
GPOCP: November 2023 - Orangutan Caring Week and A Photography Hobby Born Out of Botany Work



Dear Friends and Supporters,

I hope everyone that celebrates Thanksgiving had a safe and happy holiday. I got to spend it at home this year, sharing gratitude with friends and family around my table.

Speaking of gratitude, we are incredibly thankful for everyone's support on Giving Tuesday this week. We had a record-breaking day and are so excited about the impact that your generous donations will have for people, forests, and orangutans alike. Thank you for sharing our passion and helping us to further our mission. If you were unable to participate in Giving Tuesday, we are thankful that you follow along with our news and believe in our cause.

Some of the things we are thankful for this year include...

IN THIS ISSUE:

Commemorating Orangutan Caring Week in Village Forests

—

Making Work Feel Like a Hobby: Photographing Orangutan Foods

Join Save Wild Orangutans

DONATE

1. More forest protected through the Village Forest program. We are at 8,903 hectares, with more to be approved shortly!
2. Communities that are dedicated to forest protection – many fought tirelessly for days on end to battle fires that threatened their Village Forests in September.
3. Brilliant and enthusiastic children who will be the next generation of conservation leaders – we reached over 7,500 kids this year through our education programs!
4. Six WBOC scholarships awarded to outstanding students to attend university.
5. Data collection at our new satellite research camp is operating at full capacity – orangutan focal follows, plant phenology studies, urine and fecal samples are being collected, and more! We are learning about how the behavior, health and diet of the orangutans at the primary forest camp differs from that in the secondary forest at the Rangkong camp.
6. Women who serve as leaders in conservation and in their communities – we had over 170 women involved in sustainable livelihoods and Village Forest business groups.

...and so much more.

For our November issue of Code RED, you will hear from our Field Director, Edi Rahman, about Orangutan Caring Week and how we marked it this year with numerous activities in several of our Hutan Desas, or Village Forests, outside the national park. Our team planned and executed an incredible set of programs, helping to foster deep caring for the environment and orangutans in our region.

Our second article is from Sumihadi, our Assistant Research Manager, in charge of Botany, at Cabang Panti Research Station. Sumi has been an integral part of our team since 2019. You will read about how her general interest in orangutans and the environment transformed into a true passion and a new hobby! Unlike the temperate zone, the cycles of fruiting in these tropical rainforest trees are not governed by the same predictable patterns, and thus what is fruiting during a given month one year, will not be the same as during that same month the following year. Each month is unique! I hope you will enjoy her beautiful fruit collages as much as I do!

As we head into December and the holiday season is upon us, I send you all my warmest wishes for health and joy!

Sincerely,



Cheryl Knott, PhD
Executive Director

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

Commemorating Orangutan Caring Week in Village Forests

By Edi Rahman, Field Director

Every November there is a very exciting week for all of us to invite the community to protect and preserve orangutans and their habitat. This event is Orangutan Caring Week, known in Indonesia as Pekan Peduli Orangutan, was November 12-18th this year. We commemorated Orangutan Caring Week in 3 of the Village Forest areas that are supported by Yayasan Palung, namely Pulau Kumbang Village, Pemangkat Village and Padu Banjar Village. The theme of this year's Orangutan Caring Week was, **"Leveraging AI (Artificial Intelligence) to protect Orangutans and Global Biodiversity."**

We chose these villages to focus our Orangutan Caring Week activities for a few important reasons. First, these are villages that Yayasan Palung assists with the Village Forest program, and these forests are orangutan habitat with orangutans living in them. Additionally, there were negative interactions between humans and orangutans in these areas in 2021 and 2022 which resulted in orangutans experiencing injuries due to traps and snares from hunters, as well as wildfires around the Village Forests. Thus, it was important to bring positive activities to these villages.





