

**Research Activity Report**  
**Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”**  
(Please be sure to submit this report after the trip that supported by PWS.)

2015. 09. 17	
<b>Affiliation/Positio</b>	Primate Research Institute/D2/L4
<b>Name</b>	Rafaela Sayuri Takeshita

<b>1. Country/location of visit</b>
Malaysia
<b>2. Research project</b>
IV International Workshop on Tropical Biodiversity and Conservation
<b>3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)</b>
2015.09.07 – 2015. 09. 15 (9 days)
<b>4. Main host researcher and affiliation</b>
Dr. Sharul Anuar Mohd Sah, School of Biological Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia
<b>5. Progress and results of your research/activity</b> (You can attach extra pages if needed)
Please insert one or more pictures (to be publicly released). Below each picture, please provide a brief description.
<p>For the third time I was lucky to attend the International Workshop organized by WRC, and this time the place was Peninsular Malaysia. I have been there recently when I conducted my study on orangutans, but at that time my visit was limited to Bukit Merah Orang Utan Island, in Perak.</p> <p>The workshop was held in the first two days at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), in Penang. Most of the talks focused on conservation in Malaysian wildlife, but they also included guests from Japan, Brazil and India. One thing that disappointed me a little bit was the small participation of local researchers and students, especially if I compare to the previous workshops.</p> <p>The excursion following the workshop started with a visit to the Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies (CEMACS), where Prof. Sharul introduced the studies and facilities. The research conducted in the site includes mangrove and coral reef ecosystems, marine-culture, pollution and toxicology, coastal zone management and biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>In the next day, we went to the National Elephant Conservation Centre, Kuala Gandah, in Pahang. The first elephant we saw was a 7 year old male, surrounded by tourists in the lake, in an attraction called "water activity", where the tourists could touch and splash the animal with water (Figure 1). The other animals where placed in a concrete enclosure, isolated or in pairs, by a wooden fence (Figure 2). Some individuals had chains around their foot and the tourists could feed them with grass, though I saw some people giving them chocolates and candies.</p> <p>The staff of the park talked about the reintroduction programs and showed us a short movie about translocation and resolution of human-animal conflict in the site. Personally, I was not convinced by their strategies for several reasons. First, they could not clearly explain the training process and the criteria for selecting the animals prior to release in the wild. Secondly, the procedures showed on the video were extremely shocking. They anesthetized one animal several times and chained it during one night. Still, the animal escaped, suffering bad injuries, in addition to hunger and thirst due to overnight restraint. Then they captured the animal again - using more anesthesia - and transferred it with another individual to a new island, without evaluating whether the place was good for their survival, or how their presence would affect the environment. Although they claimed that they add collars to the animals to monitor the reintroduction, they did not talk about the results.</p>

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Figure 1. Tourists and one elephant at the "Water activity", National Elephant Conservation Centre Kuala Gandah.



Figure 2. One adult female at National Elephant Conservation Centre Kuala Gandah. Note the chain around her right front limb.

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After the sanctuary, we went to Taman Negara, the world's oldest tropical rainforest, of age 130 million years. First we visited a local aborigine settlement (Kampung orang asli) and observed their lifestyle in the forest. Their houses were made out of branches and leaves (Figure 3 - right), but they wear normal clothes and use some domestic utensils such as plastic cups, bottles, and pans (Figure 3 - left). They also showed us how they make fire, using wood (Figure 4), and how they hunt with a blowpipe (Figure 5).



Figure 3. House of a local tribe in Malaysia (Kampung orang asli).



Figure 4. Fire making through wood



Figure 5. Target (left) and blowpipe (right)

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In that evening, we went to the forest to walk and look for insects. We saw stick insects, butterflies, crickets, one black scorpion - that can only be seen with a UV light -, frogs, and one snake. Also, prof. David Hill was using a bat detector that allowed us to hear their ultrasound calls.



Figure 6. Stick insect (left) and black scorpion (right).

On the next morning, we went back to the forest to see the fauna and flora below and above the canopy. Our guide showed us many medicinal plants that can be used as insect repellents (Figure 7 - left), to treat malaria and digestive diseases or even some plants and stones to be used as cosmetics. (Figure 7 - right) Although I was expecting to see more animals, I was happy to hear a gibbon call and to see a dusky leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus obscurus* - Figure 8).



Figure 7. Insect natural repellent (left) and use of stones for make-up (right). Note the red stain on his right cheek.

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Figure 8. Dusky leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus obscurus*)

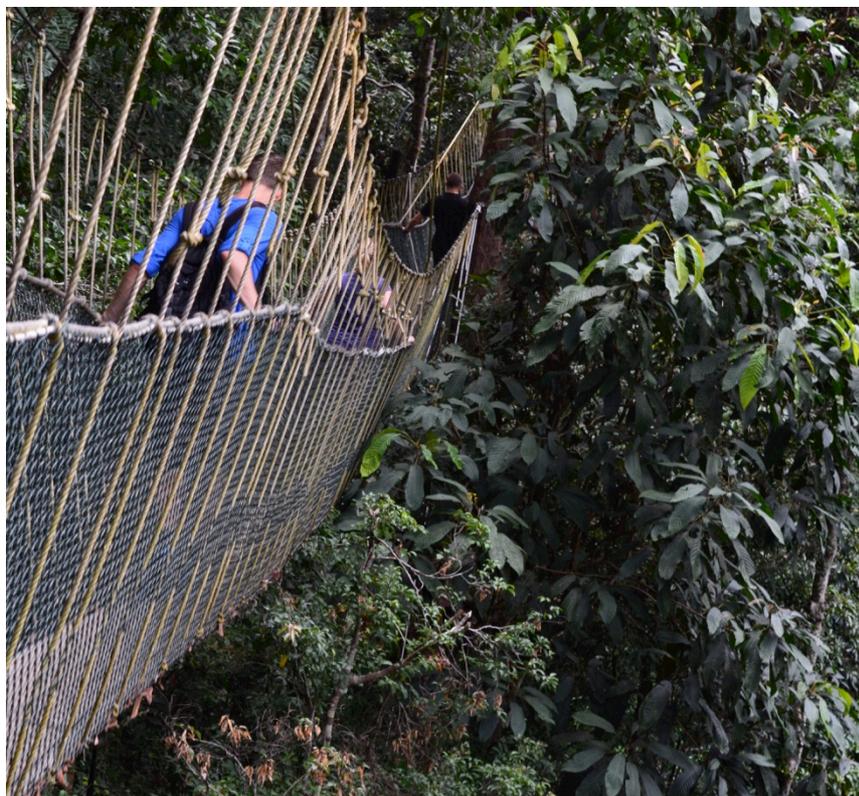


Figure 9. Canopy walk

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To end the tour, we visited Lata Berkoh lake, where we could swim and see the fishes.



Figure 10. Can you see the fishes?



Figure 11. Lata Berkoh

Overall, the workshop was informative and dynamic. However, I was expecting a little bit more integration of the group with the local students and researchers. Also, there were some problems in terms of organization that could be avoided, such as constant schedule changes and sometimes miscommunication.

## 6. Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to WRC and PWS for supporting this trip, and to Prof. Tetsuro Matsuzawa and Prof. Shiro Koshima for inviting me. I also thank my advisors, Prof. Michael Huffman and Prof.

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Fred Bercovitch for their guidance and support. Many thanks to Yuko Tawa, Sarah and Aini for organizing the tour and Dr. Sharul for hosting us.