

Borneo Sabah & Sepilok

RAINFOREST, WILDLIFE
AND RIVER ADVENTURE

BOLDER 

Adventure

HIGHLIGHTS



RAINFOREST & RIVER ADVENTURE

Trek in Kiulu, raft as a team and travel the Kinabatangan at sunset in search of wildlife.



HABITAT RESTORATION

Support native-tree planting and site care in a vital wildlife corridor.



ORANGUTANS & SUN BEARS

Learn how rehabilitation, research and enrichment support two of Borneo's most remarkable species.



REEF & INDIGENOUS CULTURE

Begin with responsible snorkelling and an introduction to Sabah's diverse indigenous traditions.

Destination

SNAPSHOT



LANDSCAPE

Tropical city coast, coral marine park, jungle river, lowland rainforest and wildlife rehabilitation forest.



CULTURE

Sabah's many indigenous communities, food, music, craft and relationship with forest and river.



CHALLENGE LEVEL

Moderate. Varied active days rather than a continuous trek, with heat and humidity adding challenge.



ACCOMMODATION

City hotels and simple adventure or conservation bases in Kiulu, Kinabatangan and Sepilok.



CLIMATE

Hot, humid and tropical with heavy rain possible at any time.



TRAVEL

Fly via Kuala Lumpur to Kota Kinabalu, travel overland across Sabah and depart from Sandakan via Kuala Lumpur.



ATMOSPHERE

Vibrant, spiritual, tropical and warm-hearted.



BEST FOR

Schools seeking a wildlife-rich environmental programme with genuine adventure and practical restoration work.

BORNEO KOTA KINABALU





SABAH RAINFOREST & WILDLIFE ADVENTURE 14 DAYS

ONE POSSIBLE JOURNEY This sample itinerary shows how we believe you can get the most from your time and create a well-balanced adventure. The exact running order and individual elements may vary according to availability, local conditions and the needs of the group. Most aspects can be tailored to suit your school's aims, preferred duration and priorities, so please get in touch and we can shape the right programme with you.

Day 1

Depart the UK

The group begins the overnight journey to Malaysian Borneo. The route ahead will cross Sabah from Kota Kinabalu to Kiulu, the Kinabatangan River and Sepilok, moving through marine, rainforest and river environments before the flight home from Sandakan.

Day 2

Arrive in Kota Kinabalu

After the international journey and transit in Kuala Lumpur, the group arrives at Kota Kinabalu Airport and meets the local team. A transfer takes everyone to the hotel for check-in and rest. Depending on flight timings, the formal welcome presentation happens later that day or the next morning, introducing the route, conservation partners and practical arrangements for the adventure across Sabah.

Day 3

Kota Kinabalu Orientation

The first full day brings the team together through ice-breaking activities before turning Kota Kinabalu into a place to explore. Working in groups, students complete cultural and historical tasks around the city, learning to notice, communicate and navigate rather than simply following a guide. A night-market visit adds a different atmosphere to the evening and introduces the food, trade and everyday energy of Sabah's capital. The day is deliberately accessible after travel, but it establishes the teamwork and curiosity that the more demanding sections of the programme will require.

Day 4

Snorkelling Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park

The programme moves onto the water for a full day in Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. Before snorkelling, students receive instruction in safe technique and responsible behaviour around reefs. Guided sessions then introduce the park's marine biodiversity and the pressures facing coastal ecosystems, with sightings dependent on the day's conditions rather than guaranteed. Travelling out from the city to the islands changes the group's perspective on Kota Kinabalu and gives the adventure its first strong environmental focus. Back at the hotel, a debrief connects what was observed below the surface with wider ocean conservation.

Day 5

Culture & the Journey to Kiulu

At Mari Mari Cultural Village, students learn about Sabah's Indigenous cultures through traditional homes, crafts, music, daily practices and interactive demonstrations. The visit provides context for a destination made up of many communities, avoiding the idea that there is a single Bornean way of life. Later, the group leaves Kota Kinabalu and travels inland to the Kiulu base at Zip Borneo. Settling into a new environment marks the next transition in the journey: the coast and city fall behind, and the focus turns to rainforest movement and river adventure.

Day 6

Jungle Trek & White-Water Rafting

A guided jungle trek begins the day in Kiulu, introducing local flora, fauna and rainforest ecology while the group learns how to move together on forest trails. In the afternoon, the team transfers its attention to the river. After equipment checks and a full safety briefing, students work together to navigate gentle rapids on a guided white-water rafting run. The change from foot to raft keeps the day energetic and varied, but both activities depend on the same habits: listening carefully, communicating clearly and responding to the environment. The group returns to base for a well-earned rest.

Day 7

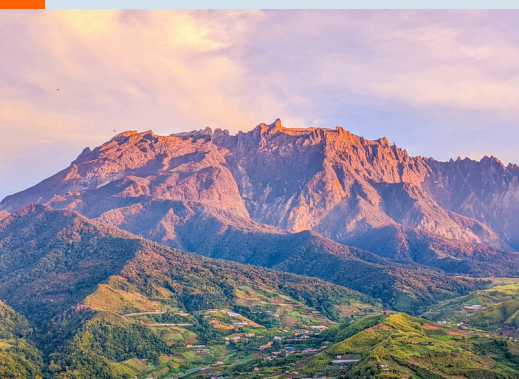
Across Sabah to Kinabatangan

Today is a substantial travel day east to the Kinabatangan region. The journey carries the group away from Kiulu and towards one of Sabah's major river landscapes, creating time to see the scale of the route across the state. On arrival, everyone checks in and recovers before a presentation from APE Borneo introduces the conservation work, the local habitat and the plan for the following days. This quieter stage is important preparation: students understand why tree planting and site maintenance matter before they begin the practical work themselves.

