

grapevine



www.orangutans.com.au

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Edition 25 - October 2010

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Hello and welcome to the October issue of the Grapevine.

Dear BOS Supporters,

As you may have heard Malcolm Carson has resigned as President of BOS Australia. Malcolm has contributed a tremendous amount to the organisation and on behalf of the Committee of BOS Australia I would like to thank him for all his efforts. As the AGM is scheduled for October, the Committee has deferred the election of a new President until then. In the interim, I have been nominated Acting President, and I can assure you that in cooperation with our remaining Committee members, the ongoing operations of BOS Australia are well in hand.

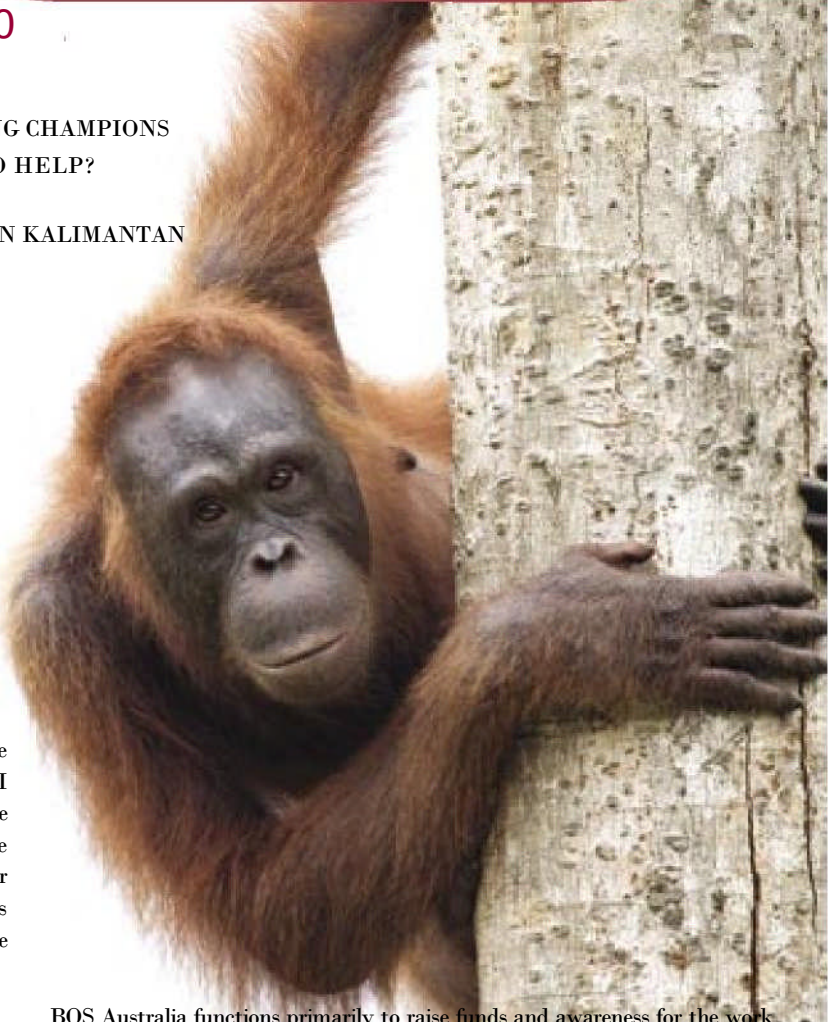
Although a number of our current Committee members will not be continuing on the Committee in 2010/2011, I am happy to announce that I will be nominating as President, Tony Gilding as Vice President and Louise Grossfeldt as a Committee Member. As the three of us have extensive knowledge of and familiarity with issues relating to orangutans and their survival, we believe that in 2010/2011 we will be able to uphold the goals of the organisation, and improve on the strategic visualisation and effective implementation of these goals.

We also have exciting nominations for the Committee, including the positions of Treasurer and Secretary, and we are looking forward to working with all of them in 2010/2011.

