

Forest Chatter



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"After up to a decade in our care another 21 captive orangutans are now home; back to the rain forest where they once came from and where they should rightfully be."

From the President...

There is so much to report on our recent activities but the most important and heartfelt news is the wonderful release of 21 more orangutans.

As I write this article those 21 orangutans are now home; back to the rain forest where they once came from and where they rightfully belong.

The logistics of their journey was immense, requiring international cooperation and a coordinated team effort. They left us by plane, canoe, helicopter and on foot.

After up to a decade in our care these orangutans are now in the safety of protected rain forest reserves. We have released 50 orangutans this year; it is an amazing realisation knowing these magnificent animals are free at last. In 2013 we plan to release 100 more.

For every orangutan we release there are more waiting and so our number one priority is continuing the momentum of our release and monitoring programs.

We have had incredible results from our release program and this success has buoyed the commitment of our team and inspired us to work even harder.

Those of you lucky enough to meet Simon and Anton from BOS Indonesia

recently will understand the complexity of the program and the passion of those who drive it.

I was also delighted to hear from Anton during his Australian visit that far fewer orangutans fell ill since we upgraded the wastewater system last year at Nyaru Menteng Sanctuary.

In other news, two of our orangutan carers from Samboja Lestari spent two weeks at Taronga Zoo working with our Vice President Lou Grossfeldt to learn new orangutan behavioural and enrichment techniques. This program will continue next year when Lou returns to Borneo.

In December volunteers Jayson and Matt head back to Borneo to finish the waste system for our new orangutan quarantine cages. Their work will be arduous and challenging and I thank them for their valuable time and expertise.

In November our talented, graphic designer Ilona spent two weeks in Indonesia training the team from the BOS headquarters.

Since Ilona's visit we have already seen a huge improvement in the quality, and presentation of information we receive. Thank you for your work Ilona.

Even though its holiday season for some our work doesn't stop. The funds



Photo: Anton and Simon present 'Back to the Wild' at Sydney University. ©BOS Australia

we receive from our adoption program have enabled us to continue our work caring for over 600 orangutans and preparing them to return to the wild. When you adopt an orangutan it makes such a tangible difference to their welfare, hope and survival. With your support we can help them climb their way to freedom.

Adopting an orangutan is a great, alternative gift for your animal-loving friends, family or work colleagues this holiday season. On behalf of our orangutans I encourage you to do so.

Kind regards,

Tony Gilding

Follow our orangutan release blogs:
goingback2dforest.wordpress.com
orangutanforest.wordpress.com



Photo: A leap of faith, Terusan is released as Lone Droscher-Nielsen, BOS founder looks on. ©BOS Australia

Habitual destruction

Borneo's orangutan population will half if current deforestation and forest conversion trends continue warns international researchers from renowned scientific journal 'PLOS ONE'.

Alarming figures provided by leading orangutan specialist Sege Wich of

Liverpool John Moores University, revealed that of the 78% of rain forest inhabited by orangutans in Borneo, 29% is used for logging, 19% is used for palm oil plantations, 6% is for industrial tree plantations and 24% of the land is not allocated for any specific use.





Free to be wild

For most of us freedom is a right and not a privilege.

Sadly today freedom for captive orangutans is a game of chance and not skill.

Over three intensive days in late October and early November we released 21 semi-wild and rehabilitated orangutans including five babies into Bukit Batikap Conservation Forest.

Many of these orangutans have spent up to 13 years in our care at Nyaru Menteng, Palangkaraya in Central Kalimantan. They were rescued from palm oil plantations and homes where they were kept as illegal pets.

This was our fourth successful release this year from our Central Kalimantan Orangutan Reintroduction Program.

Meet the lucky 21 and follow their progress at <http://goingback2dforest.wordpress.com>

Paluy, Gundul, Jamal, Mangkutub, Gusti, Lyos, Kopi, Giant, Emen, Embong, Sif, Sifa, Gadis, Garu, Leonora, Lamar, Chanel, Charlie, Menteng, Jamiat and Terusan thank you for your continued support.

When Shelton met Koprал

A rare friendship bonded in a place where disability knows no boundaries and instead unites those who have suffered the most.

Koprал

Koprал spent his early years as a pet in a cramped cage with barely enough room to move. Being a wild orangutan forced into captivity, he saw an opportunity to escape. It was then that Koprал's life changed forever.

Drawing on his instinctive climbing abilities, Koprал scaled the tallest structure he could find; a power pole. Koprал was instantly electrocuted and suffered horrific burns to his arms and legs.

When Koprал was found, he was in agonising pain and yet his owner put him back in a cage without medical care. Koprал remained there for a week and amazingly he survived.

Eventually Koprал surrendered to BOS Foundation's Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre in Samboja Lestari and when he arrived his condition was dire.

