

Dr. Dionysius Sharma



Dionysius Sharma, or Dr Dino as he is more popularly known, first worked on the fauna of the Lower Kinabatangan in 1991. His first assignment, whilst working as a staff of WWF-Malaysia was to assist in the study of the unique Proboscis monkeys and to document the diverse array of mammals, birds and reptiles occurring in the floodplains. Having traveled throughout Malaysia on conservation fieldwork assignments, Dino still regards the Lower Kinabatangan as his favourite wildlife watching location.

Born in Malacca and of north Indian/Portuguese-Eurasian descent, Dino spent a lot of his childhood outdoors, observing wild animals and appreciating the need to conserve them. Graduating from Universiti Malaya with a degree in Ecology, he went on to earn his PhD in Conservation Biology from the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology, University of Kent, England.

Based at Sukau in 1991, Dino studied the wildlife at the Menanggul, Tenegang, Resang and Sapasidom Rivers and the various oxbow lakes, documenting the vertebrate fauna and trying to estimate their densities. Even way back then, he observed that agriculture expansion in the floodplains had reduced the total available forests for the survival of the various animals. In his report titled “A Wildlife Survey of the Proposed Kinabatangan Park”, he provided the first checklists of mammals, birds and reptiles occurring at the Lower Kinabatangan, and noted that ecotourism was going to be important in the area, reaffirming the ideas of previous workers there. Since 1991, Dino has been back to Sukau on various assignments including facilitating foreign media visits, facilitating training of local journalists in environmental reporting, and acting in an Animal Planet reality-styled programme called Planet Action that featured orang utan conservation.

In 2007, Dino was appointed the Executive Director/CEO of WWF-Malaysia and continues his interest in the unique biodiversity found at Sukau and the Lower Kinabatangan, through the work of WWF-Malaysia in the establishment of a Corridor of Life at the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. His preferred choice of stay these days is the Sukau Rainforest Lodge, primarily due to the way and manner the management of this lodge promotes ecotourism and the professionalism of all the staff in managing the needs of tourists.



In appreciation of Dr. Dino's substantial contribution in Kinabatangan, Sukau Rainforest Lodge dedicates room No. 2 in his honour.