

# SINTANG ORANGUTAN CENTER PROJECT REPORT Q4

October - December 2023



*Merry Christmas 2023  
&  
Happy New Year 2024*



# Training for Trainer

On November 24, 2023, a total of 32 local farmers from various villages in the Sintang regency, along with agricultural extension agencies and students, participated in a training program on permaculture and organic farming organized by the Sintang Orangutan Center (SOC). This training event specifically targeted the local community who earn their living as farmers, as well as other community members actively involved in the agricultural sector in their daily lives. The enthusiasm of the community was evident even before the commencement of the activities, with many participants engaging in discussions about their farming practices. Some had even visited the organic gardens managed by the SOC agricultural team.



The local training for trainers started at 08:30 AM at the education center. The training began with a presentation on biochar and wood vinegar in the first session, which took place from morning until noon. Biochar refers to charcoal produced through the pyrolysis process of biomass. On the other hand, wood vinegar is a liquid resulting from the fermentation of wood and is commonly used as organic fertilizer. After the completion of all the materials, participants were given a one-hour lunch break, during which the SOC team prepared food for both participants and facilitators.

The second session started with discussions on eco enzymes and biosaka, including practical exercises in making eco enzymes, biosaka, and biochar. Eco enzymes are a mixture of enzymes produced through the fermentation of organic materials such as fruit peels, used to enhance the decomposition process in the soil. Meanwhile, biosaka is a liquid organic material produced through the fermentation of specific organic materials, such as fresh leaves. All participants appeared highly enthusiastic, actively engaged, and shared experiences throughout the activities, demonstrating a high level of involvement.



Participants' enthusiasm was not only evident during the material presentations but also in the practical exercises of making biochar, eco enzymes, and biosaka. Their spirited participation showcased a genuine interest and a desire to apply the knowledge gained in their daily lives. Additionally, the active Q&A session provided an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of the topics covered.

This training program aimed not only to provide theoretical knowledge but also to create a platform for participants to develop practical skills in permaculture and organic farming. Consequently, SOC served not only as a training organizer but also as a facilitator of the exchange of ideas and best practices to enhance the sustainability of local agriculture.

As time progresses, it is hoped that this training will have a positive impact on the farming practices of the local community, encouraging the adoption of organic and permaculture methods, and strengthening the bond among farming communities in supporting sustainable agriculture in their region.



*Discussion and practise at Education Center*







*Biochar practise with the participants*





# Forest School Activities

For the last three months the Jerora Forest School has been running as usual, now that the second forest school enclosure can be used, more orangutans can participate in forest school activities, including baby orangutans, juvenile orangutans and adults. Each has its own story that is interesting to observe.

Currently, there are six baby orangutans undergoing forest school: Otan (female, 3 years 3 months), Julia (female, 4 years 1 month), Gieke (female, 5 years 2 months), Joss (female, 5 years 4 months), Manfred (male, 5 years 6 months), and Bondan (female, 5 years 10 months). Meanwhile, the juvenile orangutans attending forest school are Tom (male, 6 years 6 months), Kingkong (female, 8 years 3 months), Jochem (male, 8 years 6 months), and Mongki (female, 8 years 10 months). And the adult orangutan participating in forest school is Oli (male, 16 years 2 months).



*Gieke usually spends her time on middle or top canopy*



The first group is the Joss, Gieke, Otan, Julia and Bondan. The five of them attended forest school in the second enclosure. Every time they go to forest school, they are all always enthusiastic about their activities, especially Joss and Gieke who always come out of the tunnel first and are usually followed by Julia and Otan who slowly come out hugging each other, lastly followed by Bondan. She usually didn't want to leave too quickly if Joss was still visible around the tunnel.

Overall, Gieke is the most active orangutan in exploring during forest school, she was often seen exploring in the upper canopy, very different from her other friends who mostly stayed in the lower canopy and forest floor. However, Gieke's ability to recognize food is not very prominent, this is because she prefers to spend her time exploring rather than foraging. However, she also occasionally eats young leaves, several types of forest fruit, rattan fruit, vine fruit, tree bark and liana bark in the surrounding area. Meanwhile, she doesn't have much interaction with other orangutans considering that Gieke only occasionally goes down to the lower canopy to play with other orangutans, especially Joss. After that, Gieke went back to exploring and in the afternoon, she would usually be on the forest floor and play with other orangutans.



