



**BORNEO: SARAWAK FAMILY LISTING TOUR FOR
RAIL-BABBLER AND CRESTED JAY**

6 - 12 JULY 2021



Rail-babbler, one of the monotypic bird families we will target on this special tour (photo Yeo Siew Teck)

This exclusive (four people maximum), seven-day tour in Sarawak, Borneo (East Malaysia) starts and ends in Kuching and has been put together to search for two main target species that are both considered monotypic families by at least one of the three major taxonomic groups, these being the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) checklist - which we follow at Birding Ecotours, the Clements checklist, and the Handbook to the Birds of the World (HBW)/BirdLife checklist:

1. **Rail-babbler**: considered a monotypic family by IOC, Clements, and HBW/BirdLife.
2. **Crested Jay**: considered a monotypic family by Clements and called Crested Shrikejay, considered a monotypic family by HBW/BirdLife and called Crested Jay, but currently considered part of the corvid family by IOC where it is also called Crested Jay (and referred to as such in this itinerary as we follow IOC, though we recognize not everyone else does). Given that the other two world taxonomy authorities recognize Crested Jay as a monotypic family we would not be surprised if IOC follows suit eventually, so a potential 'insurance family tick' for any family listers.



Crested Jay, another of the stunning birds we will target on this trip (photo Yeo Siew Teck)

Our birding will focus on two areas within Sarawak, firstly Kudah National Park and secondly the Bornean Highlands, a famous birdwatching resort complex. These locations have been selected to provide the highest chance of seeing our target species with the help of top local guides.

There are also plenty of other great birds possible as we search for the above main targets and we could also see highly sought-after species like **Blue-banded Pitta**, **Bornean Frogmouth**, **Bornean Barbet**, **Bornean Wren-Babbler**, **Bonaparte's Nightjar**, **Mountain Serpent Eagle**, **Great Argus**, **Crimson-headed Partridge**, **Chestnut-naped Forktail**, **Rufous-collared**

Kingfisher, Blue-banded Kingfisher, Reddish Scops Owl, Oriental Bay Owl, Blyth's Frogmouth, Red-bearded Bee-eater, Short-toed Coucal, Cinnamon-rumped Trogon, Diard's Trogon, Olive-backed Woodpecker, Black-and-white Bulbul, Javan Blue Flycatcher (Bornean endemic subspecies and potential future split), **Bornean Blue Flycatcher, Rufous-tailed Shama, and Pygmy White-eye.**



*The rather cute endemic **Bornean Frogmouth** is possible in Sarawak (photo Yeo Siew Teck).*

Itinerary (7 days/6 nights)

Day 1. Arrival Kuching, Sarawak

A non-birding day at leisure after your arrival into Borneo. You will be met at the airport and taken the short distance to our very comfortable accommodation. We will meet in the evening for a group welcome meal and discuss plans for the following week of birding.

Overnight: Kuching

Day 2. Kubah National Park

We will travel just under an hour to the west of Kuching to Kubah National Park. This national park protects an area of 8.6 square miles (22.3 square kilometers) and sits on a sandstone plateau, part of the Matang Range comprising of three peaks, the highest being Gunung Serapi at 2,952 feet (900 meters). Over 250 species have been recorded from the park, including one of our main target species on this tour; **Crested Jay**. We will make a start on looking for these key birds on arrival.

During the course of our day here (and following morning) we might also find some of the following: **Blue-banded Pitta**, **Bornean Wren-Babbler**, **Great Argus**, **Chestnut-naped Forktail**, **Blue-banded Kingfisher**, **Rufous-collared Kingfisher**, **Short-toed Coucal**, **Red-crowned Barbet**, **Brown Barbet**, **Green Broadbill**, **Banded Broadbill**, **Diard's Trogon**, **White-crowned Hornbill**, **Olive-backed Woodpecker**, **Banded Woodpecker**, **Buff-necked Woodpecker**, **Cream-vented Bulbul**, **Streaked Bulbul**, **Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler**, **White-necked Babbler**, **Rufous-tailed Shama**, **Rufous-chested Flycatcher**, and **Bornean Blue Flycatcher** though our main objective here will be securing views of **Crested Jay**.



Blue-banded Pitta, a stunning Bornean endemic that is more likely to be seen in Sarawak than elsewhere (photo Yeo Siew Teck)

We stay in the park area overnight and might get a chance at the enigmatic **Bonaparte's Nightjar**, **Blyth's Frogmouth**, or **Reddish Scops Owl** while spotlighting.

Overnight: Kubah National Park

Day 3. Kubah National Park to Borneo Highlands

We will spend the morning birding in Kubah National Park, focusing our attention on sightings of **Crested Jay** and other specialties of the area, depending on what was seen the previous day.

