Pit Vipers are venomous snakes from the family Viperidae. They are named so because of the heat sensing pits behind their nostrils on the side on their snouts. Pit Vipers are ambush predators that rely on their camouflage to stay hidden, awaiting prey to pass in front of them before striking. Many of the Pit Vipers are arboreal, i.e. living on trees. Some are specialized for certain habitats such as montane areas or mangroves.

**Malayan Pit Viper (Calloselasma rhodostoma)**

*Distinguishing Feature:* Dorsum reddish-brown. Flanks lighter. Triangular marks on sides meeting or alternating on thin vertebral stripe. White tail tips on juveniles.

*Habitat/Distribution:* Dry lowland forests and plantations up to 1524m above sea level. Prefers dense undergrowth and rocky areas. Restricted to the northern states of Perak and Kedah.

*Behavior:* Nocturnal and terrestrial. Flattens itself when threatened.

*Diet:* Small rodents and birds.
Siamese Pit Viper (Trimeresurus fucatus)
Distinguishing Feature: Green dorsum. Males have white & red ventrolateral stripe. Venter bright green.
Habitat/Distribution: Mid-elevation hill forests. 400-1280m asl.
Behaviour: Nocturnal and arboreal.
Diet: Rodents, birds.

Hagen's Pit Viper (Trimeresurus hageni)
Venter pale green.
Habitat/Distribution: Lowland and mid hill forests up to 600m asl.
Behaviour: Nocturnal and arboreal.
Diet: Birds, small mammals.
Mangrove Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus purpureomaculatus*)

**Distinguishing Feature:** Dorsum olive, grey or purplish-brown with darker mottling. Venter cream or brown.

**Habitat/Distribution:** Mangroves or coastal forests.

**Behavior:** Crepuscular and arboreal.

**Diet:** Small mammals.
Cameron Highlands Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus nebularis*)

**Distinguishing Feature:** Dorsum bright green. Interstitial skin consists of thick black and thin blue bands.

Postocular stripe absent.

**Habitat/Distribution:** Restricted to montane forests.

**Behaviour:** Nocturnal and arboreal.

**Diet:** Birds and small mammals.
Wagler’s Pit Viper (*Tropidolaemus wagleri*)

**Distinguishing Feature:** Female adults have black dorsum with yellow-green cross-bars. Male dorsum green with white and red spots. White and red post ocular stripe present.

**Habitat/Distribution:** Lowland forest, forest edges and secondary vegetation.

**Behaviour:** Arboreal and nocturnal.

**Diet:** Birds and rodents.

Note: Not included in this article: Malayan Brown Pit Viper (*Ovophis convictus*), Fairy Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus buniana*), Sumatran Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus sumatranus*) and Wirot’s Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus wiroti*)

*Article & photos by Steven Wong (mnsherpg@gmail.com)*
Green Humour is a comic site created by a cartoonist from India, Rohan Chak. Rohan won the Sanctuary Asia Young Naturalist Award 2012 for his work in raising awareness about environmental, wildlife and conservation issues using his comic strips. We thank him for the inspiring work he is doing and pledge to do our best to protect wildlife and the natural environment. To contact him or to view his other works, please email rohanchakcartoonist@gmail.com or visit his site at http://www.greenhumour.com.
1. Pack your lunch in a metal box instead of plastic.

2. Recycle. Make toys from junk instead of buying expensive, harmful plastic toys.

3. Bake your friend a birthday cake instead of buying him/her a plastic toy.

4. Always refuse a straw, as it adds to non-biodegradable waste.

5. Carry your own water bottle instead of buying plastic bottles.

6. Reduce paper-use by using waste paper to make paper planes.

7. Don’t hesitate to educate parents and elders.

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www.greenhumour.com
GREEN LIVING COLUMN

NATIONS PLEDGE TO END OCEAN PLASTIC WASTE

A STEP FORWARD IN THE WAR AGAINST OCEAN PLASTICS

On 6th December 2017, 193 nations signed a U.N. resolution in Nairobi on Wednesday to eliminate plastic pollution in the sea, a move some delegates hoped would pave the way to a legally binding treaty.