*Bondan is watching for Joss while she is foraging*

Different from Gieke, who doesn't forage much, Bondan is an orangutan that spends a lot of time looking for food, whether on the forest floor or in the tree canopy. Among all the baby orangutans attending forest school in her group, Bondan is the best at recognizing food, ranging from young leaves, tubers, forest fruit, cambium, grass, vine fruit, termite nests, honey, ferns to soil. Meanwhile, Bondan's exploration pattern is not bad, although not as impressive as Gieke's, but Bondan explore more in the middle canopy and lower canopy to the forest floor, she also rarely venturing in the upper canopy. With her solitary nature, Bondan never looked for other orangutans when she was at forest school and she only focused on exploring and foraging. This solitary behavior is beneficial for her early exposure to identifying different foods.





*Joss swings on a liana while exploring forest school*

Meanwhile, Joss can be said to be quite balanced in terms of exploring and foraging. During the 4th quarter of this year Joss explored more in the lower canopy, meanwhile her use of the middle canopy and forest floor was balanced, while her use of the upper canopy was very minimal. Joss has a good knowledge of food, although not as extensive as Bondan's. Based on observations, Joss prefers consuming young leaves and forest fruits, and she also enjoys eating rattan shoots, flowers, mushrooms, and honey. In terms of exploration, Joss likes to explore with other orangutans, typically following Gieke at the beginning, but since Gieke tends to explore at a higher and farther distance, Joss eventually goes to where Otan and Julia are, who do not explore as far.



*Otan, despite her young age she is a very agile orangutan*



Otan is the youngest orangutan in her group, but her ability to use the canopy is quite good. She spends a lot of time in the lower canopy, apart from that she also likes to spend time on the forest floor in the afternoon, either exploring or playing with other orangutans. Otan has a keen interest in exploration, although not as extensive as Gieke's. She usually explores not far from the forest school entrance tunnel, then climbs the nearest tree and hangs from one tree to another. Overall, Otan was very active in moving around during forest school. In terms of food recognition, Otan is still in the early stages, having only recognized young leaves, forest fruits, shoots, and cambium.

It's different with Julia, although older than Otan, is not as proficient in exploration because she can be considered a relatively lazy orangutan who dislikes exploration. Julia prefers to stay in one place once she finds a comfortable spot. Apart from that, if given the chance, Julia will hug Otan and ride on her back while climbing trees, which can be burdensome for Otan due to Julia's larger size. Despite being somewhat lazy, Julia spends a lot of time exploring in the middle and lower canopy. In the evenings, like other orangutans, she is on the forest floor playing while waiting to return to their sleeping enclosures. Julia's food recognition is also limited, as she only recognizes young leaves, flowers, liana fruits, and cambium.



*Julia (left), likes to disturb Otan while she is exploring forest school*



# Tom, Manfred and Kingkong's Activities

Towards the end of this year, Tom, Manfred and Kingkong are still carrying out their routine forest school activities. However, in December they can only get 1 week of forest school, to anticipate the number of animal keeper staff on duty during the year-end holidays at Jerora camp. This early December marks their last forest school session in 2023, and it will resume as usual in January 2024.

As usual at forest school, Manfred enjoys exploring every corner of the forest and consuming various available foods. While exploring, Manfred usually moves quite agilely from tree to tree, and his movements are quite effective because he doesn't disturb much foliage or make trees sway too much, attracting attention from anything around him. Interestingly, although his playmate is Tom, when exploring, Manfred usually moves together with Kingkong because Kingkong also enjoys exploring the canopy like Manfred, while Tom prefers to relax and explore on the forest floor. Manfred also likes to eat forest fruit and young leaves, apart from that he also often eats grass and termite nests too. Apart from his favorite menu, Manfred also occasionally eats grass, rattan, ferns and soil.



Manfred is exploring in between the trees



While exploring, Manfred spends a lot of time in the lower canopy, moving from tree to tree while following Kingkong or vice versa. He also likes to eat leaves and forest fruits that he can find there. Occasionally, he climbs to the middle and upper canopies, but soon after, Manfred will descend to the lower canopy and even to the forest floor, where he will relax. He usually does this in the late afternoon, where he will play chase and wrestle with Tom.



*Exploring & following staffs is Tom's hobby while in the forest school*



*In the evening, the three of them like to play on the forest floor*

While Manfred and Kingkong explore, Tom usually prefers to relax on the forest floor and observe the staff conducting observations. When he starts to get bored, Tom will begin exploring on the forest floor. Throughout the day, Tom prefers to move on the forest floor as he can find the food he seeks there. Although spending much time on the forest floor, Tom also spends a fair amount of time in the lower canopy and occasionally in the middle canopy, rarely in the upper canopy. Sometimes he climbs trees to follow Manfred and Kingkong in the canopy, but shortly after, he will return to the forest floor to explore or relax. Despite spending a lot of time on the forest floor, Tom's food recognition over the past three months has been quite good, where he consumes many young leaves, forest fruits, rattan, tubers, grass, and termite nests.



