Sintang Orangutan Center

PROJECT REPORT Q4

October–December 2025

Awareness and Educational Visits **October to December 2025**

From October to December 2025, Sintang Orangutan Center (SOC) welcomed three educational visits from kindergartens and a local private university as part of its public awareness and environmental education activities.

Field Trip: Green Hills Preschool & Kindergarten

The Green Hills Preschool & Kindergarten field trip to Jerora Forest School was conducted over two consecutive days, 1-2 October 2025. On the first day, the program was attended by 22 K1 students. And the following day, involved 20 students from a combined Pre-K and K2 class. All participants were accompanied by their teachers and parents. During this activity, the SOC Education Team collaborated with the Medical Team to deliver a learning experience that differed from regular classroom activities. In addition to introducing endangered and protected wildlife—particularly orangutans—students were also introduced to the veterinary profession and the crucial role veterinarians play in the orangutan rehabilitation process at SOC. The awareness sessions were delivered in an interactive format, including video screenings showing daily activities at Jerora Forest School and the orangutan release process in the Betung Kerihun National Park.

These videos provided students with a concrete understanding of how orangutans spend their time during rehabilitation before being returned to their natural habitat. The highlight of the field trip was the opportunity for students to observe orangutans from a safe distance. While watching, they listened to engaging explanations and stories about individual orangutans presented by the SOC Education Team, accompanied by representatives from the West Kalimantan BKSDA. The field trip concluded with the donation collected by the school from students and parents. This contribution represented a tangible expression of care and support for orangutan conservation efforts carried out by SOC.

2025 Induction Program: **Kapuas University, Sintang**

On October 24, 2025, the Student Executive Board (BEM) of the Faculty of Agriculture at Kapuas University, Sintang conducted the 2025 Induction Program for new students (which was initially conducted in November 2023) through an educational visit to Jerora Forest School. The activity was attended by 61 participants and supported by 38 committee members, and served as a field-based learning experience to foster environmental awareness and concern for conservation issues. The program took place in the afternoon at the SOC's Camping Ground. The first session was delivered by the West Kalimantan BKSDA, introducing the agency's profile and its role in protecting wildlife and their habitats.

The second session was facilitated by the SOC Education Team, which provided in-depth information on orangutans, the threats they face, and the role of SOC in orangutan conservation and rehabilitation efforts in West Kalimantan. Despite being briefly interrupted by rain, participants remained enthusiastic and continued the activity by touring the Jerora Forest School working areas, including the orangutan enclosures, organic farming plots, and the biochar processing facility. Guided by the SOC Education Team, this tour marked the final session and closing of the Induction Program of Kapuas University, Sintang.

Outing Class: **Pelita Kasih Kindergarten**

On October 31, 2025, Pelita Kasih Kindergarten revisited Jerora Forest School for its second visit as part of an Outing Class with an animal-themed learning focus. The activity was attended by 22 students, accompanied by their teachers and parents.

During the session, the SOC Education Team introduced various animal species and engaged students through a mini quiz to identify which animals are endangered and protected and which are not. The orangutan-focused session emphasized interesting facts about orangutans, as well as an explanation of the activities and function of Jerora Forest School as a learning environment for orangutans undergoing rehabilitation.

The highlight of the outing class was the opportunity for students to observe orangutans more closely from a safe distance, guided by the SOC Education Team. Through this direct experience, the activity aimed to foster empathy and environmental awareness toward wildlife and nature from an early age.

Wild Orangutan Evacuated from Kapuas Hulu

On Friday, October 18, 2025, a joint team consisting of the West Kalimantan BKSDA, the Betung Kerihun and Danau Sentarum National Park Authority (BBTNBKDS), and Sintang Orangutan Center (SOC) successfully evacuated an adult male wild orangutan in Suai Hamlet, Melapi Village, North Putussibau Subdistrict, Kapuas Hulu Regency.

