



Forest Chatter



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From the President...

Lone Dröscher Nielson has asked me to send big thanks to everyone involved in her Australian tour of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. I would like to add my gratitude to the helpers who made it work so smoothly and each of the donors who were lucky enough to attend.

We were all enthralled by Lone and amazed by the insights she brought us about orangutan behaviour. It was fantastic to tour with her and we met so many inspirational supporters, some of whose stories appear in this issue. We will use bigger halls and try to add visits to Perth and Adelaide next time for those who missed out.

We also thank the media for their huge support. I have never seen so much interest, especially from the ABC. They know a great story when they hear one. If you missed

the lectures, visit our homepage for Lone's personal message and links to more of her interviews. In particular the interview with Fran Kelly and the extended interview with Richard Aedy were enlightening.

One of the poignant messages that I took from Lone was just how individual and human orangutans are, making it all the more important that those that can be released, and those that cannot, get extra love and attention. More on sharing that love in a moment.

I was also fascinated to hear her talk about how the strongest and most successful orangutans, once back in the forest, are those who have experienced the deepest affection from their surrogate mothers when being prepared for release. Some orangutan experts have long held the view that it is prudent not to give orangutans preparing for release too much love as it will spoil them for the wild. Lone's experience seems to prove this wrong.

The incredible thing about the 150 releases over the past two years is that there has been only one loss. It is nice to know that orangutans, just like humans, do indeed thrive on love.

Back to the subject of sharing the love. Our Vice President, Lou Grossfeldt, has just spent five weeks in Borneo successfully working on a behavioural enrichment program to improve the lives of un-releasable orangutans. Dane, our social media expert also took the chance to visit. He has collected some captivating pictures and stories which you can see over the page.

Lone's visit to Australia and Lou's enrichment work in Borneo reminds us that our commitment to saving



orangutans is as vital as ever. There are over 700 orangutans still in captivity in our care centres in Borneo. It is only with your generosity that we can get many more of these animals back into the wild, and provide care for those that cannot go to forest homes.

The next time you hear from us will be our June tax appeal. One of only two appeals we run in a year, this is our most important. We are grateful for your continuing support.

Tony Gilding
President BOS Australia

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





Meet our youngest fundraisers

We would like to introduce two inspiring young people who are making their own mark in orangutan conservation — Jonah and Brett — and their fantastic, supportive mums.



Jonah

Jonah, 10, and his mother drove from the Gold Coast to attend Lone's Brisbane presentation and it was clear that Jonah was very excited to meet his idol. Jonah has been an avid conservationist and animal lover for much of his life. He and his family run a sanctuary for animals with special needs and care for around 60 animals. Jonah has already been very committed to the plight of orangutans for many years and is especially knowledgeable about palm oil. According to his mum he often stops people in the supermarket when they put groceries with palm oil in their trolley!

When asked what he loves about orangutans he says, "their cute faces and the look in their eyes. I hate the thought of the forest being chopped down by greedy men for palm oil, so the orangutans lose their home".

Jonah has big plans on the back of Lone's inspiring talk. He has an information stall once a month in his local area to share information with the community and raise funds

for BOS. Jonah has held a number of stalls already and has raised over \$1000 already. Jonah's ultimate goal is to raise \$10,000 — the cost of raising and releasing an orangutan back to the wild. Jonah says, "you are never too young to help and you are not on your own".

Now he has solicited help from the global community with his own Facebook page '**Jonah's Forest Friends**'. On the first day Jonah started his page with about 55 'likes' and by the end of the week he had 3700 'likes'. He now has over 4000 and counting and people are donating to his cause. He is now also the first ever Youth Ambassador for Palm Oil Investigations. Jonah is relishing sharing information about his orange forest friends so be inspired and 'like' Jonah's page or donate to his fundraising efforts at www.mycause.com.au/page/jonahsforestfriendscampaign



Brett

Brett and his family are very committed to the conservation of orangutans. Brett had the unique opportunity to interact with an orangutan on a visit to Borneo in 2012 and is now hooked! Brett decided that turning six called for an orangutan-themed party which also provided an opportunity to raise money for orangutan conservation.



You are never too young to help and you aren't on your own

Brett wanted to have a party that was fun but without destroying the environment. So, no plastic plates, wrappers and other disposables.

Brett and his friends enjoyed palm-oil free snacks like fruit sticks, a sausage sizzle, and of course an orangutan cake presented by a "real" orangutan (Brett's mum). As with all good parties there were classic party games like three-legged and egg and spoon races, and an orangutan-themed pass-the-parcel. Party-goers contributed \$450 on the day. The ultimate gift at this party was contributing to saving orangutans.

We asked Brett why he thought the orangutan party was a good idea and he said, "baby orangutans are left without their mothers when their trees are cut down to make palm oil and it makes me really sad, just because people eat foods they won't give up on. I want the kind people to take care of the baby orangutans because they don't have mums anymore and no forest to live in."

Help Jonah, Brett and BOS by donating online at www.orangutans.com.au

Trip of a lifetime...

We asked Dane, our social media coordinator, to give us some highlights from his recent trip to Borneo. He was there to document the work at Samboja Lestari and had the trip of a lifetime.

Samboja Lestari, what an amazing place, an oasis in the jungle. It is well worth packing your bags and heading over to see first-hand the impressive and important work that the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation is doing.

