



BOS Australia
primates helping primates

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News from Nyaru Menteng - Comings and goings at Nyaru Menteng

Nyaru Menteng - Borneo Orangutan Survival's rescue and rehabilitation centre in Indonesian Borneo - has recently welcomed the arrival of four young orangutans from West Kalimantan. There are no rehabilitation facilities in West Kalimantan, and with all other facilities full, it was agreed that Nyaru Menteng would accommodate the youngsters.

All were victims of the illegal pet trade. The first three arrivals, Frengky, Thomas and Caleb, are aged between two and three years of age, and were confiscated by the Natural Resource Conservation Agency (BKSDA) of the Forestry Department in Indonesia.

The Centre for Orangutan Protection (COP) made arrangements to transport the orangutans by air to Jakarta and then on to Palangka Raya. The three orangutans travelled well and were soon happily settled at Nyaru Menteng.

In July, the three were joined by an even younger baby, Kerrie. She too was a victim of the illegal pet trade and, with the assistance of the local Forestry Department, was confiscated from a village family. She then undertook the long journey from West Kalimantan by plane and truck. Thanks to COP and Orangutan Appeal UK for making these transfers possible. Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg with at least 50 more orangutans needing rescue from the illegal pet trade.

Just as we welcomed new arrivals, so there were farewells. June saw the successful release of 25 orangutans into a protected area in the wild. Almost all of these had been rescued from oil palm plantations and were able to be released after a health check, but without need for an extensive rehabilitation process.

Visit www.orangutans.com.au for the full story of the release.

New quarantine enclosures completed and upgrades to veterinary facilities



Some of the babies at play.

Both welders and technicians at Nyaru Menteng, Suripno and Kusmosnir, led the project works so the cages fulfilled the quality and requirements needed. These technicians have been trained by welders from Australia as a part of a skill exchange program funded by BOS Australia.

Jessica McKelson, Senior Zookeeper at Melbourne Zoo's Orangutan Sanctuary, recently returned from 3½ weeks at Nyaru Menteng where she saw many new developments. The quarantine facilities at the midway stage of the rehabilitation process have been completed with the development of new interconnecting cages funded by the World Society for the Protection of Animals. These cages are fully functioning with orangutans in each facility and will provide some relief in accommodating all the orangutans currently in the rehabilitation centre.

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Photo: Centre for Orangutan Protection

Can we rely on you?

The cost of running the various BOS Foundation projects in Borneo amounts to over AUD\$3.5m annually. These costs include care for the animals at the various centres, environmental conservation work and law enforcement costs, and the employee expenses for those working directly with the projects.

The continued operation of the projects is reliant on donor support from the various BOS affiliates around the world. Here at BOS Australia, we offer financial support through holding fundraisers and through seeking donations from the public.

We now have the facility to accept monthly donations by credit card. Regular gifts enable us to plan and commit to longer term projects knowing that we will be able to support them in the future. They also keep our administrative and postage costs down so that more money can go directly to the projects.

If you would like to join our team of committed supporters, please go to the donations page on our website (<https://www.orangutans.com.au/shopper/Donation.aspx>) or you can complete the form in our brochure and return it to us. This is available for downloading from the website or by ringing our office on (03) 9877 0377.

Thank you for your support.

Recommended reading

While not all of us were able to hear Willie Smits speak on his recent visit, everyone can still read the book he spoke about, *Thinkers of the Jungle*. (See article on this page.)

The book offers readers more than just another coffee-table book of endearing photographs. It outlines in often graphic detail the unfolding tragedy which, if unchecked, will see orangutans soon become extinct in the wild.

While confronting in presenting the facts, the book also offers fascinating insights into the lives and culture of orangutans, including their ability to adapt to changed circumstances. It also outlines how the Samboja Lestari model offers hope of a solution for communities, orangutans, other wildlife and the broader issue of climate change.

For your copy of *Thinkers of the Jungle*, call our office on (03) 9877 0377 or order online at:

<http://www.orangutans.com.au/Orangutan-Survival/Thinkers-of-The-Jungle-Book.aspx>

Price is \$60 plus postage.

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Jessica worked with the technicians helping to develop innovative programs to keep the orangutans mentally and physically stimulated whilst in captivity. These included all the orangutans from Thailand that were confiscated a few years back.

A further 25 new quarantine facilities were being built at Nyaru Menteng with half already completed by the time Jessica left the project. The old quarantine cages were inadequate to house orangutans and had not been updated since the project commenced. Similarly, information cages housing orangutans with hepatitis are being repaired and reinforced by external contractors. The first of these cages has been completed and work has started on the second. This project has been funded by donations from Australian supporters.

