

MALAY PENINSULA

JULY 11 – 24, 2006

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**Please note that the dates differ slightly from the 2005 Tour Catalog*

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. 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 where, with a bit of luck, we may encounter our first pitta – the incomparable Mangrove Pitta. 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.

From Fraser's Hill we will descend 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 the Crested Wood-Partridge in addition to a number of other specialties, such as Finfoot, Banded and Garnet pittas, Trogons, Red-bearded Bee-eater, and the elusive Malaysian Rail-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 comfortable accommodations and bird along gently graded roads and trails in areas undisturbed by the twentieth century.

NOTE: This tour may be combined with our Borneo tour, June 24 - July 13, 2006. These tours complement one another nicely with their very different itineraries and the attractive balance of outstanding birding.

July 11 - 13, Days 1-3: Fly USA to Kuala Lumpur, West Malaysia. Our suggested Singapore Air flight departs Los Angeles very late evening July 11, connects in Singapore and arrives in Kuala Lumpur around mid-morning

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July 13 (flights are subject to change). After clearing customs and immigration, you will be met by a representative of our ground operator and transferred to our hotel. Should you be arriving on a flight other than the one suggested, please contact our office to make arrangements for a private transfer from the airport to our hotel.

During the mid-afternoon Borneo participants will return from a birding expedition to a nearby wetland reserve. Those only taking the Borneo tour will be flying home today. Those Borneo participants continuing on to the Malaysia tour will have the remainder of the day at their leisure to shop, catch up on notes or just relax.

We will all meet this evening for dinner and a convivial familiarization session.

NIGHT: Park Royal Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

July 14, Day 4: Morning Kuala Selangor; Afternoon Ula Gombak. We will spend the morning working an area of mangroves and brackish swamps which harbor a completely different suite of birds and other animals 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, the spectacular Mangrove Pitta, 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 spend the afternoon working the forests of the Genting Highlands and Ula Gombak. Set aside as a forest 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 tally 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

July 15, Day 5: 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. 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.

NIGHT: Taman Negara National Park

July 16-19, Days 6-9: 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-Partridge – 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, Hairy-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, Grey-headed, Chestnut-rumped, Black-throated, and Chestnut-winged babblers; Striped Tit-Babbler; White-rumped Shama; Chestnut-naped and White-crowned forktails; Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher; Rufous-winged Philentoma; 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 2006? 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. However, we are unlikely to see anything but a fleeting glimpse of these essentially nocturnal species.

NIGHTS: Taman Negara National Park

July 20, Day 10: 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

July 21 - 23, Days 11-13: 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 Yellownappe; Red-headed and Orange-breasted trogons; Long-tailed Broadbill; Large Cuckoo-shrike; Grey-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

July 24, Day 14: Travel from Fraser's Hill to Kuala Lumpur. Sadly taking our leave of this truly wonderful location, we will depart this morning for the drive back to Kuala Lumpur. The tour concludes today with our Singapore Airlines flight departing from Kuala Lumpur mid-afternoon, arriving in Los Angeles early evening on the same day (flights are subject to change).

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to extend your stay or arrive early, please contact the VENT office at least **two 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, sight-seeing, and transportation. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

TOUR LEADERS: David Bishop and Susan Myers

David Bishop loves his vocation and cannot imagine anything better than exploring wild and beautiful places in Asia in the company of friends and clients. David has spent much of the past 30 years studying the birds and natural history of the Oriental region, in addition to New Guinea and the Southwest Pacific. Once a police officer amid the streets of London's West End, David 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, has 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.

Susan Myers absolutely loves birding and traveling in Asia. As she says, "The combination of incredible and diverse wildlife, ancient and fascinating cultures, and the best food in the world is unique to this amazing continent." For the last 15 years she has led tours throughout the Orient, including several tours and expeditions in the Indian subcontinent, seven tours to Vietnam, countless trips to the Malay Peninsula and Borneo, plus many other tours in India, Sri Lanka, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Taiwan, Cambodia, and the Philippines. As David Bishop comments, she lives and breathes birding and the natural history of Asia. Susan has been studying the fauna of Australia and Asia for over 20 years. Her experiences in Asia started at an early age when a short trip to Singapore cast a spell on her, never to be broken. That first sighting of a sunbird in the tropical rainforest led to the purchase of the first edition of *The Birds of South East Asia*, which she memorized before the age of thirteen! After her university studies in biological sciences, she moved to Japan where she lived for four years, learning the language and studying the natural history and culture. She has traveled there regularly ever since. Once a qualified nursing practitioner, Susan has also worked as a scuba dive instructor on Australia's Great Barrier Reef in Queensland, showing international visitors this marine marvel. Her passion and enthusiasm for all aspects of natural history, especially birds and butterflies, began in early childhood. She loves to explore new areas and just this year, in the little spare time she had, she undertook scouting trips to Cambodia, Taiwan, Sumatra, and Halmahera. She has published many papers and articles on ornithology and general ecology in a variety of respected magazines and scientific journals. Her deep affection and appreciation of Asia and its wildlife, her special language skills, and her understanding of the different cultures of this region ensure an extra dimension to your tour. This will be Susan's seventh tour to Borneo and her sixteenth to Malaysia.