The Committee is justifiably proud of its achievements in 2009/2010. We were able to send a total of \$468,000 to BOS Foundation in Indonesia in support of both Wanariset and Nyaru Menteng, as well as the purchase of a much-needed X-ray machine and a private donation of \$250,000 towards the purchase of rainforest for release sites. In addition our fundraising activities for this year raised \$109,000, which will be allocated by the new Committee in 2010/2011. For more information on our achievements in, please check out our website at www.orangutans.com.au

Tony, Louise and myself (on behalf of BOS Australia) will be attending the Donor Conference held by the BOS Foundation in Indonesia in early October. Due to the diversity of our skills and experience, the Committee believes that sending all three of us will maximise the benefit of this event to the organisation. BOS Australia is paying for our airfares, and we will be paying for our own accommodation and day-to-day expenses.

The goal of our attendance at this conference (and the additional meetings we have scheduled) is to build stronger ties with our Indonesian counterparts, and make our mutual ventures more effective and transparent through formal agreements. The conference will also allow us the opportunity to interact with representatives of BOS from around the world to gain from their experiences, knowledge, and fundraising skills.



BOS Australia functions primarily to raise funds and awareness for the work being undertaken by BOS Foundation in Indonesia. Their current focus is on projects to improve the welfare of the over 4,000 orangutans under their care and to safely release as many orangutans as possible back into the wild.

In 2010/2011 BOS Australia will focus on activities to raise funds for the ongoing operation of the nurseries for orphaned babies as well as for the day-to-day care of animals earmarked for potential release. In addition to one-off events we will actively seek to expand our existing adoption, membership, and sponsorship programmes and to increase merchandise sales. In 2010/2011 we also aim to extend the reach of our public relations efforts to encourage greater awareness and to strengthen our donor base.

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at 6:30pm on Thursday 21st October 2010 at the Holiday Inn Potts Point in Victoria Street, Potts Point, NSW, 2011. All are welcome to attend the meeting, however only financial or life members of BOS Australia are entitled to vote. Please confirm your attendance at the AGM by sending an email to contact@orangutans.com.au

Thank you for all your previous involvement in BOS Australia and we look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Regards
Jan Hindmarsh
Acting President

What have we been up to?

Orangutan Fundraising Champions

Fundraising Superstar



Bianca Nichols describes herself as “an absolute animal lover”. Having learned of the threats the orangutans face, she decided something had to be done and organised an orange coloured dress day at her school, Mater Christi. The 15 year old encouraged teachers and students to wear orange for a gold coin donation.

“Over all I think the day was a huge success!” says Bianca.

To add to the fun of the day, there was also an orange themed food and drink stall with only palm oil free products. There was Sunkist cans, orange jelly, orange juice, carrot cake, iced orange cakes and muffins, sponge cakes, caramel cakes and orange lollies.

Lots of people participated and donated and in total we raised \$1268. I encourage others to start making a difference too. If other students arranged a fundraising event at their school, sporting clubs etc they can help make a difference for the orangutans just like I did. I love orangutans and hope that people can help support and save the species,” Bianca said.

Sallywags Childcare Centre

The Sallywags Childcare Centre in Bathurst has some of our youngest orangutan champions in its care. Last year, a couple of the children donated their pocket money to help the baby orphaned orangutans. This year the children have all chipped in, producing and selling cards to raise \$20. Our thanks to Trish Cowan who works at the centre and has fostered the children’s awareness and enthusiasm through her own adoption of Ruthie.

Birdwood High School’s ‘Save the Orangutans’ group

Birdwood High School in South Australia has its own “Save the Orangutans” student interest group, led by Lynton Vonow, which meets at lunchtime every few weeks. This year has been particularly active for the group with the screening of various orangutan documentaries, participation in a palm oil campaign and petition signing.

