



Operation Wallacea 2026 Indonesia - Terrestrial Research Assistant Kit List

INTRODUCTION

This document is a guide to the expedition kit you will need for your expedition based on what you will be doing in Indonesia and the experience of previous expeditions. It is based on a 2 week terrestrial expedition. If your expedition is longer or shorter than 2 weeks you may need to bring larger or lesser quantities of the items listed.

When packing you need to be thinking of the minimum amount you can take whilst remaining comfortable and safe. For Indonesia the internal flights limit is only **20kg of hold luggage** and 7kg of hand luggage (although we have never known them to weigh this, so please put heavy things in your hand luggage), therefore you need to aim for light, compact, durable, quick-drying and versatile equipment. The list below is essential kit – unless stated as optional. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your local Opwall office. The Indonesia Project Leader can also be contacted: Mo Johnson, Indonesia: +62 8124 572 4054 or indonesia@opwall.com/ or the Opwall UK office: +441790 763194 or indonesia@opwall.com

SUMMARY CHECKLIST

Summary Checklist	Tick off once you have gone through each section of your kit list.	Tick Box
Kit list video	Ensure you watch the kit list video that accompanies this pack	
Documentation	What documentation you are required to bring on site.	
Hand luggage	What to include in your hand luggage.	
Core Kit	What core kit to bring for your expedition.	
Clothing essentials	Clothing that you will require on site.	
Terrestrial Kit	What specific kit you will need for the terrestrial part of your expedition.	
Organising, packing & added extras	Top tips for packing and organising all your expedition gear and some added optional extras for you.	
Toiletries	Guide to the toiletries you will require.	
Medical Kit	Essential medical kit for the expedition.	
Helpful Resources	Suggested resources to learn more about the region before your expedition, or to help you with your expedition prep	
Purchasing Advice	Where you can buy expedition equipment.	
Money	What money you need and the easiest way to bring it to site.	
Food	What food to expect on site.	
Washing facilities	What are the washing facilities like on-site.	

DOCUMENTATION

Documentation	You must bring physical paper copies of the following documentation.	Tick Box
Insurance documents	Please bring 2 photocopies of your Travel insurance documents with you. One to hand in at the forest site, and one to keep with you.	
Photocopy of passport	Please bring 2 passport photocopies with you (each on a separate piece of A4 paper) as you will need to hand these in at camp and you should have a spare in-case you lose your passport. Store these in a separate place to your passport.	
Internal Travel Paperwork	Please bring your internal travel paperwork in your hand luggage	
Visa copy	Please bring 2 photocopies with you. One to hand in at the forest site, and one to keep with you.	

HAND LUGGAGE

Hand luggage	Unfortunately, working in such remote locations often involving numerous flights and forms of transport, luggage can be delayed. It is best to be prepared just in case, so here is what we recommend you pack in your hand luggage.	Tick Box
Valuables	Think passport, money, camera, phone etc.	
Personal medicine	Must be in original packaging. Please bring any medication you require personally, such as inhalers, epipens, as well as your malaria tablets	
Change of clothes	Including spare underwear.	
Head torch	Essential for your expedition, so this is not something you want to lose.	
Toiletries	Tooth brush and wet wipes, deodorant.	
Walking boots	Wear these on the plane, reduces space and makes sure you don't lose them.	
Documentation	Listed on other page, these documents need to be in your hand luggage	
Fleece/Jumper	Wear this on the plane, it will keep you warm, and also saves space in your luggage	
Travel adapter & power bank	Pack these so you can keep your devices charged and usable during transit and unexpected delays. Please ensure you have the correct adaptor for Indonesian socket which is a European Style adaptor (2 large round prongs).	

