



Forest Chatter



Issue 25 | October 2018

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From the President...

BOS Foundation Indonesia has had another amazing year with over 360 orangutans released back into the wild.

Our major contribution from BOS Australia this year, thanks to your donations and our volunteers, was to design, install and commission a solar power system for the Special Care Unit (SCU) at Samboja Lestari. It comprised 60 panels and 7.5KW of batteries and cost US\$69,601. Since the installation there has been a continual, clean and free supply of 100% of the energy requirements of the SCU and its population of 43 orangutans. This has replaced a diesel generator and saved ongoing fuel and maintenance costs.

In addition, with your donations we paid for the overhaul of the two major generators, provided power stabilisers, and purchased and installed a bore at SCU for regular wash-down water supply.

These infrastructure programs reduce the running costs of the facilities as well as contribute to orangutan welfare.

We also provided much needed funds for food and salaries for staff caring for orangutans at Samboja Lestari in East Kalimantan.

Our major plans for 2018/19 include:

- complete the evaluation of the Solar Power grid for the entire Samboja Lestari complex, obtain a firm quote, find funding and commence construction
- launch volunteer program at Samboja Lestari
- increase major donor funding focus.

We thank you for your support over the last year and are excited to be working on your behalf to help our gorgeous red cousins.

Tony Gilding, President

2018 AGM

The 2018 BOS Australia AGM was held at The RAN Sailing Club, Darling Point, NSW, on 15 October 2018.

All financial and life members of BOS Australia were invited to attend the AGM and exercise their vote on matters such as the composition of the committee, and the direction of BOSA and our work to save orangutans.

BOS Australia's committee consists entirely of volunteers. All positions were opened for election at the AGM; five office bearer positions and three ordinary committee member positions.

The BOS Australian 2018/19 committee, elected unopposed, is as follows:

President: Tony Gilding

Vice President: Louise Grossfeldt

Treasurer: Susan Griffiths

Secretary: Lauren Jenkins

Ordinary committee members:

Cathy Heawood

Kerin Welford

Volunteer enrichment trips

Join us and make a real difference to the lives of orangutans.

As an Orangutan Program Volunteer, you will be a key part of the enrichment program in Borneo. Enrichment programs are vital for captive orangutans as they teach them how to forage for food, build, modify and use tools, increase agility and develop the skills needed to survive in the wild.

What's included?

- 14 days at Samboja Lodge
- Be part of a small team making enrichment items for orangutans
- Visit local markets and work with the sun bears
- All meals
- Airport transfers

Costs per person

- Flights: approx. A\$1000
- Lodge: approx. A\$1000 twin share, standard room
- Donation/fundraise: A\$1000 (minimum) that directly supports the orangutans

Departure dates

- 1–14 December 2018
- 5–18 January 2019
- 19 January–1 February 2019
- 2–15 February 2019
- 16 February–1 March 2019
- 2–15 March 2019
- 16–29 March 2019

Register or get more information

<https://bit.ly/2N4TBQA>

Benefits of membership

Financial membership of BOS Australia keeps you in touch with the world of the orangutan through our newsletter, *Forest Chatter*, and, importantly, gives you a voice concerning what happens to the orangutans in our care.

Membership gives you a voting right at the next BOS Australia AGM so you can help decide how we operate the organisation for the orangutans.

Become a member today!

Single membership \$45, family membership \$75

<https://bit.ly/2xFw2ZE>



Freedom, at last

August was a busy month for the BOS Foundation in Borneo with the release of 16 more orangutans.

Release 1

On 14 August we returned 10 more orangutans to the natural forests of the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park (TNBBBR), Central Kalimantan.

The 10 released orangutans included three males (Semilar, Paku and Nody) and seven females (Ping, Vina, Dina, Nikata, Asapa, Eropa and Hanyu) ranging in age from 13–16 years. They embarked on a 10–12-hour journey over land and via river from Nyaru Menteng to predetermined release points in the TNBBBR.

This was the 24th release of the Central Kalimantan Orangutan Reintroduction Program and brings the total population of rehabilitated orangutans reintroduced to the TNBBBR to 102, since the first release to this national park two years ago.

Read more about our 100th release in 'Nody's journey home' on the next page.

