

WELCOME _____ to FIELDNEWS _____

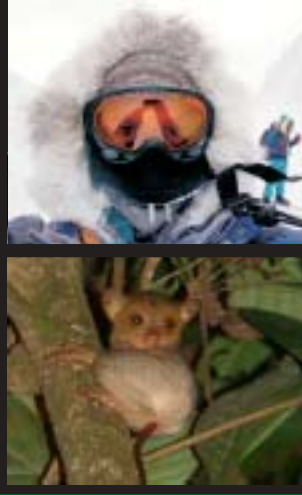
The Autumn newsletter is certainly drifting into winter - I've been off to Borneo, Sinai, Switzerland and then Sinai again, which combined with training courses all round the country has left little time in the office. The Borneo team have been equally hectic with the climbing wall reaching completion, a big charity challenge to organise and the Borneo based training taking off more than we can cope with! But we can never complain about being busy when it gets us out into amazing places and meeting some amazing people... *Dom*

UK Training - Reaching All Sectors New Emergency First aid at Work success and Oxford desert courses...

Fieldskills courses are now expanding and covering a wide range of sectors - two days in October particularly emphasised the scope of the courses...

DAY ONE: we were at Oxford University providing a specialised fieldwork safety and first aid course for a team of researchers who were off to Libya. The team were in the final stages of preparing a three week field trip to record rock art sites in the Messak Settafet, in southwest Libya. Their fascinating programme will include an in-depth and comprehensive survey of a major rock art site including use of total station/GPS mapping, regular photography and specialized digital imaging techniques. We greatly enjoyed working with the team and were delighted that they found the course useful and enjoyable.

DAY TWO: we were running the brand new Emergency first aid course for a local enterprise agency supporting office workers in Barrow. Major changes occurred in UK first aid regulation from October 2009. It has affected all companies in the UK with respect to the first aid provision they are required to have in the workplace. The new one day Emergency First Aid at Work course now offers employers another option to provide suitable first aid provision for their workplace and the new one day course certainly seems to have been proving popular. Having seen our initial trial course book up in a matter of weeks we have now added a list of other dates and are planning more into 2010. As well as open courses we are also able to run these courses in-house for businesses so drop us an email on admin@fieldskills.com if you would like to know more about this new course.



In this issue

North Pole Expedition 2010 and Borneo Loris and Tarsier Research...

SIGN UP NOW..

COURSES COMING SOON:

FREE TRAINING DAY -
1 free place available for University staff involved in Fieldwork:
20th Nov: Oxfordshire
9th Dec: Cumbria
Email admin@fieldskills.com to book

Outdoor First Aid Courses:
16th-17th Nov: Oxfordshire
7th-8th Dec: Cumbria
26th-27th Jan: Cumbria

Emergency First Aid at Work
10th Dec: Cumbria
9th Dec: Cumbria

First Aid at Work
2nd-4th March: Cumbria

More details, further dates and to book go to www.fieldskills.com

Nocturnal Primate Surveys at Danau Girang Field Centre



Long-tail macaques are easily spotted at the Danau Girang Field Centre. Almost any day of the week their loud chittar-chatter and crashing leaps through the trees can be heard by simply walking on the main path. By the end of the first month of research, these common monkeys are looked at the same way one would look at a magpie in England: utter indifference. Orangutans can still strike excitement in a long-term researcher, even though you will see at least one in a period of a week. The proboscis, silver leaf and pig-tail macaques may not be easily found at the field centre, but a simple boat ride down the Kinabatangan will reveal scores of these monkeys along the river's edge. But two primates one is unlikely to see, without time and dedication, are the Bornean slow loris and Bornean tarsier. Both these primates are nocturnal, and usually require hard work if one wishes to see one.

In over five months of research, Rachel Munds (MPhil student, Oxford Brookes University) and Ridzwan Ali (Malaysian colleague), have spotted only eight individuals of each species. For many this low sighting abundance (roughly 0.02 individuals/km) would deter them from continuing with the project. But for these two nocturnalists, it only drives them to work harder. The goal of the project is to provide a density abundance estimate for DGFC. Every night at least one, if not two, trails are walked at a pace of 600 m/hr. These primates are detected with the use of a red filter on a halogen bulb headlamp. The red filter allows for longer observations, as the animals do not detect the red light.

The Bornean loris is one of the least studied primates in the world. It is only found throughout Borneo and on a few of the surrounding

islands. It is small with an average body length of 260 mm and rarely weighing more than 550g. It is commonly found at heights of 15+m and in dense canopy coverage, which makes it challenging to see. Its diet consists of sap, insects, small vertebrates such as birds or lizards, and fruits. People assume these primates to be solitary, but occasionally one can find two to four individuals in the same tree, raising the point that more research is required to better understand their sociality. The number one issue for all slow lorises is the illegal pet and medical trade which is rampant throughout South East Asia.

The Bornean tarsier was studied fairly well in the past (over 20 years ago), but few recent studies exist. Their average body length, excluding the tail, is 135 mm and the average weight is 115g. They are faunivores, which means their diet consists exclusively of living creatures, such as insects, frogs, small birds, lizards and even snakes! Unlike the loris, they lack a distinct eye-shine, but they can still be spotted by a dull red glare from their eyes. They are believed to be semi-social, sharing sleeping sites with partners and offspring. Primary conservation threats are deforestation and food trade.



Article and photos by Rachel Munds.

Rachel attended a Fieldskills course at Oxford Brookes Uni and then met up with Dom again out in Borneo where he was leading a school team to Dinau Girang whilst Rachel was there studying.



Here we look at the science behind the project and the contribution expeditions can make to the wider scientific community...

