The Dipterocarp forests of the Malay Peninsula are among the world's oldest, supporting a diversity of animal and plant life surpassed only by the lowland communities of the Amazon Basin. Vast areas of undisturbed forest still remain and a number of reserves have been established to protect a cross section of habitat types. On this tour, we will visit the best of these. From comfortable accommodations set in the heart of the forest, we will search for some of the tropics' most exotic creatures, including exquisitely ornate pheasants, nine hornbills, kingfishers, trogons, barbets, broadbills and woodpeckers, in addition to a host of challenging bulbuls and babblers.

We will commence our exploration of the Malay Peninsula with an early morning sojourn to a rather birdy area of mangroves and swamps. From there we will explore a very interesting area of hill forest just outside the city of Kuala Lumpur. The following day we will drive and boat our way to one of our favorite places on the planet—Taman Negara! Five nights within the heart of this magnificent national park will give us time to walk forest trails, stake out salt-licks, ply forest-shaded creeks by boat, and familiarize ourselves with the peninsula's complex and very rich lowland bird community. The pheasants are among some of the world's most spectacular birds, and although shy, we can hope to see the gorgeous Crested Fireback, the extraordinary Argus Pheasant (actually seen displaying on previous tours!) and Crested Wood-Partridge, in addition to a number of other specialties such as Banded and Garnet pittas, several spectacular trogons, Red-bearded Bee-eater, and the elusive Malaysian Rail-babbler.

Just when the humidity begins to appear a little oppressive, we will ascend to Fraser's Hill, one of Malaysia's many attractive hill stations. Here, in the cool montane forests, we will relax in the delightful surroundings of a bygone era and search for some of the peninsula's most attractive birds, including its two endemics, Mountain Peacock-Pheasant and Malayan Whistling-Thrush. Other specialties include Yellow-vented Pigeon, Mountain Scops-Owl, Orange-bellied Trogon, the extraordinary Fire-tufted Barbet, Long-tailed Broadbill, Rusty-naped Pitta, Marbled Wren-Babbler and White-headed Babbler.

One of the features of this tour is, unlike explorers of old, we will not have to hack our way through interminable jungles and sleep in leech infested camps. Instead we stay throughout in very comfortable accommodations and bird along gently graded roads and trails in areas undisturbed by the twenty-first century.

NOTE: This tour may be combined with our Borneo tour, August 1-19, 2009. These tours complement one another nicely with their very different itineraries and the attractive balance of outstanding birding and natural history.
**Malay Peninsula, Page 2**

**August 19, Day 1: Arrival in Kuala Lumpur.** For those participants who have just completed the Borneo tour, we will fly to Kuala Lumpur late this morning. For those participants who are joining the Malay Peninsula tour directly from overseas, please plan to arrive into Kuala Lumpur in time to meet the group in the lobby bar at 6:30 p.m. for an introductory get together followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. 

NIGHT: Park Royal Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

**August 20, Day 2: AM Kuala Selangor and Nearby Coastal Areas.** We will spend the morning working an area of mangroves and brackish swamps which harbor a distinctive and very interesting suite of birds and other animals quite different than we will encounter elsewhere. This area soon becomes very hot and humid, so we will be concentrating our efforts during the early morning. It is a good place to see a number of coastal birds in addition to various open country, scrub species: Little Heron, Chinese Pond-Heron, Pacific Reef-Egret, Lesser Adjutant (rare), Black Baza, Black-shouldered and Brahminy kites, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Crested Serpent-Eagle, Pink-necked Pigeon, Spotted and Peaceful doves, Common Koel, Collared Kingfisher, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Dollarbird, Common Goldenback, Laced and Brown-capped woodpeckers, Pacific Swallow, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Flyeater, Ashy Tailorbird, Pied Fantail, Mangrove Blue-Flycatcher, Jungle Myna, Brown-throated and Olive-backed sunbirds, and perhaps the elusive Mangrove Whistler. We will return to our lovely hotel in time for lunch.

During the afternoon we will work the forests of the Genting Highlands and Ula Gombak. Set aside as a water-catchment reserve, these forests harbor a very rich assortment of birds and other wildlife—black morph Leopards are even recorded from time to time and on one occasion we recorded the Serow, an exceptionally rare, forest-dwelling goat. The old “back road” over the main range makes for easy walking and birding and we should see a good list of birds. This area is particularly good for barbets, bulbuls, leafbirds and flowerpeckers. It can also be very good for raptors and hornbills and we should be especially vigilant for the rarely seen White-crowned Hornbill. Participants joining us for the first time will find that this is an excellent introduction to the riches of the Malaysian forests.