Where there was once skin, Koprал's right arm from wrist to shoulder was exposed to the bone. His left arm and legs were so severely injured the flesh was rotting and falling from his body.

Koprал had endured so much in his young years; his spirit remained resolute, but his body was giving up and despite 24-hour care he wasn't expected to survive.

Defying the odds, Koprал gradually regained his appetite by eating plump fruits. He also learnt how to roll out of his basket and even attempted to climb the clinic's fence.

Koprал's recovery signs were good but his condition required surgery

at the only facility willing to accept him; an army hospital. Sadly Koprал's right arm was amputated up to the shoulder and later his left arm was also removed to his elbow.

Four months later Koprал fully recovered and joined Forest School. Today he climbs trees and builds nests using his feet and mouth.

Koprал is now seven and has grown into a highly intelligent, compassionate and curious orangutan. His story and will to survive continues to inspire us.

Shelton

In February this year, little Shelton was found riddled with gunshot pellets in Kutai National Park (KNP) in Indonesian Borneo. He was weak, unresponsive and barely alive.

When a doctor examined Shelton he was shocked to discover nine gunshot pellets lodged throughout his young body.

It was a race against time to save Shelton and the team from the BOS Foundation at Samboja Lestari were called in. The team was led by Program Manager Aschta Boestani Tajudin and accompanied by Vet Agus Irwanto.

Shelton's condition was so serious he was taken back to Samboja Lestari for intensive treatment. While surgery could remove the pellets from Shelton's body, tragically Shelton's eyes were so damaged he became permanently blind.

In the days following surgery, Shelton

was found slumped in the corner of his enclosure holding his head in a slight rocking motion. He was weak, disorientated and afraid.

Despite his lack of sight, Shelton fought on bolstered by the support and love of his carers; he was blind but his will to survive remained strong.

Shelton's life was destined to be one full of challenges and adversity; a life that would always rely on care from others.

And then Shelton met Koprал.

When Shelton moved to a new enclosure in August this year, his first visitor was Koprал.

Koprал sat above Shelton's enclosure and gently placed his fingers through the bars to reach Shelton; this was a ritual Koprал undertook daily. His behaviour showed sensitivity and insight beyond his youthful years. Koprал was waiting patiently until Shelton felt safe.

As carers opened Shelton's enclosure in the days following, Koprал couldn't contain himself, he burst in to take Shelton out to play.

Both Koprал and Shelton's stories were once considered a hopeless tragedy, today they represent the endearing hope we have for survival of the species.



Photo: Sharing the orangutan love, Shelton and Koprал. ©BOS Australia

Rebel Ruthie

When we first met Ruthie she was an orangutan with 'issues', a real little rebel who had a tough start in life.

After her mother was killed Ruthie was kept as a pet, she was malnourished and tragically mistreated. Her experiences left her with deep emotional and physical scars.

Ruthie has since grown into an energetic teenager with cute tom-boy characteristics, almond shaped eyes, fuzzy fine auburn hair, full lips and a wayward toothy grin.

As a robust young girl Ruthie is highly defiant and cheeky. She constantly pushes the boundaries and her naughty antics continue to challenge experienced babysitters.

Ruthie used to love escaping Forest School; it was a daily trick she had perfected. Like many teenagers she became a regular truant enjoying the nightlife only to return home in time for breakfast.

When trouble abounds Ruthie is always around says Nyaru Menteng Babysitter Coordinator, Hani. Its Ruthie's inquisitive nature and boundless energy

that makes her hard to supervise.

After biting some of her classmates and ransacking an office Ruthie was swiftly expelled from Forest School. She now lives in the centre's Socialisation Complex under the watchful eye of carers.

Ruthie's high intelligence continues to exceed her young years; she is assimilating well, has made new friends and uses her creative talents to build nests.

Physically strong, independent and feisty, Ruthie's disobedience and mischief are positive signs that she is getting ready for life in a real forest.

Like all of our orangutans, Ruthie must wait her turn for freedom; her future depends on us securing enough funds to release her.

Vital statistics

Name: Ruthie.

Origin: Central Kalimantan Indonesian Borneo. Ruthie arrived at Nyaru Menteng in September 2007.

Lives: Nyaru Menteng Rehabilitation Centre, Indonesian Borneo.

Cutest characteristic:
Plump, rubbery lips.

Favourite past time:
Causing chaos and building nests.

Hangs out with: Ayu, Lido, Nacho and Mawas.

Favourite food: Sweet, fleshy fruits.

Current weight: 32.7 kilograms.

Current age: Approximately 6.5 to 7 years old.

Education: Socialisation Complex.

