





EXPLORE!

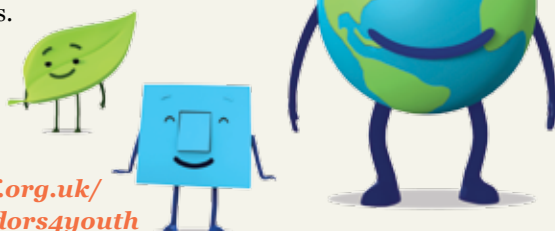
Welcome to WWF Explore, a free poster resource for youth groups and young people. Each issue features one key species with news, fascinating facts and great activities to help your group members earn a special badge.

This edition looks at orang-utans and their forest homes, and how you can help safeguard their future.

CALLING BUDDING GREEN CHAMPIONS!

Green Ambassadors for Youth – or GA4Youth – is a fantastic new programme to help 5-14s take the lead on green issues in their groups and their community. Our friendly Green Ambassador team – Leafy, Wheel, Switch, Crush, Smith and Tap – will help them get informed, get involved and get sharing on six topical green issues.

Designed with the help of over 100 leaders, it offers six themed activity sets, a set of posters to help you plan your green journey and a badge scheme to reward young people for their achievements.



Sign up at wwf.org.uk/greenambassadors4youth

All our resources are accompanied by a badge.
Find out more at wwf.org.uk/ygresources

DID YOU KNOW?

- Orang-utan means 'man of the forest' in the Malay language.
- The brains of these intelligent, problem-solving animals use a whopping 20 per cent of the energy they eat – orang-utans have been known to solve problems which some humans struggle with.
- Orang-utans will eat up to 400 different species of plants, fruits and bark – if they can find it. Despite their wide-ranging tastes, in lean times they'd rather eat poorer-quality food than move to a different area.
- In extreme storms, orang-utans have been seen using large leaves as umbrellas to keep the rain off. They've also been seen using twigs to try to catch fish.
- Their incredible arms are far longer than their legs. A male might have a span of over 2m from fingertip to fingertip—much bigger than his standing height of around 1m.
- Bornean orang-utans don't like to swim. That's why projects to build rope bridges over rivers so the animals can reach different territories are so important.

ORANG-UTANS

Get the lowdown on why they're so remarkable, and so important to our planet.

SOCIAL LIFE

Orang-utans usually live alone and the largest group will be a mother and her young. Scientists think that orang-utans learnt to live on their own because larger groups would mean more competition for food. Despite being solitary, evidence shows that orang-utans do socialise and have loose relationships with each other.

SPECIES

Orang-utans were once widespread in South-East Asia, reaching as far north as China and south towards Java. Today the two species are limited to the islands of Borneo and Sumatra and numbers are under threat.

There are 45,000-69,000 Bornean orang-utans left, putting them on the endangered list. Sumatran orang-utans are in bigger trouble: there are only around 7,300 individuals left, which means they're critically endangered.

VITAL STATISTICS

Orang-utans can live to over 30 years old in the wild, and a fully-grown adult can stand nearly a metre tall. Males can weigh between 60-85kg and females are about half the weight. Sumatran orang-utans have a narrower face and longer beard than the Bornean species, and their Bornean relatives are slightly darker in colour. Bornean males also have wider cheek pads.

FEEDING

Orang-utans are omnivores. They spend around 60% of their time foraging for food in the forest, eating a huge variety of fruit, seeds, berries, bark and grasses as well as the occasional fish and meat.

BREEDING

Orang-utans are the slowest-breeding land mammal. Females only have one baby every 7-9 years and this is one of the reasons their populations are so vulnerable. Males and females come together only to mate - she will chase him off after a few days so he doesn't eat all her food. Infants are dependent on their mother's milk until they're around five, and stay with her for up to seven years, learning the skills they need to live on their own.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Orang-utans are the 'gardeners' of their forest habitats, helping seeds to spread through their wide and varied diet. Many of those seeds are especially big ones, which can't be spread by smaller mammals, and grow into large, land-stabilising trees - crucial in areas vulnerable to tsunamis and landslides.

WHY ARE THEY UNDER THREAT?

Orang-utan numbers have declined by around 50% in the last 60 years, mainly because of loss of habitat. For these animals to live normally and thrive, spending most of their time in trees and rarely coming to the ground, they need vast tracts

of connecting forests. These big territorial spaces are now rarer, because palm oil manufacturers cut down the trees to make room for **oil palm plantations**. The roads needed to work the oil palm plantations also cut up the forest, making it hard for orang-utans to move around.

Illegal logging and mining activity has the same effect on orang-utan habitat, and is a massive problem in parts of Indonesia. Forests are destroyed without replacement, leaving the animals with nowhere to live. Fire, often caused by these commercial operations, is a threat to both the remaining forest and the animals themselves.

