

# Animal Scene

Animals affected by **AMAZON FIRES**

**PENGUIN FALLS IN LOVE**

with cardboard cutout

**HEARTWORM:**  
Does your dog have it?

*The*  
**Orangutan**

DECEMBER 2019





# Contents

December 2019  
Volume 19 • Number 10



## 6 **FUReedom Wall**

*On personhood*

by Stef dela Cruz, MD

## 8 **Feline Good**

*Trick or treat!*

*The magic of cat treats*

by Gia Lara

## 16 **Animal Appeal**

*Reptile roommate*

by Gabbie Abesamis

## 20 **Vet Visit**

*Heartworm in dogs and cats*

by Emmanuel D. Macapagal, DVM

## 26 **The Wild Side**

*Whale and dolphin watching in Bais*

by Gregg Yan

## 34 **Animal Appeal**

*Promised song:*

*The story of Grape-kun the otaku Penguin*

by Marielle Almario

## 38 **Advocate**

*Top destinations for animal lovers*

by Isona Alis

## 42 **Scene Zone**

*Hot dogs & their cool parents*

by Rich Briones

## 50 **Cover Story**

*Helping hands for the Orangutan*

by Richard Leo Ramos

## 60 **Scene Zone**

*So, dog yoga is a thing?*

by Marielle Almario

## 64 **Scene Zone**

*Turkish pet nutrition brand launched in PH*

by Joey Espiritu

## 67 **Scene Zone**

*Coffee fixes everything (including animal overpopulation)*

by Aurus Sy

## 72 **Advocate**

*Amazon rainforest fires: What does this mean for the animals?*

by Roxanne Libatique

## 78 **Inchordate**

*Treasuring a tarantula: Caring for an eight-legged friend*

by Cacai Buenviaje

## 88 **Scene Zone**

*Better teeth, better health: UP veterinarians observe Pet Dental Day*

by Maxine Louise Lagman

## 89 **Scene Zone**

*Pet and Greet Caravan*

by Maxine Louise Lagman

## 100 **For Pet's Sake**

*Man and animal: The balance of life*

by Ramon Francisco



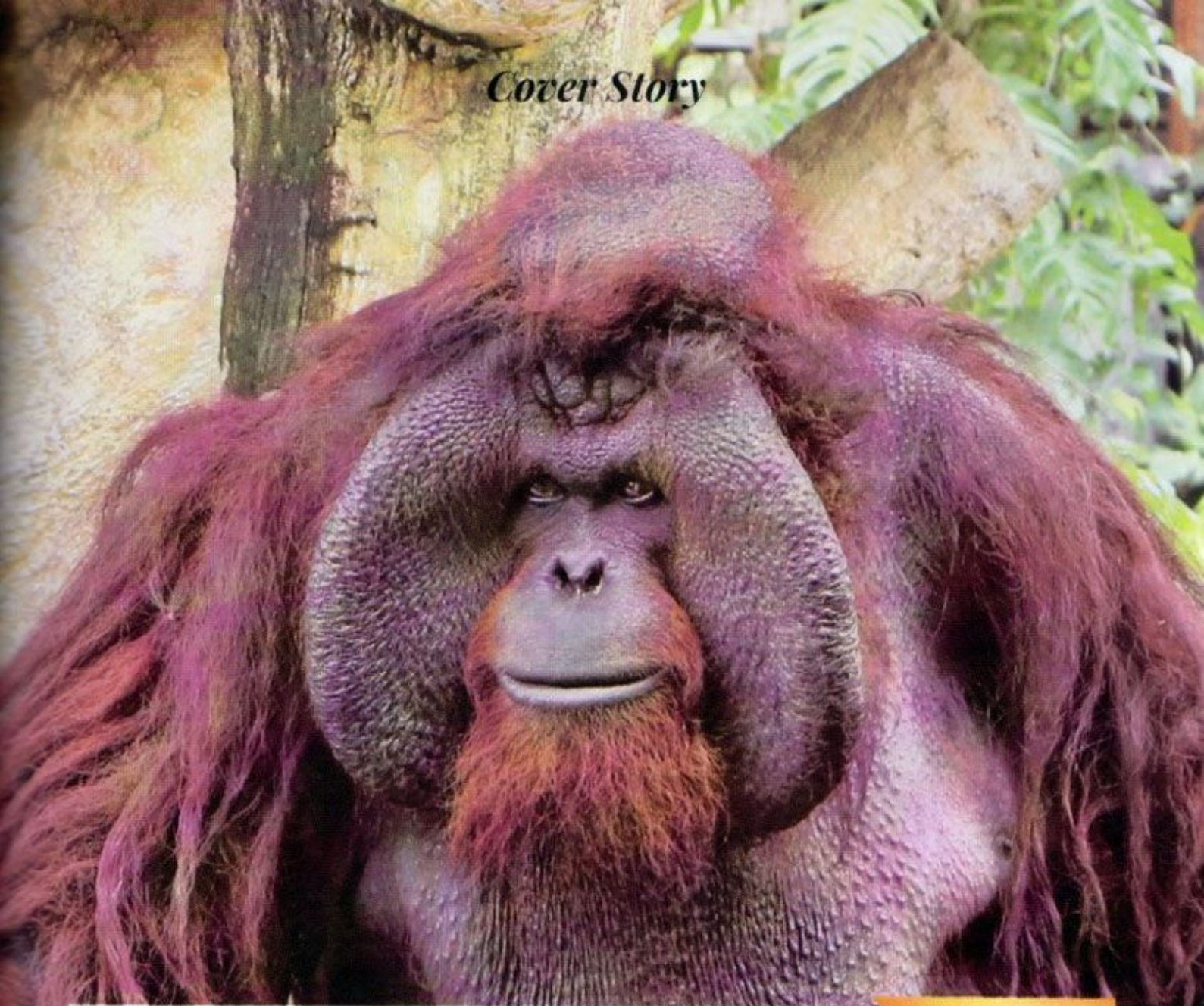


*Cover Story*

HELPING  
HANDS  
FOR THE  
**ORA  
NGU  
TAN**

By **RICHARD LEO RAMOS**  
Photos by **JEFFREY C. LIM**





