Department of Fisheries, the section was later transferred to NRE when the Ministry was formed in 2004. Marine Park Malaysia or MPM, as it is now commonly known, is responsible for managing the marine parks of Peninsular Malaysia.

The Department has begun working on an ambitious 5-year biodiversity conservation project in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), entitled 'Conserving Marine Biodiversity Through Enhanced Marine Park Management and Inclusive Sustainable Island Development'. The RM14.35 million project was inaugurated with an Inception Workshop from 7-9 September 2007 by Y. Bhg. Datuk Suboh Bin Mohd Yassin, Secretary General of NRE, at one of the three project sites – Pulau Tioman, Pahang. The two other sites identified for this conservation project are Pulau Redang, Terengganu and Pulau Sibul and Pulau Tinggi, Johor.

Over 70 representatives from various related government agencies, universities, NGOs and local communities attended the workshop. Key stakeholders comprising tourism operators as well as the agencies mentioned above were involved in the design of the project.

The main objective of the project is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity and sustainable island development in Malaysia as well as minimise threats affecting the biological diversity of Malaysian shores. The project also hopes that its capacity building activities on sustainable livelihoods will improve local communities' access to the benefits of an effectively managed protected area and provide access to supportive financing mechanisms for micro business development. Several activities have been planned to explore the possibility of replicating successful initiatives from Malaysia and other parts of the world.

For more details, please contact Ms. Chua Hooi Dean at (+6) 03-8886-1398 or email hooidean@nre.gov.my.



Director of Marine Park Malaysia, Tn. Hj. Abd Jamal Mydin presenting a snorkeling equipment set to Y. Bhg. Datuk Suboh Mohd Yassin, Secretary General NRE

Department of Marine Park

News Flash!!

SARAWAK FORESTRY is offering special packages for the Park Guiding Course which will include a certificate in Park Guiding and specific Park Products and Services. For more details, please contact Shirley Michael at shirley1@sarawakforestry.com

INSIDE: A special feature on Penang National Park and the White-bellied Sea Eagle



DWNP

IN BRIEF

Official Opening of Bako National Park Terminal in Sarawak

The new Bako National Park Terminal in Sarawak was officially launched on 3 September 2007 by Dato' Sri Wong Soon Koh, the Minister of Urban Development and Tourism Sarawak. The ceremony was attended by officers from various government and private agencies and local communities. The new RM1.38million terminal in Kampung Bako replaces the former one and will cater to visitors travelling to the park, which is accessible only by boat.

1st Selangor State Park Steering Committee Meeting

Following its gazettelement in January 2007, the first Selangor State Park (SSP) steering committee meeting was held on 25 July, convened by the Selangor State Forestry Department to discuss future plans for the park. Chaired by YB Dato' Raja Ideris bin Raja Ahmad, the chairman of the State Executive Council committee for Natural Resource Management, the meeting was attended by representatives from several government agencies including the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Selangor State Town and Country Planning Department, Selangor State Department of Land and Mines, Selangor State Economic Planning Unit, Selangor State Finance Office and Tourism Selangor. Also present were NGOs TrEES (Treat Every Environment Special), the Malaysian Nature Society and WWF-Malaysia.

Jungle River Ecology at Taman Negara National Park

The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) conducted an environmental education programme entitled 'Jungle River Ecology' (JRE) between 11-16 July 2007 using the natural resources of Taman Negara National Park at Merapoh as the learning ground. The programme was officially launched by En. Jasmi bin Abdul, Deputy Director General I DWNP and witnessed by Tuan Hj. Shaari b. Mian, Schools Division, Ministry of Education (MoE) and En. Fakhru Hata b. Musa, the Director of Institute of Biodiversity, DWNP. Thirty-three teachers from all over the country participated in the programme.

The JRE programme started in 2004 when DWNP and MoE developed a river-based educational activity for co-curriculum teachers, as Environmental Education (EE) had become an integrated subject in the Malaysian school syllabus.

Due to the increasing popularity of river-based activities among Malaysians, the river ecosystem was chosen as the topic for training teachers to be potential environmental educationists at State and district levels.

As part of achieving their objectives of establishing Taman Negara National Park, DWNP then identified the Merapoh, Pahang entry point of the park to be developed as the Merapoh Environmental Education Training (MEET) Centre. JRE is aimed at equipping teachers from the Co-curriculum Centres of the State Education Departments with relevant knowledge and skills in order to conduct environment-education related activities. Since 2004, about 120 teachers have participated in the JRE programme in Taman Negara National Park Pahang.



Above: Briefing from the facilitator before embarking on jungle tracking activity along an interpretive trail at Taman Negara National Park Pahang.

Humpback Whales Sighted Off Miri

A marine wildlife survey was conducted along the coast of Sarawak from 19 June to 6 July 2007 by SARAWAK FORESTRY, in collaboration with Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and the Sabah Wildlife Department.