On the fundraising front, the annual cake stall was again a very successful event raising a record \$370 through the sale of spiders, cakes, muffins, slices and biscuits – all palm oil free.

Lynton has also been integral in encouraging primary school students to avoid using palm oil in the products they buy and become involved in writing letters to companies about their use of palm oil.

Dow Jones Night

A big round of applause must go to the organisers and supporters of the Dow Jones (Double Dip) and Borneo Orangutan Survival event.

The event was a huge success with everyone getting up on the dance floor and singing along.

The huge turnout means we have set a new record donation to our nominated charity, which is kindly being matched by Westpac. This money will be used to help in the rescue and rehabilitation of orangutans.

Congratulations to Melissa Gamble for winning the door prize of a delicious bottle of Shiraz and a cuddly toy orangutan. Melissa is a huge fan of animals so we are very happy that the orangutan has gone to a good home!

Our thanks to The Band “Dow Jones” and Kate & Eban Bowditch who ran this event.

Class Success

My class has been absolutely wonderful! We read the storybook *Mang* then had a drawing competition. Our class mascot is an orangutan soft toy that the kids named ‘Tang’. Our book club had a ‘Colour it Orange’ campaign which was perfect timing with lots of resources including posters.

Then the issue of palm oil came up and the students were inspired to make a difference and wrote letters. We mailed them off to our local MP Janice Munt and she recently took them to parliament to show Premier John Brumby. Now she’s hoping to drop by our school before the end of term to show us the photos and give us her official response to the issue of palm oil and the plight of the orangutans!

In addition, it really struck a chord with one of the mums so she found out info on how to adopt an orangutan, assisted the students in brainstorming ways of raising \$6 each (for a target of \$120) and wrote the letter we sent home detailing what it was all about. We achieved the target last week and that’s how we came to adopt Baby Nody!

You can check out our class blog @ <http://1h-secret-blog.blogspot.com/>

- Emily Hui

Level 2 Teacher and Sustainability Coordinator
Kingston Heath Primary School
Victoria

Bos Updates

Funds Allocated

Wanariset Orangutans: \$78,000

With the Indonesian government making a firm commitment to rehabilitate and release orangutans currently held in sanctuaries over the next few years, an important component of this strategy is the transfer of the remaining orangutans currently held at Wanariset to Samboja Lestari. The concept behind this transfer is to centralise the orangutans held within these two sanctuaries, so that consistent enrichment and rehabilitation programs can be developed. Both of these management tools are a vital role in supporting the long-term reintroduction plan – BOS Australia has contributed to this vital program by providing a portion of the funding required to achieve this goal.



Nyaru Menteng: \$86,000

Nyaru Menteng houses the largest number of orangutan orphans in any sanctuary and as a result a huge amount of resources, funding and support are essential to keep this project going. The project is run by the famous Danish woman, Lone Dröschner Neilson. This woman works alongside the Indonesian government and local staff to feed, care, rehabilitate and hopefully reintroduce these animals back to a semi-wild or wild environment. This money is contribution to the overall running costs of looking after some 700 orphan orangutans!

Orangutan Welfare: \$26,000

Orangutans are amongst the most intelligent and physically strong animals that exist. As they grow and mature, these animals can become challenging to manage, particularly as they need to be housed and managed as naturally semi-solitary animals. The \$26,000 sent over by BOS Australia forms part of the welfare management scheme for the orangutans that are no longer babies but are not quite adults yet. These animals are housed in 'halfway houses' where animals are provided with a secure area with enrichment items to play with – a bit like orangutan high school!

Medical Equipment: \$28,000

As part of the management of Samboja Lestari, medical assessments are required for all the animals housed there. This is an essential step to ensure that all the animals are in good health. An X-ray machine is an important instrument to help provide a range of different medical and health information the orangutans held in care. This money from BOS Australia purchased an X-ray machine which enabled the

staff at Samboja Lestari to develop health profiles on each individual.