## TAXONOMIC INFORMATION

Kingdom	Animalia	Species	<i>Pongo pygmaeus</i> – Bornean Orangutan
Subkingdom	Bilateria	Species	<i>Pongo abelii</i> – Sumatran Orangutan
Infra kingdom	Deuterostomia	Species	<i>Pongo tapanuliensis</i> – Tapanuli Orangutan
Subphylum	Phylum Chordata		
Infraphylum	Vertebrata	<i>Direct Children</i>	
Superclass	Gnathostomata	Subspecies	
Class	Tetrapoda	<i>Pongo pygmaeus morio</i> – Northeast Bornean Orangutan	
Subclass	Mammalia		
Infra class	Theria	Subspecies	
Order	Eutheria	<i>Pongo pygmaeus pygmaeus</i> – Northwest Bornean Orangutan	
Suborder	Primates		
Infraorder	Haplorrhini		
Superfamily	Simiiformes		
Family	Hominoidea		
Subfamily	Hominidae		
Genus	Ponginae	Subspecies	
	<i>Pongo</i>	<i>Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii</i> – Central Bornean, Southwest Bornean Orangutan	



## Cover Story

Perhaps it is human nature to try and preserve the past, if only to have the ability to look back and see where one has come from. When it comes to nature, this is most important in the field of conservation. But nature and animal conservation are more than that; conservation is an action that humanity takes to accept their stewardship of the earth and all its inhabitants. It goes beyond an act of caring; it is an act of love and responsibility.

And so it is when it comes to how man and Orangutan interact.

Orangutans have been given a mixed reception in popular culture, from the mischievous and slightly mad King Louie in Disney's *The Jungle Book*, to biologically-altered Maurice in the modern-day version of the Planet of the Apes franchise. Orangutans are definitely popular, but at the same time they seem to fall in between the cracks when it comes to this fame being used to help their real-world plight.

## ORANGUTANS IN POP CULTURE

Okay, first off, an Orangutan is not a monkey – they are apes! Here are some Orangutans who became famous in entertainment and media.