If current pollution rates continue, there will be more plastic in the sea than fish by 2050, said the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which organized the meeting.

Eight million tonnes of plastic - bottles, packaging and other waste - are dumped into the ocean every year, killing marine life and entering the human food chain, UNEP added.

Norway, which initiated the resolution, has seen the evidence of the damage the pollution causes first hand, he said.

“We found micro plastics inside mussels, which is something we like to eat,” Helgesen added. “In January this year, a fairly rare species of whale was stranded on a beach because of exhaustion and they simply had to kill it. In its tummy, they found 30 plastic bags.”

NO TIMETABLE AND NOT LEGALLY BINDING

Several countries, including China and India, refused to include in the resolution a call on nations to adopt any reduction targets.

Countries did agree that the world needs to stop plastics from entering the sea, but the final resolution published on Wednesday has no timetable and is not legally binding.

THE 5 MAIN CULPRITS

According to research published in 2015, up to 60% of ocean plastics come from just five countries: China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand.

While China is a major polluter, contributing 8.82 tons of plastic wastage that wind up in the earth’s seas annually, it is certainly not alone. The contribution of other offending countries are Indonesia (3.22 tons), the Philippines (1.88 tons), Vietnam (1.83 tons), Sri Lanka (1.59 tons), Thailand (1.03 tons), Egypt (0.97 tons), Malaysia (0.94 tons), Nigeria (0.85 tons), Bangladesh (0.79 tons), and South Africa (0.63 tons).

The researchers averred that each country’s strategy to reducing plastic waste should differ. In China, 84% comes from waste that’s not collected, so it needs to concentrate on expanding garbage collection, the report says. On average, the five countries collect about 50% of trash overall. In the Philippines, 74% of its leakage happens after that waste has been “collected,” so it should perhaps modernise collection facilities and transport systems to be more retentive.

ECONOMIC PRESSURES AND POVERTY

In developing nations such as Indonesia and the Philippines, the issue of poverty has to be addressed first. In communities that are not affluent and where workers are paid daily wages or low wages, small-scale products such as single-use shampoo packets and confectionery are popular, because economic pressures make it difficult for consumers to purchase in bulk or choose more sustainable products in reusable and refillable packaging.

As Asian economies rise, people have more cash to blow on Marlboros and Sprites at 7-Eleven. But the rubbish these habits produce often does not end up in legitimate landfills.

In the 5 Asian countries listed above, only about 40% of garbage is properly collected. Across Asia, rubbish is often piled up in communal dumps, where stray bits of litter are swept up by the wind and cast into the ocean.

During rainy season, thousands of tonnes of rubbish discarded in rivers and waterways washes up on Indonesia’s shores. Heavy machinery is often brought in to clear the tourist beaches of Bali and local communities and non-profits are constantly organising large-scale beach cleanups.

Last year, a tax on single use plastic bags was trialed in 23 cities across Indonesia. While the government reported a big reduction in plastic bag use, there was significant resistance both from consumers and industry, according to Siti Nurbaya, Indonesia’s minister for the environment. This is delaying a bill to impose a nationwide tax of not less than Rp.200 (1p) per plastic bag.

Environmentalists will be hoping that the promised funding effectively channels resources and expertise into public awareness and education programmes, improvements in waste management, pressure on industry and initiatives that encourage alternatives to plastic packaging.

PROGRESS AND STRONG MEASURES

China is the biggest producer of plastic waste but has started making efforts to cut down, UNEP head Erik Solheim said.

“If there is one nation changing at the moment more than anyone else, it’s China ... the speed and determination of the government to change is enormous,” said Solheim.

Solheim eventually wants to see governments ban and redesign some packaging.

“Let’s abolish products that we do not need ... if you go to tourist places like Bali, a huge amount of the plastic picked from the oceans are actually straws.”

Under the resolution, countries agreed to start monitoring the amount of plastic they put into the ocean.

“While this is not a treaty, significant progress is being made ... 39 governments announced new commitments to reduce the amount of plastic going into the sea,” said the
chief of public advocacy at UNEP, Sam Barrat.

