



A Passion for Conservation

An award-winning photographer, illustrated book author,
committed conservationist and indefatigable traveller
on a mission to make a difference

Bjorn Olesen - A Wildlife Photographer in His Own Words

I am a retired corporate executive, award-winning wildlife photographer and a passionate conservationist. I have had the privilege to live in Asia for more than 30 years. Over the past 12 years I have travelled extensively particularly in Asia, but also in the Americas and Africa documenting many endangered species. In 2013 I was the Grand Price winner of the Smithsonian Magazine 10th Photo Competition with 37,600 submissions from 112 countries. With my wife Fanny I have authored three large format books: *A Visual Celebration of Giant pandas* in 2012, *A Visual Celebration of Borneo's Wildlife* in 2016, and *Asia's Wildlife: A Journey to the Forests of Hope* in 2018. All royalties from these publications will be donated to nature conservation

through World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Fauna & Flora International and BirdLife International. As a conservation photographer creating images that tell stories that can make a difference, the job only starts when you press the shutter. However, the more important challenge is to ensure that such stories reach the wider audience that needs to see and feel them, to get engaged to make a change. It is my hope, that these publications can create an insightful picture of current conservation issues, and call attention to the diverse threats faced by Asia's biodiversity. In the photo I am releasing a Common kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* found in a snare at the Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary, Kachin State, Myanmar.

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Helmeted Hornbill

Prehistoric looking
Helmeted Hornbill
Rhinoplax vigil,
critically
endangered. This
male is about to feed
the female inside the
tree cavity. Peninsula
Malaysia.

Nikon D500
600mm VR + 1.4
Teleconverter
1/160
f/5.6
ISO 320

**Sulawesi Crested
Macaque**

Sulawesi Crested
Macaque *Macaca
nigra*, critically
endangered.
Tangkoko NP,
Sulawesi, Indonesia.
Sadly even inside
National Parks
poaching is quite
common; the
individual on the
right has lost part of
his arm in a snare,
fortunately it
survived and
appeared fit.

Nikon D3S
300mm f/2.8
1/125
f/5.0 -2/3EV
ISO 3200





Waigeo Cuscus

The Waigeo Cuscus *Spilocuscus papuensis* lives high in the forest canopy and is rarely seen, as most are nocturnal and spend the day sleeping. Waigeo, West Papua, Indonesia.

Nikon D5
600mm VR
1/400
f/4.0 +2 2/3EV
ISO 2000

Southern Brown Kiwi

Steward Island at the southern tip of New Zealand is one of the few places to see the Southern Brown Kiwi *Apteryx australis lawryi*. No lights were allowed apart from a special low-light torch used by the guide, so without modern camera technology it would have been impossible to take this photo, virtually in total darkness.

Nikon D4
70-200mm
f/2.8 @ 200mm
1/50 f/2.8 -2EV
ISO 16000



King Penguins

King Penguins
*Aptenodytes
patagonicus*,
Falkland Islands.

With less than
3,000 overnighing
tourists a year,
Falkland Islands is
an attractive wildlife
photography
destination.

The various penguin
species are
completely fearless
towards humans,
and if you sit down
close to a colony,
often they will come
very close.

Nikon D5
600mm VR
1/2500
f/13
ISO 640





Magnificent Hummingbirds

Magnificent Hummingbird *Eugenes fulgens*, Costa Rica. Many hummingbird images are taken in studio-like conditions with multiple flashlights lights and an artificial background. To me, that has not much to do with nature photography. My preference is only to use natural light, which is perfectly possible, as you can see here.

Nikon D4S
600mm VR
1/4000
f/6.3 +2/3EV
ISO 3200
No flash



Northern Cassowary

The 1.5 m tall Northern Cassowary *Casuarius unappendiculatus* is a poorly known species. West Papua, Indonesia.

Nikon D850
300mm 2.8
1/640
f/4.0 -1/3EV
ISO 1600

Oriental Pied Hornbill

The Oriental Pied Hornbill *Anthracoceros albirostris* was thought extinct in Singapore, but a population is now established. This pair was spotted inside the Botanic Gardens.

Nikon D5 Nikkor
600mm VR +1.4
Teleconverter
1/640
f/6.3 +2/3EV
ISO 3200





**Yacare
with prey**

Yacare Caiman
Caiman yacare
with an Akari
catfish. Pantanal,
Brazil.