1

Science fiction is full of primates. An early example of this is Jules Verne's novel, *The Mysterious Island*, where a "red ape" named Jupiter was a companion for the castaway characters.

2

Not to be outdone in the genre game, Edgar Allan Poe had an Orangutan featured in one of his short suspense stories, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.

3

Clint Eastwood struck up an odd partnership with an Orangutan named Clyde in two movies, *Every Which Way But Loose* and *Any Which Way You Can*. As can be expected, Clyde apparently punched on command for comedic and narrative effect. "Right turn, Clyde!"

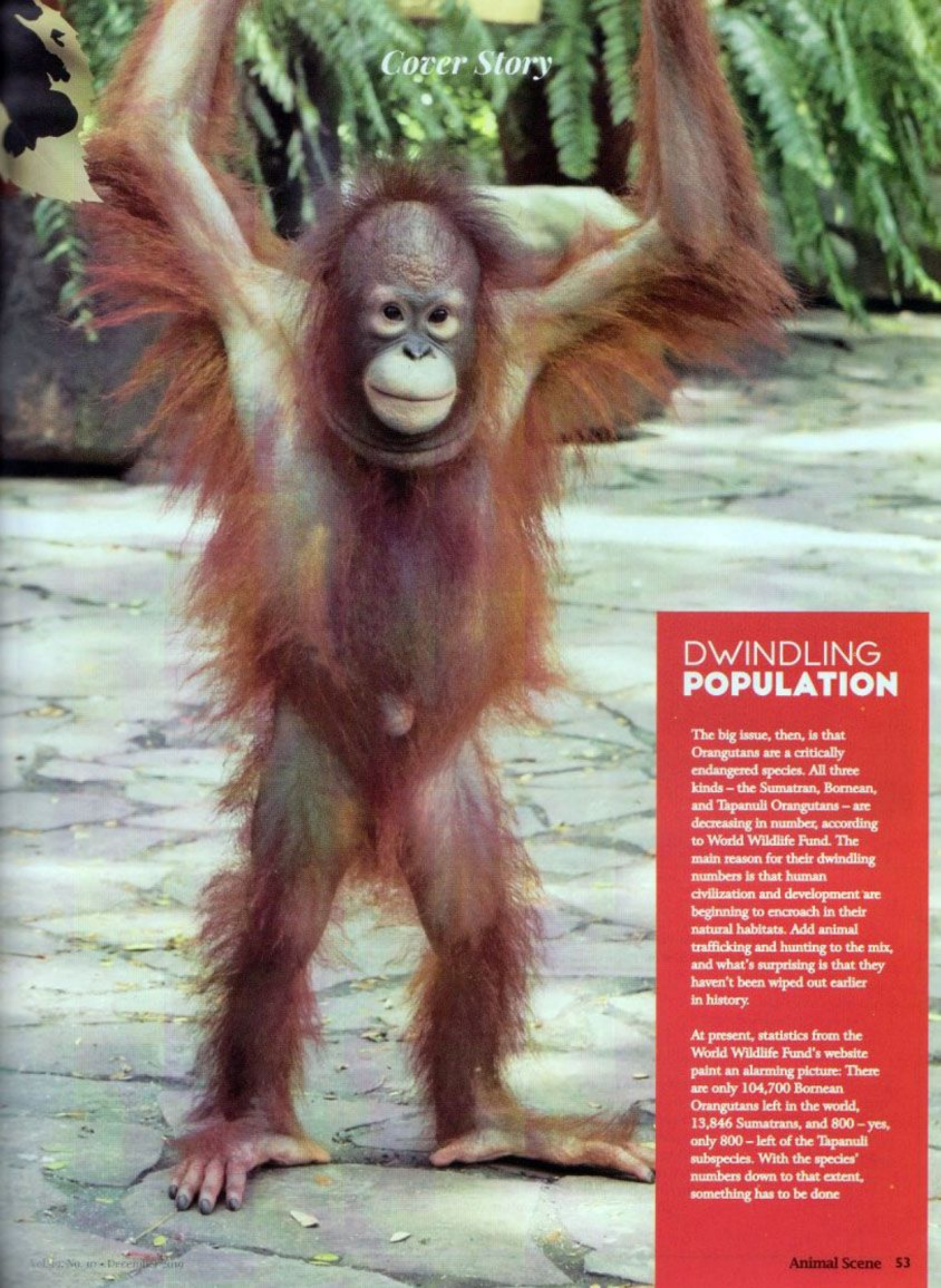
4

The cutesy animal film *Babe: Pig in the City* featured an Orangutan who liked wearing human clothes.