Due to the large number of orangutans that are being cared for by the project, immediate upgrades and expansions of the veterinary department were in desperate need. Health care is a top priority with so many animals needing care. New additions to the veterinary clinic include an isolation clinic and a laboratory. Both these clinics were nearing completion. Orangutans that are extremely ill and need 24 hour attention will be cared for in the isolation clinic while the laboratory will facilitate the analysis and study of test results from samples taken such as blood, faecal and urine.

Willie Smits launches *Thinkers of the Jungle*

BOS Australia was fortunate to host Willie Smits on his visit to Australia in May to launch the magnificent new book, *Thinkers of the Jungle*, which he co-wrote with journalist Gerd Schuster and photographer Jay Ullal. This is 320 pages of essential reading for anyone with an interest in orangutans.

The book has received very positive reviews both in Australia and internationally and the audiences were captivated by selected anecdotes about these intriguing beings who continue to surprise us with their ability to adapt and learn new skills.

Willie spoke to audiences in both Melbourne and Sydney over three nights as well as giving numerous radio interviews. Supporters dug deep into their pockets at a dinner and auction in Sydney and book sales at the Sydney and Melbourne launches were strong, resulting in very successful fundraising over the three days. Thank you to all who attended the events. We hope you found it informative and thought-provoking and remember, if you haven't got your copy of *Thinkers of the Jungle* yet, it's available online from BOS Australia at: <http://www.orangutans.com.au/Orangutan-Survival/Thinkers-of-The-Jungle-Book.aspx> or by calling our office on (03) 9877 0377. Price is \$60 plus postage.



Willie and the Sydney Volunteers

If you missed hearing Willie speak, his interview with Richard Aedy on ABC Radio's Life Matters is on our website (<http://www.orangutans.com.au/Orangutan-News/Willie-Smits-visits-Australia.aspx>)

To our volunteers who put in a lot of work to ensure the events were successful, thank you so much. And finally, heartfelt thanks to Joan Pearson who, yet again, came to the support of the orangutans, hosting a very special dinner for Willie and guests.

Palm oil round-up

Over the last couple of months there have been some promising developments internationally but also a setback in Australia on the palm oil front.

The Good

On the heels of Greenpeace UK's release of the report 'How Unilever Palm Oil Suppliers are Burning up Borneo' and subsequent activist protests outside its UK headquarters, Unilever moved rapidly to declare that it supported a moratorium on any further deforestation for palm oil in Indonesia and promised that all palm oil used by Unilever would be sustainable by 2015.

A similar campaign by Greenpeace protestors in Italy has resulted in Ferrero, the manufacturer of Nutella and Ferrero Rocher, also agreeing to support the moratorium. Greenpeace has now focused its attention on the carbon liability attached to palm oil and targeted other major users including Nestle, Proctor & Gamble and Kraft as well as keeping up the pressure on Unilever.

Further evidence that public pressure can be effective came in late June with Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi declaring that the government will not allow clearing of forest areas for any new oil plantations. In making the declaration, Abdullah said that the government had decided to impose the ban to avert criticism that Malaysia is sacrificing its forest reserves and biodiversity for oil palm profits. He referred to "smear campaigns" by Western parties which had the potential to damage exports.

While this is another promising step forward, there is some concern that Malaysian companies will simply direct their investment into Indonesia where they are already very active. Of equal concern is the response from the states. Already the Chief Minister of Sarawak has said that that state will continue to open up forest land for oil palm plantations on the basis that the land had been targeted for agriculture since the 1950s.

The tide also seems to be turning on biofuels with two recent reports casting doubt on just how efficient they are in curbing climate change. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has stated that costly public support for biofuel production has but a limited impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and on improving energy security. In light of this it suggests a moratorium on expanding biofuel production makes sense. In the UK, the Gallagher report says the "negative impacts from biofuels are real and significant" and calls for the slowing of their introduction until policies are in place to direct production onto marginal or idle land – a recommendation that the Government has agreed to consult formally on.

The Bad

Unfortunately, the news from Australia was not so good. Despite a spirited campaign by Amanda Enright to bring about change to labelling requirements for palm oil in Australian food items, Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ) ruled that her application fell outside its mandate.

Amanda first lodged an application in October 2006 calling on FSANZ to require products containing palm oil to be labelled as such on the basis that the consumer has a right to be informed. In March 2008, she received a response indicating the application to be outside the scope of FSANZ's legal capacity.

Amanda again appealed to FSANZ on the basis that it had previously set a precedent in changing labelling for genetically modified foods to enable the consumer to be informed. This time she was backed up by requests from a number of organisations, including BOS Australia, who called for the application to be advanced for public consultation.

Unfortunately, FSANZ responded in June that it had no jurisdiction over international environmental issues and it therefore rejected the application.

While it seems this avenue is exhausted, we believe from our discussions with the public that many consumers do want to know whether a product contains palm oil. We may

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Primates helping primates

BOS Australia salutes Ben Dessen from Dural, NSW, who has raised \$2000 with more to come. Ben became aware of the orangutans' plight and the threat of palm oil after booking a holiday to Borneo.

