

Project Update: February 2016

Through collaboration with Monash University Malaysia, we've been able to conduct molecular analysis of flying fox diet – the first to successfully employ this approach. So far, it has yielded a list of seven cultivated trees and 50 wild ones.

Our camera traps in durian (*Durio zibethinus*) trees have yielded exciting and important data. Many animals have been recorded, not just bats. The data will be analysed soon and we will see if we can elucidate the role of flying foxes in pollinating durian flowers.

However, there are conflict issues with humans. Local awareness of ecosystem services provided by fruit bats, and the benefits to people, was extremely low. Older locals are more likely hold a negative attitude towards flying foxes – particularly fruit tree owners who earn an income from selling their fruit, and have also experienced flying foxes raiding their fruit trees. Therefore, both awareness and conflict mitigation are needed.



Left: Durian (*Durio zibethinus*) flowers; Middle: Durian (*Durio zibethinus*) flowers; Right: Island flying fox (*Pteropus hypomelanus*) and cave nectar bat (*Eonycteris spelaea*).