

Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program



February 2020

Issue:86

Code RED

an e-newsletter from your friends in West Kalimantan

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I hope everyone had a chance to watch the [Seven Worlds One Planet Asia](#) episode featured on BBC America and AMC. One of the segments is on the wild orangutans of Gunung Palung National Park, that we helped produce. We were also thrilled to be selected for the behind-the-scenes coverage at the end of the show!

As we enter into March, we are excited to announce a new on-line community initiative to help fund the work of the Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program! Our first article highlights some of the perks of this new project. We invite you to check it out! Find us at www.saveWILDorangutans.org. We invite you to become a member. Our objective is to provide a

In This Issue:

Save WILD
Orangutans
Launch

-

Knowledge
Exchange
from West to
East


become a member. Our objective is to provide a way for people to help make a difference in saving wild orangutans. We hope you will help us spread the word to your family and friends. We look forward to sharing more of our work with you as a special member of our team!

Our second article is by our resident botanist, Andre Ronaldo. He and our research manager, Ella Brown, recently went to East Kalimantan to share information on orangutan feeding behavior in the wild with the Four Paws International Rescue Center.

Tim and I are now finishing up a series of National Geographic Live shows, talking about our 28 years of studying, photographing and conserving wild orangutans. We spoke in [Portland](#) on March 2, and still have one talk left in [Chicago](#) on March 10.

Again, you may notice some changes in our newsletter and emails as we transition into a new software program, so please let us know what you think! And thank you all again for your support – we could not do any of our important conservation work without you.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Knott, PhD
Executive Director

[Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program \(GPOCP\)](#)

Save WILD Orangutans Launch!

By Cheryl Knott and Tim Laman

This past month we officially launched our new online membership community, Save Wild Orangutans. We have been busy creating a brand new website, revamping our social media accounts, and re-branding our platform in order to expand our project even further.

We've decided to call this new initiative Save Wild Orangutans because that's really what our program aims to do! Studying and conserving wild orangutans is also what distinguishes us from almost all other orangutan-related NGOs that focus on

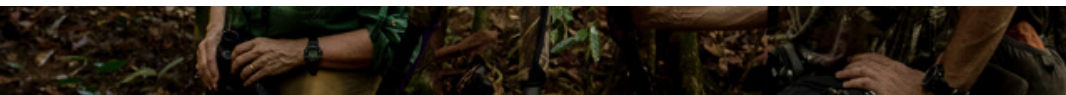
us from almost all other orangutan-related NGOs that focus on orangutan rehabilitation and re-introduction to forests. Plus, it's catchy and easy to remember!



Cheryl Knott and Tim Laman high in a dipterocarp tree during their first year together in Gunung Palung National Park in 1995.

Team Wild Orangutan consists of supporters that pledge to donate \$5 or more each month. Members then get access to new photos, videos, and stories straight from the field. All proceeds go directly to our work with habitat protection, conservation awareness, working with local communities, and research activities. This helps us to purchase equipment used each day in the field, contributes to the salaries of over 25 local Indonesian staff members, and supplements funds for all the day-to-day expenses of running our Yayasan Palung office and Cabang Panti Research Station.





Cheryl and Tim on a more recent expedition to capture footage of wild orangutans in Gunung Palung National Park.

Our goal is to provide a way for people who are passionate about protecting Borneo's wild orangutans to help. Many of us are aware of the problems that Borneo's biodiversity face, but may feel helpless or unsure of how to make a change. Now, with your support, we can keep orangutans wild.

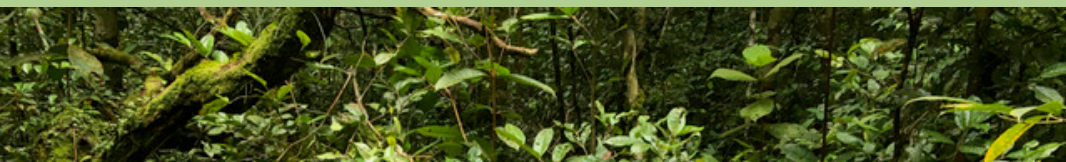
Here's a sneak-peek of what some of our exclusive Save Wild Orangutan content has looked like so far:

First, we shared some background about the project and reflected on the accomplishments we've made over the past 28 years.



