

# Mount Kinabalu Extension

## *A Birdwatcher's Paradise*

May 20 to 23, 2026



Indigo Flycatcher  
© Charlie Ryan

## SAFARI OVERVIEW

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Visit Mount Kinabalu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, known for its diverse habitats and incredible diversity of flora and fauna, including 18 endemics. Standing as one of the highest mountains in Southeast Asia, at 4,095m (13,435ft) above sea level, this granite intrusion is sacred to the locals. Tectonic forces continue to shape and define the landscape and the range of habitats you will explore – including rich tropical lowland and hill rainforest to tropical mountain forest, sub-alpine forest, and the scrub of higher elevations. Trek along the numerous trails with the opportunity to observe more than 50% of Borneo's bird species all in one location – truly a birdwatcher's paradise.

### WHY CHOOSE THIS EXTENSION?

- **UNESCO World Heritage Site:** Visit Mount Kinabalu, a globally recognized landmark celebrated for its stunning biodiversity and cultural significance.
- **Incredible Biodiversity:** Encounter a wide range of habitats, from lush tropical rainforests to sub-alpine scrub, home to over 5,000 plant species and 18 endemic species.

- **Birdwatcher’s Paradise:** With over 326 bird species, including many endemics, Mount Kinabalu offers unmatched birding opportunities.
- **Guided Exploration:** Trek well-maintained trails with expert guides, gaining insight into the region’s unique ecology and geology.
- **Spectacular Landscapes:** Enjoy breathtaking views of Southeast Asia’s highest mountain, shaped by tectonic forces and cloaked in verdant rainforests.

**TRIP OPTION:** This is a post-trip extension to our [Borneo](#) trip from May 7 to 21, 2026.

**LEADER:** Charlie Ryan.

**DAYS:** Adds 3 days to the main trip to total 15 days, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 8.

**COST:** \$2,000 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 3.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** Stay in cozy, hillside bungalows along Kinabalu Park with easy access to walking trails, the botanical gardens, and a restaurant/café. The rooms are basic and small, but comfortable, with an en-suite bathroom and hot running water.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
May 20–21	<b>Birding in Kinabalu National Park.</b> After breakfast, drive to Kinabalu National Park and explore this UNESCO World Heritage Site.	Hill Lodge, Kinabalu National Park	B, L, D
May 22	<b>Depart for Home.</b> Spend one last morning birding and walking through the park. Return to Kota Kinabalu for flights homeward.		B, L
May 23	Arrive home.		

## LEADER

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### Charlie Ryan

After signing up for a volunteer program in Indonesia in 2008, Charlie was re-routed to Sabah, Borneo where he helped set up community initiative programs for the Abai village. He has resided in Sabah ever since. Charlie guides for the National Geographic Adventure groups in Borneo and helps train nature guides, providing them with first-hand knowledge and experience. He is also an avid photographer, which compliments his passion for wildlife, culture, and travel.

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## DETAILED ITINERARY

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### May 20–21 ~ Explore Kinabalu National Park

Bid farewell to those not continuing on this extension. After your last breakfast together, travel the scenic road up to Kadamaian Valley on the way to Kinabalu National Park. Marvel at the massive granite intrusion formed 15 million and propelled upward one million years ago from tectonic movement that continues to shape the landscape. Head into the surrounding park for an afternoon of birding.

Enjoy a full day exploring the various trails at the park's base while birding. This park is a birdwatcher's paradise with about 326 species recorded, representing over half the bird species in Borneo (18 are Bornean endemics). As you traverse the beautiful scenery, try spotting some of the endemics (found only in Borneo) which include the Mountain Black Eye, the Mountain Blackbird, the Bornean Treepie, the Kinabalu Friendly Warbler, the Kinabalu Serpent Eagle, the Bornean Mountain Whistler, the Everett's Thrush, and the Whitehead's Trio.

### May 22 ~ Fly home

Spend the morning birding and walking in the park. Depart Kota Kinabalu for flights homeward.