Day 8

Tree Planting & a Kinabatangan River Cruise

The morning is spent supporting reforestation along the Kinabatangan River through native-tree planting and suitable site maintenance. Local staff explain how restored habitat can reconnect areas used by wildlife and why long-term care matters after a seedling enters the ground. Later, a river cruise offers a different view of the same ecosystem. Guides look for wildlife that may include proboscis monkeys, hornbills or crocodiles, but no sighting is guaranteed. The day links practical restoration with observation, helping students see the relationship between river, forest and the species that depend on both.







Day 9

Habitat Restoration

A second day at Kinabatangan takes the group beyond a one-off planting session. Students continue with native trees and maintenance tasks identified by the project team, seeing how restoration depends on preparation, repeated care and monitoring. The work may feel less dramatic than a wildlife cruise, but its significance is clearer after the previous day's view from the river. Free time later allows the team to recover and prepare for Sepilok's specialist wildlife centres.

Day 10

Sepilok & Orangutan Rehabilitation

Leaving the river region, the group travels to Sepilok and the Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. Students learn why rescued orangutans enter rehabilitation and how the centre supports greater independence. The Rainforest Discovery Centre adds a wider habitat perspective through its canopy walkway and interpretation of Borneo's forest ecosystem. Rather than promising a particular encounter, the day focuses on rehabilitation and the forest conditions orangutans need. At the accommodation, the group connects this specialist care with the habitat restoration completed at Kinabatangan.

Day 11

Bornean Sun Bear Conservation

The Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre introduces the world's smallest bear species and the threats that bring animals into care. Staff explain the centre's welfare and rehabilitation work before students support an appropriate task, identified in the supplier programme as creating enrichment items that encourage natural behaviours. Participation remains under centre direction and subject to current needs. Focusing on one species allows the group to look beyond the novelty of seeing a sun bear and understand the repeated work behind good animal care and conservation.



Day 12

Plastic, Creativity & Reflection

The final programme day shifts from wildlife to waste. In a Precious Plastic workshop, students learn how discarded material can be processed with simple machines and turned into useful items such as a keychain or coaster. The practical, creative task brings the environmental story back to everyday choices. After time to rest and organise, a closing reflection looks back across marine park, cultural village, river habitat, reforestation and wildlife rehabilitation before the journey home.

Day 13

Depart Sandakan

The group checks out, says goodbye to the local team and transfers to Sandakan Airport. The journey home begins via Kuala Lumpur, closing a route that has crossed Sabah from west coast to east rather than returning to the starting point.

Day 14

Arrive Home

The international journey ends back in the UK. Students return with a connected picture of Sabah's marine, rainforest and river environments, shaped by practical conservation work, guided wildlife learning and the communities and organisations met along the way.



SHAPE YOUR Adventure

FOCUS

MORE CONSERVATION

Build more time around habitat restoration, wildlife conservation and environmental learning, giving students a deeper understanding of the pressures facing Borneo's rainforests and the practical work being done to protect them.



CHALLENGE

MORE ADVENTURE

If you want a stronger physical challenge, we can explore extending the trekking element with a longer or more demanding rainforest journey, creating a greater sense of expedition alongside the wildlife and conservation experiences.



FOCUS

CHANGE THE BALANCE

Prefer more adventure and less project work? More wildlife and fewer activity days? A slightly shorter journey or additional time in one particular location? We'll work with you to find the right balance and build a programme around your school, rather than asking your school to fit a fixed itinerary.



GLOBAL LEARNING

COMMUNITY & CULTURE

Spend more time with local communities and develop the cultural side of the journey through activities such as traditional cookery, foraging, local skills and deeper exploration of life in rural Sabah.



NOT SURE WHICH WORKS BEST?

That's where we come in. We'll help shape the right adventure for your team.



WHAT'S INCLUDED



Free teaching staff places
Bolder Adventure Programme Leader 

International flights



All in-country transport
All accommodation, meals and safe drinking water

All required permits/park fees
Guided activities with expert local partners



Group safety, communication & sleep-out equipment
Travel Pack, inc. hoody or tech tee

Comprehensive travel insurance
Safety management & planning
24/7 support during travel



Highly experienced UK account management
Pre-trip briefings & training *(as applicable)*

PLEASE NOTE: Cancellation insurance, visas, vaccinations, personal expenditure, tips for leaders, guides and drivers - and any other services not listed above are not included.

NEXT STEPS

1

Consider your preferred itinerary or direction



2

Book a 20 minute planning call. We'll confirm your aims, shape the itinerary, and prepare what you need for SLT and promotion

3

Receive your customised pack for confirmation and launch

4

Reserve your dates with a small holding deposit



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DIFFERENTLY**



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