



**THE BEST OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA, WITH
EXTENSION TO BANDING ISLAND**

9 - 16 SEPTEMBER 2018



The endemic **Mountain Peacock-Pheasant** is one of our targets on this trip.

Our tour to Peninsular Malaysia will cover the two most important birding venues of Peninsular Malaysia, Fraser's Hill and Taman Negara National Park. A total of 689 species of birds have been recorded on Peninsular Malaysia alone, with three endemics (**Malayan Whistling Thrush**, **Mountain Peacock-Pheasant**, and **Malaysian Partridge**) and 145 species listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Of these, 300 can be found in Fraser's Hill and 386 in Taman Negara. The high biodiversity, multi-ethnicity of the friendly population, good infrastructure, and wonderful food of this region of the world should guarantee a tour to Peninsular Malaysia to become a highlight of any birder's world travels.

We also offer a four-day extension to this tour, looking for a slate of fabulous hornbills on Banding Island.

This tour can be combined with our **Borneo: Spectacular Birds and Other Wildlife 2018** tour for a magnificent Malaysian mega tour.

Please note that the detailed itinerary below cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors.

Itinerary (8 days/7 nights)

Day 1. Arrival

You will arrive today at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport and will be transferred to your hotel.

Overnight: The 5 Elements Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

Day 2. Transfer to Fraser's Hill, birding on the way

At 6:00 a.m. we'll meet in the lobby of The 5 Elements Hotel, from where we'll drive to Fraser's Hill. En route we'll visit the abandoned mining ponds of Ulu Yam for specialties such as **Barred Buttonquail**, **King Quail**, **Cinnamon** and **Yellow Bitterns**, **Savanna Nightjar**, **Pin-tailed** and **Common Snipes**, **Lesser Coucal**, and **Long-tailed Shrike**.

In the afternoon we'll start birding the various habitats of Fraser's Hill, a cool and invigorating hill resort region in the state of Pahang, including seven peaks with altitudes between 1,220 and 1,524 meters above sea level, and year-round temperatures between 17 °C – 25 °C (63 °F – 77 °F).

The area hosts one of Malaysia's few pristine forests, with a high level of biodiversity, and is well known in birding circles for its rich and exciting avifauna and, for the most part, relatively easy birding.

Overnight: Shahzan Inn, Fraser's Hill

Days 3 – 4. Birding Fraser's Hill and the Gap

Birdwatching in Fraser's Hill will include birding at the Gap, located at 900 meters at the bottom of the road ascending to Fraser's Hill. Birds we might find here include **Asian Fairy-bluebird**, **Scaly-breasted Bulbul**, **Purple-naped Sunbird**, **Bamboo Woodpecker**, **Yellow-bellied Warbler**, and **Marbled Wren-Babbler**.

All three Peninsular Malaysian endemics occur at Fraser's Hill, and we very much hope to encounter **Malayan Whistling Thrush**, **Mountain Peacock-Pheasant**, and/or **Malaysian Partridge** here. Other species we will be looking out for include **Malayan**, **Black**, and

Chestnut-capped Laughingthrushes, Long-tailed Sibia, Orange-bellied Leafbird, Black-throated Sunbird, Streaked Spiderhunter, Blue Nuthatch, Black-and-crimson Oriole, Sultan Tit, Black-browed Barbet, Mountain Fulvetta, Silver-eared Mesia, Orange-breasted and Red-headed Trogons, and Long-tailed Broadbill. With luck we might even catch a glimpse of the stunning **Himalayan Cutia** and **Rusty-naped Pitta**. During our stay here we'll probably also encounter a few mixed feeding flocks, and in the hills we might encounter **White-crowned** and **Great Hornbills, Black Eagle, and Blyth's Hawk-Eagle**. Finally, a few kilometers from the town center, at Jeriau Waterfall, we can look for **Slaty-backed Forktail** and **Silver-breasted Broadbill**.

Overnight: Shahzan Inn, Fraser's Hill

Day 5. Transfer to Kuala Tahan, Birding Taman Negara National Park

In the morning we will transfer to Kuala Tahan, Taman Negara. The remainder of the day will see us birding in this very rich virgin lowland rainforest, which features the 510 meters of the longest canopy walkway in the world.

Gazetted as a national park in 1938, Taman Negara is the oldest and largest protected area in Malaysia, incorporating what may be one of the oldest rainforests in the world, estimated at 130 million years old. The abundance and diversity of nature is phenomenal in Taman Negara, one of the world's most complex and rich ecosystems. It is also an Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Heritage Park and thereby a representative of efforts to conserve areas of particular biodiversity importance or exceptional uniqueness throughout ASEAN member states. BirdLife International lists Taman Negara as an Important Bird Area. The park is also home to 14,000 species of plants and trees with 2,400 flowering plants, 200 species of mammals (the last stronghold of tigers in the country), 67 species of snakes, and 55 species of frogs.

Taman Negara consists of 4,343 square kilometers of primary lowland/hilly dipterocarp and lower/upper montane oak and ericaceous forest, half of it situated below 300 meters above sea level, but there are also several hills in the park of above 1000 meters elevation. Kuala Tahan in Pahang state is the best-known and most-visited south entrance to the park.