Release 2

On 28 August 2018, the BOS Foundation released six more orangutans from the Samboja Lestari Rehabilitation and Reintroduction Centre to the Kehje Sewen Forest, in East Kalimantan.

Two separate groups were dispatched for this release. The first group departed on 27 August from Samboja Lestari and included four male orangutans (Mads, Riva, Bieber and Restu), while the second group

left the next day from pre-release Juq Kehje Swen Island in Muara Wahau and included two females (Josta and Menur).

After sedating the first group of release candidates, our team carefully moved each orangutan into a transport cage and then loaded them onto 4x4 vehicles. The team departed from Samboja Lestari and headed to Dermaga 67, located approximately 200 metres from the banks of the Telen River and the last point accessible by vehicle. The first departure group travelled for 17 hours, making stops every two hours to check on the orangutans and provide them with food and water.

On the morning of 28 August, the second group – carrying release candidates Josta and Menur – departed from Juq Kehje Swen Island and travelled for three hours to Dermaga 67.

Once the team arrived, the transport cages were carried down to the river bank and transported across to the other side by small boat. After reaching the other side, the cages were then loaded onto the utility vehicles and carried to release points in the southern part of the Kehje Sewen Forest.

Both teams had made it to the predetermined release location by around noon, and all six orangutans were finally released back to their forest home.

As the youngest among the candidates, Restu's cage was opened first. He slowly exited the cage and headed toward a tree

directly opposite the doorway, but then grabbed hold of some liana instead. After climbing up a bit, he stopped to sit and look around. He scanned his new surroundings with a somewhat bewildered look on his face, as though not quite believing he had returned to the forest. He then continued to climb up, and happily settled in the forest canopy.

After Restu had been safely released, it was then Riva's turn. Unlike Restu, Riva was not confused at all. He made a beeline for the nearest tree and climbed straight up into the forest canopy. There, he took a well-earned rest on a comfortable branch after his long and tiring journey. Without wasting time, the four remaining orangutans were also released to the forest. All four were soon climbing the trees and enjoying their newfound freedom.

After the last transport cage was opened, the Post-Release Monitoring (PRM) team quickly took over, carefully observing and documenting the released orangutans' activities. The PRM team will conduct a 30-day, nest-to-nest monitoring period to ensure all six orangutans are adapting well to their new lives in the forest.

With the release of these six orangutans, the BOS Foundation has thus far released 97 orangutans to the Kehje Sewen Forest since 2012. This brings the total number of orangutans released by the BOS Foundation to natural habitats to 374, from both Samboja Lestari and Nyaru Menteng Rehabilitation Centres.

Nody's journey home

If you ever wondered whether your donation dollars actually go to helping orangutans, this good news story will make your heart swell.

So many times we bring you terrible stories of frightened, traumatised and orphaned orangutans. We tell you about habitat destruction and threats from fires and humans.

So it is with absolute joy that we can tell you about Nody's remarkable road to freedom.

Nody's journey with BOSA started 11 years ago, but in August he became our 100th orangutan to be released to the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park.

Nody arrived at our rehabilitation sanctuary in November 2007 as a tiny two-year old baby after his mother was killed.

Nody was rescued from a palm-oil worker in Tumbang Samba Village, Katingan, Central Kalimantan, who had allegedly kept him in a cramped cage, poked and prodded, and put on display for the enjoyment of others. When he arrived at BOS Foundation's Nyaru Menteng Orangutan Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre this tiny orphan weighed only 3.3kgs and was suffering from hypothermia.

Miraculously, Nody managed to pass quarantine and then went on to complete every stage of Forest School.

With the help of generous supporters, Nody was adopted as a baby through our adoption program and over the past 11 years he has grown into a strong, independent orangutan.

On 25 March 2014, he was moved to Palas Island to begin the pre-release stage of rehabilitation. There, Nody diligently honed his forest skills and grew to be an avid explorer who firmly disliked human presence.

Nody is now 13 years old and weighs 32.9kgs. He has a stocky build and beard, and is growing cheek pads. With a sound skillset and developed natural behaviours, Nody is now living as a wild orangutan in his new home, the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park.

Seeing Nody start his life of freedom back in his jungle home is an experience one can never forget.

He was rescued, rehabilitated and finally returned to the wild because of you, our generous supporters.

Why adopt an orangutan?

