

Sulawesi Tribes & Jungles

Sulawesi, Indonesia

An expedition to see ancient cultures, pitcher plants, orchids, birds, mammals, insects

This **16 day expedition** begins in Makassar, South Sulawesi. We drive north to the Tana Toraja Highlands to explore amazing, bull-horn-shaped tongkonan houses, and ancient cliffside burial sites, as well as amazing stands of rainforest home to unique orchids, pitcher plants and bird life. Near Lake Poso, we visit 3000 year old stone megaliths said to resemble the famous Easter Island statues. We then begin an intrepid ascent up the rainforest-clad **Mount Lumut** to find populations of rare *Paphiopedilum* slipper orchids and one of the most incredible of all **carnivorous plants**, the little known *Nepenthes hamata*, which produces ferocious looking pitchers lined with blade-like teeth. After descending Mount Lumut, we visit one of Sulawesi's best birdlife trails, home to nightjars, sparrowhawks, bee eaters and fruit doves, as well as the rare pitcher plant *N. pitopangii*. We then travel to the **Tangkoko Nature Reserve** to photograph black crested macaques, spectral tarsiers, hornbills and, with luck, cuscus and winged lizards.

This expedition offers **excellent opportunities** to observe and photograph Sulawesi's iconic traditional cultures and many of the island's most spectacular animals, birds, and plants (in particular orchids and carnivorous pitcher plants). During our 2013 Sulawesi expedition, two new species of pitcher plants were discovered, along with a new species of *Paphiopedilum* orchid.

Optional pre- or post-expedition add-ons that can be arranged include outstanding diving opportunities on remote islands to visit pristine reefs, and exploration of peaks previously unvisited by pitcher plant experts offering the possibility of the discovery of new *Nepenthes*!

COST: £2,500 per person for **16 days / 15 nights** (all inclusive from start point to end point).

START POINT: Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

END POINT: Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

EXPEDITION LEADER: Dr. Alastair Robinson (experienced field botanist and *Nepenthes* expert).

DATES: December 6th – December 21st (main expedition).

Email sales@redfernnaturalhistory.com for more information and to make bookings.



SULAWESI TRIBES & JUNGLES ITINERARY

Day 1: We meet in Makassar, South Sulawesi, and transfer into mini-bus vans and begin the 7 hour drive to the Tana Toraja Highlands, where we will overnight in the area of Rantepao. We stop for lunch on the way, and have dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 2: Early morning hike to Mount Sesean to see orchids, pitcher plants (*Nepenthes maxima* "wavy leaf form") and spectacular views. Descend for lunch and then visit Lo'Ko' Mata tribal burial site and tongkonan houses at Pallawa. We observe the unique local way of burying their dead in open 'sarcophagi' in caves and manually crafted holes in cliff faces. Small effigies of the dead - Tau Tau - represent the bodies that lie entombed in the passages behind them.

Day 3: After breakfast, we depart for a morning of exploration in the Rantepao area, home to some of the most idiosyncratic cultures in all of Indonesia. Here, the gables of a traditional Tongkonan house rise majestically towards the sky, the supporting column adorned with the horns of tens of sacrificed water buffalo. After lunch, depart for Polopo, in the lowlands, where we stay overnight. We explore roadside jungles home to diverse birdlife, orchids, and pitcher plants (*Nepenthes tomoriana* and *N. mirabilis*).

Day 4: Drive towards Tentena, on the banks of the beautiful Lake Poso. We stop for lunch and to explore rainforest in search of orchids and pitcher plants.

Day 5: Explore the area west of Tentena – the Bada valley is home to pitcher plants (*Nepenthes eymae*, *N. maxima* and *N. glabrata*), as well as 3000 year old stone megaliths of unknown provenance. Most are small, but some are larger and reminiscent of their supposed Easter Island cousins.

Day 6: Drive towards Poso, stopping at Malei village. There, we transfer to 4WD and explore Mount Pompango, where a logging road has provided access to over 2000 metres. This site is newly explored and rich in wildlife, orchids and pitcher plants (*Nepenthes glabrata*). Depending on prevailing conditions, we will overnight in our tents, or make the journey back to Malei.

Day 7: An early start will see us transferred back to our van for the day's long journey to Watusongu village. From there, we reach Paranonge village, either by motorcycle, or 4x4 vehicle if the roads are in reasonable condition. The village is the last road point for Mount Lumut, home to one of the most incredible pitcher plants in the world, *Nepenthes hamata*. Overnight in tents in village area.

Day 8: We begin the steep ascent up Mount Lumut, camping in the rainforest. Wildlife is especially rich here as there are no hints of poaching. We encounter spectacular orchids (including *Paphiopedilum celebensis*), and the little-known pitcher plant *Nepenthes eymae*.

Day 9: We reach the upper slopes of Mt. Lumut and find populations of one of the finest of all carnivorous plants, *Nepenthes hamata*, with its ferocious, pitcher lined with blade-like teeth. We explore the local flora and fauna of the mountain for the rest of the day.

Day 10: We descend Mount Lumut and transfer from Paranonge to Watusongu to meet van. Overland to a hotel near Poso to overnight.

Day 11: Transfer to the Lore Lindu national park, exploring the savannah en route to find dwarf *Nepenthes maxima* and the carnivorous sundew *Drosera burmanii*. We overnight at a homestay in the Wuasa district, within the confines of the national park.

Day 12: We hike a cloudforest trail famous amongst birders for the endemic birdlife (including nightjars, sparrowhawks, bee eaters and fruit doves) and also home to a plethora of orchids, rhododendron, and the rare pitcher plant *Nepenthes pitopangii* (as well as *N. maxima* and *N. tentaculata*). We transfer to Palu town for dinner and overnight.

Day 13: We fly from Palu to Manado, and transfer to Tangkoko Nature Reserve.

Day 14: At Tangkoko, we are guided to see black crested macaques (*Macaca nigra*), little spectral tarsiers (*Tarsius tarsier*) and (with luck) a flying dragon (*Draco volans*), a lizard with beautiful yellow or orange wing flaps.

Day 15: We return from Tangkoko to Manado in time to catch a flight to Makassar. We have one last evening meal together in a local restaurant, and sleep in a hotel for the night.

Day 16: Morning departure flights from Makassar Airport.



Highlights of the **Sulawesi Tribes & Jungles Expedition**
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