Nikon D4
600mm VR
1/640
f/8.0 +1/3EV
ISO 800



**Mantled Howler
Monkey**

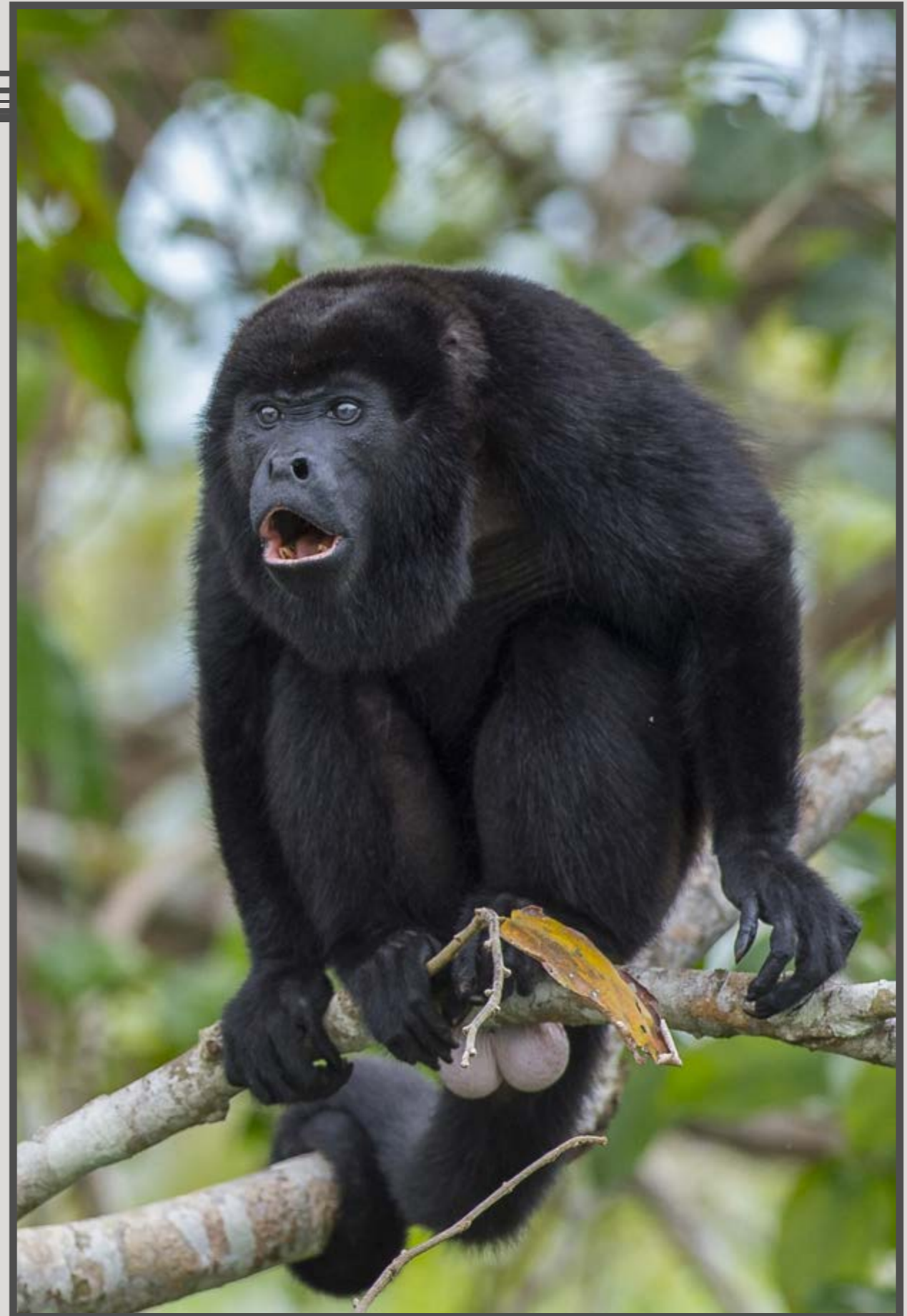
Male Mantled
Howler Monkey
Alouatta palliata
at Canopy Tower,
Panama.

Nikon D4S
300mm f/2.8
1/1000
f/8.0
ISO 1600

**Hodgson's
Frogmouth**

Hodgson's Frogmouth
*Batrachostomus
hodgsoni* family
near Dalat, Vietnam.

Nikon D5
600mm + 1.4
Teleconverter
1/100
f/10 +2/3EV
ISO 1600





Bornean Pygmy Elephant

On one of my trips to Borneo, I was fortunate to observe a group of the endangered Bornean Pygmy Elephants *Elephas maximus borneensis* crossing a tributary of the Kinabatangan River. The calf was reluctant to cross, started to panic and wanted to go back. However, with the encouragement of the experienced mother, it managed to swim across the narrow tributary with the mother behind, guiding it with her trunk.