“Chile, Oman, Sri Lanka and South Africa today ... announced measures including plastic bag bans, new marine reserves and drives to increase recycling.”

The Thai government says the nation has established a 20-year strategy to tackle the problem, including developing financial incentives for keeping plastic out of the sea and encouraging eco-packaging design and eco-friendly substitutes for plastics.

In Indonesia, the government is starting a mass education programme for schoolchildren, and in the Philippines new laws are being developed.

Part of the challenge is finding substitutes for plastics. An international prize for smarter materials and design for packaging was launched recently by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation.

WHAT WE CAN DO

It is not only governments that can make a firm decision to end plastic pollution.

Responsible and caring members of civil society can take direct and personal action to eliminate plastic waste from their lives. You can also gain or share new ideas and learn about new technologies and approaches by joining groups such as the Break Free From Plastic movement at https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/


By Wong Ee Lynn
wong.ee.lynn@yahoo.com / gl.mnselangor@yahoo.com

MNS Selangor Branch Photogroup

Photography Trip to Setinggi Waterfalls

Date: 13 January 2018

Very near Serendah town is a small, pristine waterfall that allows for full leisure activity including photography. The waterfall flow is full and cascades down a pool where one can enjoy a cool dip! Located deep in the forest, hiking in will take about a couple of hours on generally flat terrain with mild ascend. You may encounter a friendly leech or two along the way – especially in wet conditions. It is possible to drive in and park at the open area being prepared for development.

We will convoy from the meet-up venue (location will be provided to confirmed participants).

To register, please submit membership details to KK Tan at 017-3306700.

Photographers who want to double up into picnicking and water pleasures are to bring the necessary equipment and clothing. Do have an extra set of clothing on standby in the car.

Special photography items worth bringing – tripod, ND and polarising filters!

Maximum participants: 20

Cost: RM20.00 per pax

Nature Guides

NATURE EDUCATION @ PERHILITAN KRAU WILDLIFE RESERVE

Date: 27 – 28 January 2018 (Saturday-Sunday)
Meeting time on 27 Jan: 10am
Ending time on 28 Jan: 5pm
Meeting place: Institut Biodiversiti (IBD), Bukit Rengit, Lanchang, Pahang (Waze or Google Maps)
Fee: RM250 (adult) RM200 (child below 12) for members. Non-members add RM70 for MNS 1-year membership.

Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) Nature Guides SIG in collaboration with Herpetofauna and Bird SIG and the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia (PERHILITAN) is organizing a special access to Krau Wildlife Reserve endless trails and waterfall. Don’t miss the chance of learning with PERHILITAN field officers on bat ecology, herpetofauna and birdwatching. Nature lovers are invited for an exposure to zoological inventory and museum in IBD. It’s an opportunity to learn the process of species identification too.

Fee covers 1N dormitory accommodation (male and female separate), all meals (halal), activities at IBD and access to Krau Wildlife Reserve. Transport is by carpooling.

LIMITED TO 20 PLACES ONLY.

Please register at: https://goo.gl/forms/D3xd4YhJdrGzE4f12

For further enquiry, contact John Chan at greenjohnchan@gmail.com or 016 3569 169.
**Taman Negara trip**

**Date:** 17–19 March 2018  
**Charges:** RM460 non member/RM440 MNS member (Deposit RM260)

**Tasik Kenyir**  
Part of Taman Negara is in Terengganu, known as Taman Negara Kenyir. Taman Negara rainforest is the world oldest jungle believed to be 130 million years old. It spans over 260,000 hectares (or some 369 sq km), fed by 30 rivers with 25 waterfalls and at least 25 known species of fish swimming in this man-made lake. The 340 islands in the lake were once hilltops and highlands before the area was inundated by water.

