



BOS Australia
primates helping primates

grapevine

New Website - www.orangutans.com.au

BOS Australia has a new website!

It's still at the same address, so if you've been to the old site, you may need to click on Refresh or Reload to see the new site.

With its new layout, it is easier to find what you're looking for, including newsletters, merchandise, news, downloadable information flyers, video clips and much much more!

We will be adding new stuff regularly, so make sure you bookmark it and check back often.



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BOS 2008 Committee

A new year has begun, and BOS has a new Committee to steer it for 2008. We have implemented more structures this year, and committee members are now holding specific positions. The incumbents for this year are:

Sue Floyed, President

Jan Hindmarsh, Vice President

Rebecca King, Secretary

Cheryl Looker, Treasurer

Fleur Butcher, Indonesian Liaison

Belinda Morris, Grapevine Editor and Orang-U-Friends Coordinator

Ruth Comey, Graphic Design and Marketing

Louise Grossfeldt, NSW Representative

Andrea Jobson, Volunteers and Events Coordinator

We would like to thank all of the committee members from last year for their time, energies, great skills, and enthusiasm, without whom none of the successes of BOS in 2007 would have been possible.



Mothers' Day

Mothers' Day is almost here, and we have great gifts to make any mum smile. You can adopt an orphaned orangutan in your mum's name for just \$55, and she will receive a gorgeous certificate and profile of her infant, an adoption pack, and regular updates on how her baby is growing and learning skills for rainforest living. We also have cards, DVDs, T-shirts, and much more that mum will love.

Do your Mothers' Day shopping at www.orangutans.com.au or call (03) 9877 0377

Orang-U-Friends Schools Programme

The school year is underway already! BOS can work with your local school to raise students' awareness of the issues facing orangutans. Instead of feeling helpless as they learn of yet another species becoming extinct, students can get active with Orang-U-Friends, following the progress of a sponsored infant orang through all the stages of the rehabilitation centre, and celebrate as their infant is released back into the wild. The programme offers guest speakers, competitions, awards, and classroom activities.

For more information, see: www.orangutans.com.au/orang-u-friends.htm, call 03 9877 0377 or email orangufriends@orangutans.com.au

Update on Container of Care

A number of people and companies have generously donated items ranging from towels, medical supplies, dog toys, kids' toys, gloves, laptops and a camcorder, to help fill our container for Nyaru Menteng. A big thank you to you all.

But – we need more! A container has a lot of space and we want to fill every last cubic inch. We have delayed shipping until mid-year to ensure we do just that. So check through your cupboards for spare towels, blankets and toys. Ask your hardware store if they can donate basic tools such as shifters, screwdrivers and pliers or equipment such as shovels, rakes and ladders. Or, if you have contacts in the veterinary or medical fields, check our website at www.orangutans.com.au under BOS Australia News for the full wish-list of supplies and equipment.

The cost of sending items such as towels and toys to Melbourne can be prohibitive, so we ask NSW and other interstate supporters to consider the alternative of a financial donation to help pay for the cost of shipping the container or to allow us to purchase something from the wish-list on your behalf. If you have a higher value item to donate, please give us a call to discuss how we might get it to Melbourne.

For Melbourne supporters, please contact any of the following to organise drop off or collection:

Rebecca King: 9596 0856 or 0418 995 022 – Brighton

Sue Floyed: 9877 0377 – Nunawading

Fleur Butcher: 9435 3014 or 0407 511 567 – Greensborough

Jessica/Mark/Fiona: 9285 9212 – Melbourne Zoo Orangutan Department

Christine & Jiri Vitesnik: 5427 1815 or 0412 999 895 – Woodend

Welding for Welfare

Murray Ellis went to Nyaru Menteng in May 2007, as part of the BOS Welding for Welfare program. A highly experienced welder, Murray went to Indonesia to teach the local staff at the orangutan rehabilitation and reintroduction centre how to effectively construct and repair cages, greatly improving the welfare of orangutans residing there. The program was a great success, but there was much work still to be done, so in December 2007, inspired by his first experience there, Murray returned to Borneo, this time accompanied by his wife Barb. The following is his account of this trip.

Back to Borneo... We arrived in Palangkaraya to the familiar feel of air you can cut with a knife. It was great to see the people I had befriended on my first trip: Sulong, Surip, Cosmos, Jonh Leo & Suri. We headed straight off to Nyaru Menteng and the wonderful little orange people – it's hard to think of them as anything else once you get to know them. First of all we had a tour of the facility to see what had been achieved since I had left back in May. It was great to see there had been plenty of repairs done.



Lovely new quarantine cages have been manufactured, so we set about figuring out how to assemble them. These cages are 3 times the size of the old ones. Forty cages have been constructed, 24 for midway housing and 16 for the clinic. I showed the boys how to make open web joists to take the weight, and double up the internal uprights to make climbing ladders and strengthen side movement. The great thing is, show the boys once and they have got it. They are unbelievably quick learners. They also showed great patience with my incredibly bad language skills – I love translation dictionaries, but by the end we had a lovely Indonesian/English hybrid language.