Prior to the evacuation, BBTNBKDS received several reports from local residents regarding the presence of a wild orangutan that had been moving between locations, ranging from community gardens to areas close to residential settlements. This situation indicates that forest conditions as the natural habitat of orangutans are increasingly under pressure, forcing wildlife to leave their natural ranges and move closer to human settlements. Such circumstances not only heighten the risk of human–orangutan conflict but also create concern and fear among local communities. In response, BBTNBKDS coordinated with West Kalimantan BKSDA and SOC to conduct a ground check and carry out community outreach around the affected area to minimize the potential for human–orangutan conflict. According to information provided by residents, the orangutan was last observed in a community garden in Suai Hamlet, Melapi Village. After receiving the report on October 17, 2025, the joint team immediately mobilized to the site that afternoon to conduct initial observations and prepare an evacuation plan. This rapid response was made possible by the community's awareness and prompt reporting to the relevant authorities.

Observations continued until the orangutan built a night nest, after which the evacuation process was carried out the following day. In the early morning of October 18, 2025, the team returned to the location before the orangutan awoke from its night nest. The evacuation process was temporarily hindered by heavy rainfall, prompting the team to wait for weather conditions to improve while setting up a temporary shelter near the site. Once the rain subsided, the team safely awakened the orangutan, which was resting in the upper canopy of a durian tree owned by a local resident with a dense branch structure. Anesthetization was conducted carefully, and the orangutan was successfully evacuated using a safety net.

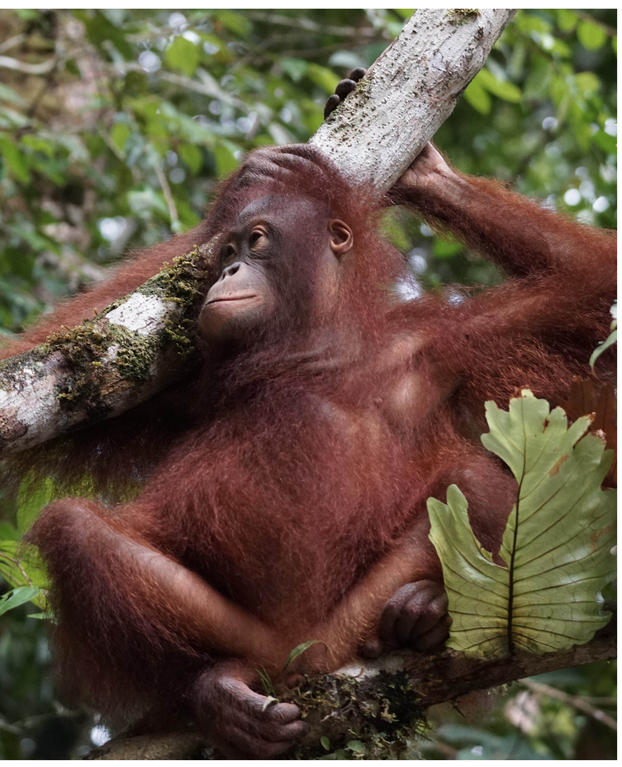
Following a brief health assessment, the adult male orangutan was estimated to be over 20 years old, weighed approximately 78 kilograms, and was declared to be in good health. As the evacuation was completed in the late afternoon, the orangutan was temporarily housed overnight at the Putussibau–Badau Conservation Resort Office. The following day, on October 19, 2025, the orangutan was translocated by boat to SOC's release site at Jepala Lala, along the Mendalam River, which is part of Betung Kerihun National Park.

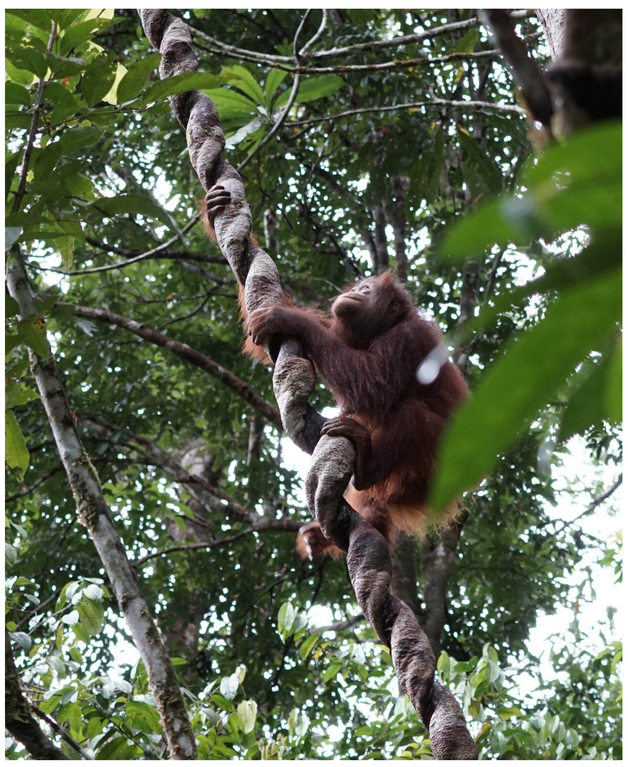
Through this incident, the joint team once again emphasized the importance of protecting and conserving forests as the primary habitat for orangutans and other wildlife. Communities are encouraged not to take actions that may endanger wildlife, to protect forests surrounding their areas, and to immediately report the presence of orangutans or other wild animals in gardens or residential areas to the relevant authorities. Timely and accurate reporting is key to managing human–wildlife conflict safely while supporting the long-term protection of orangutans in the wild.