CORE KIT

Core kit	Remember you only have 20kg allowance for your internal flights	Tick Box
Rucksack	We recommend at least 50L capacity with good back support and a waistband. Need to fit you well and be comfortable as you will need to carry this bag on a trek lasting up to 2hrs. Hold alls and suitcases are not suitable and will not be permitted in the forest.	
Rucksack waterproof cover & waterproof liner bag	It can rain quite heavily in Indonesia, and you will be carrying your bag to camp. A cover will help to keep your kit dry. The pack ideally needs to have a waterproof liner/bag into which everything is packed inside (a water-proof cover helps keep a bag looking clean, but a large garbage bag into which everything is packed and can be sealed inside is the easiest solution for keeping everything dry).	
Day bag/Small rucksack	20-30L. Used for your surveys to carry your water and equipment, so ensure a comfortable fit. Use this as your hand luggage on flights. Waterproof cover recommended.	
Sleeping Bag and/or liner or cotton sheet	Lightweight, 1-2 seasons. A light sleeping bag is recommended – the temperature rarely drops below about 20 degrees. You may also want to bring a sleeping bag liner as in warmer conditions these can be more comfortable and they are very light.	
Water bottle and/or platypus	You must have the capacity to carry at least 2L of water with you (can be in multiple containers if needed). A combination of leak-proof plastic bottles (total capacity 2 litres) is imperative. The 'hydration systems' on the market (Platypus, camelback, Ortleib) have the advantage of packing flat when not in use.	
Head Torch	Absolutely essential as there is no electricity at night and you will need this for the night surveys. Night surveys require strong headlamps, a red light setting will be less attractive to insects and is needed for the bat surveys. It is highly recommended that you bring a head torch that has a rechargeable lithium battery rather than single use batteries. Batteries are not available to purchase or dispose of on-site, you must take any used ones home with you.	
Waterproof jacket/poncho	You only need a very lightweight waterproof jacket or poncho, as it is very humid. Pac-a-mac or similar would be ideal as it they pack down very small. Heavyweight Gore-Tex raincoats are pointless – they are hot and may get snagged and torn. Some people would rather not worry about trying to keep dry in the forest because it rains so much and it is almost impossible to stay dry, however if it's raining during the night and you need to go the bathroom - you may regret not bringing anything.	
Padlock	Useful for locking your pack.	
Travel towel/Sarong	Don't bring a big thick towel as it won't dry quickly enough.	
Watch with alarm	To wake yourself up early for surveys. Doesn't have to be expensive.	
Notebook and pencil	Essential for taking notes during lectures!	

CLOTHING

The most important thing to remember is that you **WILL BE OUT IN THE RAIN** . It is a rain forest and it rains regularly. Surveys don't stop unless the rain is so heavy that it becomes hazardous. Therefore, you should bring clothes that you don't mind getting wet, muddy and stained! Synthetic quick dry fabrics are essential for surveys as it is very humid in the rainforest and clothes do not dry well. Light colours (not white) are recommended as they don't retain the heat. You will need to bring separate clothes for wearing in camp which stay in camp and stay dry, so that you always have something to change in to when you return from survey. You should also be prepared to put on wet clothes from the day before to go out on survey as it is not easy to dry things in the forest, in fact sometimes clothes dry quicker from you wearing them than hanging them up!

It is a good idea to keep one set of clothing clean for your flights to and from country, this makes your travel and the people around you more comfortable. Due to cultural sensitivities, you must wear clothing that covers your shoulders (no vest tops) and knees (long trousers, knee-length shorts, or sarong/skirt).

Remember you need to travel light so wear your hiking boots onto the airplane to keep the weight of your pack down, and then you can kick them off during the flight for comfort. Label your baggage, clothes and kit; there are many volunteers, and some may have the same or similar items to you. Unfortunately valuables are very occasionally at risk, so please only take what is vital.

