

Issue 23 AUG 2012

Orangutan

Appeal UK  
NEWSLETTEROrangutan  
Appeal UK

## MISKAM MOVES TO TABIN RESERVE

Miskam, Sepilok's 20-year-old male is known to many visitors. We believe he has fathered many young and is often seen at the feeding platform with his ladies. At the end of 2011 he decided that life was sometimes more comfortable at the Sepilok Nature Resort lodge which is next to the reserve. A wild orangutan male had been seen in the reserve and this may have driven Miskam to explore elsewhere.

Buffet breakfast at the lodge was followed by raids on the ice cream cabinet and a glass cake cabinet which he smashed to pieces! He even located Dr Nigel's cabin early one morning and stole an Appeal shirt from the washing line which he used as a pillow for his lunchtime nap.

Finally one morning he investigated a water heater, causing more damage and receiving minor burns. A decision was made that it was time for Miskam's final release to freedom in the Tabin Forest Reserve - which is the ultimate goal in the rehabilitation process that Sepilok and Orangutan Appeal strive to achieve.

Normally Miskam ranges free in the Kabili Reserve which surrounds the Centre and he would need to be darted to catch him but unexpectedly he appeared in the clinic area and was persuaded to enter a holding cage with a bottle of milk.



Miskam released in Tabin

This presented the ideal opportunity to move him to Tabin Reserve the next day and would ensure that he was not suffering any effects of sedation after his release.

Miskam had already had a full blood analysis, together with tests for Malaria, Melioidosis, Hepatitis and Tuberculosis when he was in the clinic a week earlier being treated for his burns. He was given a full clinical examination, was routinely wormed and his weight checked. He was found to be 50kg which was 3kg more than when he was recently returned to the forest. He was now ready for the next stage of his rehabilitation.

Continued overleaf ▶

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## NEW IN OUR SHOP..



The winning design

Following a recent competition for our younger supporters which involved designing a T-shirt for the Appeal, we are delighted to announce that **Jameela Bellringer from Andover** is our winner with this very cute idea.

The T-shirt is now on sale in our shop and can be purchased in white, pink, blue or orange for only £7.99 plus post & package and is available in sizes to fit anyone from five to 13 years.

**Get yours today!**

Well done Jameela and thank you very much!

**WE LOVE IT!**

## MISKAM MOVES TO TABIN RESERVE

Continued

The morning of his move dawned bright and sunny. The journey to Tabin Reserve takes five hours so the transport cage needed to be completely covered with vegetation to shield Miskam from the sun and keep him calm. He was given fluids to drink and at 9.30am ranger Elis, James Robins (primatologist) and I climbed into the Land Rover for the long drive.



Throughout the journey we made frequent stops to check on his condition and offer him food and water. After three and a half hours we turned off the road onto a rough rutted and very bumpy track through a plantation.



After an hour we finally saw the forest in the distance which would become Miskam's new home. However, our journey was still not over and the track narrowed as we drove deep into the forest over deep gullies and past a waterfall until finally reaching the Post Release Monitoring jungle camp.

We were met by our Post Release Monitoring (PRMP) Research Assistants, Lineker and Geeko, who were going to track Miskam into the forest after his release to ensure he was coping well. The Land Rover was reversed into the edge of the dense jungle, far from human habitation.

After a quick veterinary check Miskam was far too excited to bother with the drink he was being offered and angrily grabbed a couple of bananas. The cage door was lifted and without hesitation he leapt from the cage into the forest and hurriedly climbed up into the trees.

Immediately at ease, Miskam surveyed his new home from the top of the canopy. After a while he moved a little further into the forest before spending half a hour feeding on a termites nest which he devoured as if it were a great delicacy, before pulling the bark from the tree trunk to drink the trapped water. Miskam's instant ability to be able to forage filled everyone with the sense of awe.

Miskam moved off further into the forest and the release team attempted to follow him through dense undergrowth but after a few hundred yards had to call a halt and return to the track. The exhausted release team still had a long journey through the evening to get back to Sepilok.