5

For the gamers among us, there is Lanky Kong, a Sumatran Orangutan in the video game *Donkey Kong 64*. He has since appeared in other installments of the Donkey Kong/Mario Brothers franchise.



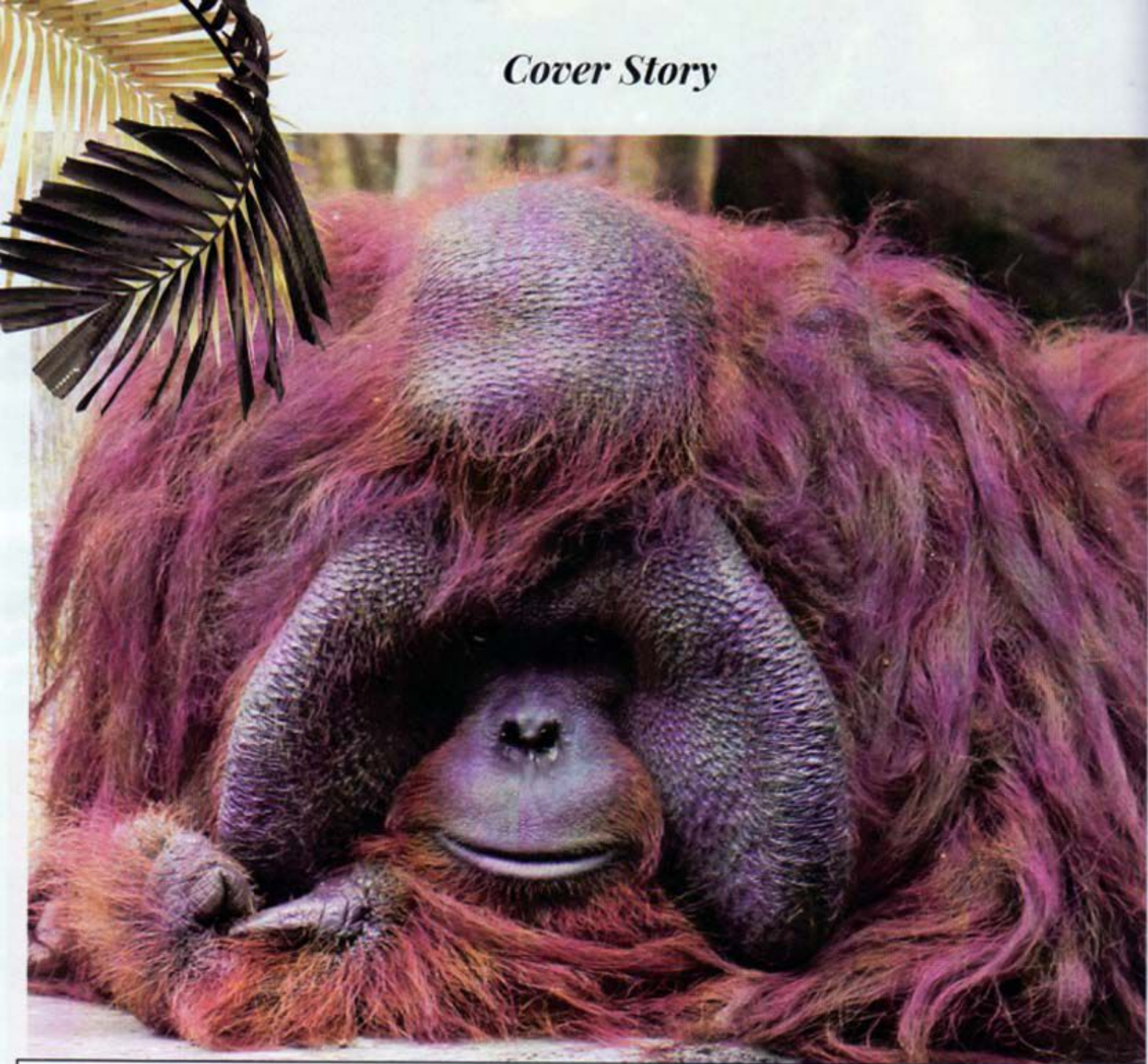


## DWINDLING POPULATION

The big issue, then, is that Orangutans are a critically endangered species. All three kinds – the Sumatran, Bornean, and Tapanuli Orangutans – are decreasing in number, according to World Wildlife Fund. The main reason for their dwindling numbers is that human civilization and development are beginning to encroach in their natural habitats. Add animal trafficking and hunting to the mix, and what's surprising is that they haven't been wiped out earlier in history.

At present, statistics from the World Wildlife Fund's website paint an alarming picture: There are only 104,700 Bornean Orangutans left in the world, 13,846 Sumatrans, and 800 – yes, only 800 – left of the Tapanuli subspecies. With the species' numbers down to that extent, something has to be done





### FUN FACTS

Orangutans are visually known for their reddish or orange-ish color, and the growths at the sides of their faces as some of the males grow older. But there's much more to them than meets the eye. Here are some facts about our brightly-colored friends.

1

The Orangutan is the man... of the forest, that is. That's literally what their name means in Malay.

2

Orangutans tend to be loners, but it's been noted that Sumatran Orangutans tend to have better social relationships than their Bornean cousins.

3

If you're familiar with the Orangutan's media image of a lanky, long-armed "old man-child" look with red hair, you're in for a surprise. The adult males can reach 200 pounds.

4

As can be expected, Orangutans spend much of their lives in trees, with the Sumatran subspecies barely touching the ground.

5

The newest Orangutan subspecies discovered, the Tapanuli Orangutan, lives in less than 500 square miles of forest in Sumatra only. Experts believed they diverged and kept to themselves, away from the other Orangutans, in the last 10,000 years at least.



