



Wildlife of the World Newsletter

November 2025



Western Long-beaked Echidna (Zaglossus bruijnii)

Hi ,

Apologies for the delay, but I'm back from a great trip to Indonesia, recovered from the jetlag and starting to sort through the thousands of photos and videos, such as the strange-looking, critically endangered echidna above... an egg-laying mammal!

Indonesia is the world's second-most bio-diverse country with some incredible wildlife, but it consists of over 17,000 islands and can be a real challenge to get around. I visited five of them on this trip, starting with the biggest, Papua, also known as New Guinea... probably the wildest and least documented region left on earth.

I spent eight days in total, staying in two little eco-villages deep in the forest, both supported entirely by visitors like me paying to be guided in search of the incredible local wildlife. It was an amazing experience, the only foreigner sharing these impressive people's simple life for a week. Sleeping in a basic hut with a bucket of water piped from the nearby stream for washing and no phone signal or contact with the developed world (apart from an off-road truck making the hazardous trip from the city every two or three days.)



Lesser Bird-of-Paradise
(*Paradisaea minor*)

Thanks to the expertise of the guides, I saw all sorts of superb animals. In addition to the echidna there were various different possums and birds-of-paradise as well as a host of exotic reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates. You can see a full report with photos and videos here: <https://hughlansdown.com/html/home/071-papua-indonesia.html>

Wildlife-watching Sites

Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra



Banded Palm Civet (Hemigalus derbyanus)



*Red-bearded Bee-eater
(Nyctyornis amictus)*

Staying with the Indonesia theme, this month's chosen site is Way Kambas National Park on the island of Sumatra.

A wonderful tropical rainforest reserve inhabited by many special animals, it was created in the 1980's to protect the critically endangered Sumatran tiger and Sumatran rhino. Unfortunately, like most Indonesian National Parks it suffers from poaching and illegal logging and only a handful of tigers and rhinos remain today.

There's still lots of superb wildlife to be seen though, with over fifty species of mammal including the beautiful little banded palm civet above as well as huge noisy siamang, sun bears, Sumatran elephants

and slow loris, also over 400 species of bird and thousands of different exotic insects... definitely worth a visit if you get the chance! You can read a report on my 2020 trip to Way Kambas here:

<https://hughlansdown.com/html/home/052-sumatra.html>



Hundreds of butterflies feeding on mineral salts in Way Kambas

The Books

Writing has taken rather a back seat while I've been travelling, but the fifth book about the wildlife of Japan is nearing completion and should be out in the New Year.

If you're in Swansea you might like to pop into the lovely little Cover to Cover bookshop in Mumbles which has all my books on display, so you can have a browse through them if you're interested with having to buy one!

Best Wishes wherever you are,

Hugh

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