



Borneo

Science, Sea Life and SCUBA

16 days

This truly incredible educational journey will inspire students in their studies as they visit live jungle and marine research centres and work alongside conservationists to discover the importance of their work on the spectacular Bornean ecology. Prepare to be amazed by the diverse flora and fauna we come across and watch Biology come to life before our eyes. Not to mention trekking to the depths of the jungle to spend the night camped out in hammocks and the opportunity to gain the PADI Open Water SCUBA Diver certification. It truly is a science trip like no other.



[Learn more about our Carbon Labels](#)

Your Recommended Expedition Itinerary

Days 1 - 2

Fly from UK to Sandakan

LD

Upon our arrival on the beautiful island of Borneo, we will be met by our local Trip Leader, who will be our guide and friend throughout our journey. We will transfer to our hostel in Sepilok, where we will have the chance to freshen up and relax after this journey. Then we will do a late evening visit to The Rainforest Discovery Centre and a night walk before we return to the hostel for a well earned rest.

Day 3

Bornean Sun Bears and Orangutans

BLD

Today will be a day we remember for the rest of our lives. The Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre (often shortened to BSBCC) is one of the most important wildlife rescue and rehabilitation projects in Southeast Asia, dedicated entirely to protecting sun bears—the smallest bear species in the world. Close by the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre is one of the most famous wildlife rehabilitation centres in the world, dedicated to rescuing and returning orphaned and displaced orangutans back to the wild. Sitting in the nursery at the Orangutan Sanctuary, watching the baby orangutans play, is one of the highlights of your expedition to Borneo. We spend the night at Sepilok.

Day 4

Travel to Sukau Homestay

BLD

Today we have a two hour drive to Sukau Homestay. Here we stay with a local village family along the Kinabatangan River—one of the best wildlife areas in Southeast Asia. Sukau Village Viewstay is a small, family-run homestay located in Sukau village along the Kinabatangan River in Sabah. Founded around 2015 by a local family and run by Bam and his wife who are well known conservationists. It's not just a place to sleep—it's designed as a community-based eco-tourism experience. We will be staying on site in dorm rooms.

Days 5 - 6

Sukau Homestay

BLD

Over the next two days we work alongside local people to see what conservation projects they are working on along the local river. This is an eye opening and inspirational opportunity and will certainly bring all of the things we have learnt about in biology lessons to life! Bam aims get visitors involved in conservation activities - sapling collection from the forest, tree-planting, building hornbill nests, making fish/prawn traps to be donated to the villagers, go on wildlife cruises/walks, orangutan surveys - amongst other things. This will be a very fulfilling experience.

Day 7

Trek into Jungle Camp

BLD

Today we drive for roughly six hours to Kiau, where we leave the vehicles and get ready to trek into the Bornean jungle tomorrow! En route, time permitting, we will visit the very moving Kundasang War Memorial, built in memory of the mostly Australian prisoners of war from World War Two. Our destination is Kiau Village (Kampung Kiau) is a scenic rural village located in the Kota Belud district at the foothills of Mount Kinabalu—one of Southeast Asia's most famous mountains.



It's often described as one of Sabah's hidden gems for cultural and nature-based tourism. We spend the night here in a homestay enjoying a cultural evening.

