

Nepenthes Exploration Expedition

Malaysia and Philippines

The Redfern Team is organising the **Nepenthes Exploration Expedition** to observe and photograph several little known *Nepenthes* taxa, in some cases, for the very first time.

This is an unconventional trip, in the sense that there is no guarantee we will find the little-known *Nepenthes* that we set out to see. But that is the nature of exploration! **We would like to run this trip in September, 2022.** We propose to find a group of participants first, discuss the itinerary with the participants as a group, and jointly select which of the following objectives to focus on, then agree mutually convenient dates.

The cost will depend upon the number of participants coming, and the combination of objectives (and the logistics involved (e.g. domestic flights, hotels 4*4 vehicles etc.)), but is likely to be between £2,000-£3,000 for a 2 week trip.

Objectives include:

Objective 1: observe the gigantic form of *Nepenthes sanguinea* from Mount Benom. Although known for over 100 years, very few people have ever seen or photographed the giant form of *N. sanguinea*. From the scant images that exist, it would appear this gigantic form is among the largest and most impressive of all pitcher plants!

Objective 2: No definite photographs exist of *Nepenthes alzapan*. The species is known only from herbarium specimens collected in 1925, and has never been seen with certainty since. It was described by botanists Martin Cheek and Matthew Jebb in 2013. Even the name “Mount Alzapan” does not appear on any maps. After months of research, the Redfern Team has located the likely candidate mountain. We will try and see this long-lost species (note: absolutely no guarantee of success - it is possible we may climb this mountain and find no *Nepenthes* at all - but this is the nature of exploration!)

Objective 3: Friends in Malaysia and the Philippines have observed two possible new *Nepenthes* species and have invited us to observe these populations. Our visit would be observation only (we cannot collect herbarium specimens without permits, which our Malaysian and Philippine colleagues may undertake at a later date, once permits have been issued). But we may be able to shed light on whether these reported populations are new species or not.

Objective 4: As a slightly more easy and reliable final objective, we can visit the beautiful Mulu National Park and Mount Murud (home to an amazing rainbow of well-known *Nepenthes* species and beautiful tourist attractions, and just a really great place to unwind and enjoy at the end of the expedition). Pending permission from the Mulu National Park, we may be able to photograph the mysterious *Nepenthes campanulata* by drone. This species grows on the cliffs of some of the world’s largest limestone caves. **Note:** we are currently applying for permission from the Mulu National Park to fly a drone (and can only do so if permission is granted).

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

NOTE: this trip is photographic / observation expedition. No scientific research, collection of herbarium specimens, or plant material will be undertaken, in accordance with Malaysian and Philippine laws. A photographs and all findings will be shared with our colleagues and friends in Malaysia and the Philippines.



OBJECTIVE 1: *NEPENTHES SANGUINEA* “GIGANTIC FORM”

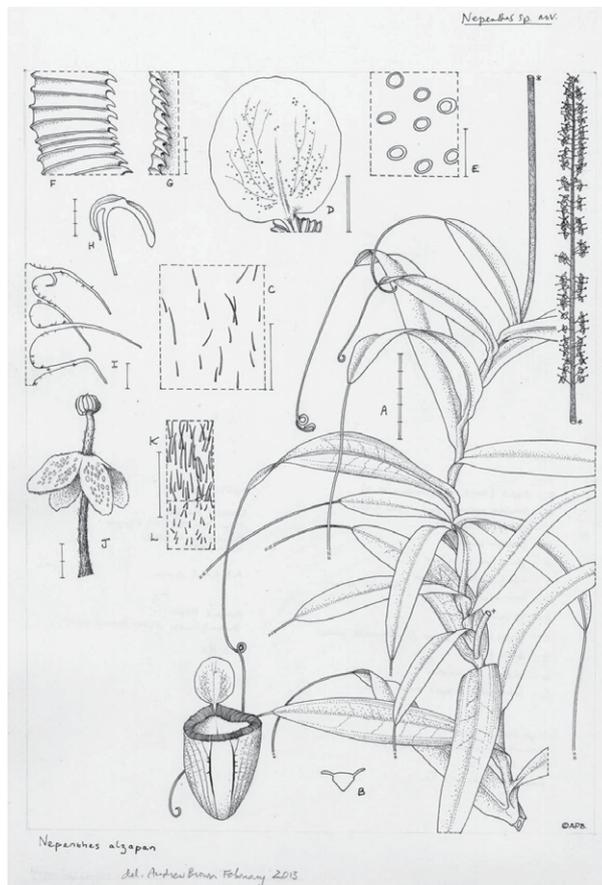
Mount Benom is home to a gigantic form of *N. sanguinea* (which looks to be one of the largest and most impressive of all *Nepenthes*). It has only ever been photographed a few times (over the last 20 years, three photos were taken by mountain climbers who were not *Nepenthes* enthusiasts (see below - taken from the internet). We aim to refind this incredible plant and establish what it is!