Kicking off Orangutan Caring Week activities with tree planting in Pulau Kumbang (top) and in the burned areas of Padu Banjar (bottom)

Sunday, November 12, 2023

Orangutan Caring Week began with planting activities in Pulau Kumbang Village and in Padu Banjar Village with various types of MPTs (Multi-Purpose Tree Species) such as jengkol, petai, mango, guava, avocado and more. The planting activity in Pulau Kumbang Village was carried out on the Karang Taruna land and was attended by the Village Head and the village officials, Kayong Forest Management Unit (KPH), Yayasan Palung and the community. The planting activity began with remarks from the Field Director of Yayasan Palung (Edi Rahman) who briefly explained about Orangutan Caring Week, followed by remarks from the Head of KPH Kayong (Mrs. Euis Herawati) and remarks from the Head of Pulau Kumbang Village (Mr. Hamid Asman). A total of 250 seeds and seedlings were planted in Pulau Kumbang Village, all of which were donated by the Kayong Forest Management Unit (KPH).



Training on orangutan nest and food identification in Pemangkat (top) and giving a puppet show in Pulau Kumbang Village (bottom)

Meanwhile, planting in Padu Banjar Village was carried out in the Village Forest area that was burned just a couple of months ago and is included in the utilization zone. Planting activities in the Padu Banjar Village Forest area were attended by Yayasan Palung, the Padu Banjar Village Forest Management Board (LPHD), one member of the Indonesian National Army, one member of the Police and the community. A total of 470 plants were planted in Padu Banjar Village and all of them again were donated by the Kayong Forest Management Unit (KPH).

At night we carried out another activity - the identification of animals using thermal drones in the Padu Banjar Village Forest area. This was led by the Yayasan Palung Village Forest team and our Research

Team, along with LPHD Padu Banjar. Using the thermal drones we detected orangutans, deer, and wild boars.



A training on land-clearing without burning (top) and a coloring activity with school children (bottom).

Monday, 13 November 2023

On the second day of Orangutan Care Week, Yayasan Palung conducted training on orangutan nest identification and orangutan foods, training on Land Clearing Without Burning (PLTB) and making organic fertilizer, a puppet show, and identification of animals in Pemangkat Village Forest area.

Training on Orangutan Nest Identification and Orangutan Foods was carried out in Pemangkat Village by Yayasan Palung's Animal and Habitat Protection team (PPS). The participants were members of SMART patrols teams, 24 people in total from 6 Village Forest areas - Padu Banjar, Pulau Kumbang, Pemangkat, Nipah Kuning, Penjalaan and Rantau Panjang.

Our Sustainable livelihoods (SL) program conducted training on Land Clearing Without Burning (PLTB) and the manufacture of organic fertilizers (solid and liquid) in Pulau Kumbang Village and was attended by 14 participants from Pulau Kumbang Village, Pemangkat and Padu Banjar.

Our Environmental Education Program (PL) conducted a number of school activities, including a puppet show and lectures at Pulau Kumbang Elementary School. Meanwhile, our Village Forest (HD) team continued to identify animals using thermal drones in the Pemangkat Village Forest area. Animal identification activities using thermal drones were carried out at night both in the Padu Banjar village forest and Pemangkat village forest, so that the warm-bodied animals can be detected against a cooled background.



Pandan mat weaving competition.

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

On the third day, our Animal and Habitat Protection (PPS) team conducted socialization activities to create more animal-friendly villages by educating animal hunters in Pemangkat Village about the protected status of endangered species. This was attended by 23 participants from Pemangkat, Pulau Kumbang, and Padu Banjar village. We were joined by the West Kalimantan Natural Resources Conservation Center (BKSDA) region 1 Ketapang. This socialization activity was replicated for several animal hunters in Pulau Kumbang, with the aim of discouraging hunters from installing traps and snares and from hunting protected animals. This event for hunters was directly carried out by members of BKSDA Region 1 Ketapang, Yayasan Palung and accompanied by the Head of Pulau Kumbang Village, Mr. Hamid Asman.

Our Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) program conducted a weaving competition using *pandanus* raw materials involving 17 female artisans in Pulau Kumbang Village. The Environmental Education (PL) team conducted animal drawing competitions and coloring activities. They also administered a general knowledge test at a Pulau Kumbang school which involved students in kindergarten and primary school, ages 5-12.

Wednesday, 15 November 2023

On our fourth and final day of our official Orangutan Caring Week activities (we care every day!) our Environmental Education (PL) team gave an educational talk at the Pulau Kumbang senior high school.