- Day 8** **Trek into the Jungle** BLD
Today we have a four hour trek into the jungle. During our trek our Trip Leader will point out some of the incredible, local flora and fauna - which are certainly more interesting than grey squirrels! After about 4 hours we reach our jungle camp. Here we have the opportunity to learn about some of the survival techniques which indigenous people have developed to allow them to thrive in the jungle. As night falls we climb into our hammocks to be gently rocked to sleep whilst listening to the croaking frog orchestras and sounds of the nocturnal animals awakening.
- Day 9** **Trek Out of the Jungle and Return to Kota Kinabalu** BLD
After an incredible night in the jungle, we trek for a further four hours to meet our vehicles once more and head to our hostel in Kota Kinabalu (KK), the capital of Sabah state. This journey takes approximately two hours and everyone will be glad to sit down in the air conditioning and think about what they have achieved over the past few days.
- Days 10 - 12** **PADI Open Water Diving** BLD
It is now time to move our focus from the biology and ecology of the jungle to that of the marine environment, no doubt it will seem like an alien world given our surroundings for the last few days! We will spend the next three days completing our PADI Open Water Diver SCUBA course. This will teach us the fundamentals of SCUBA diving, including dive techniques and equipment, as well as a series of confined and open water dives. Borneo is renowned as a world class diving area and over 3000 species were first found and classified in Malaysian waters. We can expect to see pristine coral, schools of fish, octopus, turtles and if we are lucky a majestic ray or two. Not only is SCUBA diving a fantastic opportunity to view marine wildlife up close, it will also allow us to see first hand examples of symbiotic relationships in the marine world. Those who already hold their PADI Open Water Diver Certificate may be able to complete a higher level course. These days will run from about 8:30 to 4 leaving us the late afternoons free to relax on the beach and discuss marine conservation issues in the area. We will also get stuck in with an 'Environment Clean Up' and help to clear waste from the beaches.
- Day 13** **MERC: Marine Ecology Research Centre** BLD
Having proudly achieved our PADI Open Water diver certificates, we spend the next day at the Marine Ecology Research Centre which also acts as a rehabilitation centre for marine life. Upon our arrival, we will meet with MERC staff for a briefing and full tour of the centre. We then spend our time working alongside biologists at MERC and learning about the importance of their work for the local ecology. This could include activities such as: coral and sea grass planting, collection of broken coral fragments from the sea bed, collection of sea grass from donor sites, cleaning the coral nursery (brushing algae and collecting snails!) and learning about the importance of phytoplankton as a live food source for many young sea animals.
- Day 14** **Conservation Snorkelling and Ride the Coral Flyer** BLD
Close to KK in the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, we will join in with some guided conservation snorkelling. This helps us understand coral reef ecology, threats to the marine ecosystem and teaches us how to assess reef health. Also today we will ride The Coral Flyer Zipline. This is one of the most unique adventure activities in Sabah - a 250 metre zipline that takes you from one tropical island to another over the sea. Time permitting we should also be able to spend a bit of the day in the city of KK, enjoying the hustle and bustle of a large Malaysian city.
- Days 15 - 16** **Kota Kinabalu and Depart Borneo** BL
This morning we will have the final chance to explore Kota Kinabalu and purchase any last gifts or souvenirs - remembering of course not to purchase anything which would have harmed the delicate local marine system. We are then transferred to the airport to wish farewell to our Trip Leader and beautiful Borneo, ready for our return flight to the UK, arriving on day 16.

Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC leader
- Parent and student trip launch presentation
- Pre-travel training programme
- ATOL financial protection
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests
- Emergency Medical & Repatriation Insurance
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects and cancellation insurance



A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. We are far from perfect, but we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a verified sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>

Trees for Life

Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 3



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include multiple consecutive days activity either walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) or paddling. With between five and seven hours of activity with occasional longer/harder days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling, rafting, remote camping which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness and resilience. Steady preparation and an increase in your underlying fitness levels will help you get the most from this grade trip.

Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 4



Students joining trips at this level will find the comforts of home are more of a rarity – or viewed another way, a welcome luxury. English is unlikely to be widely spoken and the food will be quite different to home, perhaps for extended sections of the trip. You should observe local customs so not to cause offence. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty and accommodation in some locations is likely to be basic. Whilst a challenge, destinations and trips at cultural level 4 are also a fantastic opportunity to see a very different part of the world.