The highlight of the survey was the sighting of the Humpback Whale 54.81 nautical miles or 101.50km off the Miri coast, the first ever confirmed record in Malaysian



An aerial photo of the Humpback whale that was sighted during the marine wildlife survey

waters. This is an addition to 14 species of marine mammals with confirmed records in Sarawak waters and additional to 19 confirmed species for Malaysia.

A total of 78 sightings of marine mammals were made during the survey. The majority of sightings were dolphins, comprising five Irrawaddy (*Orcaella brevirostris*), one Indo-Pacific Humpback (*Sousa chinensis*), four Offshore Bottlenose (*Tursiops aduncus*), three Spinner (*Stenella longirostris*), and 24 unidentified dolphin individuals.

Among other sightings recorded were six whales, consisting of a Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaengline*), one Bryde's Whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*) and four unidentified whales. There were also five sightings of Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*), nineteen sightings of marine turtles, six sightings of rays and four sightings of sharks made during the aerial survey.

This historic sighting of the Humpback Whale (a female adult) and its calf, has aroused the excitement and attention of marine conservationists and scientists.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Forestry
Department
Peninsular
Malaysia (FDPM)

is organising seminars for two scientific expeditions held last year:

3-4 Dec 2007

The seminar for the Gunung Pantu Scientific Expedition in Johor will be held at the Putri Pan Pacific, Johor Bahru, Johor.

10-11 Dec 2007

The seminar for the Bintang Hijau Expedition at Perak has been proposed to be held in Lumut.

For more details, please call En. Azman at (+6) 03-2616 4488 or email azman@forestry.gov.my

11-15 Feb 2008

The second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas (WGPA-2) will be held in Rome, Italy. For participation details, please contact the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity at secretariat@cbd.int or log on to www.cbd.int. They are also reachable by phone at (+001) 514-288-2220 and fax at (001) 514-288-588.

9-13 May 2008

The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 9 CBD) will be held in Bonn, Germany. The secretariat can be reached at secretariat@cbd.int at the same numbers above.

FDPM will be organising four scientific expeditions throughout 2008 in Pulau Pangkor, Perak; Gunung Bintang Hijau, Baling, Kedah; Bukit Panchor or Pulau Jerejak Pulau Pinang; all forest reserves in Melaka & Pulau Besar Island. Interested participants can contact En. Azman at (+6) 03-2616 4488 or email azman@forestry.gov.my

Featured Park: Penang National Park

On 10 April 2003, Penang National Park (PNP) became the first protected area to be established under the National Parks Act (NPA), a federal legislation passed by the Parliament in 1980 to designate and manage new national parks. It is also the first park with both the terrestrial and marine component to be managed by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP). The Secretary General of Penang chairs the PNP Committee (formed under the NPA) to assist in the management of the park, while the State EXCO YB Encik Teng Chang Yeow, Chairman of Tourism Development and Environment Committee of the Penang State Government, chairs the management plan development committee of the park.

Flora and Fauna

Prior to its designation as Penang National Park, the forested area of Pantai Acheh was gazetted in 1928 as the Pantai Acheh Forest Reserve. Many parties, including the Malaysian Nature Society Penang Branch had long campaigned to designate Pantai Acheh as a protected area. In 1968, DWNP recommended in a Peninsular-wide study that a protected area be designated at the north-western part of Penang Island, which was then incorporated into the Third Malaysia Plan.

The park conserves diverse terrestrial habitats, including the rare meromictic lake, mangroves, mudflats and a hill dipterocarp forest. Since the late 1970s, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) has maintained a research station at Penang National Park and as a result, numerous ecological studies have been carried out on the marine and terrestrial ecosystems. More than 1,000 plant species have been recorded with the dominant species being from the Dipterocarpaceae, Leguminosae, Apocynaceae, Euphorbiaceae and Moraceae families. The seraya tree (*Shorea curtisii*) is also commonly found in the park.



Nepenthes ampullaria

The Pantai Kerachut and Pantai Teluk Kampi beaches at Penang National Park are important turtle landing sites in Peninsular Malaysia. Among the turtle species that nest on these beaches include the Green Turtle and the Olive Ridley Turtle. The Irrawaddy Dolphin and Bottlenose Dolphin are sometimes seen in coastal waters at the park. During the migratory season shore birds are abundant.

Attractions and Activities



Sunset at Kerachut jetty

Penang National Park is also known as "Bay of Glowing Amber" due to its scenic and spectacular sunsets. Another main attraction at the park is the unique seasonal meromictic lake that contains permanently stratified fresh water and seawater layers totaling an estimated 277ha. The historical Muka Head Lighthouse situated within the park is still operational. Built in 1883 at 27m above sea level, this vintage lighthouse can be visited by following a steep jungle trail that offers a scenic view of the Straits of Melaka. In addition to wildlife viewing, tourists can enjoy other recreational activities, including jungle trekking, swimming, fishing and camping.