Ben organised fundraisers at his school with a raffle and jellybean guessing competition raising \$1350. He then ran a wildlife show and cake stall at his younger sister Eliza's school and raised a further \$510. With other donations, he achieved his goal of \$2000 while also raising awareness through his story running on the front page of a local newspaper and covered in others.



Ben Dessen showing his love of all things wild

His enthusiasm is clearly infectious with Eliza having now convinced her class and teacher to adopt orangutan "Elisa".

Ben and his family left for Borneo in early July where he was hoping to see orangutans in the wild and to learn more about the situation they face.

Great job Ben!

A move in the right direction from the US entertainment industry

A group of orangutans who appeared in Hollywood films, television commercials and magazine advertisements is being relocated to Great Ape Trust of Iowa - a significant move that begins to close the curtain in the United States on the decades-long use of orangutans in the entertainment industry.

The first of the contingent, three year old Rocky and his 19 year old mother Katy, arrived at the Great Ape Trust in July with another four orangutans to be transferred from California in the coming months. They will then be integrated with current residents Azy, Knobi and Allie.

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now need to refocus efforts on manufacturers – some of which are already voluntarily disclosing palm oil in the ingredients. Of course our preference is that they use an alternative to palm oil.

How you can help

If you would like to find out more about palm oil and its impact, go to www.palmoilaction.org.au. Sample letters are provided so that you can take action in the fight to save orangutans from extinction. You can also download the petition requesting a change in labelling laws, gather signatures and return it to the address on the bottom of the page.

Background

Palm oil is the main vegetable oil consumed in the world today, accounting for 33% of all oils consumed globally. In the previous decade world palm oil consumption has more than doubled from around 16.7Mt in 1997/98 to over 40Mt in 2007/08 (USDA). This figure is estimated to surpass 70Mt by 2020.

Indonesia has nearly quadrupled output in the past decade from 5Mt in 1997/98 to around 18.3Mt in 2007/08 making it the largest producer of palm oil in the world, accounting for 45% of total world output. It is estimated that over 7m hectares is now planted in oil palm, a seven-fold increase since 1991. By 2020, Indonesia's plantations are expected to cover at least 16.5m hectares with some estimates putting this as high as 27m hectares (Friends of the Earth, Sawit Watch and LifeMosaic).

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is putting in place a certification process with the first certification expected by September 2008. The process takes into account a number of standards including legal compliance and environmental responsibility and conservation of bio-diversity. It is expected that there will be 1Mt of palm oil certified as sustainable by the end of 2008 out of a total global output of 40Mt.

Spain pushes for ape rights

A parliamentary environmental commission has urged the Spanish government to join the Great Apes Project. The project was founded in 1993 to ensure that “non-human hominids”, including chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos and orangutans, should enjoy the right to life, freedom and to not be tortured.

Should parliament ratify the Bill, it would become illegal to use apes in experiments that cause pain, in circuses or for other commercial purposes including television commercials and filming. It is also thought to represent the first time any national legislature has recognised such rights for non-humans.

Although it will be legal for apes to be kept in zoos, most Spanish zoos would require substantial improvements to bring facilities up to the required standard. Animal rights activists claim that 70 per cent of the 315 apes kept in Spanish zoos currently live in sub-human conditions.

BOS Australia goes green

BOS Australia was ably represented by a team of volunteers at the inaugural Going Green expo held over four days in Melbourne in June. BOS Australia was one of a number of conservation groups present.

This was a fundraising event as well as an opportunity to create further awareness about the impact of palm oil and the plight of orangutans. Visitors were generally well-informed on the palm oil issue and keen to see changes to labelling standards or a switch away from palm oil by manufacturers.



The younger generation learning about palm oil

Thank you to our volunteers who helped out– Karena Oldham, Debi Slinger, Christine Greiser, Ken Murray, Allison Smith, Michael Soleri, Debbie Carruthers and Thomas McDermid.

Want to volunteer?

We are always looking for volunteers to help in Australia. We need a broad range of skills or simply volunteers prepared to give up a few hours at events to spread the BOS word. Here are some of the areas where we are currently looking for a helping hand:

- Organising fundraising events. If you've got a bit of flair, get up and go, and an eye for detail, we have a job for you.
- Marketing skills. We would welcome input from anyone with marketing and/or not-for-profit fundraising experience.
- Teaching and or public speaking skills or if you have worked in the education field. Help us develop our Orang-U-Friends program.
- Assisting with the palm oil campaign. Can you help build a database of products that don't contain palm oil to help consumers in their purchasing decisions?

We are always happy to hear ways in which you could help BOS to help the orangutans. Please contact us at bos.volunteers@gmail.com or give us a call on (03) 9877 0377.

Got something to tell us?

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

contact@orangutans.com.au

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.