Clothing	We have included rough quantities for each item but please feel free to bring more or less, it's personal preference and up to you...as long as it fits!	Tick Box
T-shirts (3-6)	Loose fitting is best, must cover shoulders. Quick drying material best for surveys. Even split between camp clothes and survey (i.e. 2-3 of each).	
Long sleeved shirts (3)	Lightweight. For covering up in the evenings. Essential for avoiding insect bites (especially on evening surveys such as bats). Button up shirts are a good option to be worn on surveys to protect your arms.	
Lightweight long trekking trousers/pants (2-3)	These should be lightweight and loose fitting. You will get very muddy, so quick drying material is best. Trousers that zip off at the knee are a good idea, as they can be turned into shorts for the river crossings, but you can also just roll your trousers up if you wish. Cotton trousers are not suitable for trekking.	
Long Shorts (2)	Lightweight and loose fitting, quick dry is best. Must cover the knee, or stop just above. For camp wear only – shorts are not permitted on survey for safety reasons	
Nightwear/Pyjamas	Accommodation is shared so bring something comfortable and appropriate to sleep in.	
Underwear and bras	Please bring at least 2 weeks' worth of underwear. This should be comfortable fitting. We recommend sports bras, as these will be more comfortable when trekking.	
Hiking socks x 6 pairs	Enough for 1 week. It is very important to keep your feet dry, so a clean pair of hiking socks will be needed daily. You will be able to hand wash these on site, but if you don't wish to then bring more.	
Hat or Bandana	Useful to protect you from the sun.	
Sunglasses	A good pair are useful to protect your eyes from the sun and glare reflected from water in the marine site and when travelling on boats.	
Flip-Flops (camp shoes)	It is absolutely essential that you change into dry footwear when returning to camp after survey. A pair of cheap flip-flops or similar are ideal, or an old pair of trainers to cover for insects.	
Swimwear	For river bathing, board shorts that go to the knee are compulsory for all and girls will need a top (rash vest or t-shirt) that covers the shoulders as well.	

TERRESTRIAL-SPECIFIC KIT

Terrestrial only	Below you will find equipment specific to the terrestrial portion of your expedition.	Tick Box
Hiking boots/Jungle boots or Wellington/Rubber Boots	For trekking, everyday. It is your decision whether you take hiking boots or wellies, but you do not need both. They need to be waterproof and quick drying, as the forest can be very wet and muddy. They also need to have a good grip. Walking boots provide considerably better ankle support but will not dry at any point if it rains. Wellies are more reliable to keep water out and dry quicker but offer less support. You will likely have wet feet at somepoint on survey so whichever option you go with you'll have to accept that.	
Walking Gaiters (Optional)	As mentioned, it can be very wet and muddy in the forest. Gaiters can help to keep your boots and the bottom of your trousers dry if you're wearing hiking boots. Please note these are optional and not a requirement.	
Hiking Sandals	For river crossings and are essential. Must have a good grip and fit your feet well. TEVA style sandals are recommended. Flip flops are NOT suitable for river crossings.	

ORGANISING, PACKING & ADDED EXTRAS

Organising, packing & added extras	Top tips for packing and organising all your expedition gear and some added optional extras for you. Label your baggage, clothes and kit; there are many volunteers, and some may have the same or similar items to you.	Tick Box
Waterproof plastic/zip lock bags/dry bag/bin liners	These are very useful to keep the water out of your kit and clothes and also for packing - dry bags can be used to compress clothes and save space. You can line your rucksack with a bin/garbage bag and have smaller bags for clothes and items like your camera.	
Camera	You will have lots of opportunities to take pictures but please bring a waterproof carrying case/bag for the camera. You will have lots of opportunities to take pictures so if you have a GoPro or waterproof camera, consider bringing this with you. Please do not bring a drone, without the correct license from the Indonesian Government you could face a penalty fine.	
Binoculars	These are really useful to see much of the wildlife in the forest. 8x42 are the best to bring but any you may have at home will suffice.	
Earphones/cards/book	Transfers can be long so bring something to keep yourself entertained.	
Language/phrase book	This is a recommendation stressed by previous volunteers. Also worth noting many translating apps allow you to download language packs you can use offline	
Folding fan	You will be glad you brought one when the midday heat hits.	
Handheld mirror	You will have no access to mirrors in the jungle so it may be useful to bring one.	
Earplugs/eye mask	If you are someone that generally struggles to sleep, you may find that the lively sounds of the jungle or people walking by with their torches on keeps you awake. Also useful for long journeys!	
Caribiner	Can be used to hang items up inside the tents as there are no hooks or shelves. Keeping things off the ground may be helpful to prevent damp	
Camping Lamp	The army style tents are dark when the power is not on – even during the day so a lamp can be helpful for lighting a wider area than your head-torch. Although you won't be spending much time in your tent!	
Small tupperware box with a good seal	To keep any snacks in to prevent wildlife from helping themselves	
Nail clippers/tweezers	If you are staying in camp for a long amount of time these will be very useful.	
2-3 Bandanas or cotton handkerchiefs	To be used as 'sweat rags' to wipe your face while on jungle walks. It is very humid and sweaty!	
Vitamin/mineral supplements	The diet is very basic in Indonesia, so these can be a good idea.	
Snacks & condiments	Cereal bars, protein bars or things to spice up your meals!	

