



Malaysian Nature Society Kedah Branch

2020 Annual Report

The Executive Committee of MNS Kedah branch for 2020 – 2021 elected to run the branch is as follows:

Chairman:	Lt Col (R) Husamudin Bin Yaacob
Vice-Chairman:	Mohamad Yani Madewnus Bin Mohd Yunus
Hon. Secretary:	Phang Fatt Khaw
Hon. Treasurer:	Yeoh Liew Kee
Committee Members:	Syed Shafizan Bin Syed Mohd Fauzi Abdul Ghani Bin Hj Ali Nor Kanzu Bin Abu Bakar Mejar (R) Amer Jaafar (co-opted) Tan Dek (co-opted)
Hon. Auditor:	Yeoh Guan Huat

The major event for the branch is the on-going Scientific Expedition to Ulu Muda since it was launched on 17th February 2019. Although this expedition is essentially a project undertaken by MNS Head office, our branch provides the logistics and other support for the scientific teams selected and approved by the HQ to conduct the on-site study. The local support team headed by Mejar Amer Jaafar and assisted by head office staff and local folks played a major role in maintaining the expedition centre on loan from MADA at the Muda Dam, assisting research teams that go into the forests to study the flora and fauna, and collecting data of the biodiversity in Ulu Muda. The Ulu Muda Expedition Centre also serves as the information centre for visitors to Ulu Muda, and the lodging for the support team. As a result of the expedition, the Forestry Department has improved the area around the Muda dam by clearing the surrounding, paved the roads leading into floating pontoon, and will monitor the entry of visitors into Ulu Muda. This will regulate and limit the people visiting Ulu Muda. From September to December 2019, nine teams from UPM, USM, UM, UMT and UNISEL have conducted research on various disciplines in Ulu Muda. Due to the outbreak of Covid-19, the expedition was temporarily suspended until the Movement Control Order is lifted.

Our branch has obtained funding amounting to RM 32,000 from MNS Head Office from the Euro Bird Life International Forest Governance for the Ulu Muda expedition. With this allocation of fund from HQ, the branch has bought 3 boats for the Muda Dam to ferry researchers into Ulu Muda, camping and other equipment for the Ulu Muda support team. The shortage of water supply to the expedition centre during the dry months has been solved to by this fund with the assistance from HQ's Water for Life Project team.

The former Menteri Besar of Kedah Dato' Seri Mukhriz Mahathir accompanied by a team of Kedah state leaders including the former Exco for Environment YB Ooi Tse Min and other head of relevant agencies visited Ulu Muda and camped at Earth Lodge in Sg Labua over the weekend on 22-24 July 2019. MNS President Prof Ahmad Ismail gave a briefing to the VIP at the Ulu Muda Expedition Centre and accompanied the entourage to Ulu Muda. Prof Ahmad Ismail and MNS Head office also organized a gotong-royong with the boat operators and local residents to clean-up of the Muda Dam areas on 7th March 2020.

However, with a change in the Kedah State government, the status of this Ulu Muda expedition may be in danger of being revoked. The new state government also proposed to allow logging again in Ulu Muda. But we are hopeful that this Ulu Muda expedition will continue and that eventually Ulu Muda will become a national park for Kedah to conserve its important function as water catchment for the three northern states, preserving its rich biodiversity, and serving it as a natural heritage for Kedah.

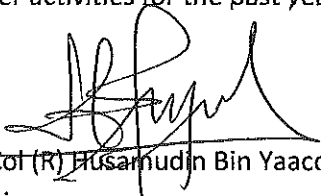
As a result of the Ulu Muda Expedition, MNS Kedah branch has established a closer contact and working relationship with the state government and other relevant agencies such as MADA, Forestry Department, Perhilitan, JPS, and Sik District office. We have also earned the trust and support of the boat operators, and the local villagers living around the Muda Dam.

Through our project in Ulu Muda, MNS Kedah has been called upon to participate in the various projects initiated by the Kedah State government. We are a member of the Jawatankuasa Tetap Alam Sekitar Negeri Kedah chaired by the Kedah State Exco on environment. We have been invited to participate in the Jerai Geopark project involving a big area of Gunung Jerai and the off-shore islands in Yan district. We have been actively supporting the Kedah State Government's "Kedah Go Green" campaign in creating awareness in reducing plastic usage. We put up stalls in three Kedah go Green events in Alor Setar, Kulim and Sungai Petani last year. The branch also participated in the mangrove replanting project by TNB and MNS HQ in Kuala Perlis.

MNS President Prof Ahmad Ismail has called upon the branch to work with Kelab Pencinta Alam (KPA) in secondary schools in Kedah to participate in nature activities and conservation projects. The members of KPAs will form the pool of new members for the society in future. There are at least 6 KPAs in Kota Setar and Kubang Pasu Districts which have been involved with MNS in Ulu Muda expedition and Kedah Go Green programme. We hope to expand this cooperation further.

Even though the Covid-19 epidemic is still ravaging since the beginning of this year and shows no ending soon, MNS Kedah will continue to carry on our activities as much as we can.

I take this opportunity to thank MNS President, the Executive Director and the Head office team, and everyone who have helped our branch in the implementation of the Scientific Ulu Muda Expedition and other activities for the past year.



Lt Col (R) Husamudin Bin Yaacob
Chairman,
MNS Kedah