# College Students' Visit

On November 8, 2023, students from the Faculty of Forestry and the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at Tanjungpura University engaged in field learning activities as part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) Program in 2023, where they conducted a study visit to the Sintang Orangutan Center (SOC). Currently, these students are undertaking MBKM activities at the Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park and the Forest Management Unit (KPH). This visit is aimed to provide students with a profound understanding of forests and the management of the orangutan conservation center at SOC. The students, coming from various academic backgrounds, are enthusiastic about expanding their knowledge in this field.

Within two days, the students were actively involved in various activities at SOC. On the first day, they explored the Sintang Quarantine Center, where the medical team provided valuable insight into the medical rehabilitation of orangutans, the treatment of sick orangutans, and the exploration of zoonotic diseases commonly found in domestic animals such as cats and dogs.



*First day, visiting Sintang Quarantine Center*

*Sintang Orangutan Center*



On the second day, the behavior team and education team provided a comprehensive overview of the SOC's organizational structure and its various activities. Discussions included orangutan evacuation procedures, rehabilitation programs, forest schools for orangutans, activities related to orangutan release, and community empowerment initiatives. Apart from that, students were introduced to the various activities offered at Jerora Forest School. Starting with a tour of the forest school facilities, including the clinic, basecamp, guest house, and organic farming area. Next, the agricultural team gave a presentation about compost and details of various organic farming activities typically undertaken at Jerora Forest School.

This immersive experience not only broadens students' understanding of the forest, but also provides important insight into the management of the SOC's orangutan conservation center. It is believed that the knowledge gained during this visit will make an important contribution to their academic and professional development in the field of forestry and conservation.

It is hoped that when students return to their academic pursuits, the impact of this learning journey will leave a lasting impression on their studies and future careers, shaping them into informed advocates for environmental conservation and sustainable forest management. SOC's commitment to education and practical experiences is expected to play a crucial role in guiding the next generation of dedicated professionals in preserving our natural heritage.



*Second day, visiting Jerora Forest School*



On November 24, 2023, Jerora Forest School also welcomed students from Kapuas Sintang University who are enrolled in the forestry and agriculture study programs. During this visit, our agricultural team enthusiastically provided an in-depth introduction to the organic farming program implemented at Jerora Forest School. The material presented was in the form of making biochar and wood vinegar, as well as how to make and apply eco enzymes.

Not only that, the behavior and ecology team also provided an introduction to phenology activities. The aim is to collect data on food tree types as well as relevant tree measurement methods. Students can feel the warmth of the educational atmosphere provided by our team, ensuring that they not only understood the theory but were also able to apply it in practice. Additionally, the session included a presentation on the introduction of the SOC, the organization responsible for Jerora Forest School, and an in-depth discussion of orangutans and their rehabilitation process, which is the primary focus of SOC in ensuring the sustainability of wildlife.

The participation in this activity was quite substantial, involving 87 students who took part in this field visit. The enthusiasm of the participants was evident, as they felt motivated to gain further insights aligned with their fields of study at the university. Their enthusiasm could be seen from the many questions asked. Participation in the visit to Jerora Forest School is not just a regular field trip but an integral part of the environmental education program initiated by SOC.



*87 students taken part in field visit to SOC*



This environmental education program is designed to create awareness and a sense of responsibility toward the environment among the younger generation. By providing new perspectives and hands-on experiences, SOC strives to shape a positive attitude and responsibility towards the surrounding environment. The visit to Jerora Forest School is a tangible step towards achieving this goal.

Beyond field visits, SOC also implements various other environmental education programs, including visits to schools to introduce orangutans and explain the importance of the role of the younger generation in environmental conservation. There are also visits to organic farming areas and camping grounds at Jerora Forest School, volunteer teaching programs in Hovat Hamlet, and online activities through webinars and Instagram live sessions, all of which are part of a broader effort to enhance public understanding of environmental issues.

As a result of this visit, it is hoped that the participants will not only gain valuable knowledge, but also feel the urge to play an active role in preserving the environment. Thus, the environmental education program organized by SOC is not only provides understanding, but also creates a young generation who is committed to contributing to sustainability and nature conservation.



