



*Orangutan
Appeal UK*

Orangutan Appeal UK

News

Issue 41 - August 2021

A Message from our Chairlady



As lockdown is being eased in the UK this summer everyone is looking forward to being able to socialise a little more and even being allowed to travel to chosen holiday resorts. However, in Sabah, Malaysia the latest movement control order (MCO) is still in force (June 2021) and the

country's borders are still closed to most foreign travellers which has had a huge impact on Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre.

A good number of our supporters originate from the tourist trade in Sabah when visiting the orangutans at Sepilok and understandably falling in love with these beautiful apes but for the past year Sepilok's doors have been closed to visitors due to the pandemic. However, the youngsters in the nursery still need feeding and caring for and if it were not for the Appeal's brilliant team in Sepilok continuing to work through this crisis things would have been very difficult.

But, our local team in Sabah still need to be paid and with no tourist income we are reliant on our supporters' adoptions being renewed and donations being made – so a big thank you to all of you who are renewing your adoptions and continuing your support for our work – we are truly grateful!

Sue Sheward MBE

Endangered Species Conservation Unit

In 2012 Sabah Wildlife Department (SWD) began discussing the idea of a brand new unit dedicated to the conservation and rehabilitation of endangered species in Sabah. Now, almost ten years later, this vision has become a reality and the Endangered Species Conservation Unit (ESCU) has officially been launched. Based in Lahad Datu on the eastern coast of Sabah, the central location will be key to the success of the new unit as it is positioned close to areas high in animal-human conflict.

The ESCU is a government led initiative under the management of Dr Sen Nathan with additional support and funding from organisations including Orangutan Appeal UK. Their main role will be to provide resources and expertise on the successful implementation of action plans to conserve some of Borneo's most vulnerable wildlife including the Bornean orangutan, banteng, proboscis monkey, Sunda clouded leopard, Malayan sun bear and Sunda pangolin.

The new unit will also be combining forces with other stake holders to help manage a number of conservation projects already underway in Borneo, such as the Sabah Pangolin Sanctuary and Research Institute (SAPSARI) and a grass planting project which will aim to improve wildlife corridors for mega-herbivores like Bornean elephants and our good friends, the orangutans.

There will be particular focus on easing conflict between humans and wildlife which is currently one of the main causes of animal fatalities in Borneo. As wildlife habitats are disturbed due to agriculture and expanding human presence, wild and potentially dangerous animals have been pushed out of their homes and onto the land of humans where they are capable of destroying crops and the livelihoods of locals.

We are so pleased to be able to continue our support for the SWD with this exciting new venture, which we have no doubt will have a positive impact on the iconic and threatened species of Borneo.



ESCU Logo



Species to be helped by ESCU

Sepilok News

Here is our Supervisor, Lineker's latest report on some of the orangutans at the Centre.

Bidu Bidu – Male - 8 years old

Bidu's visits to the centre are becoming less frequent. This is good news as it means he is starting to become more independent and finding his own food and shelter. When he does return he always takes an interest in any new activity, such as keeping a close eye on the



Bidu Bidu

maintenance team carrying out repairs. Bidu is very self-assured and is not afraid to get into an argument with the older males, he needs to be careful though as this could land him in trouble if he gets over-confident!

Beryl – Female - 10 years old

Beryl has now been living freely in the reserve for over a year. She continues to be very independent and is in good health and her climbing and nest building skills are excellent. When she was younger, she was very dependent on her human carers and enjoyed their attention. Nowadays, she is much more self-reliant. She spends a lot of time with 7 year old Alagu. The pair are often seen leading some of the younger orangutans into the forest and teaching them to find wild food. Beryl is a wonderful mentor and teacher.



Beryl

Mimi and her baby boy

Mimi's baby finally has a name! He's been named Putera, which means prince in Malay. Putera has progressed in leaps and bounds and is growing in independence. He is not afraid to venture a small distance away from his mum and enjoys playing with other babies at indoor nursery, although Mimi is always close by keeping a watchful eye on him.



