



# grapevine

Issue 27, August 2011

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## From the president...

Dear BOS Supporters,

It is with regret that I announced my retirement from BOS Australia (BOSA) at the end of the financial year, 30 June 2011.

I would like to thank you all for your involvement and support for what we are trying to achieve for the orangutans in Borneo and I greatly appreciate your commitment to this cause.

Although I am no longer actively involved with BOSA, I hope that you will continue to support this great cause, particularly in the coming year as our dream to finally return rehabilitated orangutans to the wild comes closer to being realised.

Tony Gilding is now Acting President until the next AGM and I'd like to welcome Mariana and Jade to the committee. It is my understanding that most, if not all, of the committee will be standing for re-election at the AGM in October.

I have recently returned from taking a group of volunteers who have been involved with BOSA for several years to Samboja Lestari and Nyaru Mentang to familiarise them with the projects. What was reinforced to me while there, was that no matter how great our contribution to date, there are still huge challenges facing BOS Foundation (BOSF). However, BOSF now have some extremely talented and committed people in place and I am confident they will rise to these challenges.

I have very much enjoyed my involvement with BOSA over the last seven years and the friendships that have been made as a result. I have also been pleased to see both the growth of the organisation and its increased professionalism.

Regards, Jan Hindmarsh

## Tribute to Jan: a friend leaves a legacy

As mentioned above, Jan Hindmarsh has decided to step down as President as of 30 June. She has been an important part of BOS Australia, having been intimately involved in many capacities for many years.

Her energy has been legendary and her commitment has been an inspiration to us all.

Jan was able to make a farewell trip to Indonesia in May and took along some of our hard working volunteers and a member of the committee. This was a wonderful privilege and reward for them as they have all worked tirelessly to save the orangutans in care and to learn more about the release.

The good folk at BOS Foundation were so impressed with Jan's efforts, they honored her by naming an orangutan after her.

A rare and special acknowledgment! And, we heard there were reports of some very moist eyes when Jan was introduced to her namesake.

Jan is leaving behind a very strong committee with excellent skills and dedication. It will be my honour to act as President of BOS Australia until the next AGM, at which time members have a chance to ratify our succession plan.

I look forward to hearing more from members in my role as Acting President. Over the next few months the committee will outline our plan for the next year, building on the legacy that Jan has established.

Kind regards, Tony Gilding  
*Acting President*

# Indonesia bound

In May, a small contingent of BOS Australia volunteers visited the rehabilitation projects supported by BOS Indonesia: Samboja Lestarii in East Kalimantan and Nyaru Menteng in Central Kalimantan.

This let them see first-hand the wonderful work undertaken by BOS Foundation but just getting permission to set foot in Samboja Lestarii was an amazing feat as no-one is allowed there without extensive medical testing and supporting evidence proving everyone is 100% healthy.

The group, lead by Jan Hindmarsh, visited the orangutans in the sanctuary and discussed the rehabilitation and release programs planned for later this year.

While there, Louise Grossfeldt (currently Acting Vice President and Head Primate Keeper, Taronga Zoo) said "We caught a glimpse of Dodo, one of our babies available for adoption, acting out like a typical orangutan infant. It was great to see him in forest school, learning what he needs to know to eventually survive in the big wild forest."

Nyaru Menteng is home to over 600 orphaned orangutans and was the trip's highlight. This centre is the largest of its kind in the world—providing full time, 24 hour care for its animals.

We hope in time that all of these orangutans will be released into the wild, in a secure and protected area. But the six hundred babies must attend forest school first. Louise reported: "It was quite a treat watching tiny little orange babies wandering back into camp after a hard day of orangutan education with their carers!"

Initially, the babies kept their distance but curiosity made them braver by creating novel ways of gaining attention.

Cathy, our trusty adoptions-lady, noted "Many are adept at blowing raspberries, some like throwing leaves and one had even learned how to blow kisses. However, the most memorable was one who thought sitting in a tree and peeing on us would work a treat."

The brave ones sought contact and did their best to get close, slowly inching towards the group and, much like human children, testing the boundaries with their babysitters.