Rainforest Release Sites: \$250,000

This is certainly the big achievement for BOS Australia this financial year. This large private donation, negotiated by the Committee this year, was allocated specifically towards the purchase of rainforest release sites. The purchase of these sites (estimated at \$1.5m) is a key component of the Indonesian government's long term plan to reintroduce orangutans back into the wild. There are many steps in this lengthy but exciting process and the speedy allocation of these much needed funds have brought the plan much closer to completion.

Funds Raised in 2009/2010:

Mind Body Spirit Festival: \$15,000

In November 2009 we raised just over \$15,000 at the Mind Body Spirit Festival. The funds will be allocated the new Committee in 2010/2011.

Beach to Bay Walk: \$9,000

In March 2010 over 50 participants walked from Bondi Beach to Rushcutters Bay Park and raised \$9,000 towards the new nursery at Samboja Lestari. Funds will be transferred by the new Committee in 2010/2011.

0-65 Campaign: \$65,000

For 65 days in May-July 2010 we raised just over \$65,000 for the mapping of a new rainforest release site in Indonesia. Funds will be transferred by the new Committee in 2010/2011.

Dog Day Out: \$1,000

In August 2010 we raised over \$1,000 at the Dog Day Out event. The funds will be allocated the new Committee in 2010/2011.

Fundraising Lunch: \$19,000

A fundraising lunch hosted by our tireless supporter, Joan Pearson, in September 2010 raised \$19,000 for the nursery in Nyaru Menteng. Funds will be transferred by the new Committee in 2010/2011.

Private Donation: \$250,000

This large private donation, by Mr John Cochrane, was received and allocated in 2010 specifically towards the purchase of a release site, P.T. Rhoi, attached to Samboja Lestari. Mr Cochrane first became involved with BOSA through a donation to Nyaru Menteng in 2008/2009 and after meeting with BOSF trustees in Indonesia in July 2010 he made this pledge. This is a fantastic outcome for all concerned as it fulfils Mr Cochrane's passion for finding permanent release sites for endangered orangutans as well as supporting BOS Foundation efforts!



BOS Projects

A step towards freedom

thanks to you

In May this year BOS Australia took up a big challenge - to raise \$65,000 in 65 days to pay for the planning and implementation of a release site for orangutans in Tunggul Pemenang, Central Kalimantan.

And thanks to your huge efforts we succeeded. You ran raffles, you organised collections at schools and clubs, you sold cakes and you made generous donations. We hope everyone concerned has received a 'thank you' but, in any case, here's another one: Thank you!

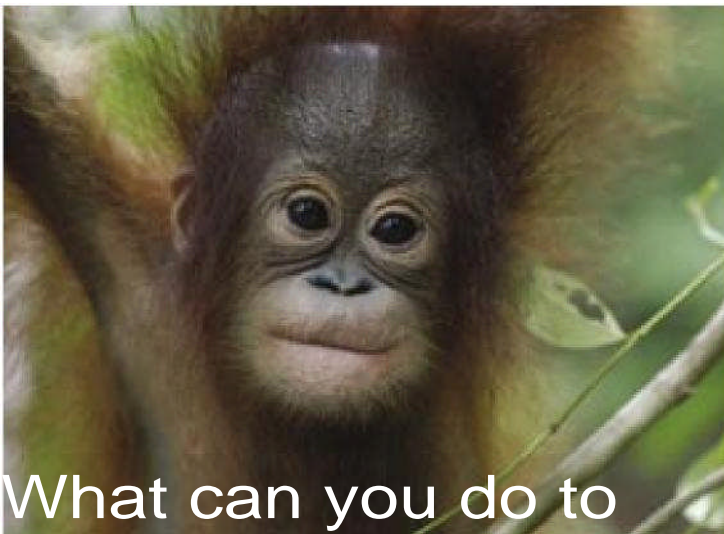
The plan now

The money will go towards the planning stage of the orangutan release program in Tunggul Pemenang, East Kalimantan. It will be the first major release of rehabilitated orangutans in 9 years. Long overdue of course but it is often difficult to appreciate how complex a task it is to organise a release program. And, until recently, there simply wasn't a suitable site available. But that is changing.