Overnight: Mutiara Taman Negara, Kuala Tahan

Days 6 – 7. Birding Taman Negara

We have two additional days to bird this magnificent park on well-maintained trails and by small motorized boats. We'll find ourselves in a birdwatcher's haven with over 380 species, of which 143 species are restricted to the Sunda subregion and 84 are listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Fortunately, all three endemics, **Malayan Whistling Thrush, Mountain Peacock-Pheasant, and Malaysian Partridge**, make their home at Taman Negara as well, so we have another change at them here, if we haven't found them during the past few days at Fraser's Hill.

Other wonderful species of course also occur here. Among the forest specialties are magnificent pheasants like **Malayan Peacock-Pheasant, Great Argus, and Crested Fireback, Crested Partridge, Yellow-crowned Barbet, Large Green Pigeon, Garnet and Malayan Banded Pittas, Rhinoceros Hornbill, Grey-bellied, Scaly-breasted, Finsch's, and Black-and-white Bulbuls, Jambu Fruit Dove, Black-thighed Falconet, Large and Striped Wren-Babblers, Black Magpie, Crested Jay, White-necked and Black-throated Babblers, Rail-babbler, Diard's and Red-naped Trogons, Banded and Rufous-collared Kingfishers, Asian Paradise Flycatcher, Malaysian Blue Flycatcher, and with luck maybe Malaysian Honeyguide.**

Along the river on peaceful boat rides we may encounter **Straw-headed Bulbul**, **Oriental Dwarf** and **Blue-banded Kingfishers**, a variety of hornbills flying overhead, and the enigmatic **Masked Finfoot**.

Rare montane residents like **Hill Prinia** and **Crested Argus** can be found at higher elevations.

At night we might encounter **Reddish** and **Sunda Scops Owls** and **Malaysian Eared Nightjar**.

Overnight: Mutiara Taman Negara, Kuala Tahan

Day 8. Birding Taman Negara, departure

We still have the whole morning birding in Taman Negara, looking for species we might have missed so far.

After lunch we will transfer to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport for your evening flights home if you are not joining the extension.

Extension: Hornbills on Banding Island

Day 1. Arrival

You will arrive today at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport and will be transferred to your hotel.

Overnight: The 5 Elements Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

Day 2. Transfer to Pulau ("Island") Banding, birding on the island

Early today we will meet for our transfer to Banding Island. After arrival we will have lunch and some rest.

Birding on Banding Island is done by boat along the island's waters. Our first of three boat trips will take place in the late afternoon. Banding Island is home to all ten species of Malaysian hornbills: **Bushy Crested**, **Oriental Pied**, **Black**, **Great**, **Rhinoceros**, **Helmeted**, **White-crowned**, **Wrinkled**, **Plain-pouched**, and **Wreathed Hornbills**. These magnificent birds are our major targets here, but we will, of course, also not neglect any others that will cross our path.

There is also a chance to see the world's largest flower, the magnificent rafflesia, here, if we are lucky and any of the three resident species of this truly very special plant is in bloom.

Overnight: Banding Lakeside Inn, Banding

Day 3. Birding Pulau Banding

Today we will have two more wonderful boat rides, in the morning and late afternoon, in search of hornbills and other birds. In between you may explore the hotel's beautiful surroundings on your own, just relax and enjoy the fabulous views from the hotel's public areas or from your luxurious room, or take a refreshing swim in the magnificent pool.

Overnight: Banding Lakeside Inn, Banding

Day 4. Departure

After breakfast we will depart for Kuala Lumpur, where the tour ends.

Main tour

Duration: 8 days

Limit (Group Size): 6 – 8
Date: 9 – 16 September 2018
Tour Start: Kuala Lumpur
Tour End: Kuala Lumpur

Price: US\$4563 per person sharing

Single Supplement: US\$645

Please note that the costing is based on local currency, so there is a (remote) chance of a surcharge in the very unlikely case of a dramatic change in the exchange rate.

Price includes:

Accommodation

Meals (except for dinner on the first night, i.e. breakfast on Day 2 through lunch on Day 8)

All transport while on tour in an air-conditioned sightseeing vehicle

Boat transfers and excursion within Taman Negara

Gratuity for porters, boatmen, drivers, etc.

English-speaking birding guide

Entrance fees for Taman Negara

Price excludes:

Flights

Insurance (including tour cancellation insurance)

Drinks (including mineral water)

Camera and video fees (Taman Negara)

Canopy walk fees (Taman Negara)

Any personal expenses, e.g. laundry, leech socks, gifts, etc.

Extension Banding Island

Duration: 4 days
Limit (Group Size): 6 – 8
Date: 16 – 19 September 2018
Tour Start: Kuala Lumpur
Tour End: Kuala Lumpur

Price: US\$1521 per person sharing

Single Supplement: US\$186

Please note that the costing is based on local currency, so there is a (remote) chance of a surcharge in the very unlikely case of a dramatic change in the exchange rate.

Price includes:

Accommodation

Meals (except for dinner on the first night, i.e. breakfast on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 4)

Transfer Kuala Lumpur – Banding Island and back

Boat trips on Banding Island as per itinerary

Gratuity for porters, boatmen, drivers, etc.

English-speaking birding guide

Price excludes:

Flights

Insurance (including tour cancellation insurance)

Drinks (including mineral water)

Any personal expenses, e.g. laundry, gifts, etc.