



Fires in Borneo on the ground

Fires in Borneo Create A Disaster for Orangutans

By Laura Mayo

During the late summer months of 2015, "Borneo Burning" was the headline seen by those who care for orangutans, predicting riveting events that would take the lives of many wild orangutans. Borneo, an island territory shared by Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei, is home to one of the largest wild orangutan populations in the world. An estimated 20,000 of the apes live on the island. The Bornean orangutan is classified as an endangered species reports the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). These apes play an important role in

Indonesian forest ecosystems because they help spread seeds around the forest, which then become young growth plants and trees, WWF states on their website.

The fires decimated over 4 million acres of forest and set up what will be one of the most devastating environmental disasters causing harm to humans, wildlife and to the planet for decades to come.

It took awhile, but people all over the world soon realized how horrific the fires were. Beginning as small, mostly illegal ways for local farmers as well as palm oil companies to quickly ready their land for planting of new crops, the fires were fueled by the dry season and quickly spread out of control. The blazes became so severe that NASA satellites were able to capture dramatic images from space of the sprawling smoke.



Fires in Borneo from space

The fires have been particularly tricky to put out, because they have taken hold in areas with peat, a type of soil made of partially decayed plant material that is rich in carbon and highly flammable. Peat, which is the first step in coal formation, releases large amounts of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide when it burns, according to a 2013 study presented at the Fire Behavior and Fuels Conference held in Raleigh, North Carolina. It's often very difficult to put out peat fires because they can burn and smolder deep underground.

Along with the obliteration of the physical forest home of the wild orangutan, the fires caused a thick wall of smoke, engulfing much of Borneo and Sumatra.

The devastating effects on human health may not be known for many years.



Workers try to control the spread of fires in Borneo

What hits home for those of us who have taken care of orangutans for many years is how the fires hurt the individual animals. Acute respiratory problems particularly affect the older ones who may have died because they couldn't escape the flames and smoke as well as the young orangutans who may have lost their mothers, a fate no orangutan infant should face.



An orangutan saved from the fires

Luckily, there were MANY dedicated people working tirelessly to put out the fires and rescue those orangutans needing help. So many displaced and injured, from infants to adults, were sent to rescue and rehabilitation centers throughout Borneo - pushing their

capacity above already unheard of limits.

ACE is proud to lend support to International Animal Rescue (IAR) whose facility in Borneo now cares for many orangutans of all ages. They also work to relocate wild orangutans from harm's way to safer areas of the forest.

Today, the rains have diminished the fires and smoke for now. Because so much land was destroyed, the already dim future for wild orangutans is very dire. But ACE members and supporters will hopefully continue to play a role in helping the orangutans in any way possible to ensure better lives for some of the most incredible animals on the planet.



A lucky survivor of the fires

Laura Mayo is assistant curator of primates at Zoo Atlanta and a past officer and board member of ACE. She traveled to Borneo in 2012, when she met and remains friends with Christine Nelson, a veterinarian with IAR in Ketapang.

Some information for this article came from the following:

www.internationalanimalrescue.org

*and from
www.livescience.com/52677-boreno-fires-hurt-orangutans.html, Nov. 5, 2015 article by Elizabeth Newton*

Please refer to these sites for additional information.



ACE Begins A New Year

On November 7, 2015, members for ACE gathered for a potluck dinner and general meeting. The food was delicious as always, and it was the perfect way to ring out the old and ring in the new. Voting for new board members produced four additions to the ACE board: Jane Barron, Lori Kirkland, Donna Mayer Todd and Gene Todd. They join three returning board members: Janelle Nord, Susan Smith and Lynn Yakubinis. We appreciate the work the three retiring board members did, and they are Michele Dave, Julie Gaines, and Laura Mayo.

For financial information, please see Susan Smith's article.

Laura and Lynn reported on the dire need for help during the fires in Borneo. Since there was a quorum of voting members present, it was decided that money raised from the holiday sales table, HoneyBaked Ham cards, Mik's bake sale and year-end donations would go to International Animal Rescue and be earmarked for fire disaster recovery in Borneo.