Travel Safety & Other Expedition Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of our overall approach to safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to your expedition. Topics covered will include:

Responsible Tourism workshop

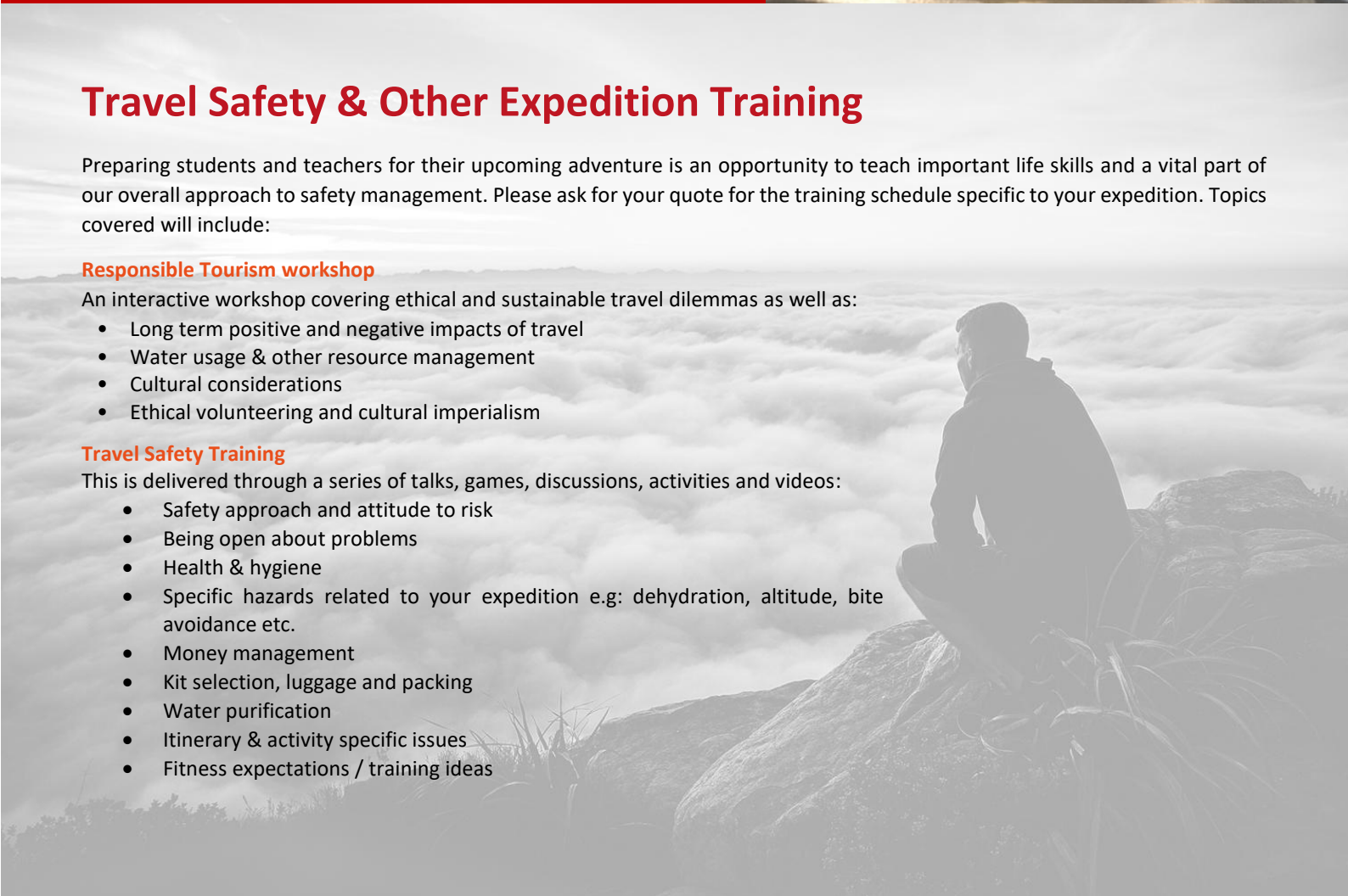
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering and cultural imperialism

Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."

Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick

Contact Us:

STC Expeditions, 65-67 Bank Chambers, High Street, Exeter, EX4 3DT
t: 01392 660056 | e: info@thestc.co.uk | w: www.thestc.co.uk



Trees for Life



Scottish Fair Trade Forum Member