Mimi and Putera

Sepilok – Male - 7 years old

Weighing in at 25kg Sepilok is a healthy weight for a male orangutan of his age. Since his arrival at outdoor nursery in 2018 his survival skills are developing well and he has found good teachers in Bidu Bidu and Tombi. One fear he is yet to conquer is that of wild dominant male, Malim. Weighing around 3 times as much as Sepilok he can appear very intimidating. Whenever Sepilok sees him he makes a swift escape and won't come back to the nursery until he is sure Malim has left.



Sepilok

Koko – Female - 6 years old

Unlike Sepilok, Koko is not at all afraid of Malim. The unlikely couple appear to have formed a close friendship. Malim occasionally visits the outdoor nursery and helps himself to some of the fruit and vegetables on offer, he especially likes coconut and will always share one with her. Koko is becoming increasingly independent and is now choosing to sleep outside in the forest most nights with her friend Ospie.



Malim and Koko



Front Cover Picture

Matamis and her baby called Matta.

Photo courtesy of Dr Sen Nathan

Sepilok News continued

Despite the Centre having been largely closed to visitors for well over a year, our staff have continued to work during this challenging time. Here is an overview of what goes on helping to prepare the orangutans for a life back in the wild.

Indoor Nursery is where the babies are taught basic skills they need to survive in the wild. Here they are shown how to climb in the jungle gym, find and identify different food types, and how to build a nest. They will spend between 3 and 5 years here before progressing to the next stage.



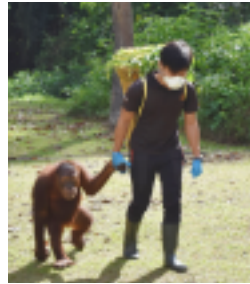
Ibri taking the babies to nursery

There are currently seven babies going through their rehabilitation at the indoor nursery, including Nami and Zorro who are available for adoption. Their primary carers are **Ibri, Bonny and Sylvester**.

At **Outdoor Nursery** the amount of time the youngsters spend indoors is reduced to a minimum and the orangutans are encouraged to roam and explore

the forest. There is much less human intervention and it will typically take 2 to 3 years to gain the necessary skills before they start living independently in the reserve.

There are currently nine orangutans going through the final stage of rehabilitation, including Tombi and new graduate Canyon! Supervisor, **Lineker**, along with



Arnold and Canyon going to forest school

Victor and Arnold are responsible for the care of the orangutans here.

Clinic is where all the orangutans receive their weekly health check. Any ill or injured orangutans will also be treated and cared for here. All our staff are on-hand 24 hours a day and provide round the clock care - be it for an orangutan or any other species in need.

Feeding platforms are located within the Kabili reserve. These encourage some of the juvenile orangutans at outdoor nursery to explore deeper into the forest as well as providing supplementary food to any of the semi-wild and wild orangutans who need it. Team member, **Pamik**, is responsible for distribution of fruit and vegetables to the platforms, and for monitoring the health of the orangutans in the reserve.

As well as the hands-on care our staff provide they also prepare the orangutans' food, collect branches, leaves and food from the forest, and create enrichment and training activities. There is a lot to do and we are very grateful for our team's hard work and dedication.



Weekly weigh-in for Koko

Invitation to join our Educational Talks for Schools and Clubs

Schools and interest groups are able to book virtual talks by contacting our education and communications officer John O'Malley, all we ask in return is that you take out an adoption of one of our baby orangutans. John would be delighted to talk to your school, organisation or group over a live video link. Sessions normally include a talk, a short video about our work and plenty of time for questions and answers. These normally last around 30-45 minutes but can be lengthened or shortened according to your needs. We are more than happy to do presentations for our supporters anywhere in the world that are happy to have the talk during the daytime in the UK.

John has spoken at many schools, businesses, conferences and interest groups such as U3A and Rotary clubs. He likes to make the sessions as interactive as possible enabling the audience to get involved and ask questions on the topics discussed.

The talks cover orangutans, Orangutan Appeal UK's work over the last twenty years, conservation issues in Borneo and the work being done to resolve these.

The presentations for schools are tailored to the age of the children and are particularly suitable for children covering environmental issues, rainforests, endangered species etc. as part of their syllabus.