Thanks to all members and non-members who supported our events and projects. We are glad to be able to continue to make a difference in the survival of great apes in the wild.

Officers and committee chairs for this year were chosen by the new board at their January meeting.

Officers are:

President - Donna Mayer Todd

Vice President - Lynn Yakubinis

Secretary - Jane Barron

Treasurer - Susan Smith

Board Members -

Lori Kirkland

Janelle Nord

Gene Todd

Committee chairs:

Finance - Susan Smith

Membership and Newsletter- Jane Barron

Apes in the Arts - Lori Kirkland

Gorilla Golf - Jodi Carrigan and Lynn Yakubinis

Fundraising - Lori Kirkland and Laura Mayo

Marketing/Advertising - Donna Mayer Todd and Lynn Yakubinis

Research - Gene Todd

Social Media - Lynn Yakubinis

Run for the Redheads - 2016 will be a year to re-evaluate and remodel the R4R. More later.



2015 - A Successful Year of Fundraising

By Susan Smith

ACE had another year of successful fundraising, raising over \$31,000 (after expenses) to help save the great apes. Large events like Apes in the Arts, Run for the Redheads, and Gorilla Golf, as well as smaller fundraisers like Yankee Candle, HoneyBaked Ham gift cards, and Dine-Out at Doc Chey's all helped to bring in funds that were distributed to various organizations.

The organizations that we supported included Friends of Bonobos, Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme, Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary and International Animal Rescue. Each of these organizations works directly with great apes in the wild, where our fundraising efforts can do the most good.

Our final fundraiser was held at the December meeting of Zoo Atlanta volunteers. The ACE

sales table made over \$950. The usual items were offered such as Gorilla Sacks, Christmas ornaments and note cards. New items this year were wine and beer glasses that had been painted by some of Zoo Atlanta's resident great apes, branching out from their regular painting of ornaments, plus signed copies of *Jeffrey - Take a Walk in December* by Karin Konoval.

At the year-end ACE meeting, membership voted to donate all the money raised in the last quarter of 2015 to help with the critical fire situation in Borneo. Funds from the sales table, HoneyBaked Ham gift cards, GoodSearch reward, and donations collected during this period, along with revenue from Mik Chari's bake sale and Darlene Bohanon's party, totaling \$3,200 will be sent to International Animal Rescue to help in this effort. With this year's final donation, ACE has donated over \$145,000 toward saving the great apes - a job well done!

Donations made in 2015

\$2,850 - Friends of Bonobos

\$2,850 - Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

\$17,546 - Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International

\$3,325 - International Animal Rescue

\$825 - Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme

\$3,200 (4th quarter donation) - International Animal Rescue



What is International Animal Rescue?

*Saving Animals From
Suffering Around the
World*

www.internationalanimalrescue.org

IAR is a group that ACE is supporting to save orangutans from the Indonesian fires. This is background of the group from their website, and uses the spelling on the website. We feel they are a group with a mission similar to ACE and we are proud to support them.

"At International Animal Rescue we do exactly what our name says - we save animals from suffering around the world. Our work includes cutting free and caring for dancing bears in India, rescuing

primates from captivity in Indonesia, and sterilising and vaccinating stray dogs and cats in developing countries. Wherever possible we return rescued animals to their natural environment but we also provide a permanent home for animals that can no longer survive in the wild.

As human populations expand, wildlife comes under increasing threat. By rescuing individual animals belonging to species like the orangutan and reintroducing them into protected areas in the wild, our work also plays a role in the conservation of the species as a whole.

A 'Hands On' Approach

We work to educate the public in the compassionate and humane treatment of all animals. Sound scientific evidence forms the basis for our decision-making and determines the course of our rescue operations. In all that we do we aim to find practical solutions that benefit both animals and people.

We also work with other like-minded organisations and government departments to strengthen legislation to protect animals from cruelty and neglect.

Head Office

International Animals Rescue has its head office in the UK, comprising of a small fundraising team,

accounts department and supporter care. The UK office works closely with the teams in India, Indonesia and Malta to ensure the projects run smoothly.

International Animal Rescue has no connection whatsoever with the group known as "The International Animals Rescue Foundation."

International Animal Rescue, U.S.