Nikon D300
600mm VR
1/800
f/4.0
ISO 800

Diademed Sifaka

Diademed Sifaka *Propithecus diadema*, critically endangered, Mantadia NP, Eastern Madagascar. Madagascar is an amazing biodiversity hotspot with 93% of all mammals and 58% of birds endemic. Unfortunately the situation on the ground is not good, with extreme poverty and habitat destruction.

Nikon D3S

70-200mm 2.8 @ 165mm

1/2000

f/5.0

ISO 3200



Silvery Langur

Silvery Langur *Trachypithecus cristatus*, Bako NP, Borneo, Malaysia. During low tide groups of Silvered Langurs often come down from the hills to feed in trees that are not accessible at high tide. Having stalked a group for most of the morning without much action, suddenly half a dozen aggressive long-tailed macaques moved in, and the group of Silvered Langurs cleared out, with this individual escaping straight in my direction.

Nikon D700

300mm f/2.8

1/400

f/5.6 -1/3EV

ISO 800



Lesser Bird of Paradise

Male Lesser Bird of Paradise *Paradisaea minor* displaying, trying to attract female nearby. West Papua, Indonesia.

Nikon D5
600mm VR
1/1000
f/4.0
ISO 3200

**Bornean
Orangutan**

Male Bornean
Orangutan
*Pongo
pygmaeus*,
critically
endangered,
Kinabatangan
River, Borneo,
Malaysia. More
often than not,
orangutans will
avoid eye
contact, but for a
brief moment this
male individual
decided to look
down and pose
for us.

Nikon D3S
300mm f/2.8
1/250
f/6.3
ISO 1600





Polar Bear

Seal River at Hudson Bay, Manitoba, Canada, is one of the best places to observe Polar Bears *Ursus maritimus* while hiking on foot.

Nikon D850
600mm VR
1/1250
f/6.3
ISO 800

Golden-cheeked Gibbon

Endangered Golden-cheeked Gibbon *Nomascus gabriellae*, female, here seen in Cat Tien NP, Vietnam.

Nikon D5
600mm VR + 1.4 Teleconverter
1/200
f/5.6 +1/3EV
ISO 3200



African Paradise-Flycatcher

African Paradise-Flycatcher *Trochocercus cyanomelas* on its nest, Botswana.

Nikon D3S
300mm f/2.8 + 1.4 Teleconverter
1/200
f/8.0 -1EV
ISO 3200



Giant Otter

The endangered Giant River Otter *Pteronura brasiliensis* can eat up to four kg of food per day. Here a Suckermouth Catfish *Hypostomus plecostomus* is being consumed. When they catch their food it is consumed immediately; they grasp the fish firmly between the forepaws and begin eating noisily. Pantanal, Cuiaba River, Brazil.

Nikon D4
300mm
1/1250
f/4.5
ISO 3200



Purple Heron

Near Lore Lindu NP, Sulawesi, Indonesia, I observed this Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* catching a big skink. It was so engrossed in the evening meal that it paid no attention to me in the car just 10 m away. To make a long story short: it was a short and uneven fight.

Nikon D5
600mm VR +1.4 Teleconverter
1/640
f/5.6
ISO 200

Asian Elephants

On 13 November 2016, the day before a "supermoon", two herds of Asian elephants *Elephas maximus* with 29 individuals congregated at Bardia NP, Nepal, as seen here. Subsequently a third group of ten elephants joined the congregation. According to the local guides it was the first time that so many elephants had been seen together in one location in Bardia.

