
GPOCP: November 2022 - Celebrating Orangutan Caring Week & Asian Primate Symposium in Vietnam



Dear Friends and Supporters,

We have had an exciting month! November 13th - 19th marked Orangutan Caring Week. This year's theme was "Orangutan Superheroes Don't Wear Capes" and I couldn't agree more. In addition to celebrating orangutans and spreading awareness about their conservation, I took time to reflect on the many dedicated staff (a.k.a. superheroes) that work tirelessly each day to carry out our mission. Read our first article, written by Sustainable Livelihoods Manager Ranti Naruri, to learn more about the exciting activities that our staff ran to commemorate Orangutan Caring Week this year.

Yesterday was Giving Tuesday, and I want to send a huge thank you to all of you who were able to donate. Your

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generosity truly makes an impact and allows our important work to happen. We continue to accept your gracious one-time donations through our [website](#), [PayPal](#), and via [check](#). We also welcome more supporters to join our membership initiative, [Save Wild Orangutans](#).

In addition, I'm excited to share that my husband, wildlife photographer [Tim Laman](#), is hosting a special [orangutan print sale](#) in honor of Giving Tuesday. Now, through the end of the week (December 4th), all orangutan prints are 30% off. Tim will generously donate 100% of proceeds from the print sale to our cause. Secure your print [here](#).

Our second article this month is co-authored by Animal Protection Manager, Erik Sulidra, and Field Laboratory Assistant, Ishma Fatiha. Erik and Ishma traveled to Hanoi, Vietnam this month to present at the Asian Primate Symposium. They write about their experience attending this conference and share some stories from their international travels!

I wish you all a happy and healthy December!

Sincerely,



Cheryl Knott, PhD
Executive Director
[Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program \(GPOCP\)](#)

DONATE to support us
this Giving Season

IN OTHER NEWS:

Orangutan print sale in honor of Giving Tuesday! All orangutan prints are 30% off & 100% of proceeds will be donated to GPOCP/Yayasan Palung. Buy yours [here](#).



Photographer Tim Laman writes:
'The Wild Ride' is one of my favorite orangutan images... It is hard to explain how much effort was needed to capture an image like this... All the sweat is worth it though, when a great moment like this presents itself, and I'm able to capture it to share with all of you.

Celebrating Orangutan Caring Week 2022

By Ranti Naruri, Sustainable Livelihoods Manager

Orangutan Caring Week (OCW) is celebrated every November. This year, Yayasan Palung/GPOCP hosted a big celebration at our Bentangor Environmental Education Center, located in Pampang Harapan Village, Sukadana District. The OCW celebration was held from November 15-16, 2022. The Yayasan Palung/GPOCP youth volunteer groups (RK-TAJAM and REBONK) assisted in the planning and implementation of the celebration.



A large banner in the front of our Bentangor Environmental Education Center welcomes festival attendees.

We invited the Bupati (Regent) of Kayong Utara Regency, the Gunung Palung National Park Bureau, the Forestry Department of Kayong Utara, Manggala Agni firefighting brigade, several government agencies of Kayong Utara, and other local NGOs (including International Animal Rescue and Health in Harmony/Alam Sehat Lestari) to the festival.

We were honored that the Bupati of Kayong Utara, Pak Citra Duani, delivered the opening remarks at the festival. He emphasized that this Orangutan Caring Week activity is one of the steps that we can take together to provide education and understanding to students and the general public about the importance of preserving orangutans and their habitat so that populations can remain stable and orangutans do not go extinct.

Next, Yayasan Palung/GPOCP Field Director, Pak Edi Rahman, delivered his opening remarks. Pak Edi said that every November, during Orangutan Caring Week, we are invited to pay more attention to orangutan conservation. OCW has become very important as orangutan populations and their habitats continue to shrink, especially in areas that are not protected. Pak Edi went on to explain that population and habitat reduction is linked to the actions of humans, and so it is our duty to reverse these trends.



Bupati Pak Citra Duani (left) and Pak Edi Rahman (right) deliver opening remarks at the OCW festival.

Later, after his speech, Pak Citra Duani carried out various activities at the festival. This included the awarding of a certificate to Yayasan Palung/GPOCP. The Bupati also planted a symbolic tree in front of Bentangor, alongside members of the National Park Bureau, the Natural Resources and Conservation Department (BKSDA), Forestry Department (KPH), and the head of Pampang Harapan Village.



Bupati Pak Citra Duani plants a tree in honor of the festivities while government officials and GPOCP Board Member, Tim Laman, look on.

Following the tree planting, Pak Citra, along with members of several other agencies, visited exhibition stands set up by Yayasan Palung/GPOCP staff to present the various activities we carry out and display products from Sustainable Livelihoods groups that we support. We also presented him with some of these sustainable livelihood products to take home.



Research Manager, Ahmad Rizal, (left) explains research equipment and some examples of orangutan foods to attendees at an informational booth.