How to Get There

Penang National Park is located near Teluk Bahang at the north-western corner of Penang Island and fronts the Straits of Melaka. It is about 30km (45 minutes by car) from Georgetown, which is located approximately 400km north of Kuala Lumpur. For more details on how to get there, please contact Penang National Park at (+6) 04-881-3530/3500 or email tnpp@streamyx.com.

FACTS & FIGURES

Year of gazettelement : 2003

Area size : 2,563ha

Management authority :
Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP)

Species Watch : *Haliaeetus leucogaster*



The White-bellied Sea Eagle, also known as the *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, can be considered an icon of the park since it can be easily sighted soaring over the park. These eagles form mating pairs for life, exhibiting a monogamous mating behaviour. Adults are largely sedentary (not migratory) and will defend their territory (an area of about 300ha around the nest) against other adults. In choosing a nesting site, this eagle goes for height – as can be observed when visitors take a boat ride along the coastal area of the park.



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News Updates

English Communication Skills for Front-liners of Sabah Parks

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment of Sabah through its agency, Sabah Tourism Board, organised a five-day English Communication course for Sabah Parks' front liners conducted by the Asian Tourism Institute (ATI) from 11 June until 10 August 2007 at Tawau Hills Park. Front-liners from Sabah Parks who attended the programme, numbering 130 in total, were divided into five groups throughout the course.

The contents of the training emphasised basic grammar sentence construction, pronunciation, vocabulary and practical conversational skills for beginners in English language usage. The main focus of the course was to improve command of the English language in the context of tourism and hospitality, with particular attention on settings in Sabah Parks. This included improving vocabulary related to ecotourism (including coastal and islands) among front-liners. As communication is an essential part of guiding tourists, it is also hoped that the course will improve their English when speaking to park visitors as well as enhance their ability to provide information regarding Sabah Parks.

Interactive and participatory methods were used in this workshop together with ice-breaking sessions, lectures, role-plays, group presentations, course hand-outs and cumulative assessments. Sabah Parks is also proud of the participants' and facilitators' positive commitment during this course.

For more details, please contact Rodzan of Sabah Parks (+6) 088-211-881 or RodzanPg.Dahlan@sabah.gov.my.



Front-liners learning the communicative functions during the course

Rakan Park Pulau Tioman

Pada 6 September 2007 satu Majlis Perasmian dan Perlantikan Rakan Park Pulau Tioman telah diadakan buat pertama kalinya di Pusat Taman Laut Pulau Tioman. Majlis ini dirasmikan oleh Pengarah Jabatan Taman Laut, Tuan Haji. Abd. Jamal Bin Mydin dan disertai oleh Timbalan Pengarah, En. Abdul Rahim Gor Yaman, Pengurus Projek Nasional UNDP, En. Ramzi B. Abu dan kakitangan Jabatan Taman Laut yang lain.

Program Rakan Park mendapat sambutan yang menggalakkan dari masyarakat tempatan Pulau Tioman. Program ini dianjurkan dengan tujuan melibatkan masyarakat tempatan bersama-sama dengan Jabatan Taman Laut dalam pengurusan bersepadu pulau-pulau Taman Laut, khususnya Pulau Tioman.

Selain daripada itu, Rakan Park ini juga akan berfungsi sebagai penyampai maklumat Jabatan Taman Laut di mana aktiviti yang dilarang dan menyalahi undang-undang akan dilaporkan. Ahli-ahli Rakan Park tersebut akan diberikan latihan untuk memantapkan lagi pengetahuan tentang ekosistem marin dan peraturan-peraturan Taman Laut agar mereka dapat menjalankan tanggungjawab dengan sebaiknya. Jabatan Taman Laut berharap program ini akan berjaya supaya ia boleh digunakan di Taman Laut yang lain.

Untuk maklumat lanjutan, sila hubungi Nizam Ismail dari Jabatan Taman Laut (+6) 03-8886 1416 atau emel nizamis@nre.gov.my

Making the Link

The 'Introductory Workshop on Creating and Re-establishing Ecological Corridors within the Central Forest Spine' was held on 30 and 31 July 2007 at Awana Genting Highlands Golf and Country Resort, Pahang. A collaboration between the Department of Town and Country Planning and WWF-Malaysia and supported by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, this workshop marked the first step in the Linking Landscapes Initiative which aims to identify and prioritise connectivity within the Central Forest Spine (CFS).



Speakers for the session: (From left) En. Azmi Nordin, Forestry FDP; Dr. Sivananthan Elagupillay, DWNP; Dr. Salmah Zakaria, Director General of NAHRIM (National Hydraulic Research Institute of Malaysia). Chair of the session is Dr. Arun Venkataraman, WWF-Malaysia (second from left).

The workshop was attended by representatives from government department/agencies, environmental NGOs, universities and environmental consultants. The main objectives of the workshop were to introduce all stakeholders to issues regarding forest fragmentation and ecological corridors; expose stakeholders to the experiences of restoring ecological corridors in Malaysia and other countries; and obtain feedback on the criteria to be used in identifying ecological linkages within the CFS. The proceedings of the workshop will be disseminated to all participants as well as stakeholders.