Miskam was tracked closely by the PRMP



team until he finally nested at 6.30pm leaving the trekking team to extricate themselves from the jungle in the darkness. Next morning was an early start and the team spotted him waking in his nest at 5.30am and tracked him all day. He was moving high in the canopy across difficult terrain which the team were struggling to keep up with. Miskam was showing signs of being agitated at the team's presence and it was at this point that James felt secure in the knowledge of Miskam's ability to survive and establish himself as a dominant male in the Tabin Reserve.

Two weeks later, Miskam was spotted by the team still deep in the forest. Hearing the team approach he gave a warning "kiss squeek" noise before appearing in the trees. Unconcerned he exchanged looks with James and his team before the two parted company, each happy that the other was not threatened.



## SEPILOK NEWS

### Britt & Charlie

Britt, an adult female with an 18 month old baby boy named Charlie is a regular at the Sepilok Visitor's platform. She has never been the friendliest orangutan (or best looking - she unfortunately lost her right eye in an accident a few years ago) to either humans or her own species and has been becoming increasingly dominant and protective within the reserve.



Britt and Charlie

Over the last few months Eyos, Anekara, Ceria, Sogo Sogo, Ganang, Anne and even Toby have all suffered injuries - some severe - at her hands.

Britt had become more aggressive and dominant than some males, seeking out her victims and pursuing and attacking them whilst Charlie would hold on for dear life. Ceria was attacked when he was in the relative safety of a holding cage and Anekara was rescued purely by chance by Ranger Elis who found her collapsed, lying on her back, submissive but still sustaining a brutal attack.

To avoid confrontation with Britt some of the orangutans would leave the forest and return to the clinic for protection. We would then be faced with the decision of keeping them within the clinic or returning them directly to 'the front line'. Something had to be done.

A decision was made to translocate Britt and Charlie to the extremity of the Sepilok Kabili reserve where there would not be the same concentrated population of orangutan we have closer to the centre. In the wild orangutan are relatively solitary and only one or two orangutan live in a square kilometre of forest. At Sepilok we have around 50

times that concentration and this inevitably leads to conflicts. By placing Britt in a new part of the protected reserve we had the hope that she may not return for some time and could even be distracted by the attentions of wild males. The rangers who had observed her closely considered that Britt is an adult female who is perfectly capable of foraging for herself and her baby.

On 6th April 2012 Britt was finally lured into our jungle holding cage by the offer of supplementary food and was sedated by dart. Charlie was removed for his own protection and also so that we could perform necessary health checks and blood sampling of both himself and his mother. We had not previously ever examined Charlie as he had been born in the reserve and this was the perfect opportunity to weigh him (4.5kg) and to assess his health which appeared remarkably good.

Transport cages had been prepared with leaves as bedding and a very angry Charlie and a very sleepy Britt were placed in them on the Appeal Landrover, ready for the journey. The cages were covered with palm leaves to protect the two from the intense heat and sun and we set off.



A very angry Charlie

To reach the far side of the reserve at Sepilok Laut we had to make a long detour by road and through palm oil plantations which took us over an hour to arrive at the release site just 4.9 miles from home!! With the Landrover reversed into the jungle edge a still very vocal Charlie was taken out of his travelling compartment and placed in front of his mother. Britt's door was

opened and to our delight she immediately clutched Charlie to her and made her way out. Orangutan mothers will reject their babies after even a short period of separation so it was a relief to see Britt's maternal instinct so strong. She was still a little drowsy from her sedation and after venturing onto the roof of the Landrover she tumbled gracefully off the bonnet and loped into the forest edge. Climbing a tree she started to feed and rest.



Britt clutches Charlie to her

The release team then settled down to a hot and uncomfortable wait in the afternoon heat as we would not leave the release site until we were sure that



A new home

Britt had fully recovered from sedation and was travelling into the reserve rather than staying near the plantation at the edge of the forest.

Finally, Britt surveyed us from her treetop perch for one last time before making her way into the jungle, Charlie clutched to her side, the pair disappeared into the dark interior.

## NEWS FROM OUR PRIMATOLOGIST

2012 marks the third year of our pioneering orangutan reintroduction project in Tabin Wildlife Reserve, Sabah. Orangutan Appeal UK is conducting original research into what happens to rehabilitated orangutans after they have been released back into the wild. Our post-release monitoring team has sent us their latest project update from our remote camp in Tabin.