By adopting one of our orangutans, you can take comfort in knowing that they are being cared for around-the-clock. Our dedicated 'nannies' teach them what they need to know for when it's time to release them back to the wild, in places not threatened by people.

<https://bit.ly/2QXBfUO>



The high price of freedom

This year, generous supporters like you have helped release 48 orangutans back into protected forests. They are now safe and free.

But, there are still 14 incredible orangutans that need releasing before the end of 2018.

It costs approximately A\$10,000 to release just one orangutan back into the wild.

We often show you the best part of the release, when the orangutan leaps from his or her cage and quickly ascends into the forest

trees. However there are immense planning, preparation and costs that contribute to the release of a rehabilitated orangutan, including:

- vet supplies and consumables to perform a pre-release medical examination
- fuel for the vehicles that travel hundreds of kilometres to the release site
- transportation of the cages and personnel to carry the orangutans by foot

- monthly post-release patrols and monitoring to ensure positive reintroduction and adaptation for the orangutans.

With your help we can ensure these 14 orangutans waiting for their freedom, have the best change of life they deserve.

With your help we can get it done before the end of the year.

<https://bit.ly/2QXBfUO>



Fire season in Borneo

It's fire season again in Borneo and our teams have already been battling a number of blazes, the largest since the devastating forest fires of 2015.

Staff from Central Kalimantan's Mawas Conservation Program were once again on the front line, facing intense heat in an attempt to gain control over the raging fires.

After three challenging days in July, our team was finally able to neutralise the raging fire, which stopped just 300m from Camp Release. Our post-fire assessment team determined that as much as 12,926 hectares (about 13,000 soccer fields) of peat forest was burned.

In August another forest fire started in the working area of BOS Foundation's Mawas Conservation Program. Three BOS Foundation monitoring team members detected smoke just before midday, again near

Camp Release. A team of 10 from the Mawas Conservation Program worked hard to eventually put out the fire that day.

Jamartin Sihite, CEO of the BOS Foundation, said; "From the evidence our team has gathered, we suspect this fire did not start on its own. We don't know who did it, but we found solid proof of extensive law violation in this area. This situation highlights the need for tighter supervision and tougher law enforcement within the region. All parties need to clearly understand that the peat swamp forest areas we have here are protected, and nobody is permitted to cut them down or burn them."

It has been estimated that this dry season might last until October, which means we are now faced with the possibility of prolonged and extensive fire outbreaks.

To prevent reoccurring fires, the Mawas Conservation Program team is committed to conducting routine fire patrols, and the team has reported this latest incident to the local authorities. But we are in dire need of more patrol support and fire prevention equipment.

What's so important about Mawas?

The Mawas area, in Central Kalimantan, southern Borneo, is home to one of the last tracts of forest supporting wild orangutans, plus many other fragile fauna and flora.

Not only is Mawas important for its biodiversity but the geological conditions of Mawas also makes it a storage house of giga-tonnes of carbon. Over a period of 8000 years, decaying plant matter from the swamp forests has built up 13–15m domes of peat. If you drain the peatlands and use fire to clear the land to plant crops (like palm oil), you release an enormous amount of stored carbon into the atmosphere.

To put all that into perspective, it's estimated that the Mawas area holds an amount of carbon roughly equal to 30 years of Australia's greenhouse emissions.

Help us protect the Mawas peat swamp forests and the lives of more than 2550 wild orangutans in the area.

<https://bit.ly/2NGon7E>



BOS Australia
primates helping primates

Borneo Orangutan Survival Australia

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Our newsletter is proudly written and produced by BOS Australia volunteers.

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Thank you for your continued support.



We love hearing from you

We know you've been spreading the orangutan word, so why not tell us about what you're up to? Email contact@orangutans.com.au or post your photos online at [facebook.com/bosaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/bosaustralia) or [instagram/bosaustralia](https://www.instagram.com/bosaustralia)

Can you help us?

Your donations provide food, shelter, protection, medicine and companionship for orangutans in our care. Visit www.orangutans.com.au to help us help them.

Donations by cheque are payable to Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Australia at PO Box 3916, Mosman NSW 2088.

Make a one-off or regular payment via direct debit or by credit card either online or by calling us on (02) 9011 5455. We now accept **pay pal** donations too! See the link on the homepage of our website.

Save paper and the environment and opt-in to receive our e-letter via email. at contact@orangutans.com.au

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