



10 years



NYARU MENTENG 1999-2009



Photo: Christian Åslund

One Woman. Ten Years. Hundreds of Lives Saved.

On November 4th 1999, Nyaru Menteng opened its gates to the first orphans rescued from the illegal pet trade. Ten years on, and while we may celebrate the many hundreds of lives Lone Dröscher-Nielsen and the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation have saved, the celebration is tinged with sadness, that such a place need exist at all.

Read on and decide for yourself if we should be celebrating 10 years in the life of Nyaru Menteng.

From flight attendant to orangutan mother – The journey begins

Substitute mother to orangutans. That is probably the most fitting way to describe a woman who has become known around the world as "The Great Dane". Her name is Lone Dröscher-Nielsen. She has dedicated the last 17 years of her life to saving the orangutan from extinction. Founder and Manager of the Nyaru Menteng Sanctuary, she heads the rescue operations to save orangutans that would otherwise not have had a chance of survival; orphaned babies whose mothers have been killed, and adult orangutans that ►



Photo: Christian Åslund



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have lost their home to the destruction of the rainforest by Man. They stay at the centre, safe and cared for, until they can be re-released into the wild.

It has not always been obvious that Lone would become a mother to the orangutans. She grew up in a small village in Denmark. Even though she always had a keen interest in animals, she took up a career as a flight attendant. Throughout her twenties, she served tea and coffee at 10,000 ft and enjoyed a life of manicures and socializing with colleagues and friends.

All that changed 17 years ago. In her early thirties, during a vacation in Borneo, she volunteered at an orangutan centre. That was the first time she came into close contact with "the man of the forest" – the Indonesian name for the orangutan. Since then, Lone's life has never been the same. It was love at first sight. So moved by the traumas experienced by these creatures, she gave up her life in Denmark, and has been living in Borneo ever since.

In November 1999, with the help of the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOS) she opened her own rehabilitation and rescue centre for orangutans in Nyaru Menteng. For ten years, Lone has fought for the survival of the orangutans. It is an uphill battle, but Lone refuses to give up. She has made a promise to them and she will never stop fighting to save them.

The Orangutan Situation

Once upon a time, orangutans lived all over South East Asia. Most of the area was then covered of enormous areas of rainforest. The orangutans could move freely, bringing life and diversity to this precious Earth resource. Today, forest destruction and an ever-increasing human population have reduced the rainforest to small, isolated patches. Agricultural areas, palm oil plantations, cities and villages have replaced this once wild, pristine landscape.

Of the 30-40,000 orangutans estimated to be living in the wild today, around 5,000 of these are killed or die every year, victims of forest destruction, fires and hunting. Huge areas are disappearing daily due to illegal logging. And there are many other victims who suffer as a result. The indigenous people also depend on the forest for their survival. But for the orangutan, if nothing changes, the species will be extinct in less than ten years.

Hope for the Future?

Hope for the future of the orangutan in our world comes with your support. With ►



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630 orangutan lives in our hands at Nyaru Menteng, individuals for whom we are tirelessly working to get back to the wild, that support is needed more now than ever. With that, we can achieve our mission: save the orangutan and protect its rainforest habitat. One of their last bastions of hope is the sanctuary at Nyaru Menteng. BOS is working hard to ensure that this situation is only a short term solution. The Orangutan was born to be wild, yet has suffered many miscarriages of justice – the loss of their home, their mother, a normal life. Though rescued, they may well find themselves caged, for their own safety and that of their carers, dreaming and hoping for a speedy return to life in the trees. And life in the trees is the future they deserve and the future that BOS works to give them.

What can you do?

The situation is desperate. But as long as forest still stands and orangutans still swing in the trees, with your help, BOS and Lone can continue to save them.

You can help by adopting an orangutan and becoming part of the largest primate rescue operation in the world today.

When adopting an orangutan your money will go to the care, medicine and eventual release of all the orangutans in our care. As an adoptive parent you will receive regular updates about your orangutan, follow their progress in forest school and get to know the character of one of these most special "people of the rainforest." You will be able to follow their journey from a scared, traumatised orphan into a happy orangutan with the skills needed to survive in the wild.

You can also help by trying to ensure that you reduce your consumption of palm oil products. Check the product for the words vegetable oil. This is normally derived from palm oil. Be proactive. Write to your supermarket and ask them to start supplying sustainable products from known sources.

Your support gives hope for the future to the orangutans in the care of BOS.



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