**Lasir Waterfall**  
Lasir Waterfall is one of the many spectacular waterfalls within Lake Kenyir. It’s a lovely waterfall, that occurred at a boundary between two different rock types. It’s a fall from about 500 feet high. The waterfall drops gracefully into multi-tiered levels of boulders forming sprays of water. Ponds of water are available at each of the 5 levels of Lasir and one can enjoy a cold refreshing bath here. There are large camping area and hiking trail up to its top. The fall is well shaded by the canopy of the surrounding forest.

**Saok Waterfall**  
Saok Waterfalls is another waterfall that is about 15 minutes boat ride away from Pengkalan Gawi. This waterfall has cascading waters over its rocky terraces. There is a flat sandy area at the foot of the waterfall that makes it an ideal place for a time of picnic with your family or friends.

**Ikan Kelah Santuary**  
There are three Kelah sanctuaries in the country. The most successful one is located in Sg Petang which is a river within Lake Kenyir. For those of you who are unaware, Lake Kenyir is a huge lake with an area of 225 sq miles. Kelah (or Mahseer) is a breed of fish which require clean streams which are highly oxygenated to survive. If the rivers are polluted they simply disappear. The government has been wise to set up a sanctuary in Sg Petang to allow this species of fish to breed in its natural environment. The sanctuary in Sg Petang is only open to public from March to October.

**Charges included:**  
1. Accommodation 2 nights at houseboat  
2. Speedboat  
3. Permit for Ikan Kelah Santuary  
4. 6 meals included (Bx2,Lx2,Dx2)  
5. Kayak  
6. Chef  

*Due to the nature of our work, we may not able to attend your phone call. We prefer FB message or whatsapp.*

Do join MNS Selangor Branch Pathfinders Group Facebook for more further information.
MNS Selangor Branch Pathfinders

**Tekiwit Sela’an Waterfall**

**Dates:** 28 April 2018 – 1 May 2018

A hidden gem at inland of Miri, Sarawak
- Tekiwit Waterfall, also known as Sela’an Waterfall. It takes 6 hours journey with 4x4 wheel drive to the nearest homestay
- Selaan Segah Homestay and Kelesa Camp. From Selaan Segah Waterfall, it takes another 40 minutes drive and 2 hours jungle trekking to see this hidden gem.
- Sela’an River and Segah River is livelihood home for native Kenyah Sela’an and Penan people, as well as home of an expensive fresh water fish - Empurau.

**Charges -** RM865 non member/RM845 MNS member (Deposit RM400)

**Charges included:**
1. Accommodation 2 nights at Selaan Segah Homestay, 1 night at Miri
2. 4x4 wheel 2 ways from Miri airport to Selaan Segah Homestay
3. Entrance fees and Guide fees
4. 7 meals included (Bx2,Lx3,Dx2)

Please take note flight not included.

**Person In Charge:** Yee Yee 012-6706490*Due to the nature of our work, we may not able to attend your phone call.

We prefer FB message or whatsapp. Do join MNS Selangor Branch Pathfinders Group Facebook for more further information.

- Rumi
A tremendous thank you once more to everyone who joined in the 2017 MYGB survey. Whether you were counting in Peninsular or East Malaysia, atop a mountain, near a jungle, on an island, in your suburb or city, your active contribution of gathering data helped give us more knowledge, of the bird population within a variety of habitats. We hope you enjoyed the brief count, not only seeing the birds but relishing the tranquil moment whilst doing so. We need more people like you to count, so spread the word to friends and family and help us increase the number of counters and count sites for 2018. The MYGB survey will be on the 2nd and 3rd of June. Natural Habitats are important to us but even more so for birds. Let’s make it an awesome count for 2018!
Everest Base Camp via Gokyo lake trek from 29/04/2018 to 14/05/2018 (16D15N) and 26/09/2018 to 11/10/2018 (16D15N)

Experience the culture of the Sherpas en route to Khumbu village. Enjoy a climb to the scintillating Kalapattar (5,545m/18190ft), one of the most spectacular vantage points in the Everest region. Explore enchanting views of Everest, Pumori, Ama Dablam, Nuptse, Lhotse, Makalu and many other towering peaks. Two free training trips will be provided for the Everest Base Camp trip.