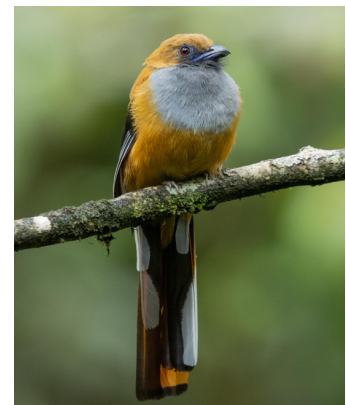
### May 23 ~ Arrive home

## COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

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### Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$2,000
Single Supplement	\$290



Whiteheads Trogon  
© Charlie Ryan

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will try to find a roommate for you, but if we cannot pair you with a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

### Payment Schedule

Payment is due with [Borneo's](#) final payment.

### Cancellations

Cancellations are non-transferable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

### Included

- Carbon offsets for the duration of this trip.
- All leaders, transport, camera fees, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Accommodations for the nights of May 20 through May 21.

- Meals from breakfast on May 20 through lunch on May 22.
- Transfers to Kota Kinabalu Airport on May 22.
- Non-alcoholic bottled beverages throughout the trip.
- Snacks during travel between locations.
- Trip Planning Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

### **Not Included**

- Carbon offsets for your flights to and from this trip.
- Passport and visa fees.
- Divergent airport transfers (arranged by us) and extra hotel nights.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$250 total per participant for this extension.
- Emergency evacuation insurance and trip cancellation [insurance](#).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

## **SIGN UP**

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Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris  
Email: [info@cheesemans.com](mailto:info@cheesemans.com)  
Website: [www.cheesemans.com](http://www.cheesemans.com)  
WhatsApp: (408) 741-5330  
Phone: (800) 527-5330 or (408) 741-5330

## **OTHER DETAILS**

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### **Climate**

Temperatures vary greatly. The lower altitudes are often hot, while the forests and higher altitudes can be surprisingly cool. In May, the average daytime temperature in Borneo is in the mid 80s°F (28°C), with highs in the low 90s°F (33°C); the evenings get down into the mid 70s°F (24°C). There is very high humidity in the lowlands, and it will feel much warmer. Temperatures in the forest and at higher altitudes are only slightly cooler, averaging 60 to 80°F (16 to 26°C). Although May is considered the dry season, rain is still possible.

### **Fitness Level**

Morning and afternoon treks will last about three hours, walking slowly while searching for birds. The walking is easy and mostly on paved roads, but some parts of the road have inclines.

### **Accommodations**

Stay in cozy, hillside bungalows along Kinabalu Park with easy access to walking trails, the botanical gardens, and a restaurant/café. The rooms are basic and small, but comfortable, with an ensuite bathroom and hot

running water. If you are concerned about the standard of accommodations being below your expectations, please ask us before booking.

## Flights

Detailed logistical information is included in the Trip Planning Materials we will send you.

Flights you book

- Arrive in Sandakan, Malaysia (SDK) by 3:00pm on May 9
- Depart from Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (BKI) after 4:00pm on May 22.

## Terms and Conditions

Read our current [Terms and Conditions](#).

## Conservation

Our company ethos has always regarded conservation as inseparable from responsible tourism. We struggle with the dilemma that traveling worldwide expends climate-changing carbon. However, we wholeheartedly believe that traveling with us will cultivate your passion for conserving our beautiful world while stimulating each destination's local economy. We encourage you to explore the various ways in which Cheesemans' operates within this context:

- **Ecotourism and Conservation for Borneo.**
- **Cheesemans' Trips are Carbon Neutral.**
- **Offsetting your Travel to/from our Trip:** We ask you to pledge to offset the carbon emissions for your travel to and from our trips. You can purchase offsets with most airlines (Delta includes them automatically), use our handy [carbon calculator](#) and donate to Sustainable Travel International, or contribute to your favorite offsetting organization.