A lot of work needed to be done at the midway houses and a new isolation ward is being constructed. We also made 2 dismountable cages to use when necessary. The work that David (the doctor) has done by way of climbing platforms is brilliant, giving young oranges hours of fun.

Another welder was purchased in Australia and packed into our luggage so they have 2 welding machines and 2 angle grinders. I also took a helmet which finally stopped them welding in sunglasses, so more will be sent over later. We purchased a large steel cut off machine, and a 5 KVA generator to make all the equipment portable.

Meeting Lone was not what I expected – such a down to earth person and really a national treasure, no make that international. It is amazing the depth of knowledge she has. I have never met anyone with such dedication and commitment in the face of such adversity.

We met up with two of the WSPA personnel Paul and Yaan when they brought over a blood machine and digital x-ray machine for the Vet clinic. They are both really good practical people with a commitment to making sure the place has everything it needs, so between the two organisations the project is getting the support it needs. Compared to my last trip the mood has completely changed and everything is going ahead strongly

While I was doing this, Barb was ploughing through thousands of images, making a Power Point presentation showing the problems with illegal logging, palm oil plantations and pet trade cruelty. She also put together a slideshow of images and found a program to burn it to a CD. The CEO of Nyaru Menteng came out for a visit and was so impressed with the approach Barb had taken that he asked for copies of the CD so they could be used at all the information centres. She taught the office staff how to use the program so they could make DVDs as required. She also had the unenviable task of trying to sort out the vets' records – they are great with animals but seem to struggle with pen and paper.

By now the 40 KVA generator should be there, which will really help with the power interruptions and allow work to go on. Unfortunately, I think I have just about done myself out of a job, the boys are getting so good! I would like to thank them all for being so helpful and interested, making it all a pleasure. We also want to thank BOS for allowing us to go and help, it is such a privilege. These animals really are so important – if we cannot save them what chance have we of saving ourselves?

Murray and Barb Ellis



BOS at the Australian Museum



On the night of 21 February, BOS volunteers Mandy McLellan and Louise Grossfeldt delivered an information session on orangutan conservation at the Australian Museum. The Museum is currently exhibiting great ape portraits by photographer James Mollison. The exhibition, called Face To Face: Primates Up Close is a series of larger-than-life portraits of apes living in sanctuaries and rehabilitation centres around the world with accompanying stories of the individual's background. Some of the orangutans in the exhibition are from BOS's Wanariset Orangutan Reintroduction Project.

Mandy and Louise were invited to present an information talk to museum members, to complement the exhibition. The talk was entitled Old Men Of The Forest: Orangutan Survival and covered orangutan natural history, threats to orangutan survival, information on BOS projects and how BOS are contributing to orangutan conservation. Mandy and Louise also shared stories with the audience about the orangutans they care for at Taronga Zoo and what it is like to work with these amazing animals.

Their in-depth and stirring presentation was supported by three wonderful short videos and many beautiful still images, taken at Nyaru Menteng for BOS, by Peter Corbett.

The night was a huge success. The Face To Face exhibition was open for the evening just for the 140 guests who attended the presentation. Mandy and Louise did a great job as BOS representatives. Guests were moved by their informative and poignant address. The atmosphere was very positive and the attendees showed a high level of interest, many staying back after the talk to chat to BOS volunteers.

The event was sold out, and the Museum are donating \$2 per ticket to BOS. We also gained new supporters and donations, and sold over \$900 worth of merchandise and adoptions. A very big thank you to Mandy, Louise, Jan, Sue, Laura, Lisa, Alison, Jen, Bill and Carol for all their hard work on the night. It was a great team effort.

Sustainable Living Festival

BOS volunteers were again active at the Sustainable Living Festival in Melbourne, on Friday 15 to Sunday 17 February. SLF is an awareness raising event, educating people about sustainable living practices, including alternative energies. BOS has attended the festival for the past 3 years and during that time has helped make people aware of Palm Oil and its effects, not only on the orangutans, but worldwide.



Many people asked how they could help, and our volunteers were forthcoming with information. Merchandise sales were constant, as were people wanting to adopt BOS babies. Thanks goes to the dedicated BOS volunteers who gave up their time and survived Melbourne's erratic temperatures over the weekend – 37 degrees on the Sunday, a bit cooler than last year when the temp reached 40 degrees.

Orang-U-Friends at VILTA

Once again, BOS was represented at the Victorian Indonesian Language Teachers Association (VILTA) conference in Melbourne in February. This is a great way of promoting our Orang-U-Friends programme to teachers of all grades who are always eager for new and topical material. Over 200 teachers were present across the two days and this resulted in a brisk trade in DVDs and many enquiries as to how their schools could become involved.



