

ORANGUTAN RESCUED FROM CAPTIVITY IN MELAWI REGENCY



On August 21, 2026, the West Kalimantan Natural Resources Conservation Agency (BKSDA Kalimantan Barat) received a report from the Head of Nanga Ella Hilir Village, Ella Hilir District, Melawi Regency, regarding an orangutan being kept by a local resident. Following the report, BKSDA Kalimantan Barat coordinated with the Sintang Orangutan Center (SOC) to verify the situation and carry out the rescue.

On August 22, 2026, the SOC team departed from Sintang for Nanga Pinoh, the capital of Melawi Regency, approximately a one-and-a-half-hour drive from Sintang. In Nanga Pinoh, the SOC team met with BKSDA Kalimantan Barat officers to coordinate, conduct a field briefing, and prepare the necessary

Orangutans are protected wildlife under Indonesian laws and regulations. Nevertheless, cases of orangutans being kept by members of the public are still found in several areas. Most captive individuals originate from the illegal wildlife trade or have been separated from their natural habitats at a young age.





equipment before continuing to the location. The journey from Nanga Pinohto Nanga Ella Hilir Village took approximately one hour.

Upon arrival in the village, the team coordinated with the village head who had submitted the report. The team was then escorted to the home of the person keeping the orangutan, located not far from the village office.

At the location, the team found a male orangutan estimated to be approximately five years old being kept behind the owner's house. The orangutan was confined in a cage measuring approximately 1 meter by 0.5 meters. The cage was not adequate to meet the orangutan's physical and behavioral needs. It was made of wood and enclosed with sheets of metal, severely restricting the orangutan's movement. There was only one small opening through which the owner provided food and water.



The area surrounding the cage was also unsuitable. It was being used to dispose of household waste, and the team found a dead rat directly beneath the cage. Such environmental conditions can increase the risk of health problems for the animal.

While waiting for the medical team to prepare for the sedation procedure, the team gathered information from the owner. According to the owner, the orangutan had been kept for approximately two years. The owner explained that her husband, who worked in Central Kalimantan, had brought the orangutan home after purchasing two orangutans from

someone who was selling them. One of the orangutans did not survive because it was already in poor physical condition when acquired, including several broken bones. That individual died approximately one month after being kept, leaving only the orangutan that was rescued during this operation.

The owner also explained that as the orangutan grew larger and became more active, the family found it increasingly difficult to care for him. The orangutan had repeatedly damaged parts of the cage and nearby household items. To prevent him from escaping, the cage was reinforced with



additional metal sheets, and the door was permanently nailed shut. During his time in captivity, the orangutan was generally fed whatever food was available, including rice, cookies, crackers, and fruit when available.

Once all preparations were complete, the medical team sedated the orangutan following established procedures. After the sedative took effect, the team opened the cage by removing the nails securing the door with the available tools. The orangutan was then safely removed from the cage for an initial health examination.

The examination found that the orangutan was generally healthy and in good body condition. He weighed 16.5 kilograms. The team also identified an injury on the left temple near the eye, which will require monitoring during the quarantine period.

After the rescue, the orangutan was immediately transported to SOC's Jerora Forest School Rehabilitation Center in Sintang.



