

Sechelt Garden Club

Sept 25 ,2023 Rand Rudland

Borneo Biodiversity Beyond Belief

Rand Rudland is a local fellow who has a very varied background....Physician, Naturalist, Photographer to name a few. This presentation details his recent trip to Borneo where he and his friend Adam spent their time tromping through the jungle, sliding around on treacherous roads, being bitten by a myriad of insects and above all photographing the incredible flora and fauna of this part of the Malay Archipelago.

Rand indicated the biodiversity is so immense that he and his group photographed a mere 5-10% of the myriad of species.

Before he left for this trip, Rand had some basic questions: what were the roads like? What was the food like? How was it to hike through the forest?

With respect to roads, in-progress was the best way to describe them. Many were under construction; some were reasonable and most were very wet and challenging. Hiking in the jungle was challenging – it was very wet and muddy. Leeches were a constant problem. However, most places needed to be accessed by walking. Many places were only accessible by boat. Internal flights were used where locals would transport their luggage by motorcycle to the bus stops which could be quite a distance from the air strip. Gas was 30 cents a litre!

The food.....Tiger Beer was great and the seafood was excellent! Their local guide, who accompanied them on their journeys, would order for them.

Fun Facts

Biodiversity:

15000 species of plants

600 species of birds

288 species of mammals

105 species of reptiles

180 species of amphibians

The weather was equatorial.....30-35 degrees with 80-90% humidity.

Island of Borneo



Rand Rudland cont'd

One destination was Deramakot Forest Reserve. In this reserve selective harvesting of trees is practiced. There is huge commercial pressure to increase these harvests to make way for palm oil fields. About half of Borneo's primary forests have been cleared or degraded. 1300 square kilometers are lost annually, with only 8% of the remaining forests being protected by the government. Palm oil and rubber plantations are huge pressures on the primary forests. The forests are populated by gigantic Dipterocarp trees. This equatorial species thrives in Borneo where the forests provide life, death and decomposition which enables the incredible biodiversity.

Another destination of Black Oriole Lodge....Rand showed photos of the Lodge which was what you may call rudimentary! They were rewarded for their hardship with sightings and photographs of their beautiful subject.

Borneo Nature Lodge, which was only accessible by boat, was a more luxurious spot visited.

Flora and Fauna Species

Lichens of which some are common to our Coast.

Ferns of which there are so many species...some of which don't even resemble ferns. There are 11 different species of basket ferns alone....some of which are aquatic.

Orchids were not abundant as this was not their season. However, the few that were seen were extremely colourful and beautiful.

Pitcher Plants were on Rand's bucket list. These are carnivorous plants which have a foul smell; which attracts flies and other insects.

Insects were plentiful (extreme understatement in my opinion). Rand spoke about a Trilobite Beetle in which the female does not emerge from the larval stage and only males are flighted. Millipedes and centipedes were abundant.

They encountered **Nocturnal breeds**....Sundra Night Carpenters who are extremely aggressive. Before bed, a search and kill of these bees made for a better sleep as their skin could be painful all night. Rand encountered many species of **Dragonflies**. Of course Butterflies were of special interest. There are almost 1000 species!

Amphibians like the Wallace's Flying Frog and File-Eared Tree Frog were shown. While the frogs were very vocal, it was difficult to locate them. Snakes were plentiful both poisonous and not. Some were 10-14 feet long! Species such as Flying Dragon Lizards, Paradise Flying snake were observed.

Night Flying Birds: Rand described many owls including the Oriental Bay Owl. They saw many resting birds at night, eagles and kingfishers.

Nocturnal Predators like Civets and Loris' were photographed. The Loris is interesting in that it is the only poisonous mammal. When they are stressed, they lick a brachial gland which transfers poison to hollow teeth. Enemies who are bitten by a Loris are poisoned. Fruit bats with a 4 foot wingspan were observed.

Birds: Bulwer's Pheasant and Bornean Peacock Pheasants were target species which were photographed. They were invited to sit in a blind which was great as it was in the shade!