I was fortunate enough to spend six nights staying at the eco-lodge, literally located high in the sky, up near the clouds it seemed, so you have a great vantage point over the orangutan islands and can always hear the dulcet tones of the orangutans calling!

While Samboja Lestari is home to over 200 orangutans, both release candidates and unreleasables, it is also home to about 50 sun bears. Like many of the orangutans these sun bears were kept as pets and then, as they have grown, were unable to be controlled by their 'owners'. They have since been rescued but unfortunately cannot be released so they will spend the rest of their lives at Samboja.

Over the six days of my eco-adventure I spent many hours watching the orangutans on the island, and getting to see the way the individuals interact with each other. Being a father of an eight-month old, it was just like sitting and watching him.

It really makes you appreciate the work of the orangutan baby-sitters when you see how child-like the orangutans are and how much care and attention they need in order to be taught the essential life skills that they have missed out on now that they are orphans.

I also had the opportunity to be involved in making some of the enrichment that is handed out to the orangutans on a daily basis. Various items such as pieces of bamboo stuffed with a mixture of porridge and honey, frozen juice ice blocks, or small cardboard boxes filled with bamboo leaves provide essential daily enrichment to the orangutans.

While the adventure is understandably very orangutan-focused, you can also go on numerous tours, both on-site, such as taking a trek through some of the walking tracks, as well as heading out to Black River for a cruise where you can be lucky enough to see Proboscis monkeys, or head out to Sungai Wain forest, the original release site.

All of the activities are available and organised from the staff at the lodge and you always have a guide who is well-versed in making sure you understand as much as you can about the location.

Once you leave the lodge and head to the airport for the trip home, it is normal to reflect on the experience you have just had. I have come home with a new level of understanding and appreciation for all involved.



Lou Grossfeldt and the many staff at the lodge work tirelessly to do all they can to ensure the best standard of living is given to both the orangutans and the sun bears. They should be highly-commended for the work they do, especially with the current enrichment program being established.

I would highly recommend to anyone that is keen to experience Samboja Lestari to stop thinking about it, and just do it! Really, what is a week out of your life? The memories and experiences of a life time...

See more of Dane's adventures at www.facebook.com/bosaustralia



Photos © Dane Squance



Volunteer profile

One of our creative volunteers, Sandra Griffin is an avid knitter and has put her considerable skills to good use by knitting jumpers and blankets for the orangutans at Nyaru Mentang.

You might think that in a tropical climate like Borneo a woolly jumper would be the last thing you would need. But the orangutans who come to the conservation centre are often very ill, fragile and without their mothers; and a warm woolly jumper or blanket is a comfort we have all relished and can appreciate.

Sandra first became aware of Lone's work and the plight of orangutans about four years ago. She says, "it broke my heart to see them in their plastic baskets without their mother's fur to cling too".

So Sandra took some left-over wool from her knitting business and decided to knit some comforting woollies. With help from Tony Gilding these items were transported to Nyaru Mentang.

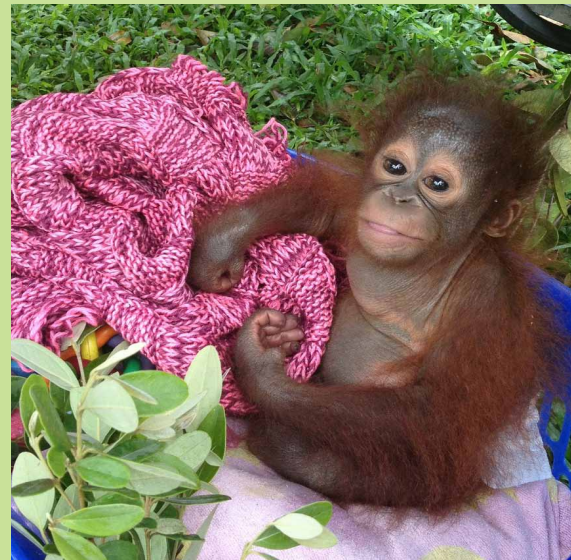
Sandra was also able to get some sponsorship from King's Furniture to buy more wool and has been knitting ever since.

Sandra brought some of her orangutan couture to our Brisbane BOS event so Lone could take them back to her charges. Lone's 'model' orangutan looks very fetching in these colourful threads but the real star is Sura who you may recall came to the centre as a very sick infant.

She clearly loves her blanket and it certainly makes her little plastic basket more homely. "You look into those eyes and you are lost. If we can't help them what future do we have as a species?", Sandra says. Her work is truly a labour of love and shows the variety of ways we can all assist BOS.

So if you can knit some woolly items Sandra would always love some more willing helpers.

Email us and we will put you in touch; contact@orangutans.com.au.



It's that time again...

Tax time is coming and there is only one way to make it bearable and that's to donate to save orangutans! The money from your donation goes to the care and eventual release of orangutans back to the wild. And all donations are tax deductible.

For example, you can adopt a beautiful baby orangutan today for yourself or someone special for \$120.00 per year, (one off or ongoing), \$32.50 per quarter (ongoing) or \$12.00 per month (ongoing). You can also make a

one-off donation or buy virtual certificates. Virtual certificates are very handy if you have forgotten someone's birthday!

So go **online** and donate before June 30!



BOS Australia
primates helping primates

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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 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. 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.

www.orangutans.com.au