## ORANGUTAN BASICS

Orangutans are large members of the ape family, and as such are the only Asian representatives as well. Males can reach in excess of 200 pounds, with females peaking at around 120, according to the 2015 International Studbook of the Orangutan.

They are known for their striking visual look, thanks to their reddish hair, which can range from dark brown to a bright orange. Their faces, though, are usually bare and dark in color. Males who are sexually and socially mature also have large cheek pads, or flanges, aside from throat pouches and,

well, mustaches. Both males and females have beards.

They usually have a lifespan of 35-40 years but have been known to reach about 50 years. Orangutans are usually solitary in nature but can also form social attachments with others.

They are foragers, and have a diet consisting of leaves, flowers, wood pith, bark, insects, and sometimes the occasional bird's egg or smaller wildlife. They prefer lowland forests, including swamps and dry forests.

### ABOUT AVILON ZOO AND THEIR ORANGUTANS

Avilon Zoo is one of the largest, if not the largest institution of its kind in the Philippines, both because of its land area and the size of its collection. The zoo's 19 acres in Rizal are populated with 3,000 animals, from around 600 animal species.

When it comes to Orangutans, Avilon Zoo is part of the Global Species Management Program (GSMP) for Orangutans. All of the individual Orangutans that the zoo has registered in the International Studbook (ISB), to make sure that there is proper documentation – it may help save their species, after all. To that end, tests determined that the Orangutans of Avilon were South Bornean (subspecies *Pongo pygmaeus wurmbii*).

## A HELPING HAND

Thankfully, many organizations are stepping in to help bolster the number of Orangutans in the world – and, hopefully, get them back on a stable footing in terms of population.

Noel Rafael is one such man. He is the executive secretary of both the Membership and Information Office of the Southeast Asian Zoos and Aquariums Association, and the Philippine Zoos and Aquariums Association. But when it comes to Orangutans, and particularly Bornean Orangutans, it is his work as Curator and Conservation Program Director of Avilon Zoo that is most important.

