

THE APE CRUSADERS

Sean Whyte

Many people will know orangutans are an endangered species, but not necessarily realise that this endearing and familiar animal will possibly become the first of the remaining four great apes to become extinct in our lifetime. A rapidly growing number of people are now becoming aware of the Ape Crusaders and the extraordinary lengths to which they go to save orangutans.

Exclusively because of logging, in recent years largely driven by oil palm production, orangutan numbers are falling so fast it is estimated they will be wiped out within twenty years. Some orangutans may remain in Malaysia, but across the border in Indonesia there seems little hope. What hope there is increasingly depends on a small, very pro-active group: The Centre for Orangutan Protection (COP).

In fewer than four years COP's Ape Crusader team has saved thousands of hectares of forest and rescued dozens of orangutans over an area close to 500,000 square kms. Their 4 x wheel drive Ape Crusader truck donated by British charity Orangutan Appeal UK is in constant use, day and night, 365 days a year, taking the COP Rapid Response Team to far away locations where orangutans need rescuing from forests being logged. The work of COP is always difficult and frequently dangerous.

Written and partly photographed by Sean Whyte, one of the world's leading campaigners on behalf of orangutan protection, *The Ape Crusaders* is a pioneering book based on first-hand experience. It takes the reader on a tumultuous photographic journey throughout Borneo showing for the first time the highs and lows of frontline orangutan conservation in action.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

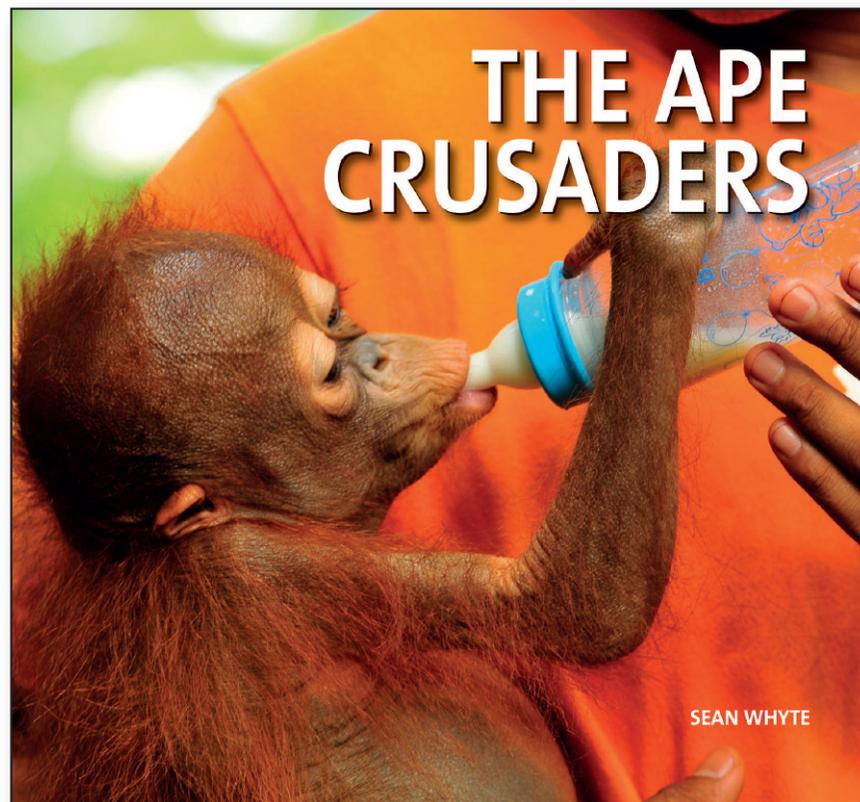
Acknowledged as one of the world's leading campaigners on behalf of orangutan protection, Sean Whyte has visited Indonesia some 20 times, gaining an unparalleled knowledge of the broad spectrum of issues faced by those who devote their lives to the conservation of this most enigmatic yet increasingly endangered species. Putting his experience to use he has published reports on orangutans, is a prolific contributor to Indonesian newspaper reports and campaigns relentlessly to save this highly endangered 'Man of the Forest'.

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THE APE CRUSADERS



Mely relished the company of Hardi. It was as if she knew he had come to help her.



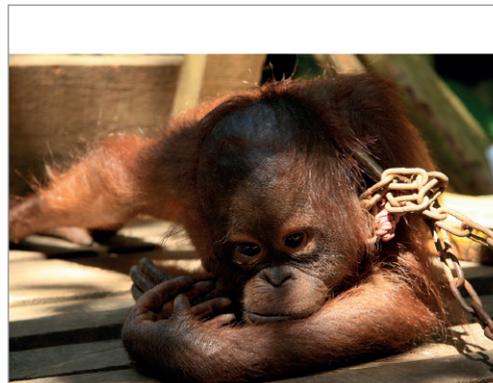
Hardi Baktiantoro documenting illegal logging in Central Kalimantan.



Newly rescued this baby enjoys its first fresh fruit in a long time.



Momo and Mimi (l-r) looking a lot happier and healthier now they are in a rescue centre.



This three year old male orangutan named Budy had been kept as a pet in a village near Ketapang, West Kalimantan. He was confiscated (see opposite) and taken to a nearby rescue centre.



Right: Children watch as the two orangutans are taken away by the Ape Crusader rescue team.

Below: A Ketapang forestry police officer confiscating two baby orangutans. Confiscations are often made a long way from base and any backup help which might be needed, so where possible it is always advisable to use friendly persuasion rather than force.



Aged about five or six Memo was rescued in Sebulu, East Kalimantan. A blood test later confirmed Memo is infected with Hepatitis B.

Example of a double-page spread.