

Book & Site Reviews

The Malaysian Biodiversity Information System (MyBIS)

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Malaysia is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which is a landmark international treaty adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and entered into force on 29 December 1993. Malaysia has since developed national biodiversity strategies and platforms like the Malaysian Biodiversity Information System ([MyBIS](https://www.mybis.gov.my/one/)) website, <https://www.mybis.gov.my/one/> to fulfil its obligations under the CBD.

MyBIS is designed to centralise and share data on the country's rich biological diversity. MyBIS.gov.my offers a broad and detailed scope of coverage across Malaysia's natural heritage, focusing on biodiversity, ecosystems, and conservation. If you are passionate about conservation or simply curious about Malaysia's natural heritage, MyBIS is a treasure trove of knowledge.

MyBIS offers a vast catalogue of thousands of species, ranging from microbes and fungi to plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and marine life. It highlights Malaysia's diverse ecosystems—including mangroves, peat swamps, montane forests, and coral reefs—while providing insights into their ecological roles and the threats they face. The portal also includes data on genetic diversity and biological specimens, supporting research in biotechnology, agriculture, and conservation genetics, with links to digitised collections from 12 national centres covering herbarium, zoology, entomology, and marine archives.

MyBIS contributes to tracking threatened species, aligns with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and promotes sustainable use of biological resources through access and benefit-sharing (ABS) frameworks. It also lists over 500 biodiversity experts across Malaysia for collaboration and consultation, and supports environmental campaigns such as the Kempen Penanaman 100 Juta Pokok, which aims to restore forest cover and raise public awareness about nature's role in human well-being.



Figure: Example of a bird species description in MyBIS. Note also the other tabs on taxonomy, gallery, location, publications, etc.

For birdwatchers, MyBIS is a valuable resource offering detailed information on hundreds of bird species found in Malaysia, including scientific and common names, conservation status under national and international frameworks like the IUCN Red List, habitat descriptions, and distribution maps (Figure1). These maps indicate where specific birds have been recorded, helping users plan birding trips to known hotspots or explore under reported areas. The site also features high-quality images to aid in field identification and confirmation of sightings. Taxonomic updates, including the latest revisions and synonyms, keep users informed of changes in scientific naming. Additionally, MyBIS shares event listings and news that may include birdwatching campaigns, citizen science initiatives, and conservation talks, fostering greater engagement within the birding and environmental community.

Example of 2 books or many books birds available for download on MyBIS:



Burung-burung Malaysia: Malaysia Biodiversity Information System (MyBIS)
<https://www.mybis.gov.my/pb/1140>



Burung-burung Malaysia: Malaysia Biodiversity Information System (MyBIS), Volume 2
<https://www.mybis.gov.my/pb/4960>

If you would like to search for more books go to: <https://www.mybis.gov.my/one/references.php>
Then search with either the key word :bird" or "burung" and review the list.

MyBIS.gov.my is a well-designed and accessible portal that caters to a wide range of users, from casual birdwatchers to researchers and policymakers. Its intuitive layout supports both exploratory browsing and focused research, with a clear top navigation bar linking directly to key sections such as Species, Habitats, Publications, News, and Events. The site's powerful search tool allows users to locate species by name, category, or conservation status, making it easy to find profiles of birds like the Malayan Peacock-Pheasant or Rhinoceros Hornbill. Each species page is meticulously organized with tabs for taxonomy, distribution, images, and references, presenting detailed information in a digestible format. The responsive design ensures smooth access on mobile devices, which is especially useful for birders in the field, and the inclusion of some Malay-language content enhances accessibility for local users. As a reference-only platform, MyBIS does not require user registration and does not support interactive features such as sighting submissions or checklist creation.

MyBIS offers a variety of downloadable resources that support birdwatching, conservation, and biodiversity education. These include species fact sheets in PDF format, which summarize taxonomy, conservation status, and distribution—ideal for field reference or presentations. Users can also access national publications such as the *Malaysia Biodiversity Outlook* and the *National Policy on Biological Diversity*, along with reports and guidelines relevant to environmental planning and advocacy. For outreach and awareness, MyBIS provides posters and infographics on bird conservation and ecosystem themes, suitable for campaigns and educational use. Additionally, event materials like webinars, recordings, campaign kits, and workshop handouts are available for initiatives such as Kempen Penanaman 100 Juta Pokok and Biodiversity Day, helping communities engage with Malaysia's biodiversity efforts.

Whether you are a seasoned birder or simply curious about Malaysia's wild wonders, MyBIS offers more than just facts — it is a living gallery of 12,893 photos capturing the rare, the remarkable, and the delightfully bizarre. It is a place where nature tells its story, one image at a time.