Since my last update we've released another three orangutans into Tabin as part of our post-release monitoring project. They are, Eyos a 13-year-old female, Hope an 11-year-old female and Oscar an adolescent male of 12. Like all of the orangutans that we've brought to the Tabin Reserve to monitor, they have been implanted with radio transmitters so that we can track them every day in the forest.

Eyos came to Tabin on 1st March while Oscar and Hope joined her a couple of weeks later. We have already collected many, many hours of data on these three, and they are doing well so far. Oscar is travelling huge distances each day and it looks like he will soon move far away from us and our tracking equipment, right into the most remote part of the reserve. Eyos and Hope have much smaller home ranges and have stayed pretty much within the confines of our trailed release site. Whenever any of our orangutans venture further afield we do our very best to maintain contact by cutting more and more trails to keep up with them! A lot of the time when they travel over really steep and treacherous terrain this gets really difficult, but we've all lost a fair bit of weight thanks to their ranging habits, so we shouldn't complain!



Hope enjoying some local delicacies

Like us - Eyos was pretty overweight when she arrived in Tabin, despite being put on a diet for weeks before she came. As many of you will know, she has had a



Eyos having a whole of a time

pretty rough time of it over the last few years, suffering from regular bullying from the other adult females at the rehab centre, while also giving birth to two stillborn babies. Unfortunately, this led to her being held in the enclosure for quite a long period so she got pretty fat. We were particularly delighted therefore, to give her some long awaited freedom in Tabin, where she has slowly built her confidence up and established a pretty stable home range up until this point. She can be quite a lazy orangutan, but she absolutely loves her food, so as she has lost some of her captive weight and her energy levels have increased, she's now able to climb higher, and access those harder to reach fruits from smaller, thinner branches in the canopy.

Hope has also found her own preferred



Oscar eating ants

area, separate to Eyos'. She'll spend hours at a time in the same feeding patches feasting on young bamboo shoots. It's definitely her favourite food so far. Neither of our females have interacted much with wild males, although Oscar and Eyos have already had a romantic liaison, which may, in around six months time, produce the project's first newborn! Only time will tell.

The senior ranger at Sepilok decided to also send Miskam to Tabin earlier this year, although he is not officially part of the monitoring project. Since then we have bumped into him a couple of times in the reserve, and he was looking well while angrily kiss-squeaking at us! This has to be considered a good sign as he's obviously totally uninterested in being followed by humans. Indeed given his aggressive attitude towards us, it would likely interfere with his post-release progress if we were to sporadically track him, even if he had been implanted.

I'm keen to release more orangutans to Tabin later this year, so by the next time I write I hope to update you all on who is next! On behalf of my team and I, I'd like to say a massive thank you to all of the Appeal's generous supporters who make our work possible. Reintroducing and monitoring orangutans remains experimental and is still in its formative stages, but it is an absolute privilege to share the experience with these beautiful animals.

Ginger love from all of us in Tabin -  
James Robins - Primatologist

## KEEPING OUR VETS BUSY

The year started on a high with Sue Sheward receiving the honour of an MBE in Her Majesty The Queen's New Year's Honours List and then visiting Sabah to monitor the Appeal's activities first hand. The achievement of this award inevitably reflects favourably on the charity and is recognition for all her hard work over many years. At Sepilok Sue was able to see the improvements at the centre, shadowed the vet in the course of his duties and discussed projects for 2012 including the provision of a permanent enclosure / facility for Nonong, our ten-year-old orangutan who lost the use of her left arm following a severe attack of cerebral malaria a few years ago.



Nonong

In the veterinary clinic we have been busier than ever. The Appeal has signed an agreement with Sabah Wildlife Department to maintain veterinary cover at Sepilok over the next two to three years and the recent hectic activity in the centre has highlighted the importance of this action.

We have started the next stage of the Post Release Monitoring project for 2012 and James Robins, our primatologist, had selected six orangutan for release from Sepilok. In February I commenced the surgeries to implant the radio telemetry tracking devices dorsally in the neck of each orangutan.

The surgeries were undertaken in our new operating room at Sepilok where we were able to provide practical surgical training for the Appeal-sponsored nurse Ibritinah. I am pleased to say that all six operations were completed successfully with all wounds healing within two weeks. The post release monitoring team had been expanded to eight local Malaysian trackers to enable dawn to dusk surveillance of the orangutan once at Tabin and Eyos, an adult female was the first to be released.



