

Working with BOS UK to Protect the Orangutans

Hello and welcome to another "corner-copia" of all things that should concern us. I realise naturally that, as I write this column, the so-called human- mutated virus H1N1 called "Swine Flu" has literally landed in the UK and Spain, and named only because one surface protein is similar to one found in the virus already known about in pigs. Climate, travel and time of the year are all involved here. Let's hope it stays away long after the possible late Spring and Summer lower risk period.

My thoughts have already been touched on in an earlier column regarding the state of the native Orangutans, now endangered because of the palm oil from many of the plantations in Borneo. I make no apologies therefore in taking you, my reader, on a long flight to Borneo Orangutan Survival International's four on-going projects. I hope that many of you were able to watch all the episodes and re-runs of the latest Orangutan Diaries (vet Steve Leonard, wildlife presenter Michaela Strachan) on the BBC and BBC iPlayer. The team's absolute dedication and sense of success and achievement gives so much hope for these great apes. I also hope that you didn't fail to be moved by the knowledge, love and skillful professionalism that all the staff members of these projects demonstrated in the daily care and future releases of such adorable, unique, trusting and probably very naughty orphaned apes - orphaned because of the growth in demand from unsustainable sources throughout the world, fuelled by increased use of palm oil in so many of the products we use every day; orphaned because their mothers were shot or machete'd to death after recently giving birth to young that they were trying to find food for, in the devastated forest areas, the plantations and surrounding land.

On that recent Saving Planet Earth special Nick Knowles, after a period of his quarantine at the project's centre, was able to cuddle Othello, a little Orang that he named at the start of his visit. He explained that the staff's babysitters were paid at the time £3 a day - plus a whole wheelbarrow-load of thriving orphans! The cost of social and medical care and



rehab of these 600+ priceless red jewels of the forest worked out to be £1000 EACH per annum, taking on average 7 years to work through from the Kalimantan Centre Nursery School, Forest Schools 1 and 2 and the Islands. The daily cost of feeding, mainly fruit including star fruit, was 90p a day. By saving such forest jewels, the forests themselves are saved, along with all the other animals and plants living in that forest.

My Practice is in the process of adopting one of the Orphans, and in view of team members flying out in May we have put time, money and effort, supported by our staff and clients, wholesalers, laboratory suppliers, eBay and Amazon Marketplace sellers and local chemists to find



as many of the items as possible on the BOS Wish List that was sent to me from Borneo by the resident paediatric doctor, Dr David Irons who, along with the Veterinary Team members, was seen at work in the BBC Diaries. We will also help sponsor one of the veterinary surgeons working there.

We plan to deliver all these essential items very soon, and wish to thank everyone who supported this effort most sincerely - especially as the issue is in apes so far away and where the reality (in food) is so close and personal - but the effort has to continue, so those of you interested in helping BOS can contact us and we will have details at hand as to how you can make it your own personal project.

If you have any questions or suggestions for the charity, please feel free to send your mail to Grainne McEntee, head of Operations, BOS UK, 8 Temple Square, Aylesbury HP20 2QH. Donations and orangutan adoption hotline: 08456 521528 or email enquiry@savetheorangutan.co.uk



Final thought this month: "We don't seem to know what we've got until we've lost it".

Robert Elliott