The talks allow the children to hear directly from an organisation working to resolve the complex issues that

they are learning about and to ask questions about orangutans, the rainforest environment, the current situation on the ground in Borneo and the work being done to save the critically endangered orangutans of Borneo. This can widen the children's understanding beyond the syllabus and inspire them to take a wider interest in conservation and the environment.

Talks are normally conducted over Zoom, Skype or Google classroom but can be adapted to whichever video conferencing software your school or organisation prefers to use.

If you are interested in arranging a video presentation with John please contact him directly at admin10@orangutan-appeal.org.uk or contact us by phone on 01590 623443 during office hours.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!



St Lukes School with John in 2019



John conducting a talk

How It All Began



Sue and one of the orphans

People often ask us why and how our Chairperson and Founder, Susan Sheward MBE, started Orangutan Appeal UK. Here is Sue's story.

In 1986, I had my first close encounter with orangutans in the beautiful set-up of Gerald Durrell's conservation project. It was absolutely captivating. For an hour and a half, I watched young orangutans swinging on a rope while their mum nursed the baby. In the next room, the daddy orangutan was enjoying a lazy afternoon. It was just like a human home. Suddenly, the toddler slipped off the rope and landed on his mummy and the baby. Everyone screeched and the daddy fell off his perch, frightened! It was very comical and so humanised. It touched my heart.

Fifteen years and lots of research later, I decided to go to Borneo. "Please can I come and volunteer for you?" I wrote to the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. They happily accepted and a few weeks later, I was on the plane! Sepilok turned out to be a tiny operation, with only one house, one vet and one ranger. The orangutans' conditions were extremely sad – shut in cages, with no space to move and play. The local government didn't have enough money to help them. This is when I decided that I would build a playpen for those poor baby orangutans.

I came back to England and started raising money. After many visits to Chester Zoo and various organisations, I learned what it would take to build an enclosure, and raised £5,000. My next challenge was to get government permission to do local conservation work. As I planned my next trip and was still waiting for permission, I called the director at 2am (9am in Borneo). "My goodness, Sue!" said the director, "You never give up! I suppose I had better say you can do it." And that was it; I was back in Borneo with two cage builders from Chester Zoo and two more people to help. Within a week, we had built an enclosure the size of a big room. The baby orangutans went absolutely crazy when they finally got to

play and swing there. It was fantastic! That marked the beginning of the charity Orangutan Appeal UK, of which I am founder and chairperson.

Two decades on and Orangutan Appeal UK is flourishing. The charity is constantly applying for grants to fund new enclosures, veterinary equipment and staff. There's a hugely successful adoption scheme and for 9 years we ran a ground-breaking research project monitoring orangutans' movements and rehabilitation when they're released back into the wild.

The first release we did was a huge male orangutan, called King Ghaz. It was important to release King Ghaz far from human habitation and deep into the rainforest. So the only way this could be achieved was by helicopter. The release was a huge success and the following year we translocated another male called Missouri, followed by two more males and two females.

Since setting up the charity we have raised an amazing £3 million GBP which has enabled us to install new enclosures at the Centre and provide essential veterinary equipment. As time went on we provided brand new 4x4 vehicles to enable us to carry out rescues and releases deep in the forest and much, much more.

I am very proud of the fact that we have helped save so many critically endangered orangutans and when I was told that I was to be awarded an MBE I was utterly amazed. Last year was our 20th Anniversary for the charity and I was most honoured again when I heard I was to be made a "Datuk" which is the Malaysian equivalent to a Dame!

I'm so grateful to have been given the opportunity to help and indeed make a difference.



The new enclosure



The first orphans Sue cared for



Missouri

Wildlife Rescue Unit (WRU) Update

The WRU play an essential part in the conservation of Sabah's wildlife. The WRU vets and rangers deal with a wide variety of animals including orangutans, elephants, crocodiles, monkeys, pangolins and sun-bears, to name just a few. Their duties include rescues, translocations, treatment and monitoring, as well as conducting research, enforcement and increasing public awareness.

