



BNS NEWSLETTER – April 2015

The 2014/2015 Committee

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April Activities

April Talk

Date : 27 April
Title : “Stories through Memories”: Bruneian experiences of World War II.
Speakers : Janet Marles, Maslin Jukim, Frank Dhont

38 people came and heard about the “Kisah-Kisah dalam Kenangan / Stories through Memories” oral history project which is collecting personal stories of those who lived through World War II in Brunei Darussalam, particularly regarding the last weeks of fighting between Japanese occupying forces, Bruneian locals and the Australian Armed Forces. The presentation covered the background of the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia and showed how the events are remembered and narrated by survivors, discussing the process of capturing and documenting these stories for future generations.



Exhibition Announcement: "STORIES THROUGH MEMORIES: 70 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP" showcases first-hand accounts of Bruneians who lived through World War II and historical images of the leading role of Australian forces in the 1945 liberation of Borneo. The exhibition is a collaboration between the Australian High Commission to Brunei Darussalam, Australian Department of Veteran's Affairs, Brunei Museums, Universiti Brunei Darussalam and James Cook University. Surviving Australian veterans from the Borneo campaign will be visiting Brunei Darussalam as part of this 70th anniversary commemorative exhibition.

details: Waterfront Gallery, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam - June 2015.

April Outing

Date : Sunday, 26 April
Destination : Bukit Patoi, Temburong
Organised by : Bruce Rhind

After stopping briefly on the way to release into the river a turtle that Bruce had found in his garden, we arrived at Bukit Patoi and set off up the usual trail.

At the top, we briefly admired the view before going to inspect some camera traps that had been previously set.



The Malayan Box Turtle (*Cuora amboinensis*) setting off into the river



The view from the top of Bukit Patoi

Then we stopped again on the summit for something to eat and set off down via a new trail that Bruce has found, arriving back at the car park by about 1:00.

In Bangar, we shared a roti before catching the ferry back to Bandar.

Bukit Patoi really does offer a splendid little jungle trek through some wonderful jungle.



Participants



Resetting a camera trap.

Plant Identification

Can you identify this fern, seen at Bukit Patoi? The leaves at the top are paired, but then there is a long, dangling end leaf. Why does it have this long terminal leaf? (Answer is below the picture.)



From David Edwards: It is a fern called *Goniophlebium* in the Family Polypodiaceae (assuming no-one has changed the families yet). It is almost certainly *Goniophlebium percussum* (Cav.) Walther & Grether, the commonest of the genus in lowland Brunei, which, when young, often has the very long terminal leaflet. It is usually an epiphyte, but young ones are sometimes found on old rotten tree trunks, or on rocks, as this one appears to be. There are about six species of *Goniophlebium* in Borneo, at least four of which occur in Brunei.

Animal Identification

Can you identify this fellow seen at Bukit Patoi? Bruce says he has seen it three times now. On the ground it is very feisty; it dashes forward and threatens to bite you. But it has no teeth. (See below for the answer.)



From Ulmar Grafe: It is an agamid lizard with the name Bornean Angle-headed Lizard (*Gonocephalus bornensis*).

Bonus information: *gonocephalus* is from Greek *gon-* ('angle') + *cephalus* ('head'). For another occurrence of *gon-*: *trigonometry* = *tri* ('three') + *gon* ('angle') + *metry* ('measurement').

Planned Activities

May Talk

Date : Monday, 4 May, 8:00 pm
Place : Mitsubishi Lecture Theatre, CLT 1.17, UBD
Speaker : Prof Dr. Sarath Bandara
Title : Chronic Kidney Disease Due to Dietary Exposure to Heavy Metal Cadmium: A global Health Problem

Agricultural practices can impact human health in many unexpected ways. Among various types of health issues, the Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is now emerging as a global health problem due to dietary exposure to pollution of the food web caused by agricultural practices. Here I present a cohort study of a hidden impact of agricultural practices on renal health in Sri Lanka. In addition, I will report on our observations of alarming levels of cadmium and arsenic in rice market samples available in Brunei. The highest cadmium levels were seen in traditional rice varieties and the new improved variety Laila of Brunei. Consumption of variety Bandul, Bario, Laila and Thai Jasmine rice the fragrant rice Beras Wangi results in dangerously high weekly intake of cadmium. It is proposed that a regular screening for serum and urine cadmium levels among the present CKD patients would reveal whether a major percentage of these could be due to elevated dietary cadmium. In addition, the data from rice cadmium levels demands more screening of food to make it safer. We are also studying fertilizer use and soil heavy metals in Brunei Darussalam as a cause for rice pollution.

May Outing (1)

Date : Sunday, 3 May
Time : 3:45 pm
Destination : Boat Ride- Brunei Bay Islands
Organised by : Shavez Cheema

It is a nice river cruise along the Brunei Bay islands and mangroves. In the past Proboscis Monkeys, snakes and flying foxes have been spotted. Good trip to relax in the evening in the pristine mangroves and river system.

Cost: \$20 each; Minimum: 6 people per boat; Maximum: 3 boats.

Contact shavez@gmail.com. First come, first served.

May Outing (2)

Date : Sunday, 10 May
Time : 8 am (till 11 am)
Destination : Fossil Hunting at Ambok Hill
Organised by : Antonino Briguglio

The Ambok Hill (known as Ambok Hill) is a fantastic place to see and collect fossils in Brunei.

Located in the Tutong District it is very easy to find and to explore (good place for kids). It is quite a safe area as it is an open abandoned quarry, but let's try not to get too close to some steep cliffs as they might cave in.

We will provide some geology hammers but if you have any tool to dig in sandstone and clay feel free to bring it with you. We will spend some time collecting fossils in the area so bring some "sample bags" with you to carry home your findings. Bring some water and sun cream, there is no shade in a quarry! We will bring some hard hats for those who wish to get close to the cliffs.

The locality is full of fossils and trace fossils which date back in the Miocene (about 5 million years ago). We have found so far gastropods, bivalves, scaphopods, shark teeth, turtles, rays, and of course billions of microfossils.

If it is raining the night before, we should expect some mud, so bring adequate boots.

Meeting Point: the car park in front of the new UBD Herbal Garden at 8 am.

For further details, contact Antonino at: antonino.briguglio@ubd.edu.bn

May Outing (3)

Date : Friday, 22 May
Time : 6 pm
Destination : Sg Besar
Organised by : Shavez Cheema (shavez@gmail.com)

This is the Si Jamping recreational park, on the Kota Batu Road. It is a beautiful place to watch the islands of the Brunei bay.

Book Club

Date : Tuesday, 5 May
Time : 6 pm
Place : Mitsubishi Lecture Theatre, CLT 1.17, UBD
Organised by : Shavez Cheema

Members can choose any book from the BNS library. Then we read the book silently and slowly for 40 minutes. While reading, members have to write down the interesting things they have found. At the end, everyone gets 5-10 minutes to share what they have learnt and have a good discussion. Email: Fatin naturebookclub@gmail.com to register and for more details.

