



Hitting it on the nose

Action is needed to prevent the highly unique and rare proboscis monkey from leaping into extinction

TEXT BY NORFARHANA MAZLAN & MADINAH ADRUS

IMAGES BY MADINAH ADRUS & HAFEZ MT

The proboscis monkey (*Nasalis larvatus*) has become an important flagship species for conservation in Malaysian Borneo, alongside the orangutan (Credit: Muhammad Khairulanam Zakaria/Unimas)

IN THIS era of globalisation, there is a wide gulf between man's love of technology and modernity, and his love for the natural world. An imbalance between economic pursuits that drive illegal hunting, logging and the expansion of plantations, and the conservation of our natural heritage. And even when conservationists get into gear, highlighting the panda as the symbol of species conservation, on the other side of the divide are the more precious species found in Malaysia that are under threat owing to lack of exposure.

We take in this case the proboscis monkey, the mascot for Visit Malaysia Year 2014 and the face of ecotourism. A species endemic to Borneo, *Nasalis larvatus* has become an important flagship species for conservation in Malaysian Borneo, alongside the orangutan. Among a total of 22 species of primates in Malaysia, the proboscis monkey is one with a unique characteristic – that bulbous nose, which has led to it being called long-nosed monkey.