NIGHT: Park Royal Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

**August 21, Day 3: Drive to Taman Negara.** Today we begin our “expedition” to Taman Negara, widely considered to be the singly most important reserve in the whole of South-east Asia. We will start with a couple of hours birding along the Ulu Gombak before driving across the main range and into the heart of Peninsula Malaysia. We pass through extensive oil palm and rubber estates which gradually give way to forest until we reach the edge of the huge 4,300 square kilometer national park. There are no roads within the park, but a spectacular boat ride to the lodge at Kuala Tahan is a good introduction to these magnificent forests. An excellent system of trails permits access to large areas of the forest and, although it is possible to visit the mountain peaks, a typical jaunt to Gunung Tahan requires two weeks! We will therefore concentrate on the biologically richer lowlands where, in addition to walking, we will take short boat rides and sit patiently at hides (blinds) overlooking salt licks in order to sample as much as possible of the fantastically diverse fauna and flora within this park. Many of the birds and mammals are shy and difficult to observe, and this can become frustrating. However, we have set aside sufficient time so that if you miss something the first time or even the second or third, there will be lots of opportunity to try again. We will make use of the tape-recorder to lure in skulkers, and this will require considerable patience. However, the reward of seeing a Malaysian Rail-babbler whistling at your feet or one of the pittas hopping about nearby is more than sufficient compensation. We will also hope to find a fruiting tree where it will be much easier to see pigeons, hornbills, barbets, and bulbuls than constantly craning your neck to locate one of these remarkably inconspicuous canopy dwellers. In many ways, a visit to Taman Negara is the pinnacle of tropical Asian birding, and this should be a very exciting four days. Furthermore, the new resort with its superbly comfortable chalets and outstanding restaurant and bar make for an especially pleasant stay.

NIGHTS: Taman Negara Resort, Taman Negara National Park
August 22–25, Days 4-7: Taman Negara National Park. Birds we may encounter include Lesser Fish-Eagle; Crested Serpent-Eagle; Wallace's Hawk-Eagle (rare); Black-thighed Falconet; Crested Wood-Pardridge — perhaps the most attractive of the pheasant's cousins, it is rather elusive; with luck Crested Fireback and Great Argus whom we will hear daily; Thick-billed, Pink-necked, and Large Green pigeons; Mountain Imperial-Pigeon; Emerald Dove; Blue-rumped Parrot; Blue-crowned Hanging-Parrot; Plaintive and Drongo cuckoos; Raffle's and Black-bellied malkohas; Malaysian Eared-Nightjar; Gould's Frogmouth; Edible-nest Swiftlet; Brown Needletail; Scarlet-rumped, Cinnamon-rumped (difficult) and Red-naped trogons; Blue-banded, White-throated and Stork-billed kingfishers; Blue-throated Bee-eater; Bushy-crested, Southern Pied, Rhinoceros, and White-crowned — elusive, interior forest inhabitant — hornbills; Gold-whiskered, Red-throated, and Coppersmith barbets; Rufous, Crimson-winged, Great Slaty, White-bellied, and Orange-backed woodpeckers; Black-and-red, Black-and-yellow, and Green broadbills; Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike; Blue-winged Leafbird; Straw-headed, Red-eyed, Yellow-bellied, Hair-y-backed, and Buff-vented bulbuls; Greater Racket-tailed and Bronze drongos; Dark-throated Oriole; Black-capped, Short-tailed, Ferruginous, Abbott's, Sooty-capped, Scaly-crowned, Rufous-crowned, Gray-headed, Chestnut-rumped, Black-throated, and Chestnut-winged babblers; Striped Tit-Babbler; White-rumped Shama; Chestnut-naped and White-crowned forktails; Gray-headed Canary Flycatcher; Rufous-winged Philemtoma; Black-naped Monarch; and Plain and Scarlet sunbirds.

A number of species of pittas occur here including Blue-winged, Giant, Garnet, Hooded, and Banded. All of them are difficult to see, and a special effort will be made to locate these and as many species of pheasants as possible during our stay in the park. On previous tours we have recorded such spectacles as 30+ Jambu Fruit-Doves attending a fruiting tree, an unbelievable Great Argus at its display ground, and huge flights of hornbills — what treats await us in 2009! While birding, we may encounter a number of mammals including Lesser Treeshrew, Malaysian Fruit-Bat, Colugo, Pig-tailed Macaque, Banded Leaf-Monkey, White-handed Gibbon, the beautiful Prevost's Squirrel and, if we are very fortunate, a Malaysian Tapir. Tigers, various small cats, and civets also occur, but we are unlikely to see anything but a fleeting glimpse of these essentially nocturnal species.

NIGHTS: Taman Negara Resort, Taman Negara National Park

August 26, Day 8: Drive to Fraser's Hill. This morning we will make the attractive drive to the relative cool of Fraser's Hill, stopping for anything of interest along the way.