International Animal Rescue, U.S. was incorporated on 19 April 2001 and subsequently registered in every state in the U.S. This meant we were able to start raising awareness of our projects and generate funds to support them by developing a programme of direct mail appeals to animal-loving members of the U.S. public. Through this programme we are building up a network of U.S. supporters eager to support our animal rescue projects and help us spread the word about our vital work.

Since 2006 International Animal Rescue has run a small administrative office in Massachusetts and we are now seeking to expand our fundraising efforts in the U.S.

During the latter half of 2014, with the transfer of a member of our UK fundraising team to the U.S, we will be increasing our presence

there and engaging new audiences in order to establish a wider network of individuals committed to supporting our animal welfare and conservation projects.

Borneo Orangutan Rescue

The plight of the orangutan in Indonesia has reached a critical stage, with the survival of the species under severe threat. Animals are suffering and dying because of the systematic destruction of the rainforest, primarily for palm oil production, particularly in Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of the island of Borneo.

International Animal Rescue's team is working in West Kalimantan to rescue and care for baby orangutans that have been taken from their mothers to be illegally sold as pets and adults that have spent their entire lives in captivity chained up or imprisoned in tiny cages. Our human-orangutan conflict (HOC) team also comes to the aid of orangutans left stranded when their forest home is destroyed and translocates these vulnerable animals to safe areas of protected forest. When we first started the project in 2009 we used a small transit centre in Ketapang as a temporary rescue facility. However, it wasn't long before the centre was overflowing with orangutans and there

was an urgent need for something larger and better equipped.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we were able to buy 24 hectares of land in Sungai Awan and at the beginning of 2012 we started building a permanent Orangutan Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. We have since raised sufficient funds to purchase a further 42 hectares and expand the original site. Here the rescued orangutans are prepared for release back into protected areas of forest. Any animals that can no longer survive in the wild will be given a permanent home at the centre."

United States Registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Tax Id: 54-2044674



Did you know?

Since the founding of ACE in 2006, we have donated over \$145,000 to non-profit organizations working to save great apes in the wild!



2015 Gorilla Golf

The Fifth Annual Gorilla Golf tournament benefiting Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International (DFGFI) was held on September 29, 2015, at Brookfield Country Club in Roswell, GA. We had an excellent turn out this year with 21 golfers! Also, we had our greatest fundraising to date raising \$17,542 for gorilla conservation.



Photo by Jodi Carrigan
Our loyal gang of golfers

The winning golfers this year were as follows:

First Place - Brian Buckelew

Second Place - Carl Johnston

Third Place (tie) - Alfredo Rameiz and Michael Reineck

Longest Drive - Vivienne Ferguson

Closest to the Gorilla - Kathy LaPointe



Photo by Jodi Carrigan
Kathy LaPointe with her gorilla art prize

Kathy LaPointe made the shot of her life to get not only Closest to the Gorilla but also a hole-in-one!!!! Congratulations to all of the winners!

Save the date
September 27, 2016, for our 6th Annual Gorilla Golf Tournament. For more information, contact gorillagolf@apeconservationeffort.org.

ACE Attends the DFGFI Luncheon in New York

By Adie Miller

Each year in the fall in New York City, long-time donors and generous supporters of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International (DFGFI) gather for an annual update and elegant luncheon to honor the work done by the dedicated staff both in the offices in the U.S. and

Africa as well as in the field.

As a perpetual annual donating organization of \$1,000 or more, ACE is extended an invitation each year for some of its members to attend. On November 2, 2015, three of our members (Jodi Carrigan, Lisa Dempsey, and Adie Miller) traveled to New York for the opportunity to represent ACE and its commitment to gorilla conservation by attending the event.



Photo by Adie Miller
Lisa Dempsey, Sigourney Weaver, Adie Miller

The Circle Luncheon was held in the elegant Yale Club on Vanderbilt Avenue in New York City. We were greeted in the club lobby by DFGFI President & CEO Dr. Tara Stoinski and newly-elected Chairman of the Executive Committee Dwight Scott.