How you can help Ruthie

Adopting Ruthie will contribute to her health, well-being, medication, ongoing vaccinations, and support the wonderful surrogate mothers who care for over 600 orangutan orphans in our care. With your adoption we can help set Ruthie free.

Adopt Ruthie

Visit <http://www.orangutans.com.au/Orangutans-Survival/Orangutan-Adoptions> and look for Ruthie's profile.

Photo: Ruthie. ©BOS Australia



Down but not out

Sadly today the orangutan faces an enormous struggle to survive as populations dwindle daily due to invasive and destructive habitat loss throughout Indonesian Borneo.

With deforestation continuing at an alarming rate competition for land continues to take precedence over survival of the species.

Since 2001 BOS Foundation has worked tirelessly to restore 17 million square metres (sqm) of ecological wasteland in East Kalimantan.

BOS Australia was allocated 42,000 sqm for supporters to help us return this barren land back to fertile rain forest.

In only four years we have already reached 8,000 sqm and we hope to

reach our target of 10,000 sqm by our five year anniversary in November 2013.

For only \$10.00 per sqm your sponsorship helps us to buy land for releases, restore forest and secure property for our sun bear enclosures

Visit www.orangutans.com.au/Orangutan-Survival/Purchase-Rainforest

Simon and Anton inspire audiences in Australia

In October BOS Foundation's Program manager Anton Nurcahyo and Senior Scientific Advisor Simon Husson presented 'Back to the wild' to capacity crowds in Sydney and enthusiastic audiences in Lismore and Byron Bay.

They were in Australia to talk

about BOS Foundation's recently released orangutans, the impact of deforestation, Forest School and to provide a personal account of the release program.

The enlightening presentations captivated audiences, and attracted many heartfelt donors resulting in 50

new adoptions.

The tour secured a massive amount of media support including national television, radio, and online and print media exposure.

Thank you to everyone who attended for your passion and generous support.

Volunteer profile

At BOSA we have a passionate team of dedicated volunteers who help us to promote international awareness of the plight of the magnificent orangutan.

Together our volunteers share the spirit of the 'orangutan story' within the community and are the brand ambassadors for the BOS foundation.

Meet one of our wonderful volunteers.

Aaron Laws, BOS volunteer, part-time student and Workers' Compensation Claims Advisor.

Name Aaron Laws

Tell us a little about yourself

I am a Team Leader in the workers' compensation industry managing claims. I am also studying for a Certificate IV in Frontline Management at Ultimo TAFE in Sydney which I expect to complete in June 2013.

What are your personal interests?

I have a passion for animals and love collecting books and learning about the natural world; particularly primates.

I also love to socialise with friends, spending time at the beach and dining out for breakfast and dinner.

Recently I adopted a greyhound named Wally from Greyhound Rescue NSW and he and I are spending quality time getting to know each other.

Why and when did you first start volunteering with BOSA?

I started volunteering with BOSA in 2009 not long after I saw the BBC series of Orangutan Diaries on television. I was so touched and inspired by the work of Lone Dröscher-Nielsen that I got in touch with BOSA to see what I could do to help.

I joined a BOSA volunteer group in Sydney and volunteered at various events.

How does your volunteer work help BOSA?

Through my volunteer work I have helped to raise awareness and funding to contribute to the welfare of orangutans in Indonesian Borneo.

I like to inspire people to contribute to the cause in any way they can. I tell people about BOSA's amazing work and the impact of deforestation on orangutan habitat.

What is the best part about being a volunteer with BOSA?

The people I have met along the way; we have become family.

After being overseas, I helped out at BOSA's recent Sydney University event. It was lovely to catch up with my volunteer friends, talk about my work in Borneo and rekindle the passion for these beautiful primates.

What is it about orangutans that inspires you?

Orangutans are amazing creatures, the more I learn about them, the more blown away I am.

When I first met an orangutan face-to-face, I saw the most expressive, wise, caring, gentle and inquisitive eyes. I knew I could never turn my back on such a beautiful soul, so the fight must go on.

What is your hope for the future of orangutans?

I hope over time the BOS foundation can continue to secure more protected rain forest and release as many orangutans as possible.

It would be really wonderful to ensure the releases remain sustainable and attract environmental tourism to Borneo.

Could you volunteer for BOSA?

We are always looking for people with a variety of skills to become involved in our committee work, fund-raising activities, website maintenance, education, public relations and marketing. BOSA is only as strong as the people who support it.

If you think you can help us please contact volunteer@orangutans.com.au and address your enquiry to Aaron.

Editor's note

Heartfelt thanks to Stephanie D'Alessi for volunteering her time and expertise designing this edition of our newsletter.

Jay



BOS Australia
primates helping primates

Borneo Orangutan Survival Australia

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

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 www.facebook.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 set them free.

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.

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