NIGHT: Shazhan Hotel, Fraser's Hill, Pahang

August 27-29, Days 9-11: Fraser's Hill. An attractive ex-colonial resort, Fraser's Hill is set in the midst of beautiful, undisturbed montane forest with magnificent vistas of the surrounding country. From our comfortable lodgings, we will bird along the forest lined roads and, for some of the more elusive specialties; we will make brief forays along narrow forest trails. Species we may see include Black Eagle; Malayan Partridge — very difficult; Yellow-vented Pigeon — uncommon; Little Cuckoo-Dove; Large Hawk-Cuckoo; Oriental Cuckoo; Mountain Scops-Owl — commonly heard, but nearly impossible to see; Collared Owlet; White-bellied Swiftlet; Fire-tufted and Black-browed barbets; Greater Yellownape; Red-headed and Orange-breasted trogons; Long-tailed Broadbill; Large Cuckoo-shrike; Gray-chinned Minivet; Mountain Bulbul; Lesser Racket-tailed Drongo; Black-and-crimson Oriole; Common Green Magpie; Blue Nuthatch; Streaked Wren-Babbler; Golden Babbler; Black, Chestnut-capped, and Chestnut-crowned laughingthrushes; Silver-eared Mesia; Cutia — if we are lucky (on previous tours we have thrilled as a family of seven Cutias treated us to an incredible spectacle as they foraged at hand's reach from us!!); White-browed and Black-eared shrike-babblers; Blue-winged Minla; Mountain Fulvetta; Long-tailed Sibia; Lesser Shortwing; Malayan Whistling-Thrush; Mountain Leaf, Chestnut-crowned, and Yellow-bellied warblers; Mountain Tailorbird; Rufous-browed, Little Pied, and Pygmy Blue flycatchers; Large Niltava; White-throated Fantail; Black-throated Sunbird; Streaked Spiderhunter; and Brown Bullfinch.

NIGHTS: Shazhan Hotel, Fraser's Hill, Pahang
August 30, Day 12: Travel from Fraser’s Hill to Kuala Lumpur. Sadly taking our leave of this truly wonderful location, we will depart early this morning for the drive back to Kuala Lumpur airport in time to connect with flights home. You should plan your flight departure from Kuala Lumpur anytime after 2:00 p.m. today.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to extend your stay or arrive early, please contact the VENT office at least four months prior to your departure date. These arrangements may range from an extra night at the initial hotel of the tour to a week or more extension including accommodations and transfers. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 8 participants.

TOUR LEADER: David Bishop

David Bishop loves his vocation and cannot imagine anything better than exploring wild and beautiful places in Asia and the Pacific in the company of friends and clients. He has spent much of the past 33 years studying the birds and natural history of the Oriental region, in addition to New Guinea and the Southwest Pacific. David was once a police officer amid the streets of London’s West End, but has emerged as an acknowledged authority on the birds of these exotic regions. His enthusiasm for these places and their birds is contagious. This, along with his skills in locating wildlife, sharing what he sees with others, and conversing with local people in their native language, ensures you the very finest quality tour. David has undertaken a number of expeditions to survey the birds and other wildlife of previously unexplored regions throughout New Guinea (largely together with Jared Diamond) and the Oriental Region. This has resulted in a number of exciting discoveries and rediscoveries including the incomparable Wallace’s Standardwing, a bizarre bird-of-paradise. Some of the results of this work, together with observations gained during the VENT tours he leads, have been published in the scientific and semi-popular literature to which David is a regular contributor. In July 1997, David, together with Brian Coates, published A Guide to the Birds of Wallacea (Sulawesi, the Moluccas, and Lesser Sundas), and David is currently working on other book projects. David lives with his wife and daughter (his son currently resides in England) in the attractive university town of Armidale, NSW, Australia.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for the tour is $4,495 per person in double occupancy from Kuala Lumpur. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 12, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, gratuities, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Kuala Lumpur and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

The single supplement for this tour is $495. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

TOUR REGISTRATION: To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is $500 per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit by check, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. The VENT registration form should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.
CANCELLATION POLICY: Cancellation Penalties and Refunds are based on the following schedule: if cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, the deposit less $300 per person is refundable. If cancellation is made fewer than 120 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions, as well as any transfers from one tour to another. **We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.**

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FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE: A brochure and application form for optional coverage for baggage, illness, and trip cancellation can be obtained through the VENT office. **We strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance as soon as possible to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness.** VENT recommends Travel Insured International as our preferred insurance provider. Check with your insurance agent regarding coverage you may presently have via other insurance policies that may cover illness during your trip. **Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available; however, stipulations apply, usually requiring the purchase of the insurance soon after registering.** Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as work-related cancellation, medical upgrade, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” clause among others. **Contact Travel Insured International prior to registration for details.** Not all insurance providers provide the same levels of coverage. If you purchase insurance through a company other than Travel Insured International, please be advised that rules and stipulations may be different.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of $50,000. CST #2014998-50.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

BAGGAGE: One or two small duffle bags can be extremely useful for short trips, and can be packed within your luggage when not in use. As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars (always), a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications, and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag (check for current airline security carry-on restrictions; see www.tsa.gov/travelers for more information).