As the sanctuary aims to turn the youngsters into wild orangutans, the babysitters ensured they didn't get too close and quite a few of their charges were told-off.

This resulted in some widening their eyes, poking their bottom lip out, and producing a little whimper. However, the cheekier ones simply walked away pretending that it was really an attractive stick they were after and not the visitors.

At the end of a hectic day it was time for bed with the easiest way to round up a bunch of unruly babies being to pile them into wheelbarrows for the trip back to their quarters!

Our volunteers were also fortunate in visiting Salat Island, where some recent graduates from 'orangutan school' live and get to use their new skills, including making sleeping nests and finding food from trees in season. Staff from Nyaru Menteng visit twice a day to offer supplementary food and monitor their health and well-being.

There was also time for a brief stop at the Sunbear project to see the great work being done by the bear keepers with 58 Malay sun bears. These animals have suffered similarly to the orangutans, having been taken from their forest homes or confiscated from the illegal pet trade.

We're unclear how BOSF ended up with the sun bears, but it appears the Indonesian government was involved, so there was not much say in the matter.

The latest addition is an incredibly cute five-month old sun bear (Lady) who had wandered into a farmer's home. She's still learning to drink from a bowl so carers take her into the forest daily to learn climbing and other sun bear skills.

During their five day trip our volunteers saw just how much needs to be done to rescue, rehabilitate and release orangutans and sunbears. But they felt it was well worth the money they spent to see how their volunteering (and your ongoing support) keeps these projects going!



# Orangutans need TLC in winter too

Orangutans share around 97% DNA similarity with humans, so they are prone to the same ailments we are.

Runny nose, persistent cough, a heavy head...the thing we share most during winter is the common cold so, as the weather cools, they also risk catching colds and the flu and they're particularly vulnerable if they come in contact with us.

We are lucky, however, as taking a week off to recuperate can mean curling up in a warm bed, dosing up on vitamin C and garlic, and maybe having someone bring us a warm soup. But, if you are an orangutan living in the wild, you face having to still find food, move throughout the day, and make a bed for the evening.

And, while those living with us may be lucky in getting some TLC, this contact is probably how they contracted it initially.

A dose of vitamin C, a warm honey drink, good rest (and maybe some antibiotics) also helps them recover from seasonal ailments.



## But others are not so lucky...

What if your illness is a little more serious than a winter cold? How do you deal with diseases like polio, measles or tuberculosis?

While these diseases can be fatal, we're fortunate in having vaccines to help control their spread and impact to the point that, in most parts of the world, they don't exist or are no longer as devastating. But (again) for orangutans, exposure to any of these human-conveyed illnesses can be fatal.

They are exposed by contact with people and they don't have the support of modern medicine. Often, in sanctuaries like ours, animals are admitted already carrying diseases such as tuberculosis or hepatitis and many others have already perished.

And sadly, many orangutans that have been exposed will spend their lives being cared for by human hands as they can't be reintroduced into the wild for fear of infecting precious wild populations.

**Please help:** BOS has many orangutans with diseases that can't be released—your donation can help to enhance their lives with special food, enrichment and care.



## Keeping your conscious (and your homes) clean

You may recall from our last newsletter, that BOS Australia has been fortunate to work with Planet Ark in the promotion of their new palm oil free laundry products 'Aware'.

They're the first palm oil-free laundry products available in major supermarkets.

Some of you may have seen and supported the campaign, where a portion of the sale made from each Aware product was donated to help support orangutan conservation and rehabilitation.



Because of Planet Ark's hugely successful campaign, they have presented us with a substantial donation which will be used for the work BOS Foundation is doing in Indonesia with helping to save the Bornean Orangutan.

Thanks for your support of these products and please see 'What's the Difference' overleaf.



## Palm oil vs palm sugar What's the difference?

**Palm sugar** was originally made from the sugary sap of the palmyra palm, the date palm or the sugar date palm. Now it's also made from the sap of the sago palm and coconut palms.