Nikon D5
600mm VR + 1.4
Teleconverter
1/800
f/10
ISO 320



Spotted Owlet

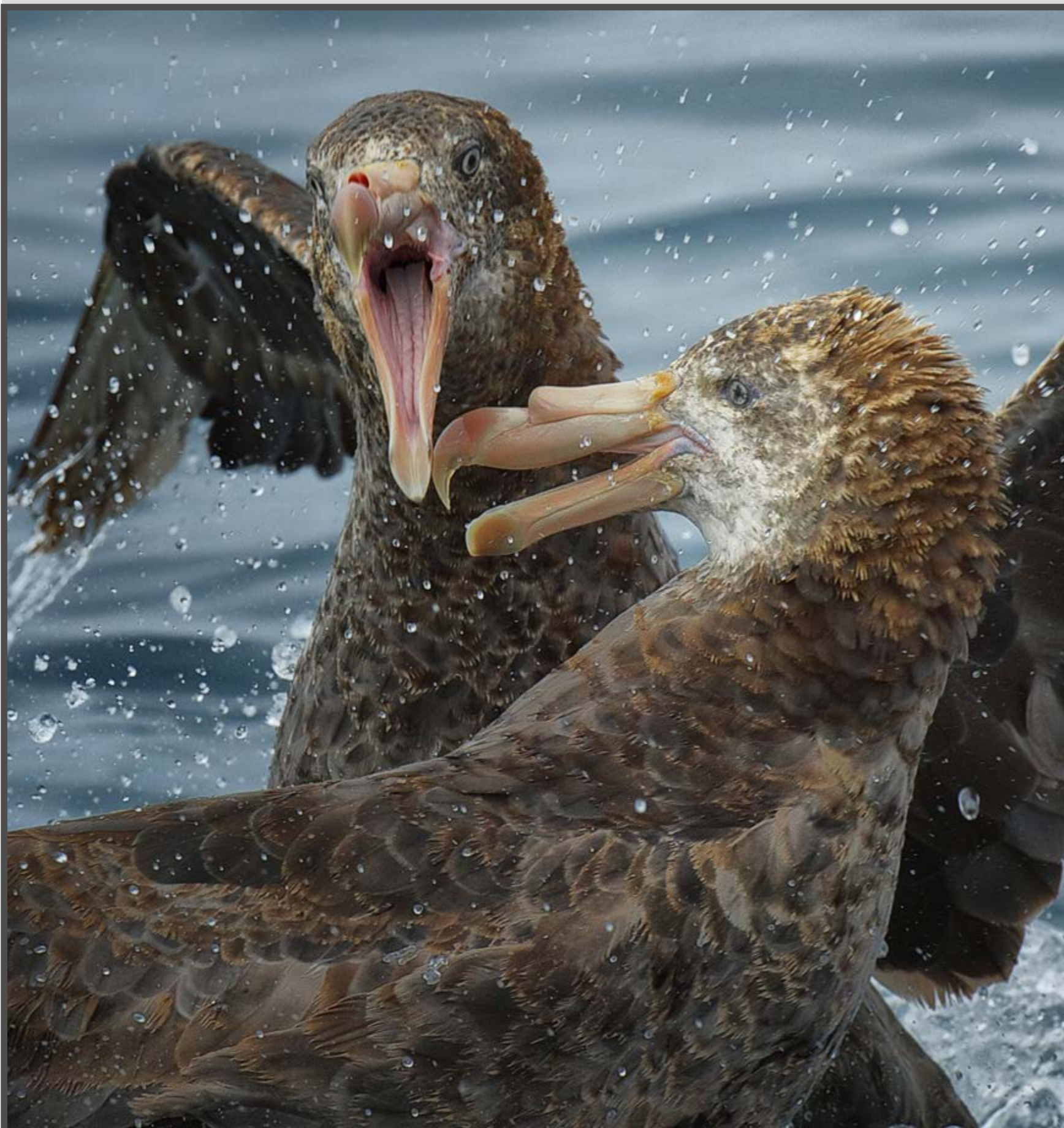
Relaxing Spotted Owlet *Athene brama*
observed outside Bangkok, Thailand.

Nikon D4S
600mm VR + 1.4 Teleconverter
1/1250
f/8.0 +1/3EV
ISO 800

**Proboscis monkey**

The endangered and charismatic Proboscis monkey *Nasalis larvatus* is perhaps Borneo's most important animal flagship species because, unlike the Bornean Orangutan or the Pygmy Elephant, it is easily observable given the high encounter rates in the right locations. They can be regularly seen along the Kinabatangan River, at the Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary in Sabah, and in Bako National Park in Sarawak, Malaysia.

Nikon D3S
600mm VR
1/640
f/10 +1/3EV
ISO 1600



Rufous-necked Hornbill

The Rufous-necked Hornbill *Aceros nipalensis* occurs in the eastern Himalayas, the hill tracts of north-east India, and the east to the Annamite Mountains of Vietnam. It is threatened by habitat loss and hunting, and is listed as Vulnerable.

Nikon D4S
600mm VR
1/400
f/6.3 +1 1/3EV
ISO 3200



Northern Giant Petrels

A pair of fighting Northern Giant Petrels *Macronectes halli*, Kaikoura, New Zealand.

Nikon D4
70-200mm
1/1250
f/10 @ 200mm -2/3EV
ISO 400