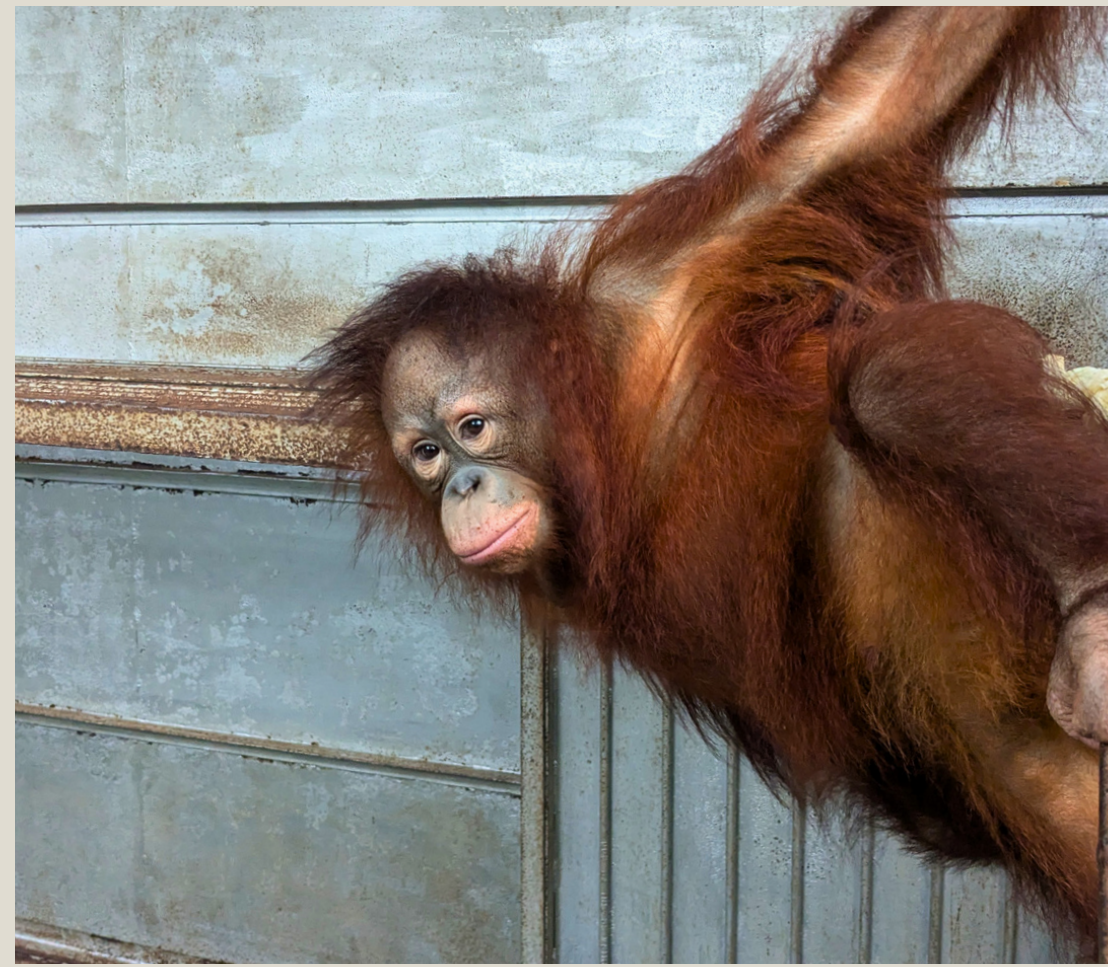
The journey continued until nighttime. Upon arrival, he was placed directly in the quarantine facility for further observation and medical assessment before beginning the next stage of rehabilitation.

During the initial observation period in quarantine, the orangutan has shown a relatively positive response. He has been active, although he remains somewhat shy when exposed to unfamiliar surroundings and people. He has shown an appetite, although the amount of food he has consumed is still relatively small. He has not yet shown interest in drinking milk but is willing to drink water.



One behavior observed by the team is his ability to use a water faucet independently. He not only drinks directly from the faucet but has also been observed wetting his body with the running water, appearing to use it much like a bath. This behavior is being documented as part of the team's ongoing observations. The current dry-season conditions may be one factor associated with this behavior, although continued monitoring is needed to better understand his habits and responses.

For now, the orangutan will remain in quarantine and undergo gradual monitoring. The team will continue to observe his health, eating patterns, activity levels, responses to his environment, and other behaviors. These observations will help determine the appropriate care and rehabilitation steps moving forward.



This rescue was made possible through cooperation between the local community, the village government, BKSDA Kalimantan Barat, and SOC as part of efforts to protect wildlife. Reports from community members play an important role in helping authorities identify and respond to cases involving wildlife being kept in inappropriate conditions, allowing the animals to receive proper care and appropriate rehabilitation.