*SOC team presented information on orangutan & organic farming*





# Scout Movement's Visit

On December 18-19, 2023, Jerora Forest School warmly welcomed guests from the Scout Movement of the Wanabakti Scout Work Unit in the Sintang Branch. Their visit was to camp at the SOC's camping ground. A total of 36 participants and committee members participated in this activity, creating a spirited atmosphere of togetherness.

During the activity, the SOC team played an important role by presenting two speakers who covered aspects of orangutan conservation at SOC. The first speaker focused on the history of SOC, explaining about orangutans, engaging participants in understanding morphology, distribution, characteristics, human-orangutan conflicts, and the sequence of activities at SOC, ranging from rescue, medical rehabilitation, behavior, to the release in Betung Kerihun National Park. The second speaker introduced the topic of organic farming, delving into subjects such as biochar and eco-enzymes. Both topics were presented on the first and second days of the event, providing participants with an opportunity to deepen their knowledge.

In addition to gaining insights through the presentations, participants were taken on a tour of the Jerora Forest School. This tour provided a firsthand view of the activities and conservation efforts taking place at the forest school. All participants appeared enthusiastic from the beginning of their arrival at the Jerora Forest School facility. The SOC team on duty played a role in creating a friendly and supportive atmosphere, offering a warm welcome to their guests.

This activity was not only a valuable moment for sharing knowledge about conservation and organic farming but also served as a platform to strengthen the synergy between Jerora Forest School and the Scout Movement of the Wanabakti Scout Work Unit in the Sintang Branch. This collaboration is expected to continue and have a positive impact on environmental and nature conservation efforts.





*Various activities were held during their stay at SOC*





# Merry Christmas from SOC!

The year 2023 has reached its end, and soon it will leave behind the old pages to embark on a new chapter in 2024. We would like to extend warm wishes to those who have been part of orangutan conservation activities at the Sintang Orangutan Center. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at SOC! Your continuous support has been a crucial boost in our efforts to care for orangutans, and we are deeply grateful for your generosity throughout the year.

Looking back at the journey throughout this year, SOC has experienced various ups and downs. However, with the unwavering support from donors, partners, and the SOC team itself, we have successfully overcome these challenges and continued our mission in orangutan conservation and rehabilitation.

Our heartfelt thanks go to all the donors who have played a vital role in supporting this mission. Your contributions have enabled us to provide the necessary care and rehabilitation for orangutans on their journey towards recovery and release back into the wild.

We also want to express our deep gratitude to the hardworking SOC team. The incredible efforts and commitment to the welfare of orangutans at the rehabilitation center are truly remarkable. The team's dedication is noteworthy, and we appreciate each individual for their crucial role in orangutan conservation activities at SOC as a whole.

Furthermore, SOC has had the opportunity to meet many new faces throughout the year, the volunteers, that each bringing their unique skills and enthusiasm to SOC. Your involvement has been a crucial part of SOC's development, and we look forward to continuing this journey together in the coming year.

As we bid farewell to 2023, we wish the best for everyone in the upcoming year. May 2024 bring happiness, success, and positive changes for everyone. Thank you for being an integral part of the Sintang Orangutan Center's family.

Merry Christmas 2023 and Happy New Year 2024. May the future be filled with hope and prosperity for all of us.

*Sintang Orangutan Center*







# About Sintang Orangutan Center

The Sintang Orangutan Center (SOC) is a local environmental NGO that collaborate with the Indonesian government to rescue, rehabilitate and release orangutans back into the wild.

In addition to the orangutan work, SOC also provides awareness and education programs for local people to reduce deforestation by providing sustainable agricultural alternatives, stop illegal poaching and the keeping of illegal pets like orangutans.

SOC is located in Sintang, West Kalimantan, an Indonesian province on the island of Borneo.

SOC's rehabilitation program aim is to rehabilitate orangutans and provide them with the survival skills to prepare them for release back to the wild. After a series of medical health examinations healthy orangutans are transferred to the socialization groups where they can learn together with friends. The final stage before release is a training period in a so-called forest school which is a fenced in intact rainforest.

We work under an official agreement with the Forestry Ministry Department. So far we have rescued and taken care of more than 50 orangutans since 2010. Orangutans were rescued from illegal wildlife trade, or confiscated from people who kept them as pets. We also collaborated in rescue orangutan victims of conflict with local people. We release orangutans in a special part of the Betung Kerihun National Park.

## SUPPORT US IN PROTECTING ORANGUTAN AND THEIR FOREST

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