The many activities that Yayasan Palung carried out from November 12-15, 2023 to celebrate Orangutan Caring Week were intended to invite all parties to be more concerned about saving orangutans and their habitats which are increasingly threatened due to various human activities such as hunting, land clearing (settlements, plantations, mining), illegal logging and forest and land fires. We shared many of these activities on social media, and encourage you all to follow us there!



Group photo for Orangutan Caring Week's planting activities in Padu Banjar where we rehabilitated land that burned in September.

Making Work Feel Like a Hobby: Photographing Orangutan Foods

By Sumihadi, Assistant Research Manager, Botany

Forests that are maintained sustainably are one of the most important factors in supporting the survival of flora and fauna, because one of their key benefits is providing shelter and food for animals. One of the animals that has an important role within the forest, but its existence is threatened is the orangutan.

For four years I have been part of the Yayasan Palung/GPOCP Team engaged in orangutan research. I started this work as a volunteer because I am one of the recipients of the West Bornean Orangutan Caring Scholarship. After graduating from college in 2019, I volunteered for one month and then started working as laboratory staff at the Gunung Palung National Park Cabang Panti Research Station in 2020.



Sumi, collecting a bounty of orangutan fruits in the field.

The exciting days began after completing three months of staff training – I was now part of the Orangutan Project. As time went on, I began to find what I liked and wanted to do. I loved my work and discovering unique and interesting things in this forest – very adorable orangutans, their interesting behavior, and that they eat both plants and small insects. Moreover, when I entered the forest I found animals, large trees, lianas hanging freely, leaf litter on the forest floor, and each different habitat gave off a calming atmosphere. All of these became objects of my interest to study and capture with a camera.



Ficus and Garcinia fruits.

In 2021, I combined my job with a new hobby, which was to make collages of all the orangutan foods eaten each month. Each day we collect samples of the fruits or plants eaten by the orangutans. To the extent possible, I get complete samples of the food eaten, often with the help of field assistants that are following the orangutans. I then set aside one-by-one, good examples of each of the various types of plants that the orangutans fed on during the day. Then I photograph them and combine the photos into folders, with each folder containing the name of a different genus and species. I do this every month and I make a list of what plants orangutans ate that month. I then arrange the food samples artistically into one frame and photograph the samples together. I do this to be able to distinguish easily what is always present in the forest and what orangutans only eat occasionally. These photographs thus become a visual representation of the range of foods orangutans eat each month as well as being visually pleasing!



Top: Fruits from the family Dipterocarpaceae. These trees are plentiful in Gunung Palung and fruit at irregular intervals.

Bottom: A variety of Willughbeia fruit with their leaves that help identify the different types.

The types of fruits, flowers, leaves, and even mushrooms and small insects that the orangutans eat are very unique and interesting in shape, color, and taste. Orangutans do not only eat fruit, they also eat young leaves, old leaves, tree bark and pith as well. I find it difficult to choose which plant I like best because I like everything, but I can say that *Ficus* (fig) fruit comes in many types and is always there and always bears fruit throughout the year. Besides *Ficus* there are also *Willughbeia* lianas

which also come in different varieties. Meanwhile, other plants only produce fruit seasonally or irregularly. One of them is from the family *Dipterocarpaceae*. Here, you can see some photos that that I have taken of these different plants.

My new-found hobby of collecting and photographing plants has been discovered because of this work. Thanks to Yayasan Palung / GPOCP for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this research. I really love the work and the environment in Gunung Palung National Park.





Top: Ficus, or fig, fruits are available year-round and come in many different species.

Middle: Pith, bark, epiphyte and young leaves.

Bottom: Juggler caterpillars. It has been fairly rare that we see orangutans eat caterpillars, but they appear to do this more frequently in the secondary forest that we are now monitoring!

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.

"Human society is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Earth environment. If our "parent company" destabilizes, our society and our economies go down with it."

The Natural Step



Our Contact Information

Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program

P.O. Box G

1661 Massachusetts Ave

Lexington, MA 02420

1-617-353-7723

<https://www.savegorangutans.org/> [Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage](#)

[email preferences](#)

Yayasan Palung

Jl. Kol. Sugiono, no. 28, RT 013/RW 05 Sampit, Kec. Delta Pawan,

Kabupaten Ketapang, Kalimantan Barat 78811, Indonesia

www.yayasanpalung.com

YAYASAN PALUNG