The area at Tunggul Pemenang was selected because the conditions are near perfect for newly released orangutans. It is an 86,450 hectare site, 750 metres above sea level, and well stocked with tree species that provide shelter and food for orangutans. No other wild orangutans are living there so the newcomers won't be faced with competition. It is also safe from human threat as the local inhabitants are highly supportive of the release program. Eventually, it is hoped, the site will be home to many of the 800+ orangutans who currently live in rehabilitation centres around the region.

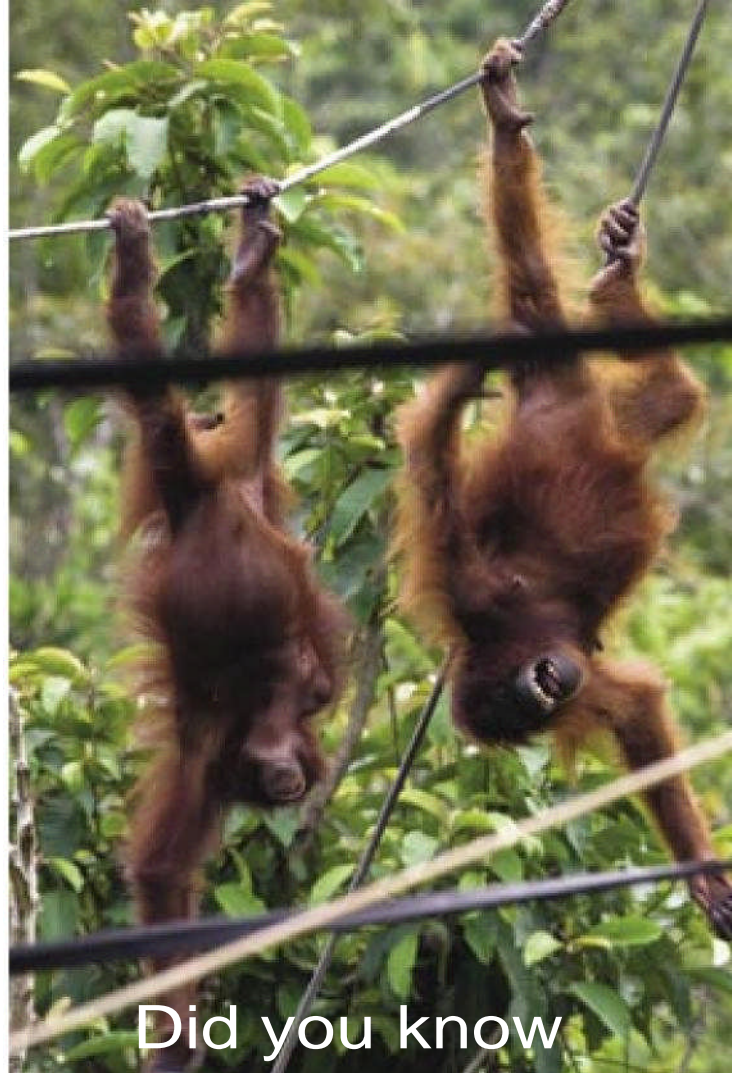
The Indonesian government has also started the process of issuing permits for the BOS Foundation to take control of more land that is suitable as release sites. So our job is far from over but we're off to a great start! We'll keep you up to date with progress.

Tony Gilding - On behalf of our dedicated fundraising team



What can you do to help?

With a brand new government in place, it's the perfect time to let them know about the use of palm oil and the effect it's having around the world. Why don't you write a letter to The Minister for Environment and the Minister for Health and let them know that you're not happy about it! You can get their details from the Australian Government website.