Photo by Adie Miller
Dwight Scott and Tara Stoinski

We were whisked up the elevator to an ornately-decorated ballroom overlooking the Upper

East Side. The DFGFI staff had done a superb job of embellishing the banquet tables with centerpieces featuring cute plush gorillas. There was a table near the bar with giveaways such as DFGFI calendars, bumper stickers and newsletters, Gorilla Munch cereal and packets of natural snack called Gorilla Goods, from which 2% of the profits are donated to DFGFI. Honorary Chairperson Sigourney Weaver was in attendance and was quite gracious meeting all of the guests and posing for photos.

Dr. Stoinski started the program with general facts about the work being done in Rwanda for research and protection of mountain gorillas, including plans for the start of an upcoming census. Additionally the following four points were emphasized as necessary to save the mountain gorilla species:

- 1. Protection of gorilla populations and their forest homes through anti-poaching patrols.* Over 20,000 hours are dedicated to protecting Rwanda's mountain gorillas each year.
- 2. Scientific research on gorillas as well as their surrounding biodiversity.* Teams at the Karisoke Research Center collect more than 5,000 hours of data yearly that are fed into a long-term database and shared with other conservation initiatives.

3. *Training the next generation of conservationists.* In conjunction with the University of Rwanda, DFGFI trains over 200 students each year in field research methods and conservation.

4. *Community outreach near Volcanoes National Park where primary and secondary school children are educated about gorilla conservation.* DFGFI also supports a local health clinic, clean water initiatives, and community development projects.

Dr. Damian Caillaud spoke about new and greater efforts to protect Grauer's gorillas in the DRC. Veronica Vecelli, Program Manager at Karisoke Research Center, gave an overall update of progress in monitoring mountain gorillas.



Photo by Adie Miller

Kristin Lukas, Kiesza, Tara Stoinski, Jodi Carrigan

After listening raptly to all the presentations, Sigourney Weaver gave a moving talk about the dedication of these workers, especially those in the field, and still seems as passionate about the protection of gorillas

as the scientist that she portrayed in the movie several years ago. In fact, she was included among some of the long-term donors, many of whom have contributed significant dollars to DFGFI for over twenty years. There was time for a few attendees to comment. Each one thanked the presenters for their work and some spoke with pure joy that they could contribute to something that meant so much to them personally.

It was an honor to attend the Circle Luncheon in 2015. With the onset of 2016 comes the 50th Anniversary of Karisoke Research Center and more opportunity for ACE to support DFGFI. More will be revealed.



Photo by Adie Miller

Tara Stoinski and Sigourney Weaver at the 2015 DFGFI Circle Luncheon in New York

Mountain Gorilla Census Underway in Africa's Virunga Massif

DFGFI Gorilla Council story, October 2015

A census of mountain gorillas in the Virunga massif, which straddles the borders between Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, is now underway, with the participation of authorities and staff from all three countries, as well as many partner organizations.

This complex collaborative effort involves some 60 people divided into teams, including eight staff from the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund. The process began with an intensive training period, which was like a crash course on how to plan and follow predetermined routes (called "recces"), search for fresh gorilla trails, use electronic data-collection devices and an application specifically developed for the census, collect and preserve gorilla fecal samples, identify important vegetation, use compasses and maps, and follow logistics and communications protocols. Notably, this was the first time electronic devices were used for a census (as

opposed to paper notebooks and pencils)!

Then, in early October, teams set up camps in the forest, and began conducting the first part of the census, over a period of approximately 11 weeks. A second sweep of the forest is planned for early next year. Each phase will be followed by data analysis and the release of preliminary results, and then a final report.

The last census was conducted in 2010 and showed a total of 480 mountain gorillas in the Virungas, an increase from the 380 counted in the 2003 census. (The census does not include a separate populations of mountain gorillas living in Uganda's Bwindi forest. A separate census conducted there in 2012 showed approximately 400 gorillas.)

How the census works

Each day on a census team involves some 10 or more hours of hiking in the forest, starting out on the prescribed recces. Census staff systematically walk throughout the gorillas' entire range, following gorilla trails as they are encountered from west to east. The count is based on observations of night nests, dung samples and hair samples, which provide various kinds of

evidence. For example, the presence of silver hair indicates nests of silverbacks. Dung samples are used in several ways: to approximate ages of individuals in each group by measuring dung size; to determine genders and unique identities using DNA extraction; and to establish health status by analyzing gastrointestinal parasites that may be present. The census staff also collects information on illegal activities in the forest, and looks for the presence or evidence of other large mammals in the park.