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 14 participants. However, if fewer than 8 participants register for the tour then only the first tour leader will accompany the group.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: The fee for the tour is **\$3,100** per person in double occupancy from Kuala Lumpur. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 3 to breakfast on Day 14, 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 **\$368**. 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, complete the VENT registration form and return it with a deposit of **\$500** per person (check or money order in US dollars.) If registering by phone, the deposit must be received within 10 days or the space will be released. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 120 days or more before departure date, the deposit less **\$75** 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 to protect yourself.***

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
120 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$75 .
Fewer than 120 days before departure date	No refund available.

TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE: Application forms 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 to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness. 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, as are other coverages such as terrorism protection; however, stipulations apply, usually requiring the purchase of the insurance soon after registering. Contact the VENT office prior to registration for details.**

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.

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 comfortable 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 repair, along with a belt pack or day pack (for carrying books, sunscreen, extra film, 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. 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 the handful of 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.

Hot, freshly cooked food is likely to be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating, make sure meat is cooked thoroughly. 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, but unlikely to be encountered. You may contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta (CDC) which operates a 24-hour automated travelers' health hotline at 877-FYI-TRIP. You may also visit their website at www.cdc.gov/travel.

Insects such as mosquitos, 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.

MISCELLANEOUS: Departure Tax - R20 (approx. 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.

** Recommended to take on tour.

Beebe, W. *Pheasant Jungles*. New York, 1927. A wonderful account of this naturalist's travels collecting data for this fine book on the pheasants.

Cambon, M., Harper, D., Richmond, S. & R. Watkins. *Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei*. Lonely Planet, Melbourne, Australia. 2004. An excellent introductory guide to this fascinating region.

Caulfield, C. *In the Rainforest*. London: Heinemann, 1984. An exceptionally accurate and insightful account of who is doing what to our rainforests – and the repercussions.

Chapman, F.S. *The Jungle is Neutral*. London: Corgi books, 1949. The classic on jungle warfare during World War II in Malaysia.

Earl of Cranbrook (editor). *Malaysia*. Key Environment Series. Oxford: Pergamon Press in collaboration with I.U.C.N., 1986.

Fauconnier, H. *The Soul of Malaya*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965. A powerful invocation of the seduction of Malaysia.

Hoi-Sen, Y. *Malaysian Butterflies: An Introduction*. Kuala Lumpur: Tropical Press, 1987.

Hoi-Sen, Y. *Magnificent Plants*. Malaysia: Tropical Press, 1981.

McNeely, J. and P. S. Wachtel. *Soul of the Tiger*, 1988. An exceptional book, quite unlike anything else written. Put together by two international conservationists who know the people and nature of the Orient as well as any.

Medway, Lord, and D.R. Wells. *The Birds of the Malay Peninsula*. Kuala Lumpur: H.F. and G. Witherby in association with Penerbit University, Malaysia, 1976.

Polunin, I. *Plants and Flowers of Malaysia*. Singapore: Times Editions, 1988.

Richards, P.W. *The Tropical Rain Forest*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

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

Rubeli, K. *Tropical Rain Forest in South-East Asia: A Pictorial Journey*. Malaysia: Tropical Press, 1987.

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Tweedie, M.W.F. *Mammals of Malaysia*. Malaysian Nature Handbooks. Malaysia: Longman Press, 1978.

Wallace, A.R. *The Malay Archipelago*. Revised edition. New York: Dover Publications, 1962.

Whitmore, T.C. *Tropical Rain Forests of the Far East*. London: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Whitmore, T.C. *Palms of Malaya*. 2nd edition. Kuala Lumpur: O.U.P., 1977.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurants, porters, drivers, 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, motorcoach, 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 November 7, 2005 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.