

## **Shannyn Kitchen**

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I arrived in Malang, Java on July 16<sup>th</sup> for a month-long stay in Indonesia. In Malang I met with Bu Peni Anggari, a professor at the State University of Malang (Universitas Negeri Malang) and program assistant for the Critical Language Scholarship Program. I also met with Pak Gatut Susanto, the director of the BIPA (Bahasa Indonesia untuk Penutur Asing) program for teaching Indonesian to international students at the State University of Malang. I spoke with them about the list of visa requirements for conducting research in Indonesia and cleared up several points of confusion concerning the intimidating research visa application process. They offered official recommendation letters from the State University of Malang, which will be a part of my visa requirements, as well as letters of introduction to university or government offices located near my field site.

Upon arrival in Pangkalan Bun, Central Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo, I met with a former guide who worked in Tanjung Puting National Park to discuss arranging a tour through her contacts. I finally arranged a tour from August 8-11 (3 days, 2 nights). This was the last tour available during the high season and the cost had risen since last year. Once the tour was arranged, I spoke with friends in Pangkalan Bun about my surprise at the cost and the number of tourists arriving. Through these conversations, as well as casual conversations with newly met residents of Pangkalan Bun, I realized that local tourism to the park is more common than I had assumed. Tourists from the region are common, but they tour differently from international tourists. This led to a change in my research focus from international tourists to tourists residing in the area, including the city of Pangkalan Bun. Because of this change, I have settled upon Pangkalan Bun instead of Kumai as a base of field work, because it is the larger of the two towns and I have already met several people who could provide valuable interviews about their trips into the park. Inside the park I spoke with guides and boat crews about their work conditions, tourists, and their experiences working in tourism. These guides and crews mostly handle foreign tourists rather than local tourists, who are more likely to take day-trips into the park and usually opt out of hiring a guide.

My attempts to approach local government offices for statistical information on tourism and park visitors were rejected without a formal letter of introduction from my home university. I could not obtain these on short notice, but I can easily meet these requirements in the future. The university was not holding classes, but I met with a professor who has conducted social science research in Tanjung Puting National Park. I have decided on two organizations in Pangkalan Bun (Antakusuma University and the Natural Resource Conservation Office) to which I will send formal letters of introduction from my home university in the United States and the State University of Malang.