ABOVE - PHOTOS FROM THE INTERNET FROM MOUNT BENOM

OBJECTIVE 2: *NEPENTHES ALZAPAN*

Nepenthes alzapan was collected in 1925 and described in 2013, but no definite photographs of this species exist. We will attempt to observe this ‘lost’ species for the first time since 1925!



OBJECTIVE 3: MYSTERY *NEPENTHES* POPULATIONS

In partnership with friends in Malaysia and the Philippines, we have the option to visit a population of possible new *Nepenthes* species in both countries to observe these plants and try and work out what they represent. This is a 'wild goose chase' and success is by no means guaranteed, but it could be very interesting.

OBJECTIVE 4: MOUNT MURUD AND MULU NATIONAL PARK

Mount Murud and Mulu National Park are simply some of the best *Nepenthes* locations on Earth. They offer so many spectacular species to observe and photograph, and both are very easy to visit.

Redfern Adventures has run many trips to Mount Murud and the Mulu National Park and recommends the following itinerary. This is strongly recommended since (if we strike out in terms of luck with other objectives) participants are sure to have an amazing time at Mount Murud and Mulu National Park!

Day 1: We drive from Lawas in 4WD vehicles to Bakelalan. Along the way, we look for populations of *Nepenthes vogelii*, *N. veitchii*, *N. reinwardtiana*, *N. fusca* and several other species (all of which have been photographed along this road in recent years). Overnight in Bakelalan in local hotel and dine in local restaurant.

Day 2: Ascend Mount Murud (surprisingly easy mountain - approx 4-6 hours) to reach the summit area, home to beautiful cloudforest filled with diverse orchids as well as *Nepenthes mollis*, *N. fusca*, *N. reinwardtiana*, *N. murudensis*, *N. muluensis*, *N. lowii*, *N. tentaculata* and many hybrids. A large camp consisting of wooden buildings has been constructed on the summit of Mount Murud. For the nights of August 4th and 5th, we sleep in these huts (tents not needed, but bring sleeping bags and roll mats). Dinner is hot camp food. On August 6th, we depart early and journey back to Bakelalan and overnight in Bakelalan in local hotel and dine in local restaurant.

Day 3: We drive in 4WD vehicles from Bakelalan back to Lawas for a late lunch, then back to Kota Kinabalu for dinner. Overnight in Kota Kinabalu in local hotel.

Day 4: We catch a morning flight from Kota Kinabalu to Mulu National Park. Overnight in Mulu lodge and dinner in a local restaurant. Depending upon our arrival time at Mulu, we may be able to visit *Nepenthes* populations today.

Days 5 and 6: We have an easy and enjoyable day in the stunning Mulu National Park. Within walking distance from our lodge, we visit really good lowland *Nepenthes* sites with *N. bicalcarata*, *N. hemsleyana*, *N. rafflesiana*, *N. ampullaria* "green form", "spotted form" and "red form" (and many hybrids). We visit some of the world's largest and most spectacular limestone caves, on the cliffs of which grows *N. campanulata*. While we can capture distant views of this species, we will seek permission from the park authorities prior to our visit to photograph *N. campanulata* on the cliffsides with drones (the first time this has ever been attempted). We have the option of visiting *Paphiopedilum sanderianum* populations, as well as other orchids. Overnight in Mulu lodge and dinner in a local restaurant. Mulu is absolutely wonderful.

Day 7: We fly out from Mulu National Park back to Kota Kinabalu, Malaysian Borneo and say our goodbyes at Kota Kinabalu Airport after lunch. End of Tour. Participants fly out from Kota Kinabalu late this evening. Anyone wishing to undertake Mount Tambuyukon (or any other parts of the Giant *Nepenthes* Expedition) stays with the group.

NOTE: at Mulu National Park, we can also organise treks to the pinnacles (3 days/2 nights to see *Nepenthes faizaliana* and the spectacular limestone blades) and/or Mount Mulu (5 days / 4 nights to see really fantastic stands of *N. muluensis*, *N. lowii* and other species).

Optional Extensions: Alternatively, we can set up a private tour (before or after the above itinerary) for you to visit: **Mount Kinabalu (3 days extra)**, Borneo's greatest mountain, to see *N. tentaculata*, *N. villosa* (Kinabalu form), *N. x kinabaluensis*.



MULU CAVES (MULU NATIONAL PARK)

During our search for *Nepenthes*, we will visit Mulu National Park, where we will explore some of the largest and most spectacular limestone caves on Earth! *Nepenthes campanulata* grows on the cliffs of these giant caves!



Visit: www.redfernadventures.com for further information
or email sales@redfernadventures.com to register your interest.



Visit: www.redfernadventures.com for further information
or email sales@redfernadventures.com to register your interest.