The following report is a selection of the animals they helped in just one month.

As humans encroach further on animals' wild habitats, clashes between people and wildlife are quite common. One of the main complaints received by the WRU is monkeys causing a nuisance on farmland and in towns. The team have humane cages which they use to trap the monkeys who are then released in an appropriate location. In one month the WRU were called out 11 times to either rescue, monitor or translocate monkeys.

A police officer received a report of a pangolin that had been attacked by a dog so he contacted the WRU. Two rangers were dispatched to recover the pangolin, which was then immediately taken to the WRU veterinarian at Sepilok. A full health check was conducted and the pangolin was found to have two bite wounds but was alert and responsive. It was nursed back to health and then released by OAU team member, Pamik, into a protected forest reserve. The WRU rescued, treated and successfully released a further 3 pangolins that month.

Clowyi, the green sea turtle, made the headlines in Malaysia. She had been seen floating and unable to dive into the sea. Fortunately, she was rescued and handed over to the WRU but was found to have a condition called floater syndrome, which may have been caused by the ingestion of plastic. This condition can be fatal. However, with veterinary care from the WRU she made a full recovery and amazingly after one month they were able to release her back into the sea.

A common issue is the invasion of elephants onto agricultural land. This can have devastating consequences for both elephants and humans so the WRU are critical in helping to

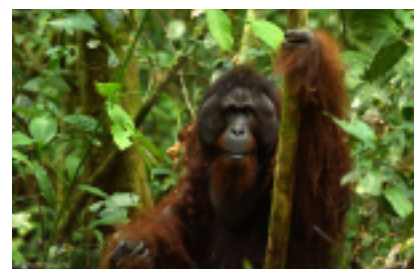
mitigate problems. This can involve spending many hours or days tracking the movement of herds of elephants and if necessary, encouraging or translocating them safely away from human activity. On two occasions, the team found evidence of elephants being in the area but were unable to locate them.

Other animals saved by the team included a Wallace hawk eagle that was hit by a car and sent to Sepilok to recuperate, a crocodile trapped in a storm drain, and a baby Sunda crows owl found on a golf course. The team were called out 44 times and came to the aid of 23 different species!

Orangutan Appeal UK has been supporting the WRU for over 4 years. Their operating costs are approximately £20,000GBP per month. If you would like to help us with this essential work PLEASE consider donating, NO MATTER HOW SMALL IT ALL HELPS.



WRU vet with baby pangolin



Orangutan translocation

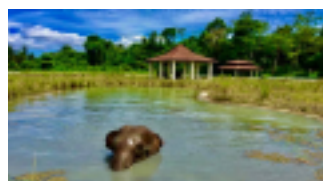


Orangutan helicopter translocation

New Bornean Elephant Centre

Four Bornean pygmy elephants have recently been transferred from Sepilok Rehabilitation Centre, which has been their temporary home for the past few years, to their new home at the Borneo Elephant Sanctuary (BES), in the Kinabatangan wildlife reserve. The elephants were rescued between 2015 and 2016 and have been cared for by WRU rangers at Sepilok, for the past 5 years. Their names are Budak, Adun, Dumpas and Danum. They join three other elephants already living at the sanctuary, which is set in 1,214 hectares of forest and includes large paddocks and areas for roaming.

Budak was found wandering alone by plantation workers in Kinabatangan, while Adun was rescued in Telupid after he had fallen into a pond with his herd nowhere to be seen. Dumpas was found in Tawau by the roadside separated from his herd, and Danum was found alone in Lahad Datu.



Taking a swim



Exploring their new home

The sanctuary is not yet fully completed but there are plans for an upgraded clinic, additional staff quarters, and a cultivation programme to provide napier grass within a wildlife corridor to supplement the elephants' diet.



Dumpas

Dr Sen Nathan confirmed the elephants are settling in well and are curious to explore their new surroundings. He expressed his thanks to Orangutan Appeal UK for our assistance and the contributions we have made to the rangers' salaries and medical costs towards the care of the elephants.

