

BACKGROUND

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE: DISCOVERING THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE SON TRA PENINSULA



Our resort, in the Son Tra nature reserve, is home to many wildlife and plant species

The InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort's location in the heart of the pristine Son Tra National Park means that you'll share your vacation with some unusual natural neighbours. Our resort provides a safe haven for rare and endangered species with our relaxed pace of life, lush tropical gardens and onsite team trained in wildlife awareness combining to create an environment loved by birds, butterflies and animals alike. During your stay you can join a Nature Tour with our Resident Zoologist Anthony Barker to see some of the plants and animals that make the peninsula their home, including the Red-Shanked Douc Langur. Keep your eyes open, keep noise to a minimum and look up from time to time. You might be surprised to see who's watching you from the treetops.

Read on to learn about three of our most popular neighbours in nature.

The Fashionista of the Forest – the Red-Shanked Douc Langur

Some say they look like they're wearing scarlet trousers, others long red socks, but whichever it is, our Red-Shanked Douc Langur friends always look nothing short of striking. And they're one of our rarest resident species. Of only around 2,000 left in the wild, 1,500 of them make the Son Tra Peninsula home and are regular visitors to our resort. They're folivores, meaning that their diet is made up almost entirely of leaves, and they regularly come to nibble on the

young leaves of our Tropical Almond trees. Mornings and evenings are the best times to catch a glimpse as they spend long hours napping in the middle of the day. In spite of their bright red legs they're quite easy to miss. Look up, but also look down as you stroll along the pathways – broken sticks and leaves on the ground are a good indication that a Douc Langur has been in the area recently. They're shy and rather silent monkeys, and we have a feeling they may enjoy watching us as much as we enjoy watching the buggies driving by and our guests strolling through the resort.

Underneath the Banyan Tree

Banyan trees have long been significant in Vietnamese culture for the shade they provide, their complex beauty and the belief that there's a banyan tree on the moon, celebrated in local folklore during the Mid-Autumn Festival. The Son Tra Peninsula is home to 46 different species. They're the largest trees in the world in terms of diameter, and given enough space they'll just keep growing. As they grow wider, aerial roots drop down from the branches to the floor, eventually becoming supporting trunks that allow the tree to keep spreading outwards. You can find a beautiful banyan within the resort and, at only 20 years old, it's already extraordinarily large. But to see a tree with a few more centuries of history, head out on a guided 5km hike to visit the great old banyan tree that's said to be over 1,000 years old. At first glance you might think it's a whole forest, but look up and you'll see it's one large canopy system supported by aerial roots that have turned into 20 different trunks over the centuries. So when they say you can't see the forest for the trees, in this case that's just because you're only looking at one, albeit huge, banyan tree.

Here Comes the Sunbird

If you see a small flash of colour darting past, you may have spotted one of our prettiest avian residents. Try and follow its path with your eyes. You'll often see them heading in the direction of flowers where they like to sit and sip nectar with their long, curved beaks. Often mistaken for hummingbirds, these colourful little birds are sunbirds, and a few different types make the Son Tra Peninsula their home. As with most bird species it's the male who is more colourful, and the more nutrients they eat the more colourful they get. At our resort keep an eye out for the Olive-Backed Sunbird which looks like it's wearing a rather spectacular blue cravat above its yellow belly, and the Crimson Sunbird who appears to wear a scarlet cape with an aquamarine crown on top of its head. For a closer look, head to our Coral Tree and you're likely to see plenty of colourful sunbirds treating it as one big nectar-filled buffet.

The InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort is committed to protecting Son Tra's unique biodiversity to ensure that critically endangered species can be seen by future generations. Providing a safe haven for the flora and fauna that lies within our resort is just one of our contributions. Connect with our Zoologist to learn more about how you can help to protect the rare flora and fauna of the region.



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