Orang-utans, like many ape species, are highly charismatic and are seen as desirable pets by some unscrupulous people. When

an infant is captured for the **illegal pet trade**, the mother is often killed - that's a real blow when you consider the very slow breeding cycle of orang-utans. Their preference to live alone and in fragmented groups also means that it takes relatively little to put populations in danger.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

To help orang-utans, we need to save their forest homes. One of the ways you can help is through wise shopping choices.

For more information, please check out wwf.org.uk/forests

Look out for the 'CSPO' logo on products in your supermarket. The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil - RSPO - promotes the production and use of sustainable palm oil, which ensures that income reaches local people and important forests aren't cut down. Retailers using 100% sustainable palm oil include Boots, Co-op, Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's.



Choose products containing or made from wood bearing the FSC mark. This signifies that the wood comes from responsibly managed forests where the trees harvested are replanted or allowed to grow back naturally, indigenous people are allowed to use the land, and that sometimes, no logging is allowed at all to preserve a pristine home for the rare creatures and plants which live there.



ACTIVITIES

FUN IN THE FOREST

Take to the tree tops and be an orang-utan! Take part in a low or high ropes activity, zip wire, climbing or aerial walkway, using all the necessary safety precautions of your organisation. Imagine life in the forest in the tree canopy; take in the view and the sounds of being in the tree tops. Think of how well adapted the orang-utan is for moving around with ease, how strong they are, even the size of their hands and feet, perfectly adapted to moving from branch to branch and supporting their weight.



FOREST HOMES

Find out about species that share the orang-utan's forest home - eg clouded leopards and river dolphins. Create 3D habitats in shoe boxes or a fabulous forest frieze showing these amazing animals in their forest environment.

HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

Bring in a collection of items such as bread, biscuits, cereals, crisps, ice cream, cooking oil, noodles as well as products such as soap, toothpaste and detergents. Get members to check out the labels to see which have 'palm oil' or 'vegetable oil' listed. Do they have these sorts of things in their house? Talk about the links between the food we eat and the plight of the orang-utan. Discuss what they might do about the situation but be realistic: with palm oil in so many products, it's difficult to avoid! It's also important that they realise it's not a simple situation – for example, many poorer people rely on work in plantations to make a living. This is where certification and labelling systems could help, by ensuring that the palm oil comes from well managed forests – forests where wildlife, habitat and the livelihoods of local people are protected.

CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE

Imagine the difference to orang-utans if we all chose products with sustainably farmed palm oil. Your group can help to make this change by telling others why this is important and all about certified products! Invite members to make a mini film or an 'adbusting' advert telling the real story about a food product of their choice containing palm oil. Or they could create a poster or even an animation on their mobile phone promoting a sustainable product and telling others how we can make positive choices for orang-utans whilst shopping.

CROSSING THE FOREST

Define a space 3-4m wide using chalk or rope. In twos (mother and baby), members cross this 'forest canopy' without touching the ground to find something delicious and return to their nests. Your members can use chairs and move these themselves or you can place the chairs ready. Winners are those who make it safely across the forest canopy and return with the prize.

WHAT IS WWF DOING TO HELP?

We're working in lots of different ways to help these amazing animals. We've helped pay for the restoration of over 2,000 hectares of degraded forests in Sabah on the island of Borneo and surveys show an increase in the number of orang-utan nests since 2007.

Our top conservation areas have been recognised by the state government. This should stop them from being converted to timber or oil palm plantations.



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

wwf.org.uk

WWF-UK, registered charity number 1081247 and registered in Scotland number SC039593. A company limited by guarantee number 4016725 © 1986 panda symbol and © "WWF" Registered Trademark of WWF-World Wide Fund For Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund), Living Planet Centre, Rufford House, Brewery Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 4LL, T: +44 (0)1483 426333, E: youth@wwf.org.uk

In Sabah's Sugut Forest reserve, we've helped to work out how connected the forest is. Finding problem gaps and giving orang-utans a way to cross logging or palm oil roads helps isolated animals find mates or better food supplies.

We're working with TRAFFIC (the wildlife trade monitoring network) to improve the enforcement of wildlife laws that ban the trade in live orang-utans and we're helping to reduce the demand for the illegal pet trade.

HOW CAN YOUR GROUP HELP?

By adopting an orang-utan, you can help fund our vital work to protect their habitats in Borneo. You'll help us work with governments to create and extend protected areas of rainforest and enable the people who live in the region to manage the land more sustainably. The money is also used to promote the use of sustainable palm oil – which doesn't involve the rainforest being cut down.

For more details about our orang-utan adoption scheme, check out wwf.org.uk/orangadopt