TOILETRIES

Toiletries	Good tip to travelling light is to get into small groups to combine things like toiletries to split the load of shampoo and sun block for example so you don't bring a bottle each.	Tick Box
Toiletries bag	How are you storing these	
Toothbrush & Toothpaste	Avoid bringing an electric toothbrush as you may struggle to charge it in the forest. We would recommend bringing a case to keep it clean.	
Deodorant/anti-perspirant	You will sweat but nice to be fresh after washing. Avoid spray cans and take roll-on instead.	
Hair and Body Wash	Biodegradable if possible, small travel sizes or bars rather than liquids to save space (make sure you have a tin if you have bars)	
Insect repellent	Malaria and dengue do occur in SE Sulawesi. 'Mosi-Guard' and 'Skin so soft' by Avon are effective, environmentally friendly insect repellents that do not contain DEET. DEET products are not recommended in the forest so we can minimise our impact on the environment and you will not be able to handle any animals on surveys if wearing this. See: www.alternativeinsectrepellent.co.uk/ .	
Talcum powder/anti-fungal powder	It is important to keep your feet dry, so it is recommended to use antifungal powder at the end of each survey and after washing. A small tube of anti-fungal cream and some talcum powder may help to dry feet at the end of each day and prevent any issues.	

Sun cream	Factor 30, minimum, is recommended. Please ensure it is a coral friendly sun-block if you intend to use it in the water.	
Sanitary towels/tampons	Please note, tampons are not available in Indonesia. Bring some even if you are not expecting to use them as both travel and the tropical climate can affect your menstrual cycle.	
Laundry Soap	You can clean clothes in the river or using buckets if needed, please make sure you have biodegradable soap.	
Any other toiletries you would normally use		

PERSONAL MEDICAL KIT

Staff will be carrying medical kits and the medical provision on site is excellent. However, there are some items listed below you will also need to carry yourself. It is essential that you bring your own basic medical kit.

Personal Medical Kit	The medical provision on site is excellent and there are medics based at all camps. However, there are some items listed below you should carry yourself (as appropriate).	Tick Box
Antihistamine tablets	For insect bites. It's useful if you can bring both drowsy and non drowsy	
Antihistamine/Hydrocortisone cream	Bite/sting cream. Can be very beneficial for reducing itching and swelling of insect bites.	
Paracetamol/aspirin	For headaches etc.	
Ibuprofen	For swelling etc.	
Rehydration salts	Essential! Rehydration salts kept in camp do not have the most appetising taste so please bring your own. You will be sweating a lot and losing fluids. Because of this, we recommend you take a dosage of rehydration salts every day. Don't forget to read the correct dosage to ensure you are absorbing the salts correctly	
Antiseptic wipes	Cleaning cuts or grazes	
Plasters (assorted sizes)	May also be worth adding a couple of blister plasters as well as normal ones.	
Personal Medication	It is vital that you bring any prescribed medications.	
Vitamins	If you normally take these.	
Malaria Tablets	Please seek your doctors advice on malaria prophylaxis.	
Sea/travel sickness tablets	The roads on Buton can be bumpy, and the boat journey there can be rough.	

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Helpful Resources	Below you will find a selection of helpful resources for your expedition	Tick Box
Top Eco-Friendly Kit Ideas	https://www.opwall.com/article/top-eco-friendly-kit-ideas/	
Beginner Fieldwork Equipment	https://www.opwall.com/article/beginner-fieldwork-equipment/	
What Equipment to Borrow or Buy	https://www.opwall.com/article/the-festive-guide-to-gearing-up-for-your-expedition/	
Top 10 Must Have Items!	https://www.opwall.com/article/lets-find-out-what-you-couldnt-live-without/	
Ecological Apps to Download	https://www.opwall.com/article/ecological-apps-so-you-can-identify-appsolutely-everything/	
BBC Documentaries	BBC Planet Earth, Episode 8: Jungles Documentary BBC Life of Mammals, Episode 8: Tree Dwellers	
Malay Archipelago	by Alfred Russel Wallace gives an excellent background to the area of Indonesia now known as the Wallacea region. This book which was published in the 1850's can be obtained from Pisces Conservation -book format for £14-40 if you contact them directly (tel +44 (0)1590 674000 or emailpisces@irchouse.demon.co.uk)	
A Guide to the Birds of Wallacea: Sulawesi, the Moluccas and Lesser Sunda islands, Indonesia	by Brian J Coates and K.D Bishop is the best bird guide. This book is very expensive, so this is certainly not a compulsory purchase.	
Merlin Bird ID app	We strongly recommend that you download the Merlin Bird ID app and install the Sulawesi pack before arriving in Indonesia. We will show you how to use it on arrival and it will greatly help with the bird point count surveys. Download on the App Store or Google Play	