Implanting devices into Anakara

From a veterinary point of view I have been grateful for the refurbished operating room. This week will see the installation of the final stainless steel surgical cabinets and we soon hope to have a new anaesthetic machine ordered. The room has been put to good use - firstly for the transponder surgeries but also for cases such as Toby's thumb!

One morning I received an urgent call from our research assistant Victor at the feeding platform telling me that he had spotted Toby with an injury to his hand. Toby was brought into clinic and I discovered that he had received a severe bite to his right thumb. The thumb was bitten through its base joint close to the hand and was hanging off. We dressed it, gave antibiotic and pain relief and spent an hour preparing the operating theatre.

The surgery was difficult as I tried to retain as much of the base of thumb function as possible whilst having to remove bone and infected tissue to give a clean wound. We managed to close the wound over with salvaged skin and dose him up with antibiotic and painkillers. The operation took us 1.5 hours. He is an excellent patient and left the wound alone for nearly five days (I was just getting confidence that it would heal) when on Sunday morning he had removed all stitches and the bone was exposed. I resutured under local anaesthesia but he removed the visible stitches within two hours. Consequently we performed an even more difficult operation on Monday morning removing more bone and enlarging the



Dr Nigel operating on Toby

incision to try and get adequate closure. So far he has licked the wound but it has remained closed.

We continue to carry out routine three-monthly blood tests on all orangutans in the reserve and at the same time have been struggling to manage a severe virus infection. Luckily we now have the new hygiene regime in place and I am pleased to say that we do not need to modify this in any way.

The virus resulted in two extremely acute illnesses in the younger orangutan and necessitated a week of intensive care for one of the babies. She needed intravenous infusion therapy over three days and constant nursing even through the night. This again emphasised the importance of Orangutan Appeal UK providing 24-hour veterinary cover throughout the year; without our veterinary assistance I am convinced that this young orangutan would not have survived.



Eyos goes to Tabin

Last but not least, of course, has been the everyday routine veterinary work: Sogo Sogo recently x-rayed after falling whilst being chased by Britt, the management of an unfortunate stillbirth and the 'normal' diarrhoea cases, wounds and injuries and health checks on a day to day basis. All in all an extremely busy time for us all in the clinic area.

Returning volunteers and visitors have commented favourably on the visible progress they can see we are making and we know that through the support of our sponsors we have been able to provide continuity of care, improved standards and cemented relationships at Sepilok. I feel that we are making huge contribution to the Centre and with the continued help of loyal sponsors we will continue to build on our success!

**Dr Nigel Hicks BVSc MRCVS**  
Senior Veterinary Surgeon  
OAUK

## COP NEWS

The Appeal has been supporting the Centre for Orangutan Protection (COP) in Indonesian Borneo for over five years - their dedicated director Hardi Baktiantoro has sent us his latest report.

### Roy's Rescue



Roy's rescue

After we received information about Roy, COP's investigation team were immediately on the case and indeed, Roy was being kept illegally as a pet. He had been kept inside a tiny cage, in appalling conditions, for 10 years in east Jakarta.



Gundal lives in squalor

COP immediately reported this to the authorities and in April 2012, our rescue team and the Jakarta Natural Resources Conservation Center (BKSDA) joined together to rescue Roy from captivity.

This confiscation needed to be well co-ordinated, and included a veterinarian from the Wild Animal Rescue Center in Jakarta. Because of Roy's



Kukuku - two-year-old

size, he needed to be anaesthetized to enable the teams to move him without causing him too much stress.

The team had to work quickly, and with diplomacy. Roy was moved to the transport enclosure and the team took Roy to the local BKSDA centre.

Whilst the team in Jakarta was successfully rescuing Roy, COP's APE Crusader team in East Kalimantan had found three orangutans that are being illegally kept as pets in the Samarinda community. Unfortunately, these three could not be rescued as the BOS Foundation have so many orphans they have refused to open their doors to new orangutans, and the East Kalimantan BKSDA has no appropriate accommodation for confiscated orangutans. There was no alternative but to leave these orangutans with the

owners. So sadly Rambo, Kukuku and Gundal cannot be rescued.