There are fewer than 1,500 Bornean pygmy elephants left in the wild. Borneo Elephant Sanctuary is dedicated to the care of injured, displaced and orphaned elephants. Many elephant migration routes have been disrupted due to agriculture and ever expanding human land use. This often leads to human-elephant conflict. Therefore, the work carried out by the WRU and BES is critical to their survival as a species. We are pleased to be able to support them in their mission.

Remembering Orangutan Appeal UK in your will



Hope and her 1 year old daughter Doris

If the orangutan is close to your heart and you feel passionate about their fight for future survival, please consider leaving a gift in your will, whatever the size, to Orangutan Appeal UK. This will ensure your ideals will continue to live on

through our tireless work, campaigning and endeavour.

Our pledge to you is that your very kind donation will go towards making a lasting impact on not only the survival of this most beautiful ape from extinction but also help in

the preservation of their home - the most incredible and vital, yet sadly diminishing habitat, the rainforest.

Legacies are a truly inspirational way of helping to ensure the survival of this critically endangered species.

However, leaving a gift to charity will always require careful and informed deliberation. So should you need any further information, please call us in confidence, your privacy will always be respected. Thank you.

The only information needed by your legal advisor is our registered address and our charity number:

Orangutan Appeal UK, Charbury, Orestan Lane, Effingham, Surrey, KT24 5SN

Charity Number 1138538

Please call us on 01590 623443 or email info@orangutan-appeal.org.uk

Borneo Nature Foundation (BNF) Update

In our last update we described the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic and our concerns for how it may worsen the rate of forest loss across Indonesia. Sadly, data from March 2020 shows that forest loss across Indonesia increased by 130% compared to the three-year average. This means it is more important that ever for BNF to continue implementing our reforestation and firefighting projects, supported by Orangutan Appeal UK (OAUk), in order to safeguard and restore the critical region of the Sebangau National Park for the benefit of orangutans, other wildlife, local communities and the global climate.

In December 2020, BNF launched its ambitious new '1 Million Trees' campaign. This community-led reforestation project aims to grow, plant, monitor and protect 1 million trees over 2,500 hectares by 2025. Community members from local villages are highly involved in this project, managing nurseries on their own land to grow the large number of seedlings needed for reforestation. BNF purchases these seedlings from the community members once ready for replanting, providing families with an additional source of income. In early 2021, we established 2 new nurseries, bringing the current total to 8 and benefiting 54 families.

In addition to these reforestation activities, BNF supports community nursery members to use the nurseries to



Members of community nurseries harvesting their crops

grow economically valuable crops and develop effective growing techniques. We run three activities per week which include: crop maintenance and care, permaculture techniques, nursery management, and freshwater fish cultivation. We hope to expand the community nurseries scheme and continue this successful development of peat-friendly livelihoods.

At the time of writing, Indonesia has been in the wet season, and the consequent lack of active fires has given us the opportunity to develop our firefighting strategy. January saw the launch of a new drone centre hosted at the University of Palangka Raya, and a firefighting network coordination meeting to develop strategies and requirements for the regional network of community firefighting teams. The CIMTROP patrol and firefighting team have continued to monitor the forest for fire and other illegal activities, such as timber harvesting and hunting.

With the support of OAUk, we are very happy to be able to continue our important reforestation work and firefighting strategy, despite the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are excited to upscale the 1 Million Trees project and reach more communities to join the project. With our advances in firefighting strategy, we feel ready to tackle whatever this year's dry season brings, although we hope that our preparations do not have to be implemented!

Dr Mark Harrison

Borneo Nature Foundation



Community Patrol Team monitoring the forest edges for illegal activity

Thank You Supporters

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has adopted, donated and fundraised over the last very challenging 6 months. We really couldn't continue without your support.

Business Partners

We would like to thank our wonderful business partners who continue to support us. We have received donations from Banana Tree Restaurants, SYTO International who featured in our previous newsletter, along with continued generous donations from **N'eat Healthy, Centaur Foods, ABN Consultancy, Strip Distribution Ltd and Extincts CIC.**

We also extend our gratitude to **Jim Hurman of JIT Ltd, Rebecca De Souza, Astro Ape, John Gurney and Joachim Gurt** who have all chosen to make much appreciated large donations in the previous six months.