Noel generously answered our questions via email about how Avilon Zoo is helping in the efforts to remove Orangutans from the critically endangered list.

**QUESTION: WHAT MAKES THE BORNEAN ORANGUTANS, AND ORANGUTANS IN GENERAL, SO UNIQUE?**

**NOEL:** Orangutans are the only species of Great Apes presently existing in Asia. They are also

the largest arboreal mammals on earth. Unique for all three species of Orangutans would be the cheek pads of the dominant males.

**Q: WHAT IS THEIR STATUS IN TERMS OF POPULATION, CLIMATE, AND HABITAT?**

**N:** All three species of Orangutans are classified as Critically Endangered (CR) in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The primary threat to their existence would be habitat loss and fragmentation due to the rapid rate of conversion of rainforests to oil palm plantations, other agricultural practices, industrialization and urbanization.

To a certain extent, but not as rampant as with previous decades, poaching and collection for the pet trade also contribute to Orangutan population declines. In Sumatra, the Tapanuli Orangutan (which only has a few hundred individuals left) is at a high risk of being forever gone due to a dam project. If the building of the dam pushes through, it will inundate the Tapanuli Orangutan's only remaining habitat.

**Q:** How is Avilon Zoo pursuing the breeding program to boost the global population of Orangutans?

**N:** Avilon Zoo is part of the Global Species Management Program (GSMP) for Orangutans. All Avilon Zoo Orangutans are recorded in the Orangutan International Studbook (ISB). Avilon Zoo is an active member of the Southeast Asian Zoos & Aquariums Association (SEAZA) which has population management of Orangutans as one of its high-priority projects.

**Q: WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF RAISING ORANGUTANS IN CAPTIVITY?**

**N:** The biggest challenges are keeping them healthy physically and mentally and simulating their natural diet.

**Q: CAN ORANGUTANS THRIVE IN A PHILIPPINE SETTING, SUCH AS A LOCAL WILDLIFE PRESERVE? WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR THAT?**

**N:** Orangutans are not native to the Philippines. Any effort to create a wildlife sanctuary in the Philippines should benefit Philippine indigenous wildlife. We have some other fine facilities though, such as the Davao Crocodile Park and Cebu Safari & Adventure Park, which also have some Orangutans, so a local program is possible. For that to commence, we first need to know which species are in both institutions through genetic analysis.

**Q: WHAT WOULD YOU WANT THE PUBLIC TO KNOW?**

**N:** Our primary aim in Avilon Zoo for the Orangutans is to contribute to efforts to preserving the species, be it through breeding and exchange programs, or scientific research. . . The more people [experience the presence of these magnificent great apes], the more [we can educate them on issues about] their natural home range, and what people can do, both big and small, to contribute in saving their species, their habitat, and biodiversity as a whole.



## ORANGUTANS AND **MEN**

The challenge of helping Orangutans get out of the list of critically endangered species highlights many of the issues that surround development, conservation, and biodiversity here in our planet. There is hope, however, as conservation efforts show that where there is a will, there is a way to save our evolutionary cousins. It will be a great effort, but success will mean everything – that we as a species can move forward without callously erasing the past, that we care for all under the sun.

### WHAT AFFECTS THEIR SURVIVAL

#### LOSS OF HABITAT

Orangutans are losing their habitats to human development in the form of illegal logging, deforestation, and resource development activities like agricultural plantations. This is made worse by the fact that even if there are declared protected areas, many human activities simply encroach on the said territories. Some estimates state that as much as 80% of their habitat has disappeared.

#### CONFLICT

Another issue is that Orangutans can, if they have issues with food supply, move into previously developed human territories, and then disrupt crop production. In these cases, Orangutans have been shot in revenge for their destructive activities.

#### HUNTING AND ILLEGAL TRADE

Because of their size, Orangutans tend to be easy targets, especially with their slow movements. Females are usually the targets and, even worse, if young Orangutans are caught with the females, they are traded as pets. Many deaths happen while they are in captivity or are on the way to other parts of the country or the world. They are usually kept as a form of status symbols in households.

Thankfully, measures and actions are being done to make sure that our red-haired evolutionary cousins can thrive again.



*Cover Story*