Many **raptors** were observed. Species of Hornbill, Bee Eaters and Barbets, Broadbills, Bornean Bristlehead, Black Oriole, Drongos, Laughing Thrush, Spiderhunters, Sunbirds.

The group was honoured to encounter **Pygmy Elephants**. Despite their name, these elephants were anything but tiny! Many monkeys were observed, such as Proboscis monkeys.

The group were very honoured to be able to observe the **Northern Bornean Orangutan**, which was one of Rand's species of interest.

This presentation was absolutely fascinating. The Club thanks Rand for preparing and presenting this amazing talk.

Go Native!

Redwood Sorrel

Oxalis oregana

Redwood sorrel is a shade-tolerant, spreading ground cover with clover-like heart-shaped leaves. Native to BC, Redwood sorrel has small delicate white flowers with yellow centres that bloom in the spring. Once the flower fades, tiny fruits ripen and then explode, sending seeds in every direction (the seeds are favoured by sparrows). This plant needs moist soils and does well planted under trees and damp woodland areas. Redwood sorrel is a perennial evergreen, so its foliage stays attractive all year.

Fire smart, deer resistant and pollinator friendly redwood sorrel grows to 5-20 cm in height and spreads by rhizomes.

Redwood sorrel is an enthusiastic and attractive perennial. Placed along borders in shady gardens, it will blanket the ground quickly. Be sure you really want it.



Master Gardener Basic Training

January 2024

This is program for everyone with an interest in gardening, from backyard and community gardeners, to garden designers and landscapers. Our program is science-based with instructors from local universities and colleges, as well as ministry specialists, growers and other professionals. For more information:

email: basic_training@vancouvermastergardeners.org

www.mgabc.org

facebook: vancouver master gardeners

Sign up early as it fills up

ALL THINGS POLLINATOR SALE

Cascade Green Park Butterfly Garden - Water Catchment System

In the spring of 2024 the Sechelt Garden Club will hold an All Things Pollinator sale to help raise funds for the Cascade Green Park Butterfly Garden water catchment system. If you would like to donate new or items in very good condition that have a pollinator theme we would be extremely grateful (ie: placemats, blankets, vases, jewellery, colourful bowls, dishes, puzzles). The items can be given to any garden club executive director.



Cascade green photos by Suzan Essiembre

Next SGC Meeting

Monday Oct 30, 2023 7:00

**Seniors Activity Centre
5604 Trail Ave. Sechelt**

**Speaker: Gary Lewis from Phoenix
Perennials talking about Ground
Covers**

Guests are welcome Fee \$10

About the speaker

UBC alumnus Gary Lewis is the owner of Phoenix Perennials, an award-winning, cutting edge, retail and mail order nursery in Vancouver, and an expert on perennials and horticulture. He holds two degrees from UBC in Conservation Biology and Plant Ecology. He is one of Canada's most knowledgeable plant experts with a deep and special interest in rare and unusual herbaceous perennials.

In addition to his work as a busy nurseryman, Gary is also a popular garden lecturer. In 2013 Gary was selected as "Communicator of the Year" by the BC Landscape and Nursery Association and in 2014 as one of Canada's Top 10 horticultural professionals under 40 by Greenhouse Canada magazine. He also recently published *The Complete Book of Ground Covers*.

Gary has led previous trips with alumni UBC to Holland, Belgium, Ireland, South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia.

Phill Murray



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Gerri Randall 604-813-4171
randallgerri@gmail.com

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lee.tidmarsh@gmail.com

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ctowninred@yahoo.com

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muguettem@shaw.ca

Membership

Brenda Hawkings 778-833-0909
brenda.hawkings@telus.net

Communications

Lee Tidmarsh 604-374-4255
lee.tidmarsh@gmail.com

Webmaster

Dianne Tarris 604-865-0726
dtarris@telus.net

Guest Speakers

Phill Murray 604-886-2151
phillmurray@live.ca

Community Projects

Marg Acton 604-317-3287
margannacton@gmail.com

Pat Kolterman 604-399-8654
patko@hotmail.ca

Director-at-large

Suzan Essiembre 604-989-7852
suzessie@telus.net

Past President

Ann Booth 604-720-0277
annset2go@me.com