

Darren Craig, from Aberdeen joined the Borneo 2006 expedition as Photographer.

Before Raleigh I was working for the Royal Bank of Scotland as a Technical Team Leader for software development. I was getting stuck in a rut and I'd wanted to travel for years. I was attracted to Raleigh as I wanted to do something a bit different, rather than just ticking off countries. Other voluntary organisations seemed really expensive and not to offer the same opportunities as Raleigh.

My main responsibilities as expedition photographer were to capture images which portray Raleigh life and experiences. As well as project photographs I was responsible for creating the end of expedition slideshow for participants and local sponsors, selecting the images and working on layout with the Communications Officer, providing specific images for PR, press and sponsors, backing up participants pictures, and organising a small exhibition at the end of the slideshow.

I'd get up at the crack of dawn or before, eat porridge, go out with my camera ready to catch whatever's going on, but working also as part of the project team, so that could be anything from building, to group work, to dealing with medical issues and so on.

I would recommend joining Raleigh as a staff volunteer because you get so many different experiences in such a short space of time – half of which you never thought you'd get. You do a lot of things in the local area which you wouldn't normally have the chance to do as a regular tourist. You get to mix with a (mostly!) really good bunch of people from all areas and backgrounds. I also enjoyed the moments you get with locals and really getting immersed in the local culture on some sites or alternatively being quite remote in the rainforests surrounded by nature.

The other things that really affect me positively post-Raleigh is the odd email I get from a Malaysian local informing me of her progress, and thanking me for my help during the trip. It's really encouraging, and to be honest, how often do you get stuff like that in a normal job?

