

HORNBILLS IN SARAWAK



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Hornbills are large birds in the family bucerotidae and are well thought-out as important ecological indicators on the success of forest regeneration. As they are relatively large in size, the hornbills require habitats that consist of large forest patch. This has made them become useful indicators of forest condition and human disturbance. There are eight species of hornbills in Sarawak that include the rhinoceros hornbill (*Buceros rhinoceros*), helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*), black hornbill (*Anthracoceros malayanus*), bushy-crested hornbill (*Anorrhinus galeritus*), white-crowned hornbill (*Berenicornis comatus*), wrinkled hornbill (*Rhabdotorrhinus corrugatus*), wreathed hornbill (*Rhyticeros undulatus*), and the oriental pied hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*). All the hornbill species in Sarawak are totally protected under the Sarawak Wild Life Protection Ordinance (SWLPO) 1998. The conservation status of these hornbills by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) ranges from least concerned to critically endangered, expressing concerns on these large birds. The helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*) ranks as critically endangered. The next species of concern are the recently uplisted species wrinkled hornbill (*Rhabdotorrhinus corrugatus*) and white-crowned hornbill (*Berenicornis comatus*) that are now both listed as endangered. The rhinoceros hornbill (*Buceros rhinoceros*) and wreathed hornbill (*Rhyticeros undulatus*) are under the category vulnerable. Black hornbill (*Anthracoceros malayanus*) and bushy-crested hornbill (*Anorrhinus galeritus*) are listed as near threatened while only the oriental pied hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*) are considered as least concerned. Sarawak is also well known as “Bumi Kenyalang” or Land of the Hornbills. For the people of Sarawak, especially the Dayak, hornbill is considered as a bird of importance and it holds strong cultural symbol. The most known and majestic species of hornbill is the rhinoceros hornbill. It is used as Sarawak’s state emblem and is also frequently incorporated into carvings, motives and ceremonial dresses. Doubtlessly, the hornbills are considered as a state-pride species for the people of Sarawak.

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Rhinoceros Hornbill



Black Hornbill