Tim Fogg climbing the tall trees of Gunung Palung National Park to rig remote cameras for the BBC's Seven Worlds One Planet program.

In the second installment, Tim shared his experience filming for the BBC series, *Seven Worlds One Planet* – Asia episode, which recently aired in the US. The article features behind-the-scenes photos from the filming process, and explains the careful (and often exhausting!) work it takes to get the necessary footage.





Russell Laman taking a break on a log after flying a drone above the tree canopy.

In the coming months we hope to share short videos, stories told by our assistants in the field, updates about our latest research findings, and more. And we want to hear from you! We'd love to know what our members are interested in most, so that we can seek to get more engaging content.

Please consider joining our team. Let's make a difference for the wild orangutans of Borneo.

[Join Now!](#)

Knowledge Exchange from West to East

*By Andre Ronaldo, GPOCP Botanist and Survey Coordinator
with forward by Cheryl Knott, GPOCP Executive Director*

The Cabang Panti Study Site, within Gunung Palung National Park, is situated to give access to no less than 8 different rainforest habitat types. This unparalleled habitat diversity means that orangutans here have potential access to a huge diversity of potential food sources. Thus, from our site, we can study what orangutans are eating from a wide range of habitats. Over the many years of the

project we have developed a detailed knowledge of over 500 different plants that orangutans eat. Our research includes identifying them, studying their flowering and fruiting habits, weighing and measuring them and determining the nutrient and caloric composition. This, combined with our rich field data on orangutan foraging patterns, has given us a detailed understanding of the complex botanical 'landscape' that wild orangutans use. It was because of this knowledge that we were recently asked by Signe Preuschoft, Primatologist at the Four Paws International Rescue Center, in East Kalimantan, to come speak to her team and provide insights and training to her staff. Our fabulous new project botanist, Andre Ronaldo, and Research Manager, Ella Brown, thus visited the Center this past January to share their expertise. Below, Andre tells you about the visit.



Andre giving a lecture on the orangutan feeding trees found at Cabang Panti Research Station.

Jejak Pulang, also known as Four Paws International Rescue Center, in East Kalimantan, is an orangutan rehabilitation facility. In January, Jejak Pulang invited us to participate in a consortium about "Orangutan Feeding Ecology & Development of Feeding Abilities of Orphaned Orangutans in Rehabilitation." The objective of the meeting was to share our findings about orangutan feeding behavior in the wild, including the species of trees they feed on in the wild, the plant parts consumed and their overall foraging behavior. The meeting was not only for knowledge exchange but also to increase cooperation between institutions working on helping orangutans. Thus, Research Manager, Ella Brown, and I hopped on a plane (two in fact) to present our findings from the

nopped on a plane (two in fact) to present our findings from the Cabang Panti Research Station on orangutan feeding ecology.

Ella spoke about the behavior of wild orangutans in Cabang Panti and I shared my knowledge on how to identify orangutan feeding plants, what parts they ate and how to determine mature, immature and ripe fruits. Some of the other interesting presentations from Jejak Pulang included talking about the development of feeding competence in orangutan rehabilitation and determining food availability in the orangutan forest schools.



The group looking at the feeding trees within the 'Forest School' for orangutan rehabilitation.

After the presentations, we conducted a phenology (study of cyclic and seasonal phenomena of plant, climate, and animal life) simulation with botanists from the local natural resources department, Jejak Pulang, and myself. We shared information on phenology studies, and plant and fruit identification. Then we visited the local herbarium, where we saw even more plant species! We also shared techniques on how to best preserve botanical samples and manage a herbarium. The participants of the event were very happy to be able to learn from GPOCP's long-term research on wild orangutans and their feeding ecology! We were thrilled to be able to participate and see that our research can be put to direct use for helping rehabilitate these former captive orangutans.





Andre and Ella (left) with the local natural resources department and the team from Jejak Pulang.

"Conservation isn't just the business of a few people. It's a matter that concerns all of us"

Walt Disney



Our Contact Information

Gunung Palung Orangutan
Conservation Program

P.O. Box 15680

Boston, MA 02215

1-617-353-7723

<https://www.savewildorangutans.org/>



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage email preferences](#)

Orangutan Photographs © Tim Laman
All other photographs © GPOCP