

# Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program



May 2019

Issue: 77

## Code RED

An e-newsletter from your friends in West Kalimantan

Dear Friends and Supporters,

May has revealed not only a newborn orangutan and a prestigious international conservation award for GPOCP, but also welcomed 6 new students to the Bornean Orangutan Caring Scholarship program!

### In This Issue:

The Warmth of London

-

Fulfilling Her Dreams in Borneo

-

Walimah finally had her baby!

-

Bornean Orangutan Caring Scholarships 2019

-

Adventures Among Orangutans: NAT GEO

## Remembering Great Apes



*Walimah relaxing with her new infant. Photo by GPOCP research field assistant Dang.*

In this issue of *Code Red*, Wendi Tamariska gives us a personal account of his trip to London for The Whitley Fund for Nature Award Ceremony at the start of the month. I am so proud of him and the whole GPOCP team that earned this 'Green Oscar' award. Then, we are introduced to Tori Bakley, our new research assistant, who shares her experiences getting to know the rainforests of Borneo that she's dreamed about visiting since she was a child.

Our sidebar articles introduce the new baby of Gunung Palung National Park, the 2019 Bornean Orangutan Caring Scholarship signing ceremony, my NAT GEO LIVE talks with Tim Laman, and the Remembering Great Apes book from the Remembering Wildlife book series that raises both awareness and funds for great ape conservation.

We are also excited to announce two recent journal publications! Former Program Director, Cassie Freund, along with myself and GPOCP's education staff, published an article in [Animal Conservation](#) about the impacts of our environmental education program and I published, along with my graduate students and Indonesian research staff and counterparts, an article in [Scientific Reports](#) about a possible case of infanticide with Walimah's previous infant.

We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter. Be sure to check out our social media and website to interact with our upcoming campaigns and projects!

Sincerely,

## Walimah finally had her baby!

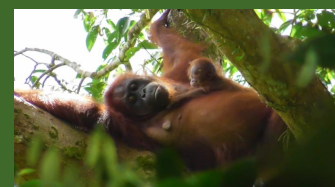
We are thrilled to announce that Walimah has given birth!

Walimah, our most distinctive and famous orangutan, has been featured in nature documentaries with both the BBC and National Geographic.

We have been observing her at Cabang Panti Research Station since she was born, and seeing her with her new baby is very precious and exciting news!

Any new baby for a critically endangered species gives us hope, and this one happens to have a mother that is already dear to us.

We look forward to seeing this little one grow up and enjoy life in the wild forests of Gunung Palung in the years to come!



*Walimah and her baby in GPNP. Photo by GPOCP Research Manager Ella Brown.*



Cheryl Knott

Cheryl Knott, PhD  
Executive Director  
[Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program \(GPOCP\)](#)

## The Warmth of London

By Wendi Tamariska, GPOCP Sustainable Livelihoods Manager

I never imagined that I would one day see this city. An iconic metropolis with an advanced culture that is very different from where I come from in West Kalimantan. But I am incredibly grateful to have received the opportunity to visit London, England, as a recipient of the 2019 Whitley Fund for Nature Award.



*The Whitley Fund for Nature Award ceremony brochure- with our very own Tim Laman's photo of an orangutan from Gunung Palung National Park on the cover!*

When I first flew in to London, I was quite impressed with the layout of the city when I saw it from the air; it was so compact. And when I first left the airport building, I was greeted with such cold air that it overwhelmed me! It was only around 10 - 15 °C, very cold for an Indonesian! In addition, I was not properly dressed considering I had just traveled 21 hours from tropical Jakarta. The overwhelming sensation of the cold air quickly vanished in the warm welcome that I received from my colleagues in London. Warm hugs and shining smiles made me feel instantly at ease.

## Bornean Orangutan Caring Scholarships 2019

On May 17th, GPOCP and the Orang Utan Republik Foundation proudly welcomed 6 new students to the Bornean Orangutan Caring Scholarship program!

These scholarships enable local students to attend university and build regional capacity towards conservation in various professions including lawyers, scientists, educators, policy makers, and more.



*Signing the BOCS contracts in Ketapang, May 17th, 2019.*

This ceremony was attended by the families of the recipients, the local Education Department, the Forestry Department, ASRI, IAR, Gunung Palung National Park, Flora and Fauna International, the Natural Resources Department, and Aid Environment, as well as GPOCP staff and volunteers.

It is through community engagement and education that we



*The winners of the 2019 Whitley Award at the Royal Geographic Society in London. Wendi is third from the left.*

Established in 1994, the [Whitley Award](#) has been given to conservation leaders working directly in the field. This award, also known as 'The Green Oscar' is presented by the charity patron HRH Princess Anne.

This year I, along with 5 other winners, were selected from 110 applicants from 55 countries. An achievement like this is nothing I could have ever imagined in my wildest dreams and is all thanks to my hard-working team and colleagues at GPOCP!

reach our conservation goals, and the BOCS program combines the two in the best possible way. Knowledgeable and professional students will graduate to join the workforce and contribute to protecting orangutans and their rainforest habitats.

We are very grateful for everyone's support for making this all possible!

## Adventures Among Orangutans: NAT GEO LIVE Tour!

GPOCP Executive Director, Dr. Cheryl Knott, and her husband, wildlife photojournalist (and GPOCP Board Member), Dr. Tim Laman, are on a world tour with NAT GEO LIVE! to give talks about their adventures among the orangutans in Gunung Palung over the past 30 years!