Did you know

Oil palm plantations are destroying Borneo's rainforest and decimating orangutan populations. Unfortunately it is one of the world's most rapidly expanding crops. This growth is likely to continue for years because of the global demand for edible oils and bio fuel. Growing concerns about the environmental impacts of palm oil led to the establishment of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). It is a nonprofit, industry-led trade organisation whose stated mission is to "provide RSPO-certified palm oil to the market".

The RSPO has the potential to improve the environmental performance of palm oil producers. However, this potential has not been fully realised. Possible solutions include:

1. Restructuring the membership of the RSPO so greater decision making powers are given to environmental organisations and experts. Industry currently has the biggest voting power.
2. Developing a real monitoring and enforcement capability, or to partner with an organisation that has the capacity to monitor the producers the RSPO certifies.
3. Taking a stronger stand against forest destruction and the draining of peat swamps and eliminate this as an option both for RSPO members and non-member companies.
4. Appointing an independent watchdog group to monitor and audit the RSPO.

For its part, the environmental community should convince palm oil users to buy certified sustainable palm oil. Globally, less than 4% of the annual production of palm oil is currently certified sustainable. Consumers are still buying palm oil grown at the expense of our tropical forests and orangutans.

Reference: Laurance, W.F., Koh, L.P., Butler, R., Sodi, N.S., Bradshaw, C.J.A., Neidel, D.J., Consungi, H. and Vega, J.M. (2010). Improving the Performance of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil for Nature Conservation. Conservation Biology 24: 377-381.

Did you know ...

Long calls are made by flanged male orangutans and can be heard up to a kilometre away. They are important in the long-distance communication of this semi-solitary species and allow orangutans to determine where in the forest they should travel in order to avoid or approach dominant males.

A study conducted near Mawas (Borneo) found female orangutans recognise not only which male is calling but why. Females with young babies (who are not ready to breed again) ignored long calls made by males in response to environmental noises such as trees falling and the presence of other males. However they moved away from long calls produced for breeding purposes.

Reference: Spillmann, B., Dunkel, L.P., van Noordwijk, M.A., Amda, R.N.A., Lameria, A.R., Wich, S.A. and C.P. van Schaik (2010). Acoustic properties of long calls given by flanged male orangutans (Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii) reflect both individual identity and context. Ethology 116: 385-395.

Don't Forget

The easiest way to keep your membership, adoption or donation current is to convert to a regular giving option. You can give the amount you choose monthly, quarterly or yearly and pay by credit or debit card.

Please call or email Emma on 02 9011 5455 or contact@orangutans.com.au who can arrange this quickly and easily.



Orangutans in Rehabilitation to get New Homes in Kalimantan

With a permit already in hand, PT Orangutan Habitat Restoration Indonesia (ROI) is preparing to release orangutans into Borneo jungles after years of being held in rehabilitation centres. The Forestry Ministry awarded an ROI license to restore 86,450 hectares of former timber concession area in East Kutai district, East Kalimantan, to be the new home for rehabilitated orangutans.

“We target the gradual release to start in April 2011 at the latest,” chairman of Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOSF) Togu Manurung told The Jakarta Post. There are currently 226 orangutans held in captivity in the BOSF rehabilitation center in East Kalimantan. The BOSF set up ROI when the government allowed only the company to propose permits for ecosystem restoration projects.

He said that the new area was located 750 metres above sea level and well-stocked with tree species to provide shelter and food for wild orangutans. The BOSF also rehabilitated some 612 orangutans in its Central Kalimantan center. Togu said the release of orangutans in Central Kalimantan was expected to start from November in cooperation with timber company of PT Akhates Plywood.

“The plan is to return some 40 orangutans back to their habitat in the jungle by November, the forest fruit season,” he said. The company currently proposed an additional area of some 23,000 hectares in East Kalimantan and 200,000 hectares in Central Kalimantan. BOSF chairman of board of trustee, Bungaran Saragih asserted that ROI would not harvest trees in its concession areas.