Also critical to the census teams are the cooks who set up makeshift camp kitchens in the forest to keep everyone fed. They also get water and firewood, and generally make sure everyone is well cared for. Once the day is over, everyone hikes back to their camps but there is still work to do. All the samples collected for DNA analysis have to be transferred to other containers and all the devices and radios have to be recharged, using a generator, which takes about three hours. But after that, it's nice and quiet and everyone goes to sleep early, to prepare for another long but important day.

"The mountain gorilla census is critical for

understanding the current population status and overall population trends of this critically endangered species, to confirm that our intensive protection efforts are working, and to provide all partners with a basis for good conservation planning," says Tara Stoinski, Ph.D., president and CEO/chief scientific officer of the Fossey Fund.

The 2015 Virunga Massif mountain gorilla census is being conducted by the Protected Area Authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda (l'Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, the Rwanda Development Board and the Uganda Wildlife Authority) under the transboundary framework of the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration. The census is supported by the International Gorilla Conservation Programme (a coalition of the Fauna & Flora International and WWF), the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, the Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation, the Gorilla Doctors, and the North Carolina Zoo. The census is funded through generous contributions from Fauna & Flora International, WWF and Partners in Conservation at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium.



Mark your calendars to attend a one-hour brown bag lunch General Meeting of ACE on Saturday, Feb. 20, 2016 at 12:15 pm. Location to be announced by email next month.

Notes of Thanks

From IAR:

"We can't thank you enough for your generous support. The energy you and the Ape Conservation Effort put forth to help orangutans is truly inspiring. We couldn't do this work without you! Sincerely, Laurence Holyoak, US Program Director"

From DFGFI: (excerpts)

"Thank you for your gift of \$17,546 received on Dec. 4, 2015 to DFGFI via the proceeds from the 5th Annual Gorilla Golf Tournament. Your collaboration is essential to gorilla conservation and protection. We are extremely proud for your continued support! We have had such an incredible year in all our programs...And this is thanks to the continuing support of organizations like your, once again thanks so much. Sincerely, Tara Stoinski President & CEO/Chief Scientific Officer"

From Orangutan Outreach/SOCP:

"We've received the ACE Run for the Redheads funds (\$835) and will include them in our transfer to SOCP. Jessica McKelson [is copied] on this email so we're all on the same page. As I'm sure you've seen online there has been another big influx of babies to SOCP quarantine center in the last few months. The ACE contribution will be a big help. Big orangutan hugs to everyone. Thanks again! Rich Zimmerman, Director Orangutan Outreach"

2016 ACE Board

President - Donna Meyer Todd
president@apeconservationeffort.org

Vice President - Lynn Yakubinis

Secretary - Jane Barron

Treasurer - Susan Smith

Board members at large:

Janelle Nord

Gene Todd

Lynn Yakubinis

ACE contact addresses:

Primary contact:
info@apeconservationeffort.org

Run for the Redheads 5K:
redheadrun@apeconservationeffort.org

Gorilla Golf:
gorillagolf@apeconservationeffort.org

Fundraising events:
fundraising@apeconservationeffort.org

APE CONSERVATION EFFORT

6th Annual

GORILLA GOLF TOURNAMENT

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2016

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 9:15 A.M. • SHOT GUN START AT 10:00 A.M.

BROOKFIELD COUNTRY CLUB

100 Willow Run • Roswell, GA 30075

www.brookfieldcountryclub.com

This event will be played like a golf-a-thon.
Each Participant must raise a minimum of
\$500.00 in sponsorships.

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Enjoy a day of
All Inclusive Golf
including:
Continental Breakfast
and
Buffet Lunch!
All Beverages Included

Proceeds from the tournament will support The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International

For more information and registration visit www.apeconservationeffort.org

Call 404-427-4998 or e-mail gorillagolf@apeconservationeffort.org