Purchasing Advice

You may find that you have suitable gear already, so don't feel you have to buy everything new. Shop around as there are some really great deals out there and some items you may even be able to borrow from friends or relatives of a school outdoors or camping club. Never be afraid to buy second hand from places like vinted.

Please check the fundraising resources library (Password: wallacea81) for discount codes and a copy of the Sponsorship Support Letter to download for purchasing any equipment in person.

Below are some retailers we recommend checking out for great gear and helpful advice:

Go Outdoors (UK)	gooutdoors.co.uk - Lot's of good brands and discounts for outdoor gear (wellies and boots!)	
Mountain Warehouse (UK)	mountainwarehouse.com - good entry level gear at cheap prices - also occasionally has great sales/deals	
Decathlon (UK/EU)	Decathlon.co.uk - some of the cheapest outdoor gear out there	
Regatta/Craghoppers (UK)	craghoppers.com or outlet stores - can have a great sales, really high quality tropical equipment	
Back Country Gear (US)	backcountrygear.com - For outdoor clothing and equipment	
US Outdoor (US)	usoutdoor.com - For outdoor clothing and equipment	
Naturally Organic (NZ)	naturallyorganic.co.nz - Organic shampoos, body washes, sun lotion	
Bivouac (NZ)	bivouac.co.nz - Outdoor clothing and equipment	
Ecostore (NZ)	ecostoredirect.co.nz - Ecofriendly shampoos and body washes	

MONEY

Some spending money is needed to purchase meals during the internal travel period before and after the expedition.

The meals you will need to purchase yourself are outlined in the internal travel package info provided. We recommend budgeting 5-10 pounds sterling per meal and you will likely need to purchase between 4 and 6 meals depending on your exact travel itinerary.

If your hold luggage weights more than 20kgs you will be asked to pay for any extra kgs in IDR Cash at the airport when you check in. The cost for extra luggage is approx. GBP5/ UDS6.50/ AUD10 per kilogram extra, for each leg of the journey! So if you are 1kg over take that amount and multiply by two for your outbound and homeward bound journey.

The local Indonesian currency is Rupiah, it is essential that you bring some to use on site as other currencies are not accepted. Changing money to Rupiah may be possible in your home country, and if so this is recommended. If this is not possible, then you can change money at Jakarta or Bali international airport, or withdraw Rupiah from ATMs whilst in Jakarta, Bali, Makassar, or Kendari. Although you are likely to be on a tight travel schedule and so this may not be possible. Once you get to Buton Island there will be no way to exchange money, and no other currency is accepted apart from Indonesian Rupiah so ensure to plan ahead.

FOOD

Once you are on the expedition you will be provided with 3 meals per day and an afternoon snack is also provided.

If you would like to have extra snacks outside of this you are welcome to bring snack bars or protein bars with you.

Every meal will include rice, as this is a staple in Indonesia. The diet is largely carbohydrate based. There is no meat or fish at the forest site. There is protein source in every meal in the form of beans, tofu and tempe, as well as eggs, but you may wish to bring an additional source of protein with you. There is a vegetable dish with every meal, and fruit is served when possible.

The water is boiled over the fire in order to sterilize it for drinking. This does mean it can have a slightly smoky taste that is not to everyone's liking, so you may wish to bring something to add some flavour, such as flavour sachets, or concentrates. However, this is optional.

WASHING FACILITIES

You will be able to wash clothes in the river/small bucket in the forest if you take your own biodegradable laundry soap. It is a good idea to keep one set of clothing clean for your flights to and from country, this makes your travel and the people around you more comfortable.