“We are committed to protecting the orangutans. They need forests. They have been living in the rehabilitation centers for too long,” he told the Post on Saturday. Bungaran, who was formerly Forestry and Agriculture Minister, cited the high costs to conserve orangutans, whose population sharply declined due to the expansion of oil palm plantations and mining sites, among others.

He said ROI would spend at least two years monitoring the daily activities of released orangutans in their new habitat to ensure that they could survive in the area. “We should teach [orangutans] survival skills for the wild.

Some have been in the rehabilitation center for about nine years,” he said.

The government pledged to release every orangutan into forests. In the last 35 years, about 50,000 orangutans have died due to deforestation and habitat loss, government data shows.

About 90 percent of orangutans live in Borneo and Sumatra. It is estimated there are 6,667 orangutans in Sumatra, mostly in the Leuser ecosystem, and 54,567 in Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of Borneo. The remaining 10 percent are in Sabah and Sarawak, Malaysia. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature said the orangutan species native to Kalimantan was endangered. Orangutans in Sumatra are also critically endangered.

Source: The Jakarta Post - August 24, 2010. Adianto P. Simamora



A Man In The Forest

I grabbed the first trolley I could find and hurried to catch up with my mum, she already had an armful of groceries ready to throw into it.

"These biscuits are good and they will make it easy for school lunches", she mumbled.

I took the packet out of the trolley and read the label. They contained palm oil.

The mother orangutan huddled close to her baby, protecting it from the danger just metres in front of them. Giant diggers, bulldozers, and other demolishing devices were coming closer and closer, ripping down the rainforest. A new plantation of oil palm trees was to replace their rainforest home.

Palm oil is used to make products for supermarkets and shops. They are burning and bulldozing down rainforests in Borneo to plant more and more palm oil plantations.

The mother orangutan could feel her baby trembling in her mass of orange fur.

Suddenly a big, steel toothed scoop exposed where the mother and her baby were crouching. The orangutan leapt up and tried to defend her baby, baring her teeth back at the big scoop trying to ward off the big machine.

It was the squeeze of a trigger that sealed the poor mother orangutan's fate on the damp forest floor.

Crying, the baby buried its face in its dead mother's fur. Confused and frightened the small ape welcomed the wooden box placed over his head.

Orangutan means 'Man of the Forest'. They are our closest living relative.

The baby orangutan was driven away from the rainforest to a busy airport. Wide eyed with fear the baby crouched listening to the noises of big jumbo jets and people rushing along the streets of Jakarta.

Many years later it was mating season and our baby orangutan now named Tom was a fully-grown male. He paced up and down in his cage and drew pictures in the sandy floor of his iron prison. He could not be released into the wild. There was now not enough rainforest left. He became bored, naughty, violent, and often tipped food over his head. His minders could no longer comfort him.

He died in that cage of a broken heart.

Today when I am buying things in the supermarket, I do not let my mum buy biscuits with palm oil in them, even if they are on special!

I do not enjoy fast food outlets with food that has been fried in palm oil. I look and read everything. I try to be aware.

I dream about one day seeing an orangutan in the wild, free with lots of rainforest in which to roam. I dream about Tom finding a mate and loving babies of his own.

Unfortunately by the time you have read my story more orangutans may have died because of people's greed to get rich regardless of our rainforests.

In the rainforest of Borneo there once lived an orangutan.

*by Finn Ball
8 years old*

Competition:

We think the name of the newsletter 'Grapevine' has no relevance to orangutans or what BOS actually does, so we're thinking about changing the name and we'd love to hear your ideas!

Please email your suggestions to Emma. Her email address is: contact@orangutans.com.au



Donations to BOSA can be made in a number of ways: via our website: www.orangutans.com.au

or by sending a cheque or money order, payable to
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