CLIMATE: Most of our time will be spent in tropical lowland and montane forest. The lowlands are generally hot and humid except during the early morning and at night. However, much of the time we spend in the lowlands will be in the shade of the forest. At Fraser's Hill it can be quite cool, and night time temperatures can fall below 40 degrees. Although the “wet season” is supposedly over, we will almost certainly encounter some rain.

CLOTHING: Bring light-weight and predominantly cotton field clothing – **PLEASE no bright colors (remember – browns, tans and greens are less likely to startle birds and mammals),** a warm sweater, a hat with a good brim to keep the sun off while you are seated in a canoe, a waterproof poncho, jacket or the like (please, no bright colors or loud, crackling plastics), a small collapsible umbrella – ESSENTIAL and comforta-
ble boots with rugged soles – even flat trails when wet can become slippery. You should also have relatively thick socks to cushion your feet during long walks (it is ideal that you buy them calf-length so that you can tuck the bottoms of your trousers into them as protection against “bugs”). A dressier outfit such as a sport coat, dress or pant suit may be more presentable at our Kuala Lumpur hotel.

**CURRENCY:** Ringgit (R) The Ringgit is often referred to as the Malaysian Dollar. Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express are widely accepted throughout Malaysia.

**DOCUMENTS:** A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure from Kuala Lumpur is required for United States citizens to enter Malaysia. Visas are not required; a tourist visa will be issued upon arrival. Citizens of other countries should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions.

**EQUIPMENT:** You should pack a pair of binoculars that are in good working order, along with a belt pack or day pack (for carrying books, sunscreen, extra film or digital memory, etc.). As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag (check for current airline security carry-on restrictions; see www.tsa.gov/travelers for more information). Your leader will have a spotting scope, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. Other items to bring should include a flashlight or headlamp, water bottle or small canteen, alarm clock, sunglasses and sunscreen. It is wise to carry several copies of a list of your expensive equipment for customs inspectors. This list should include a description of the object, including the serial number if possible, the place of purchase and the price. Visitors to Malaysia are rarely challenged about such equipment unless there appears to be an inordinate amount of it.

**HEALTH:** Kuala Lumpur and other major cities are generally free from most diseases associated with the Far East. Tap water from the municipal water systems is considered safe. In smaller towns and rural areas, assume the water is unsafe and stick with bottled or boiled drinks. Sanitation throughout Malaysia is relatively very good compared to most tropical areas of the world. Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating, make sure meat is cooked thoroughly, and avoid local dairy products. Be sure to bring all necessary prescription drugs, as well as aspirin, antacids, and a supply of antihistamines should you develop a cold.

No vaccinations are required; however cholera, typhoid and tetanus should be current. Gamma globulin may be taken to prevent hepatitis. Malaria is present, including the chloroquine-resistant strain. In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers’ Information Line 877-FYI-TRIP (394-8747) or you can check their website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html) (click on travel health).

Insects such as mosquitoes, sand-flies and leeches can be a problem. This is best dealt with by wearing long-sleeved shirts of sufficient thickness and density of weave that the “bugs” cannot bite through, and long trousers tucked into long socks. We also recommend CUTTER’S LOTION in the squeeze bottle or pump-style OFF. If you are taking prescription medication or over-the-counter medicine, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and strongly consider inoculations against Hepatitis types A and B.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Departure Tax - R20 (apx. USD $10) collected at the time of departure
Electricity - 220 volts, 50 cycles
Language - Bahasa Malaysian, English, Hindi and Chinese
Time - 121/2 to 13 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time
**SUGGESTED READING:** Our website at www.ventbird.com offers an affiliated online store that carries a wide variety of items for birding and nature lovers including over 6,000 books. A portion of the sales from the store benefits the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. You might also want to visit such other online stores as www.amazon.com, and for those out-of-print and hard-to-find titles, www.abebooks.com or www.buteobooks.com, which specializes in ornithology books. We also recommend Andrew Isles books for the Asia-Pacific region at http://www.andrewisles.com/AndrewIsles/ for difficult to find and out of print books.

**Recommended to take on tour.


**Frances, C. M. 2008. *A Field Guide to the Mammals of South-east Asia*. Asia Books. Bangkok, Thailand. This superb new field guide illustrates and describes in detail all the mammals you may encounter on this tour.


**Robson, C. 2000. *A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia*. New Holland, UK. – *This truly superb field guide is THE guide you must have with you on this tour.*


**TIPPING:** Tipping (restaurants, porters, drivers, and local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that such tips are not expected and are entirely optional.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motor-coach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. When this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on November 26, 2008 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.