The Release of Gieke and Artemis

On November 19, 2025, in the heart of Betung Kerihun National Park, two orangutans took their first steps toward a new life. Artemis and Gieke were released into the Rongun area, a tributary of the Mendalam River that cuts through tropical rainforest of West Kalimantan and forms an essential part of this protected ecosystem.

As the transport crates were opened, the forest welcomed them in its own way. Artemis immediately climbed into a tree and moved away from the activity below. She chose to remain in the upper canopy, resting as if recovering from the long journey to her new home. Gieke, on the other hand, showed a very different response. She became active right away—swinging from tree to tree, beginning to explore, recognizing forest foods, and moving through the forest with great curiosity. Her enthusiasm even led to a few early challenges: she was stung by insects and experienced a minor incident when a tree he climbed fell—an early reminder that the forest is a real and demanding classroom.





In the days that followed, their contrasting personalities became more apparent. Artemis moved more slowly, spent much of her time resting, and tended to avoid human presence. Gieke did the opposite—continuing to explore actively, circling the release area, traveling along the banks of the Mendalam River, and occasionally returning to the release point as if reorienting himself. On the third day, distance began to grow between them. Gieke ventured farther, moving deeper into the forest and reaching higher elevations. Artemis was observed searching for and calling out to her several times, but the vastness of the Rongun forest swallowed her calls. That same day marked an important milestone for Artemis: she built her first sleeping nest, an early sign of independence in the wild. The monitoring team searched for Gieke the next day. After hours of trekking through steep terrain, the team finally located Gieke, who appeared quieter and exhausted. To protect her natural adaptation process, the team decided to reunite her with Artemis. The reunion happened shortly afterward. As soon as she realized Gieke was nearby, Artemis climbed down to meet her. They spent the afternoon together—feeding side by side, regaining strength—and that night, they rested in the same tree.

The days that followed revealed a strong bond between them. Gieke often led their movements, while Artemis followed closely behind. Whenever Artemis lagged behind, Gieke would pause and wait for her. Artemis also learned much from Gieke—identifying forest foods such as kubal fruit, rattan, and the bark of top *(Artocarpus sp.)*. Together, they faced the challenges of the forest, including painful stings from insects nesting in tree cavities. Over time, Artemis grew more confident. Although she would still cry occasionally when she lost sight of Gieke, she was able to refocus on foraging and building nests to rest. Artemis was even observed building nests more frequently—an essential survival skill in the wild.

By the middle of the monitoring period, Gieke began traveling farther and eventually separated from Artemis. The team lost track of Gieke as he moved toward the Barip Besar River, a tributary of the Rongun, through steep and difficult terrain. Artemis continued to be monitored for several days after that, before her trail was also lost as she traveled toward the Salakotung River.

Search efforts continued until December 9, 2025, but neither Artemis nor Gieke was relocated. For the field team, losing track of Artemis and Gieke was not a failure. On the contrary, it became a sign of hope—evidence that both orangutans had moved deeper into the forest, living independently, and navigating the wild without reliance on humans, just as they were meant to do. The release of Artemis and Gieke in the Rongun area of Betung Kerihun National Park is the result of long-term dedication and the support of many partners. Every step they take in the forest is a reminder that when forests are protected, orangutans are given the chance to return home.

Thank you to all donors and supporters who have been part of this journey. Your support has given Artemis and Gieke the opportunity to live freely—in their true home.