Scientists have become increasingly aware of the importance and contribution of polar oceans and the part they play in driving the Earth's climate. The annual variation of polar sea ice extent influences not only the exchange, but also the distribution of moisture and solar energy. In addition, concentrated seasonal inputs of dense brine contribute to driving ocean circulation. Of particular importance in exerting controls on energy distribution and circulation is the high reflectivity of ice and snow. The higher reflectivity of ice covered water, in contrast to that of ice free water, is capable of generating a greater variation in the degree of solar energy reflected than other regions of the Earth. With this knowledge, it is evident that in order to better understand solar energy transfer and improve present and future climate variability predictions, the capacity to rapidly determine past sea ice extent and the associated climatic response is crucial.

Recent developments in the Petroleum and Environmental Geochemistry Group (PEGG) at the University of Plymouth, UK, have enabled high resolution monitoring of shifts in sea ice cover over the last several thousand years. This is made possible by looking at the chemical fingerprint of specific species of microscopic algae that live within sea ice. Every year when the sea ice melts, these algae are released to the seafloor where their chemical signature is

North Pole 2010

During February 2010 Antony Jinman will be embarking on his greatest expedition to date, to become the 27th Briton ever to ski to the Geographic North Pole, some 480 miles. This expedition is in collaboration with Plymouth University and will be used to collect vital data in on going research into understanding past sea ice extent. If you can help him with sponsorship or in any other way then you can find him at www.antonyjinman.com

Dom and Antony amongst many other expeditioners will be at Explore 2009 - the annual expedition and fieldwork conference at the RGS in London on the 14th-15th November. There are still places available so contact the RGS now...

preserved over many years.

Currently, the growth and development of these microscopic algae over the spring season have been monitored in detail in a localised region of the Canadian Arctic. While this has vastly improved our knowledge relating to the monitoring of sea ice, Anthony's expedition to the North Pole will expand our knowledge into the high Arctic greatly enhancing the range of our sea ice data and will provide increased confidence in sea ice reconstructions. The logistical and technical difficulties in obtaining such samples make this opportunity unmissable in terms of moving forward in climate change studies within the Arctic.

Collecting sea ice for scientific analysis in polar conditions is highly challenging. Long coring devices, similar to an apple corer, will be used to manually 'drill' into the frozen sea surface to collect the bottom few centimetres of sea ice where the algae are found to live. A quick inspection of this ice will show whether or not these algae are present. The ice is then gently melted and passed through a small fibre filter to collect the algae. The filter is then sealed in a low volume sterile bag and packed into the sled where it is kept at ambient Arctic temperatures, preserving the algae and their chemical fingerprint for later analysis in the laboratories in Plymouth.

Antony and his team's previous arctic experience and knowledge is crucial to the success of this scientific expedition and will greatly aid our understanding of the arctic.



The memorial fund was set up in memory of Laura Jones, who died tragically in the Borneo rainforest on 24th June 1999 at the age of 19.

Laura had loved to travel and had been out to Borneo to see more of the world, and in the few days before had seen baby turtles hatching and going out to sea, on Malay islands off the Philippines.

Borneo team support Laura Jones Memorial fund

She then travelled inland to stay at the Sukau River Lodge, which had no phone or electricity. At 6am in the morning she was sleeping but suddenly stopped breathing. She was taken up river and by car whilst being given CPR to a local village who had only basic medical equipment without electricity, and was then driven by landrover to the nearest hospital which was brand new, but there was no money for doctors or staff. She was finally taken to a mother and baby unit still being given CPR. 4 hours after she was first struggling to breathe she was flown to the major hospital in Sandakan Hospital where she was pronounced dead on arrival.

10 years on the exact cause of her death is still unknown, although Doctors suspect Sudden Adult Death Syndrome.

Laura was a student at Bournemouth University, and had been at Godolphin School, Salisbury prior to that.

Laura's family and friends raised over £16,000 for a fund to provide training and medical equipment (including defibrillators) to the area where Laura died.

Now thanks to the kind help of one of Laura's friends now living in the area, and the Fieldskills training team, this dream has become a reality almost 10 years to the day.

Fieldskills will train 200 staff on the Kinabatangan including lodge workers and tour guides as well as local nursing staff on specialist 2 day first aid courses.

The first of these ran on 23rd & 24th June, 21 tour guides from 5 companies located along the Kinabatangan River took part. The next course is scheduled for December 2009.

EXPED NEWS

Our latest collection of snippets from the expedition and conservation world...

Latest Red list is not good news...

A fifth of the world's known mammals, a third of its amphibians, more than a quarter of its reptiles and up to 70% of its plants are under threat of extinction according to the red list of threatened species, the latest annual survey compiled by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Among the critically endangered species are the western lowland gorilla and the bactrian camel. The golden-headed lion tamarin is listed as endangered and the socorro dove is extinct in the wild. Only a single male specimen of the Rabb's fringe-limbed

tree frog, which lives in central Panama, has been heard calling in the last three years and attempts to breed it in captivity have so far failed.

The IUCN estimates that nearly 17,300 of the world's 47,677 assessed species are under threat of extinction.

Perhaps news like this explains why climate change activists are going to such lengths - but this latest idea takes the biscuit... (Dom)

Swimming Everest...

Lewis Pugh, the epic cold-water swimmer and climate-change activist, has announced his next swim: a kilometer-long lap across a glacial lake at the top of Everest, in a pond of meltwater 17,000 feet up. He told me the swim will highlight climate-change issues in two massive countries bordering Everest, China and India. Realizing the effects of climate change on the pristine environment of Everest shocked him, Pugh said. The lake he'll swim in, atop Khumbu Glacier, "shouldn't even be there." He will be doing the whole thing in his speedos...