After lunch we will check out of our accommodation and transfer approximately two hours to the Borneo Highlands, and our accommodation there for the next four nights. Time permitting, we will start our birding of the area in the late afternoon.

Overnight: Borneo Highlands Resort.

Days 4 - 6. Borneo Highlands

We will have three full days birding in the Borneo Highlands. Rapidly becoming one of the most popular birding sites in Sarawak, Borneo Highlands is a resort complex located on a plateau in the Penrissen Range, straddling the rugged border of Sarawak (Malaysian Borneo) and Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo). Located at an elevation of 3,280 feet (1,000 meters) the site offers excellent access to virgin rainforest and a plethora of birds.

Our two main targets, **Rail-babbler** and **Crested Jay** both occur here so we will be focused on looking for those as soon as possible. This area is one of the top birding spots in Sarawak and we are likely to come across many other exciting birds during our stay, with other potential highlights including **Blue-banded Pitta**, **Crimson-headed Partridge**, **Bornean Frogmouth**, **Mountain Serpent Eagle**, **Bornean Barbet**, **Black-bellied Malkoha**, **Malaysian Hawk-Cuckoo**, **Cinnamon-rumped Trogon**, **Diard's Trogon**, **Scarlet-rumped Trogon**, **Red-naped Trogon**, **Olive-backed Woodpecker**, **White-crowned Hornbill**, **Wrinkled Hornbill**, **Green Broadbill**, **Black-thighed Falconet**, **Reddish Scops Owl**, **Jambu Fruit Dove**, **Red-bearded Bee-eater**, **Banded Kingfisher**, **Golden-whiskered Barbet**, **Blue-eared Barbet**, **Brown Barbet**, **Scaly-breasted Bulbul**, **Cream-vented Bulbul**, **Cinereous Bulbul**, **Puff-backed Bulbul**, **Eyebrowed Wren-Babbler**, **Temminck's Babbler**, **White-necked Babbler**, **Grey-breasted Babbler**, **Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler**, **Maroon-breasted Philentoma**, **Rufous-chested Flycatcher**, **Temminck's Sunbird**, **Pygmy White-eye**, **Grey-breasted Spiderhunter**, **Spectacled Spiderhunter**, **Thick-billed Spiderhunter**, **Yellow-eared Spiderhunter**, and **Javan Blue Flycatcher** (a recent split from Hill Blue Flycatcher and the Bornean endemic subspecies might be better treated as a separate endemic species itself).

Overnight (three nights): Borneo Highlands Resort.



*The gorgeous **Crimson-headed Partridge** is possible at Borneo Highlands (photo Liew Weng Keong).*

Day 7. Borneo Highlands to Kuching

We will have a final morning birding in the Borneo Highlands and will reluctantly bid a fond farewell to the site around noon. We are sure to have seen some wonderful birds during our time here. After checking out of the resort we will drive approximately two hours back to Kuching where the tour will end.

You can fly out of Kuching in the evening or stay an extra night if you wish (night not included in tour cost). Following this tour we have our Indonesia: Sulawesi and Halmahera birding tour, this 18-day tour focusses on the wide-range of over 100 endemic birds found on these Indonesian islands, including highly sought-after world birds like **Standardwing** (a bird-of-paradise often known as Wallace's Standardwing or Standardwing Bird-of-paradise), **Maleo**, **Purple-bearded Bee-eater**, and **Ivory-breasted Pitta**, as well as **Hylocitrea**, a Sulawesi-endemic monotypic family. Lots more great birds not to be missed!

Overnight: Not included

Please note that the itinerary 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.

Duration:	7 days
Group Size:	4
Dates:	6 - 12 July 2021
Start:	Kuching, Sarawak
End:	Kuching, Sarawak
Prices:	US\$ 7,520 per person – based on 1 participant US\$ 5,486 per person – based on 2 participants US\$ 4,558 per person – based on 3 participants US\$ 3,999 per person – based on 4 participants

Single Supplements: All costs are based on single rooms

Price includes:

All accommodation (as described above)
All meals (from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 7)
Drinking water, please bring a refillable water bottle
Expert tour leader
Local bird and wildlife guide fees
National park/birdwatching reserve entrance fees
All ground transport and tolls while on tour, including airport pick-up at beginning of the tour on day 1 and drop-off (if going straight to the airport when the tour finishes on day 7)

Price excludes:

Flights to/from Kuching and any airport tax

Any drinks, meals, accommodation, and transfers before the tour officially starts or after it officially ends as detailed in above itinerary

Items of a personal nature, e.g. gifts, laundry, internet access, phone calls, etc.

Soft/alcoholic drinks

Camera and video fees

Personal travel insurance

Visa if required

Gratuities