

# Up close and personal with nature on jungle expedition

Climber comes face-to-face with one of the world's deadliest snakes during mountain challenge



Lee Farmer has his hands full with a harmless millipede in the Borneo's Crocker mountain range

GIANT, venomous centipedes, a brush with a deadly krait snake and chats with former headhunters – it's a tough life being a Woolton Hill land agent.

In fact, Lee Farmer was taking time out for yet another hair-raising adventure, this time spending four weeks in Borneo's Crocker mountain range, where he scaled its second highest mountain, Kinabalu.

Previously the 37-year-old adventurer has conquered Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and Elbrus in Russia, before scaling Everest for charity last year.

He has just returned from

Report by John Garvey

his month-long jaunt, where he spent eight days trekking through the jungle before tackling Mount Kinabalu.

It was there that he had some interesting encounters, including the lively meeting with the krait snake.

The krait is one of the world's deadliest snakes and kills by paralysing its victims who become unable to breathe.

Mr Farmer said: "I was hunting in the jungle one night and went to catch what I thought was an edible frog. Instead I was confronted by a snake.

"I moved one way and the snake went the other. I found out later that if bitten, I'd have had less than four hours to live."

Other hazards included poisonous, 10-inch long centipedes.

But Mr Farmer's said his most fascinating encounter was with members of the native Dusun tribe, who were known to indulge in headhunting.

Headhunting was the practise of removing, displaying, and in some cases preserving human heads among some tribal cultures.

It is no longer practised but Mr Farmer said: "I was fascinated by this rather

gruesome act and was shown how to use a blow pipe and darts, construct and set traps for game and was taken to a sacred area of the jungle by a bobohizan, or priestess, which used to be used as part of the ceremony related to headhunting."

The high point of Mr Farmer's trek was reaching the summit of Mt Kinabalu. At 4,095 metres, it is the highest peak between the Himalayas and New Guinea.

He plans to return to Mount Kilimanjaro in September to lead a group up the difficult Western Breach route.