**Palm oil**, however, is an edible oil, produced from the fruit of an oil palm. And, as it's often labelled as **vegetable oil**, many people don't realise the number of products they've bought that have helped destroy a rainforest as the land is turned into monoculture plantations.

**Worse: palm oil isn't even labelled in Australia.** Which means you can't even make an informed choice about whether or not to support this destructive industry.

There are only three vegetable oils that must be labelled in Australia and New Zealand: peanut oil, sesame oil and soy bean oil (and that's because some of us are allergic to them).

Recently, the government passed an amendment to the Food Act requiring products containing palm oil to be labelled as such, rather than as 'vegetable oil'. However, the food industry is campaigning hard against this. Ausfoodnews.com says 'The Australian Food and Grocery Council called the recent palm oil labelling bill, passed in the Senate, 'unworkable' and called for a House of Reps committee to examine the bill.

### What you can do

Visit [www.ipetitions.com/petition/labelpalmoil/](http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/labelpalmoil/) to help make it compulsory to label palm oil in Australia. And write to your local member of parliament to urge them to back the recent recommendation on labeling.

Unsure of your MP? Contact: [action@palmoilaction.org.au](mailto:action@palmoilaction.org.au)



► Palm oil plantations destroy natural habitats

## Orangutans a hit in the capital

Canberra's new BOSA chapter has kicked off with great success in its fundraising.

Their first event (National Film and Sound Archive Arc Cinema) opened with wine and cheeses donated by IGA Express, Canberra City) and a showing of the Australian film 'Lantana'.

Professor Colin Groves, an expert in primate studies from the Australian National University, generously presented on the similarity between orangutans and humans, and how habitat destruction is contributing to their demise.

Two exquisitely framed photographs of Bornean Orangutans were auctioned off to high-bidding guests, with one winner buying a picture for a Mother's Day gift (donated by Alexis and Drew from Belconnen Pet Discount Centre). Another won a superb hot stone massage (from Jill Dobkin, Karool Massage).

Other events, including open gardens, are planned. Contact Susan Dalby for information at: [act@orangutans.com.au](mailto:act@orangutans.com.au)

Brian Lamont wanted to help orangutans and generously baked scrumptious muffins every Monday in May to sell at his workplace. Big-hearted Brian is noted for his fundraising for several charities and our Canberra BOS team wishes to send him a big 'thank you' for his \$200 donation.

## Lots of bright orange kids!

St Francis of Assisi Primary School, Canberra, held an 'Orange day' to increase awareness of the orangutans' plight and to raise money for wildlife sanctuaries in Borneo.

Two sisters undertaking a class task on endangered animals, wanted to help the orangutans. So, helped by their mum, the entire school (with Principal David Austin's support) became engaged. Nearly 500 children wore something orange to school and enjoyed a colouring-in comp, oranges at fruit break, free wristbands declaring 'Save a tree, save me', and a fantastic presentation by BOS and Professor Colin Groves of the ANU.

With the support of local businesses and Scholastic Australia, they've raised \$700 and donations are still coming in. Some of this money will be used to adopt one of the baby orangutans.

**Congratulations** to the students, staff and parents of St Francis of Assisi in Canberra.



## We love hearing from you

There are so many unsung heroes out there, each helping us raise funds for the orangutans, so why not let us know what you're up to. You can write to us at: [contact@orangutans.com.au](mailto:contact@orangutans.com.au)

And remember, when sending photos, please give us your permission to put them on our website and in the newsletter.

## Can you help us?

Borneo Orangutan Survival Australia needs your help, please visit our website to donate at [www.orangutans.com.au](http://www.orangutans.com.au) or send a cheque, payable to Borneo Orangutan Survival (Australia) to: PO Box 3916, Mosman NSW 2088.

Perhaps the most convenient method for you is to set up a one-off or regular payment via direct debit (or your credit card): you can do this online or by calling us on (02) 9011 5455 to arrange it.

**e-Newsletter:** if you prefer to save paper and get your next newsletter via email, please drop us a note at: [contact@orangutans.com.au](mailto:contact@orangutans.com.au)

Thank you for your continued support.

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