SUMBER :
INTERNET
Gunung Mulu National Park

"Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations." United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Considering Mulu's spectacular scenery and its biological significance, it was not surprising that Mulu was successfully listed as a World Heritage site in November 2000. To qualify for world heritage status a park must meet one of the four following criteria: * Be an outstanding example of the world’s geological history. * Be an outstanding representative example of on-going evolutionary processes. * Be of exceptional natural beauty. * Contain significant natural habitat for in-situ conservation of biological diversity and the protection of threatened species Mulu meets all four of these:-

**Earth's history and geological features**
Mulu’s concentration of caves, its geomorphic and structural characteristics are an outstanding resource, which allows a greater understanding of Earth’s history.

**Ecological Processes**
Mulu provides outstanding scientific opportunities to study theories on the origins of cave faunas.

**Superlative natural phenomena or natural beauty and aesthetic importance**
Mulu has outstanding scenic values, including the natural phenomenon of millions of bats and swiftlets leaving and entering the caves is a superlative wildlife spectacle.

**Biodiversity and threatened species**
Mulu provides significant natural habitat for a wide range of plant and animal diversity both above and below ground. World Heritage status has created renewed interest in the park and a genuine desire of the government and people of Malaysia to ensure it is adequately protected. Accordingly, the Sarawak Government has committed to developing world leading conservation practices and high quality nature-based tourism activities at Mulu and has committed considerable resources to ensure its goals are achieved.

Tarikh Akses: 17 April 2013
ABOUT GUNUNG MULU NATIONAL PARK

Introduction

Gunung Mulu National Park is one of Nature’s most spectacular achievements and the ‘Jewels in the Crown’ of Sarawak’s expanding network of national park. It is also the largest national park, covering 544 sq km of primary rainforest; which is criss-crossed by fast flowing rivers and clear jungle streams. Mulu is dominated by three mountains – Gunung Mulu (2,376 m), Gunung Api (1,750 m) and Gunung Benarat (1,858 m). Yet many of Mulu’s greatest attractions lie deep below the surface. Hidden underneath the forested slopes of these mountains is one of the largest limestone cave system in the world.

This system, a breath-taking natural wonder, contains a number of record breaking caves. With the world’s largest cave passage (Deer Cave), the world’s largest natural chamber (Sarawak Chamber), and the longest cave in Southeast Asia (Clearwater Cave), it is not surprising that Mulu is now world-famous. Over 200 Km of cave passages have been surveyed but this is thought to represent just 30-40% of the actual total.

The oldest of Mulu’s caves started to form about 5 million years ago when sideways earth movements resulted in the formation of both limestone and sandstone mountains, lying side by side. Millions of years of heavy rain and the action of rivers and running water carved out the vast subterranean system that exists today. The weathering process still continues; dripping water creates new rock features, limestone is slowly worn away, and underground rivers carve and sculpt the caves, transporting limestone debris to the cave mouth or redistributing it within the system.
Although Mulu is synonymous with caves, the ‘Mulu experience’ is not limited to underground attractions; above ground there is plenty to and do. The is covered in rich primary rainforest and offers a whole range of nature-based activities. There are some excellent jungle treks and mountain hikes, including the challenging trek to view the Pinnacles – 45 meter high, razor sharp limestone spikes that sit majestically on the slopes of Gunung Api.

With its rich bio-diversity, and world-famous caves, Mulu offers the adventurous traveler an exhilarating cave and rainforest experience, possibly unmatched anywhere else on Earth.

THE SHOW CAVES

Mulu’s four show caves were selected for their uniqueness or sheer beauty. They can all visit as day trips from the park HQ and are accessible by plankwalks and well-lit concrete paths. Strategically positioned spotlights highlight the unique features of the individual caves. A plankwalk leads through the forest to Deer Cave and Lang’s Cave whilst Clearwater Cave and Wind Cave are reached by taking a longboat up the Melinau River, or by following a 4 km nature trail.

DEER CAVE AND LANG’S CAVE

Deer Cave is reached by following a three kilometer plankwalk which passes through peat swamp, alluvial flats and limestone outcrops. There is much to see on the way to the cave, including some superb rainforest, jungle streams and an ancient Penan burial cave.
When you reach the cave entrance you are left in no doubt that you are about to enter the largest cave passage in the world. Deer Cave is simply huge – it is just over 2 kilometers in length and never less than 90m high and wide. The main chamber, which is partially lit by sunlight, is 174 meters wide and 122 meters high. This is the area where deer used to shelter so the local Penan and Berawan people named the Gua Payau or Gua Rusa (Deer Cave).

A path leads into the cave and winds its way around, following the natural contours of the cave floor. Although the path is lit, a flashlight is useful for examining the guano-covered cave floor and its population of insects. The path eventually leads to the “Garden of Eden” where a hole in the cave roof lets in a shaft of light which allows the rich green vegetation to thrive. Another feature is the famous profile of Abraham Lincoln, which guards the southern entrance of the cave.