*Come see their talk at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Kansas City, MO on June 4th!*

Visit the [NAT GEO LIVE](#)



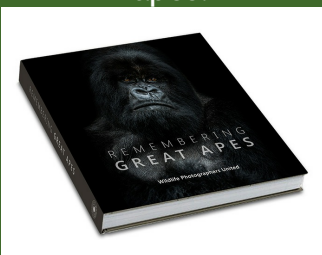
*Wendi Tamariska giving his acceptance speech at the Whitley Award Ceremony in London, May 2019. Click [here](#) to see the full speech on the GPOCP YouTube channel.*

I want to thank GPOCP for nominating me for this award, and thank all of those who support GPOCP to enable our work in the field. This is only the first step for us to start something bigger for the survival of orangutans and their habitat around Gunung Palung National Park.

website to learn the tour dates and locations, and come hear about orangutan conservation first-hand.

## Remembering Great Apes

Remembering Great Apes is the third book in the highly acclaimed *Remembering Wildlife* series of charity books and has been edited by Ian Redmond and features a foreword by Dr. Jane Goodall. The book is full of beautiful images donated by 72 top wildlife photographers including Tim Laman, Anup Shah, Art Wolfe, Jonathan & Angela Scott and Michael Poliza, with an aim to raise awareness of the plight facing gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos and orangutans. The proceeds from this book directly protect these magnificent great apes!



*Remembering Great Apes, check it out [here](#)*







*Wendi Tamariska meeting Ian Redmond at a networking event hosted by The Whitley Fund for Nature in London. Photo credit GPOCP.*

With the support from the Whitley Fund for Nature, the Arcus Foundation, and Sir David Attenborough (Check out his narrated [video](#) of our project!), I am looking forward to expanding our work and collaborations with all those who want to preserve orangutans in Kalimantan. With this award we are planning to expand our sustainable livelihoods work in more villages surrounding Gunung Palung National Park.

While only in London for 10 days, I saw first hand how the city values its history. It was quite a cultural

[Donate](#)



**amazon**smile

Choose GPOCP as your Amazon Smile recipient and 0.05% of your sales will go directly to us.

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

*"What I see everywhere in the world are ordinary people willing to confront despair, power, and incalculable odds in order to restore some semblance of grace, justice, and beauty to this world."*

*Paul Hawken*

difference from the tropical rainforests of Borneo, but I thoroughly enjoyed seeing some of London's treasures - especially its historical buildings and castles. I was also able to visit the Natural History Museum, hundreds of years old but still beautifully maintained and a busy hub for activity.

The large gardens on almost every corner of the city were also quite impressive. These parks offer a perfect place for recreation and for people to socialize. Road infrastructure, public transportation and even facilities for people with disabilities are all designed to make life easier for pedestrians, motorists and cyclists. Surprisingly, I did not witness even one traffic jam because everyone actually stops at a red light!



*HRH, Princess Anne, presenting the Whitley Award to Wendi Tamariska, Sustainable Livelihoods Manager.  
Photos credit Whitley Fund for Nature.*

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to London and I am extremely honored and grateful to the Whitley Fund for their support. Now that I am back in Ketapang, I am looking forward to getting started on making an even bigger impact on orangutan conservation!

## **Fulfilling My Dreams in Borneo**

*By Tori Bakley, GPOCP Research Assistant*

My name is Tori Bakley, and I am a recent graduate from Florida State University and the new volunteer research assistant with GPOCP! I have had a special interest in orangutans and the rainforests of Borneo since I first learned about them on the Animal Planet TV channel when I was 10 years old. Since then, my

interest in orangutans and Bornean biodiversity has only grown. Like the wonderful umbrella species they are, my curiosity about orangutans led to me learning about other Bornean species, like slow lorises, gliding frogs, *dipterocarp* trees, and hornbills. To me, it seemed as though the most enchanting and impressive species resided within the coasts of this giant island, and it has been my goal to come here and see them with my own eyes.



*Tori Bakely helping inventory botanical samples in the lab at Cabang Panti Research Station.*

I arrived in Indonesia on January 13th, two days after my 22nd birthday, and have spent the last four months at Cabang Panti Research Station in Gunung Palung National Park. The forests are incredible and I could explore them all day (and some days I do!). I cannot help but acknowledge that I expected there to be a lot more wild spaces and local biodiversity in Borneo than there is outside of the national park. In the small town of Ketapang, where the GPOCP office is located, wildlife is sparse and primarily found in the local city forest and in other protected spaces. Most species have been pushed out of their natural ranges, and even the density of species within the national park is much smaller than it would be if the edges of the park were not so distinct. It starkly points out the importance of protecting the remaining wildlife and forests of Borneo.





*An avid bird enthusiast, Tori has an excellent eye and managed to get a beautiful shot of this juvenile Brown Wood Owl (Strix leptogrammica) while out searching for orangutans.*

In Gunung Palung National Park, the trees stretch high into the sky and their branches are commonly adorned with hornbills, gliding lizards, and giant squirrels. *Lianas* drape across the trails and often provide support while crossing rivers and stepping across *pneumatophores* in the peat swamp. Mushrooms sprout in the most surprising shapes, colors, and formations, and some even make the forest floor glow in the dark. Every day I see something that I have never seen before.

Tori has enthusiasm for all the creatures in the forest and this photo with her amphibious friend was quite popular on Indonesian social media! Photos credit Tori Bakley.

I have another 7 months left to explore the forests of Gunung Palung and the creatures that dwell within. So far this experience has been a dream and I love that I get to call Borneo home!

Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program (GPOCP)

<http://saveGPorangutans.org>

[savegporangutans@gmail.com](mailto:savegporangutans@gmail.com)



Orangutan Photographs © Tim Laman

All other photographs © GPOCP