Fundraisers

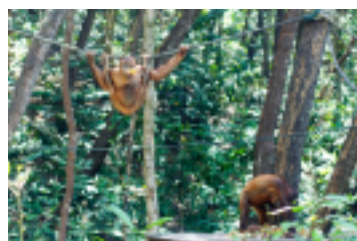
Thank you to all our amazing fundraisers participating in a variety of events and challenges. Special mentions to **Lissie Harris** who cut off her long hair and raised over £1,300! **Rosalie and Max Dale** who asked for donations in lieu of wedding gifts, **Hannah Arnold** for completing the Royal Parks Virtual Half Marathon, and **Rachel Unicomb** for donating the profits from sales of her children's book.

Maple Leaf Kingsley International School raised awareness and funds through their "Ape-ril Month Celebration" with many of the students also adopting an orangutan. One adoptive parent was delighted with her adoption and described Nami as **"having a smile that can light up a gloomy day and despite her miserable life before Sepilok she's now the happiest ape she's ever seen!"**

Shangri-La Director Visits Sepilok

Sepilok was able to open its doors to the public earlier this year, albeit only temporarily. One special visitor was Katie Roberts, Director of Marketing for Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts. Katie was given a guided tour by our supervisor and met the Orangutan Appeal UK Team. Katie described her visit as a 'dream come true'. Whilst she was there she adopted orphaned orangutan Canyon.

The Shangri-La Group has two beautiful hotels in Kota Kinabalu - Tanjung Aru and Rasa Ria. Both of which have supported our work for many years and have also hosted a number of high profile events for us. Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort has a 64 acre nature reserve which was established in collaboration with Sabah Wildlife Department. The focus of the reserve is wildlife conservation and preservation of the rainforest



Two of the original orphans at Rasa Ria

ecosystem alongside research and educational programmes.

25 years ago agricultural areas were being expanded, leading to the further loss of orangutans' habitat and

Art Competition

One of the few positives from the last year is that many people have found time to be more creative. Maybe that's you, or maybe you'd like that to be you. Or perhaps you have always had a pencil or paintbrush to hand.

With that in mind, we are running an ART PRIZE COMPETITION!

There are two categories: Adult (12yrs+) and Child (11yrs and under). The winners will receive a one-year adoption of one of our beautiful baby orangutans, and their artworks will be featured in our newsletter, website, and social media.

Use any medium (painting, drawing, sculpture etc.)

No photography or videography

The artwork must feature, or be inspired by, orangutans

Open now until the 31st October 2021

So whatever your experience, why not flex your artistic muscles whilst helping this critically-endangered species? Create to conserve!

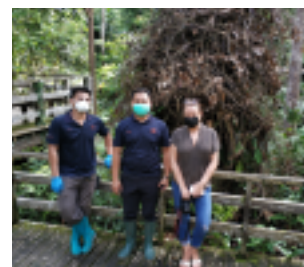
The cost of entry is £5, with all funds raised going towards funding **our local staff at the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre in Borneo**, who have been diligently caring for the orphaned baby orangutans under incredibly hard circumstances, while Sabah has been in lockdown.

To find out more and to enter, please visit

www.orangutan-appeal.org.uk

home. Rasa Ria offered its assistance to Sabah Wildlife Department to help home some of the large influx of orangutans that were orphaned as a result of this. Part of the reserve was dedicated to the orangutans; enclosures were built to house them and special areas constructed where they could exercise in the forest and begin their rehabilitation back to the wild. When Sue founded Orangutan Appeal UK, the resort offered their assistance with her efforts to save these critically endangered apes. This included educating tourists about these beautiful creatures' plight and allowing them to visit the sanctuary to see the orangutans and get involved in saving their futures.

The programme ended in 2016 as the number of orangutans coming into rescue decreased. Over the course of 20 years, 43 orphaned orangutans successfully completed the first phase of their rehabilitation under the care of trained rangers, before moving to Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre.



Katie with Lineker & Pamik