There is a growing awareness of the problems that palm oil is creating for the environment and orangutans and a real thirst for more information. We handed out many flyers on the issue which are expected to end up on classroom walls. One of our priorities is to look at what further information we as an organisation can provide to help people understand the issue and play their part in buying products responsibly.

As an added bonus, the participants were treated to a comedy show as Sue Floyed and Rebecca King attempted to erect a seemingly simple clothes rack to display our t-shirts. Yes, we know, we should have read the instructions but that would be way too boring. If anyone would like a slightly used and damaged clothes rack, please contact Sue. Meanwhile, we'll work on plan B for the next event.

Over the course of the two days, we raised over \$1300. While most of the purchases were for the schools, many couldn't resist getting an orangutan toy or t-shirt for themselves at the same time. Just as importantly, we hope to see new schools recruited as Orang-U-Friends sponsors in coming weeks.

Got something to tell us?

If you have information you would like to share with other orangutan enthusiasts, please email Belinda Morris at:

editor@orangutans.com.au

Indonesia Begins Plan to Save Orangutans

The Associated Press, Dec 2007

Indonesia has begun a 10-year program to save endangered orangutans from extinction by protecting tropical jungle habitat from logging, mining and palm oil plantations, its president has said.

The plan, revealed on the sidelines of the Bali climate change conference, aims to preserve up to 2.5 million acres of forest on the Indonesian half of Borneo island.

As many as 50,000 orangutans have been lost over the past 35 years due to shrinking habitat, and "if this continues, these majestic creatures will likely face extinction by 2050," Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said. "To save orangutans, we must save the forests," he said. Two thirds of Borneo's 74 million acres of primary forest have already been destroyed and environmental groups say the remainder is disappearing at a rate of 300 football fields per hour.

The Nature Conservancy, a coalition of non-governmental groups, pledged \$1 million to the program, which "could lead to 9,800 orangutans being saved," said Erik Meijaard, a senior ecologist for the coalition. Rapid deforestation has directly and indirectly led to around 3,000 orangutan deaths every year since 1970, the organization said.

Extracted from: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/10/AR2007121000403.html>

Translated by Sabrina Carrasco Heiermann



Studies conclude that biofuels are not so green

Almost all biofuels used today cause more greenhouse gas emissions than conventional fuels if the pollution caused by producing these "green" fuels is taken into account, studies have concluded.

These studies for the first time take a comprehensive look at the emissions effects of the huge amount of land that is being converted to cropland globally to support biofuels development. The destruction of natural ecosystems - whether rain forest in the tropics or grasslands in South America - increases the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere because the ecosystems are the planet's natural sponge for carbon emissions.

"When you take this into account, most of the biofuel that people are using or planning to use would probably increase greenhouse gasses substantially," said Timothy Searchinger, the lead author of one of the studies and a researcher on the environment and economics at Princeton University.

Plant-based fuels were originally billed as better than fossil fuels because the carbon released when they are burned is balanced by the carbon absorbed when the plants grow. But even that equation proved overly simplistic because the process of turning plants into fuel causes its own emissions - through refining and transport, for example.

The land-use issue makes the balance sheet far more problematic: The clearance of grassland releases 93 times the amount of greenhouse gas that would be saved by the fuel made annually on that land, said Joseph Fargione, a scientist at the Nature Conservancy. "So for the next 93 years, you're making climate change worse, just at the time when we need to be bringing down carbon emissions."

The European Union and a number of national governments have recently tried to address the land-use issue with proposals for regulations stipulating that imported biofuels cannot come from land that was previously rain forest, for example. But even with such restrictions, Searchinger's study said, the purchase of biofuels in Europe and the United States leads indirectly to the destruction of natural habitats. If vegetable oil prices go up globally, as they have because of increased demand for biofuel crops, new land is inevitably cleared as farmers in developing countries switch production. Crops from old plantations and fields go to Europe for biofuels, but new fields and plantations are created to feed people at home.

International environmental groups and the United Nations responded cautiously to the studies, saying that biofuels could still be useful. "We don't want a total public backlash that would prevent us from getting the potential benefits," said Nicholas Nuttall, spokesman for the UN Environment Program. "There was an unfortunate effort to dress up biofuels as the silver bullet of climate change," he said. "We fully believe that if biofuels are to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem, there urgently needs to be better sustainability criterion."

Alex Kaat, a spokesman for the group Wetlands International, said: "If the whole point of biofuels directives was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we've found out that most biofuels are not really better than conventional fuels at that."

Extracted from: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/02/07/healthscience/biofuel.php>

By Elisabeth Rosenthal - February 2008, The International Herald Tribune

Donations to BOS Australia 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:

**Borneo Orangutan Survival (BOS) Australia
16 Varman Crt, Nunawading, VIC 3131**

call us **(03) 9877 0377** to arrange direct debit or credit card donation.