Contact: Thong at goalus@mymountaingoal.com H/P: 016-6375622 Off: 03-40248896
Further info please sign in: http://www.mymountaingoal.com/everestkalapattar.htm

Annapurna Base Camp Via Poon Hill Trek (4130M) from 27/03/18 to 09/04/18 (14d13n)

Walk through villages, then climb through forests into the Annapurna Sanctuary, a valley surrounded by high Himalayan peaks. A great opportunity to get into the mountains without the altitude problems of Mt. Everest. This fantastic 10-day trek offers the most spectacular landscape views of the Himalayas, allowing you to be completely immersed in the heart of the towering Annapurna range. Altitudes of 4130m are reached, and a reasonable level of physical fitness is required to comfortably complete this expedition.

Two free training trips will be provided for the trip.
Contact: +60166375622 WhatsApp, WeChat and Line.
Further information please sign in: http://www.mymountaingoal.com/AnnapurnaRegion.htm
24 Hour Wildlife Crime Hotline

019-356 4194

This hotline is a channel to report offences involving all endangered wildlife in Malaysia, for example:

- the discovery of snares, traps and cages set in the forest to catch wildlife,
- a captured tiger in the forest,
- a bear caged in a village,
- an endangered species of bird or reptile being sold illegally in a pet shop,
- the sale of illegal products such as tiger parts sold in “traditional” medicine,
- wildlife parts - skins, claws, and elephant tusks sold as collectables
- pets or wildlife advertised or served in a restaurant, or sold for the cooking pot

The Wildlife Crime Hotline is managed by MYCAT, which stands for Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers. MYCAT comprises the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society-Malaysia Programme and WWF-Malaysia.
MNS HQ
JKR 641, Jalan Kelantan, Bukit Persekutuan, 50480 Kuala Lumpur (just before the Seri Perdana turn off to Jalan Mahameru)
Open: Monday – Friday; 9:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
T: 03-22879422 F: 03-22878773
mns@mns.org.my www.mns.my
Membership: Leong Wei Chin

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PENCINTA ALAM is a monthly newsletter made possible by dedicated volunteers and contributors from the Malaysian Nature Society. Accuracy is the contributor’s responsibility. The Editor reserves the right to edit for length and content.

Submissions: Articles including the author and photographers’ names (max. 800 words), advertisements, digital images (100 dpi & no larger than 640 x 480 pixels & separately from the article), etc. must reach the Editor by the 13th of each month (unless noted otherwise) via the following e-mail address: tapir2005@gmail.com.

Advertising rates:
Classifieds: RM5 per column inch
Quarter page ad: RM30
Half page ad: RM60
- All payments must be made to ‘Malaysian Nature Society Selangor Branch’.
- Please bank in cash or cheque to Maybank Account no 014150307352.
- After banking in, please scan the slip and e-mail it with your advertisement to: tapir2005@gmail.com and berniechin118@yahoo.com.

Discount rate for ads paid in advance:
3 adverts paid in advance – 5% off published rate;
6 adverts paid in advance – 10% off published rate;
9 adverts paid in advance – 15% off published rate;
12 adverts paid in advance – 20% off published rate.

ATTENTION!

Please bring your membership card to all activities as proof of membership.

Don’t Leave Home Without It
All members must show their membership cards to participate in any Branch’s activities. New members who haven’t received their cards must show their membership payment receipts. Lost your card? Contact Wee Chin at HQ.

This issue’s editor:
Khor Hui Min

Next issue’s editor:
Khor Hui Min

Renew Your Membership via Online Credit Card Payment
Settling your MNS membership fee is now made easier with on-line credit card payment via the MNS website. To renew, please visit https://www.mns.my/subscription/. For inquiries, contact Wee Chin at membership@mns.org.my.

Computer Recycling Collection Centre
The MNS Penang, Nature Information Centre (NIC) is a designated recycling collection centre for old computers and computer parts by the Penang City Council. Please send your unwanted computers and parts to the NIC to be sent for recycling by DOE approved recycling establishment. Contact Kanda at 013-4537992 for more information or check out Penang Branch web pages.