Throughout the two-day Orangutan Caring Week Festival, we held a series of activities for the public, including a drawing competition for elementary, middle and high school students, a quiz show for high school students, a *Pandanus* leaf weaving competition for elementary, middle and high school students, and a cooking competition for the Pampang Harapan village community. We also hosted talk shows with speakers from the Natural Resources and Conservation Department, the Kayong Utara Forestry Department, the Padu Banjar Customary Forest Management Board (LPHD), and Yayasan Palung/GPOCP research program staff. RK-TAJAM and REBONK youth group volunteers also acted out a live performance about orangutan conservation.





Some of the activities that took place over the two-day festival were (top left to bottom right): a coloring/design competition, a traditional weaving competition using dried Pandanus leaves, a cooking competition using locally sourced ingredients and a small fire, and a quiz show.

Overall, the two-day event was a tremendous success! It was wonderful to see such a great turnout from the community and we were proud to share our message and pull off such a large-scale event!



Some of the staff and volunteers dress up for the occasion in front of the "mini forest" at Bentangor.

Attending the 8th Asian Primate Symposium in Vietnam

By Erik Sulidra, Animal Protection Manager & Ishma Fatiha, Field Laboratory Assistant

This past month, staff members of Yayasan Palung/GPOCP attended the 8th Asian Primate Symposium which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam from November 13th – 16th. This event is the largest primate symposium in Asia, where experts and stakeholders in the field of primate research and conservation meet and discuss various topics. Primate behavior, ecology, genetics, taxonomy, and conservation were

the main themes discussed this year by 190 forum participants. Yayasan Palung/GPOCP sent two representatives, Erik Sulidra (Animal Protection Manager) and Ishma Fatiha Karimah (Field Laboratory Assistant at Cabang Panti Research Station) to present on our orangutan research and conservation work at the forum. Erik's travel was generously supported by Forum Orangutan Indonesia (FORINA).



Ishma (center, wearing black and gold) and Erik (far right) stand alongside the other Indonesian attendees at the 8th Asian Primate Symposium in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The plenary talk on the first day was delivered by Dr. Christian Roos from the German Primate Center, on the topic of genomics of Asian primates. After that, participants were free to attend presentations from a variety of subjects, based on interest. Ishma was particularly interested in listening to a presentation on a method of using drones to survey primates, because for the last 3 months she has helped use a drone to search for orangutans at Cabang Panti. It was fascinating to see the same method used on primates other than orangutans, and also how to most effectively use this drone method. Meanwhile, Erik was also interested in attending talks on the topics of conservation and education. Speakers presented on a method to approach the community starting from an early age, encouraging them to observe simple phenomena from nature in order to foster curiosity in children and allow them to continue learning and understanding.

The symposium participants later had the opportunity to visit the Endangered Primate Rescue Center (EPRC), to gain insight into both *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation work, as well as the richness of Vietnam's unique primate fauna. It was here that Erik and Ishma saw the world's rarest monkey, the Cat Ba langur. There are only an estimated 70 individuals left in the world! After that, the participants were invited to visit the Van Long Nature Reserve, one of the langur's natural habitats, but unfortunately this adventure was cut short due to heavy rain.



Erik presents on biodiversity survey results from Customary Forests surrounding Gunung Palung National Park.

On the final day of the conference, Erik and Ishma each gave their presentations. Erik's talk was entitled "Assessment of Orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii*) Habitat and Populations Within Hutan Desa in West Kalimantan, Indonesia". This presentation focused on the estimation of orangutan populations in two Customary Forest landscapes (Sungai Paduan Peat Protection Forest and Sungai Purang Production Forest), assessment of forest composition and identification of orangutan food trees, recording of the presence of other biodiversity (mammals and birds), identification of potential disturbance to orangutans and other animals, and forest protection efforts. Ishma gave a presentation entitled "Soil-transmitted Helminths in Wild Bornean Orangutans (*Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii*)", which discussed the prevalence of soil-transmitted helminths and the relationship between the height of orangutans in the canopy and the number of these parasitic worms found in orangutan fecal samples. The presentations were dynamic, many participants attended and interesting questions were asked to trigger discussion.



Ishma presents her data on parasite prevalence at Cabang Panti and the correlation with orangutan height in the rainforest canopy.

Erik Sulidra and Ishma Fatiha were among a handful of Indonesian representatives at this international conference, and they were so delighted to be part of it! On the sidelines of the formal event, participants from various countries had informal discussions about the conservation challenges they face, as well as possibilities for collaborating on primate conservation in the future.



Ishma and Erik give a thumbs up while enjoying their trip to Vietnam!

Management of Cabang Panti Research Station is conducted by the Gunung Palung National Park Office (BTN-GP) in collaboration with GPOCP/YP. Scientific research is carried out in conjunction with the Universitas Nasional (UNAS) and Boston University.

"He that plants trees loves others besides himself."

– Thomas Fuller



Our Contact Information

Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation
Program
P.O. Box G
[1661 Massachusetts Ave](https://www.gunungpalung.org/)

[Lexington, MA 02420](#)

[1-617-353-7723](#)

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

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

Yayasan Palung

Jl. Kol. Sugiono Gg H. Ikhrum No.1, Sampit, Kec.

Delta Pawan, Kabupaten Ketapang,

Kalimantan Barat 78811, Indonesia

www.yayasanpalung.com

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