COP and the BKSDA officials have agreed the need for the establishment of a wild animal rescue centre as a matter of urgency and the Appeal would love to be able to help. To be able to do this, land needs to be purchased, which is very expensive in Indonesia and no organization has yet been found who has sufficient funds to be able to do this. We can only spread the word that there is a desperate need for land or funds to be donated in East Kalimantan. Perhaps



Rambo who is just one-year-old

an Appeal supporter may be found who could donate the funds or we may receive a legacy which would enable the Appeal to assist with the setting up of this much needed new Rescue Centre - we can only hope and in the meantime continue to do our best.

### Orangutan Killers sent to prison

In May 2012 the Jakarta Globe reported:-

Sanggatta district court in East Kalimantan sentenced four people to between six and 10 months in prison for slaughtering two orangutans on two separate palm oil plantation companies.

Tajar and Tuill, employees of Cipta Prima Selaras, in Indonesian Borneo were each given a 10 month sentence and a Rp 50 million (approx £2,000) fine while Lewsin and Tadeus, employees of Sabhantara Rawi Sentosa were each sentenced to eight months in prison and ordered to pay Rp 25million fine.

COP gave witness testimony during the trial and later said that the sentence was very lenient and that the defendants who were charged with the killings were the field executors, not the management which it should have been.

Without COP's involvement these men may never have been brought to trial.

The role of the courts to protect the orangutan is vital and could set a precedent for the future.

### The Ape Crusader book

If you would like to find out more about the work of COP, their book of amazing pictures is currently on Special Reduced Price Offer in our shop for £12 including P & P.

## SUPPORTERS NEWS

Our grateful thanks to supporter Kate Wall for the outstanding effort she has made in helping the Orangutan Appeal. In addition to her tireless fundraising efforts, Kate went along with our Chairperson to an interview to promote the Appeal at Radio Solent on 25 May, as you can see from the photograph, she did so in a rather fetching Orangutan suit!



Kate Wall

What a STAR our very own Nick Johnson is. Part of Nick's role in the appeal is fundraising and he has excelled himself by his own efforts. He recently undertook a sponsored beard shave for the Appeal and so far has raised over £440. Nick says he hasn't been beardless for about six years, but the beard is staying off for the moment! We are grateful for his commitment and support to the appeal and we are very happy to have him on our team... with or without his whiskers!



Nick before and after his beard shave

Many thanks go to the offices of the Australian Government Solicitor who made a generous donation of £640. The money was raised by holding 'Banana Week', during which the AGS Training Team made a different banana-based dish each day (eg. banana pancakes, banana milkshakes) for purchase by AGS staff.

Supporter Siobhan Pope held a charity fashion show in aid of the appeal in April. The evening was a great success and raised £370 for us.



Siobhan Pope

The children in Foundation Class at St Josephs School in Gravesend have been learning about the jungle and the rain forest. On Friday 25th May the children in Foundation Class climbed, crawled, jumped and swung from ropes in an hour long 'Monkey Trail' to raise money in aid of orphaned baby orangutans in Borneo. The sponsored event raised nearly £500 which will enable the children to adopt four baby orangutans. In addition, the children have collected 170 baby bottles, a bottle sterilising unit, dummies, nappies and baby toys to send out to Sepilok.

### Animal Friends Insurance Charity Donations

Animal Friends aren't just about pet



Helping the Appeal

insurance; they also donate a large amount of profits to registered charities all over the world. To promote their love of animal welfare, they've set themselves a challenge; to donate £1 million to charity by the end of 2012. To help them reach this goal, there are a number of different ways to help charities that require their donations. For example, Orangutan Appeal UK will earn commission whenever our users buy a policy from Animal Friends via the banner on our website. Animal Friends track all transactions generated from the site, and will pay £15 for every successful sale generated.

### Runners

This year we had four runners in April's Brighton Marathon and three in May's Bupa London 10km. Ben Miles raised £468.75. In the Brighton Marathon, Emma Huson raised a massive £947.76, Andy Graham, Jim Tuenge and Chris Lunn raised £828 between them.

In total, our runners have raised £2,244.51 so far this year.