Not surprisingly, Deer Cave is home to many species of bats. Between 5 and 7pm, if the weather is fine, visitors may be treated to the spectacular sight of a black cloud of free-tailed bats emerging from the entrance of the cave to go in search of food. Originally, this cloud was thought to contain hundreds of thousands of bats but a recent study that the figure is well over a million.

A visit to Deer Cave is usually combined with one to Lang’s Cave, whose entrance is a short distance away from that of Deer Cave. Lang’s Cave is the smallest of the show caves but its rock formations are well worth seeing. These are made all the more attractive by the strategically positioned spotlights which highlight stalactites and stalagmites. As the cave is relatively small and well-lit, it offers good opportunities to see some of its inhabitants such as bats, swiftlets and even cave-dwelling snakes.
CLEARWATER CAVE & WIND CAVE

Clearwater cave is a Asia’s longest cave, measuring some 107 km. It has a subterranean river, part of which is navigable by boat. There are two ways of reaching Clearwater. Firstly, you can trek along a 4 km nature trail which takes approximately one and a half hours. Alternatively, you can travel by long boat along the Melinau River, usually stopping off at Wind Cave along the way. It normally takes about 15 minutes to reach Wind Cave by boat. When the water level is low the journey takes longer as the boatman often has to jump out of the boat and push.

A plankwalk leads from the riverbank to the entrance of Wind Cave, so named because of the cool breezes which can be felt at the narrow parts of the cave. Wind Cave, which is part of the Clearwater system, has many impressive stalactites, stalagmites, flowrocks, helitites and rock corals, some which are illuminated in the 'King’s' Room.

From Wind Cave you can either follow a plankwalk or take a boat to a picnic area near the entrance of Clearwater Cave. Either way the journey takes about 5 minutes. 200 steps lead up through the forest to the mouth of Clearwater Cave. With its underground river, Clearwater is fascinating cave to scroll around. Plankwalks, paths and small floating bridges make this an easy and enjoyable experience. There are excellent photo opportunities for those who have the patience for cave photography.

After a tour of the cave you have to climb down the steps to the picnic area. At the base of the steps there is a crystal clear pool that is filled by water that flows out of the cave. This is an excellent swimming spot and many visitors decide to take a refreshing clip. The less energetic can relax on the picnic benches and admire the rainforest scenery, or perhaps watch the swarms of butterflies that are often found fluttering around near the river bank. If you are lucky you may see the Rajah Brooke butterfly with its huge bright-green colored wings.
FOREST ACTIVITIES / NATURAL WALKS

When you walk into the heart of the park, it is easy to overwhelmed. Dense vegetation clings to every surface and trees are draped with orchid, ferns and creepers. Insects, lizards and squirrels dash up and down the tree trunks and butterflies, dragonflies burst of color as they glide by.

The 480 meter long “Mulu Canopy Skywalk” which is the world’s longest tree based canopy walk takes you up in the towering trees where the forest pulses with life, among vivid butterflies, huge insects and lush ferns.

From your lofty perch, you can spot the far more intense trail that leads to the 2,376 m Mount Mulu, the park’s signature landmark. As you walk among the ferns and vines 15 – 25 metres above the forest floor and river you will enjoy this unique opportunity to get closer to the rainforest ‘web of life’. Just beneath the skywalk, you can spot the shallow ‘Paku River’ with its freshwater inhabitants.

Instead of that, other forest activities are “Tree Top Tower”. Soaring into the treetops like one of the nearby massive trees this 30 meter tower and bird hide gives you the chance to ‘spy’ on squirrels arguing over their territory; to watch macaques and hornbills attracted by the seasonal figs and observe a large number of canopy dwelling birds.

The hide designed for you to comfortably and quietly wait for passing wildlife without them being aware that you watching.

Learn from the locals on a ‘Plants for Life Walk’ where they will show you that tastes good and what cures sickness.

BIO-DIVERSITY

Ever since the 1930’s the rich rainforest of the Mulu area has attracted scientists. Every expedition seems to discover something new – a plant or animal species previously unknown to man, animal patterns, an unearthed a mountain of scientific facts, they have barely ‘scratched the surface’ of Mulu bio-diversity. However, this ‘barely scratched surface’ includes an impressive array of plants and animals.
The park contains 8 different types of forest – including peat swamp, health and mixed dipterocarp, moss forest and stunted upper montage vegetation – and thousands of species ferns, fungi, mosses, and flowering plants including 170 species of wild orchid and 10 species of pitcher plant. Mulu’s wildlife is equally impressive and includes 75 species of mammals, 262 species of birds (including the eight species of hornbill found in Sarawak), 74 species of frogs, 47 species of fish, 281 species of butterflies and 458 species of ants.

TREKS AND TRAILS IN MULU

Mulu has three adventure treks, all of which require a certain level of physical fitness. Basic camping gear is useful as overnight stays in jungle base camps are required. Trekkers must be accompanied by official park guide. Most tour operators can assist with travel arrangements for these treks and also can supply any necessary equipment and food.

