

# *The Jeff Corwin Experience: Borneo Island Ecosystem Teacher's Guide*

**Grade Level:** K-8

**Curriculum Focus:** Life Science

**Lesson Duration:** Two class periods

## **Program Description**

The island of Borneo may be one of the wildest places on the planet. Deep in these jungles, Jeff Corwin encounters a herd of wild Asian elephants, orphan orangutans, reclusive proboscis monkeys, and leeches before he captures two deadly snakes.

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## **Video Index**

### **Segment 1: Welcome to Borneo (15 min.)**

#### *Description*

Join Jeff Corwin on his adventure in Borneo. Travel the Kinabatangan River to observe tree frogs, track Asian elephants, and visit with primates.

#### *Pre-viewing question*

What do you think is unique about Borneo?

Answer: Answers will vary, but students may mention unique animals and new habitats.

#### *Post-viewing question*

Why did the elephants in the jungle go after Jeff and Bert?

Answer: The elephants were protecting their territory and their young.

### **Segment 2: Exploring the Gomantong Caves (9 min.)**

#### *Description*

Explore the unique ecosystem in the Gomantong Caves. See swarms of bats feeding on insects and the swiftlets that co-exist with them. Discover how swiftlet nests are harvested.

#### *Pre-viewing question*

What animals do you think live in the Gomantong Caves?

Answer: Answers will vary; students may say bats and insects.

#### *Post-viewing question*

Why are swiftlet nests harvested?

Answer: The rubbery material that people can make from them is believed to have medicinal properties.

### Segment 3: Borneo's Unusual Animals (18 min.)

#### *Description*

Discover a variety of unusual animals: the proboscis monkey, one of the rarest primates in the world; the venomous mangrove snake; sea turtles; and the yellow-lipped sea krait of Snake Island.

#### *Pre-viewing question*

What animals do you think live in Borneo?

Answer: Answers may include monkeys and snakes.

#### *Post-viewing question*

Where did the proboscis monkey get its name?

Answer: From its long nose, or proboscis

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## Lesson Plan

### *Student Objectives*

- Learn where Borneo is located on a world map.
- Keep a journal about Borneo after watching the video.
- Share the journals with other members of the class.

### *Materials*

- *The Jeff Corwin Experience: Borneo: An Island Ecosystem* video and VCR, DVD and DVD player
- Computer(s) with Internet access
- World map showing Borneo (from an online or print source)
- Notebooks for each student

### *Procedures*

1. Begin the lesson by asking students if they have ever heard of Borneo. Then show them where Borneo is located on a world map. You can find a map online at this Web site: [http://encarta.msn.com/map\\_701511246/Borneo.html](http://encarta.msn.com/map_701511246/Borneo.html). Point out that Borneo is the third largest island on Earth and is part of the continent of Asia.
2. Tell students that Borneo is very far away, and most of us will probably not have an opportunity to go there. So they are going to do the next best thing: Imagine they are with Jeff Corwin exploring the animals of Borneo.



3. Show students *The Jeff Corwin Experience: Borneo: An Island Ecosystem*. You can show students the whole video or any one of the three segments. Tell students to pay attention close attention as they watch the episode.
4. Now have students take out a notebook. Ask them to write a series of journal entries based on the video. The entries could include what animals they liked the best, thought were the most interesting, the most unusual, or the fiercest. Some of the animals students could write about are the Asian elephant, the orangutan, or the proboscis monkey. Remind students that Jeff included a video journal in the show describing his reaction to almost being stampeded by the Asian elephants.
5. Have students write three or four entries based on the video. To refresh students' memories, you may want to show a few minutes of the video while students are working on their entries.
6. Conclude the lesson by asking for volunteers to share their entries. Then discuss what students wrote about. What animals made an impression on students? Make sure they can support their ideas with examples.

## Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students were highly engaged in class discussions; wrote thoughtful, descriptive, and insightful entries in their journals.
- **2 points:** Students participated in class discussions; wrote satisfactory entries in their journals.
- **1 point:** Students participated minimally in class discussions; did not complete the entries for their journals.

## Vocabulary

### Asian elephant

*Definition:* A type of elephant found in Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam; Asian elephants are smaller than African elephants and have light grey skin.

*Context:* Jeff Corwin was almost trampled by a herd of Asian elephants, which was a sobering experience for him.

### Borneo

*Definition:* The third largest island on Earth; Borneo is near the equator in the South China Sea.

*Context:* The island of Borneo is between Malaysia and the Philippines in the continent of Asia.



### **island**

*Definition:* A landmass surrounded by water on all sides

*Context:* We refer to the Hawaiian Islands as Hawaii, and it is the 50<sup>th</sup> state in the United States.

### **orangutan**

*Definition:* A primate in Borneo and Sumatra that is about two thirds as large as the gorilla and has brown skin, long sparse reddish brown hair, and very long arms

*Context:* At that the Sepilok Wildlife Sanctuary, orangutans are being trained so that they can live alone in the wild once again.

### **proboscis monkey**

*Definition:* A long-tailed monkey in Borneo, mostly recognizable by the male's long, pendulous nose

*Context:* The proboscis monkey is an extremely rare primate and it lives only in the forests of Borneo.

## **Academic Standards**

### **National Academy of Sciences**

The National Academy of Sciences provides guidelines for teaching science in grades K–12 to promote scientific literacy. To view the standards, visit this Web site:

<http://books.nap.edu/html/nses/html/overview.html#content>.

Grades K-4

- Life Science: Organisms and environments

Grades 5-8

- Life Science: Populations and ecosystems
- Diversity and adaptations of organisms

### **Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

- Language Arts – Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media; Writing: Gathers and uses information for research purposes

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## **Support Materials**

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>