Sara Robinson and her boyfriend will be running the Great South Run in October. This is Sara's third time in a row, and she has done us proud in previous years, always raising over £1,000.

### David's 6 x 6

Supporters will be sad to hear that David Faulkner, who was running six marathons in six days to raise money and awareness for the Appeal, unfortunately suffered quite a serious injury after completing two of the six runs, which left him unable to complete the remaining four marathons.

Despite this setback, David has already raised more than £3,000 to be divided between Orangutan Appeal UK and the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and he remains very determined to complete the remaining four later in the year.

Thank you for all your support David and we wish you a speedy recovery!

### Do you like running?

We have guaranteed places available in a number of UK events. For more information please email Nick on [admin2@orangutan-appeal.org.uk](mailto:admin2@orangutan-appeal.org.uk)

## MEET OUR NEW PARTNERS

Orangutan Appeal UK are always looking for new ways that we can contribute to the conservation of the orangutan and our new partners "OuTrop" (Orangutan Tropical Peatland Project) have enabled us to do just that!

### Fighting Fires to Protect Orangutans

The Orangutan Tropical Peatland Project (OuTrop) is a not-for-profit organization working to protect wild orangutans in Indonesian Borneo. We conduct conservation-based research to help improve orangutan conservation strategies and support locally-led conservation initiatives. Our focal site is the Sabangau Forest in southern Borneo, which covers some 6,000 sq.km of peat-swamp forest, or an area almost the size of Devon. OuTrop's orangutan

population surveys indicate that this forest is home to around 6,900 individuals. Protection of Sabangau Forest - and its orangutans - is crucial for the long-term survival of the species.

This population is under threat from forest loss and degradation, as a result of illegal logging, forest fires and conversion of land for agriculture, including palm oil. The Sabangau Forest grows on peat, which is formed under very wet conditions (these are not called peat-swamp forests for nothing!), and the forest trees are dependent upon these water-logged conditions for their survival. Like most other peat swamps in the region, the Sabangau Forest is criss-crossed by countless small canals, dug previously by illegal loggers to float timber out of the forest. Although these loggers have now moved on from many areas of Sabangau, their canals remain and continue to drain the peat, making it highly vulnerable to dry-season fires.



◀ Kalampangan fire ▶

These fires are now the biggest threat to the Sabangau Forest and its orangutans: in a matter of hours they can burn away peat that has taken thousands of years to form, converting the forest into scrub or waste land unable to support orangutans.

To counter these threats and secure the survival of Sabangau's orangutan population, OuTrop works together with our local partners, CIMTROP, at the University of Palangka Raya, to fight these dry-season fires and dam canals to help prevent future fires. This is essential for the protection of the Sabangau Forest, its orangutans and the myriad other endangered and understudied species that call this forest home. The Fire Attack Force work under dangerous conditions to fight forest fires, often working around the clock for days on end to ensure that fires are properly extinguished (fire doesn't sleep, after all!).

This team's commitment is extraordinary, and we are delighted and extremely grateful that the Orangutan Appeal UK is able to contribute towards supporting the team and helping in the on-going fight to protect Sabangau's orangutans. We hope to be able to update you in a future edition of this newsletter!

**Mark Harrison**  
Managing Director  
Orangutan Tropical Peatland Project



▶ Firefighting - Bernat Ripoll ◀

### Joining Forces to Save Orangutans!

OuTrop is delighted to announce new collaborations with a like-minded organisation. These collaborations will provide important extra support to the project, helping to further our shared mission to conserve orangutans, their habitat and the countless other species that call these forests home.

Orangutan Appeal UK is dedicated to the rehabilitation and preservation of orangutans and the conservation of their habitat. The Appeal strives to protect

remaining wild populations of orangutans by providing support and funding for projects across Malaysian and Indonesian Borneo, and by raising awareness of the plight of this great ape across the globe. We look forward to a productive collaboration.

### OuTrop Volunteers 2012

Would you like to visit the Sabangau Forest? A limited number of volunteer places are available to join our programme in 2012. Volunteers

provide an essential helping hand on the project and are much needed! We will provide you with training in survey methods, a window into a career as a conservation biologist, and an unforgettable experience!

For more information:  
[www.outrop.com](http://www.outrop.com)  
[info@outrop.com](mailto:info@outrop.com)