The following sections provide brief details about each trek and its attractions:
The Pinnacles

The famous Pinnacles’ at Mulu consist of a series of 45 meter high, razor-sharp limestone spikes that tower above the surrounding vegetation, mid-way up the slopes of Gunung Api. The trek to view them is one of the most popular in the park. But be warned, the Pinnacle Summit Trek is a tough and challenging one. The trail itself is very steep (near vertically parts) and requires a certain level of fitness.

The Pinnacles Summit Trek is usually done as 3 day / 2 night trek although it is possible to do it as a 2 day / 1 night trek. The first stage is a 1-2 hour boat trip along the Melinau River to Kuala Berar. If the water level is low, the boat has to be pushed over rocky sections so the trips takes longer. Base Camp 5 is relatively easy 7.8 km walk from Kuala Berar, following flat jungle terrain and taking 2-3 hours. Camp 5 is situated near the Melinau Gorge which separates Gunung Benarat from Gunung Api. There is hostel–style accommodation at the camp, and cooking facilities. The Melinau River in front Of Camp 5 is Crystal clear and ideal for a swim after the trek from Long Berar.

The real hiking begins the following morning. The trails is 2.4 km in length but rises some 1,200 meters from Camp 5 to the viewpoint, passing through lowland dipterocarp forest before climbing steeply through moss forest. Here the trees are a lot smaller and everything is covered in slippery green moss. Limestone debris also litters the trail so trekkers must proceed with care. The last section of the trails near vertical, with rope section and 15 aluminums ladders strategically positioned to help with the climb. The vegetation is sparse although orchids, rhododendrons and pitcher plants thrive in the area, and can be seen at the side of the trail.

After some tough climbing you finally come out onto a rocky outcrop where the stunning views provides a good reward for all the effort. The viewpoint area is made up of a number of Pinnacles, rocks and vegetation. After taking some photos and a short rest and a last glimpse of the Pinnacles, it is time to begin the descent back to Camp 5 and the second overnight stay.

It is very difficult to put an exact time on how long it takes to trek to the Pinnacles’ viewpoint. Fit and experienced trekkers should be able to reach the top in 2-3 hours. The not so fit but to determine generally take around 4-5hours. Most people spend an hour or so at the top before coming down. For many the descent is actually more
difficult and therefore takes longer, so the return trip can take anything from 5 to 10 hours depending on fitness level.

The Headhunter’s Trail

The Headhunter’s Trail is a great way of entering or leaving Gunung Mulu National Park. The trek is organized by travel operators and combines upriver travel, jungle trekking and an overnight stay at an Iban longhouse. The trail itself follows the route taken by Kayan headhunting parties who paddled up the Melinau River to Melinau Gorge. They then dragged their longboats through the forest for 3 km until they reached the banks of the Terikan River, where they launched headhunting raids against the people of the Limbang area.

The basic trails route is as follows. First take a boat from the park HQ to Kuala Berar and then trek for 2-3 hours to reach Camp 5. From Camp 5 follow the 11.3 km trail to Kuala Terikan, a 4-5 hour trek. Either rest or spend the night in the accommodation units at the ranger station at Ng. Metawai (about 15 minutes from Kuala Terikan), or travel by longboat for 3-4 hours (depending on boat engine and water level) to reach the longhouse (Rumah Bala Lesong). After an overnight stay the journey continues by boat downriver to Naga Medamit. From there it is possible to travel by road to Limbang.

The Headhunter’s Trail can also be done in reverse, starting from Limbang and ending up at the Park HQ. Either way the trek offers an excellent introduction to the rivers and rainforest of Mulu and the added attraction of a longhouse visit. As the treks include an overnight stay at Camp 5, most tour operators offer the option of climbing the Pinnacles as part of their Headhunter’s Trail package.

Gunung Mulu Summit Trek

The climb to the summit of Gunung Mulu (2,376 m) is the toughest organized trek in the park. It requires a high level of fitness and sense of adventure. Indeed, Gunung Mulu has always attracted adventures. In the 19th Century, Spenser St John and Charles Hose, two old “Borneo Hands”, attempted to conquer Mount Mulu. They and other explorers and mountaineers failed. It wasn’t until 1920’s, when a Berawan rhino hunter named ‘Tama Nilong’ discovered the ‘south-west’ ridge, that a way to the summit was found. In 1932, Tama Nilong led Lord Shackleton and an Oxford University Expedition to the summit of Mulu.

Today’s trek follows the route discovered in the 1920’s. It involves overnight stops at jungle camps and offers a chance to experience the rainforest and perhaps see some rare animals and birds, including various species of Hornbill. The trek is usually done as a 4 day hike, but experienced trekkers can do it in less. A number of wooden huts are positioned along the trail and provide shelter for overnights stops. Trekking schedule and overnight camping arrangements can be worked out beforehand with your guides. Trekkers should go prepared. Good walking shoes are essential, as is a sleeping bag...
(or blanket) as it can get cold. Food supplies, cooking utensils and sufficient water must also be taken. The park guides and travel companies can arrange this.

Sumber: [http://www.mulunationalpark.com](http://www.mulunationalpark.com)
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