

Biodiversity



Habitat in and around the KOP study area was badly burned by forest fires in 1982-3 and 1997-8, but has been recovering for the last 12 years.

Currently, the habitat is mixed primary-secondary forest around a headland that grades from flooding riverine to stream-fed valleys and slopes and hill dipterocarp forest. It offers a relatively heterogeneous, small-scale mosaic.

In addition to orangutans, the area's habitat supports many other species of flora and fauna, some of them threatened with extinction.

32 mammals (7 sp. at risk)

E *Presbytis hosei canicus*
Hylobates muelleri fumereus
Nasalis larvatus
V *Macaca nemestrina*
Helarctos malayanus
Sus barbatus
NT *Ratufa affinis*

94 birds (10 sp. at risk)

V *Lophura erythrophthalma*
CE *Columba argentina*
NT *Lophura ignita*
Buceros rhinoceros
Aegethina viridissima
Chloropsis cyanopogon
Ixos malaccensis
Platysmurus leucopterus
Malacocincla malaccensis
Alcippe brunneicauda



261 trees (24 sp. endemic to Borneo)

(C)E: (critically) endangered, V: vulnerable, NT: near threatened

Applications & Plans

- Enhancing knowledge and awareness of the biological importance of Kutai NP and its orangutans
- Improving understanding of E Kalimantan's *morio*, to enable planners to design more effective orangutan protection and management programs
- Increasing international support for the protection of Kutai National Park and its orangutans
- Hosting student learning and research at our field site



Take Home Message

- Kutai NP's *morio* differ in important ways from orangutans elsewhere, and may change how we understand orangutans
- Kutai's orangutans constitute one of the few remaining priority *morio* populations in E Kalimantan.
- Kutai NP and its orangutans have suffered serious damage, but are recovering well in some areas
- Kutai NP is still very valuable biologically
- Kutai NP and its orangutans are important to protect

Contact Us

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KUTAI ORANGUTAN PROJECT



The Kutai Orangutan project is a new orangutan research project in Kutai NP, founded in 2009 in collaboration with Kutai National Park Authorities to support conservation.

KOP's core is a long-term study of Kutai NP orangutans' habitat use patterns (resources, travel, seasonal change). Orangutans in and around Kutai NP need protection, and effective protection requires understanding their patterns and needs. These orangutans are not well understood, so KOP aims to support protection efforts by improving understanding.



The Kutai Orangutan Project

Orangutans in and around Kutai NP need effective protection, which requires understanding their habits and needs. These orangutans are not well understood. KOP aims to help by improving understanding.

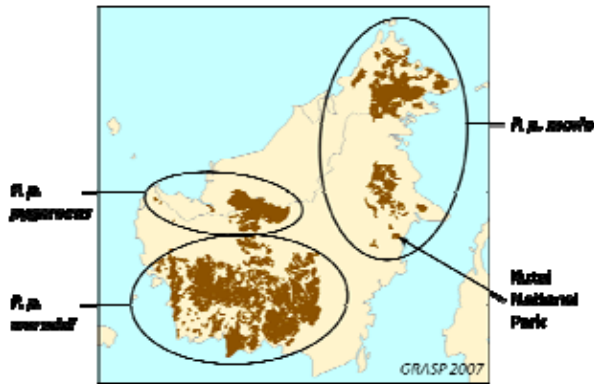
Pongo pygmaeus morio

Kutai NP orangutans belong to the E Kalimantan population of *P. p. morio*, the eastern subspecies of the Bornean orangutan. *Morio* differ from orangutans elsewhere, physically and behaviorally. *Morio* (below, right) is often “black” in color, rather than red like Sumatran (left) or other Bornean (center) orangutans. *Morio* may be the toughest orangutans, specially adapted to E Borneo’s poor, harsh habitat. They appear to rest a lot and travel and socialize little, perhaps because their poor diet means they must economize on energy spending.



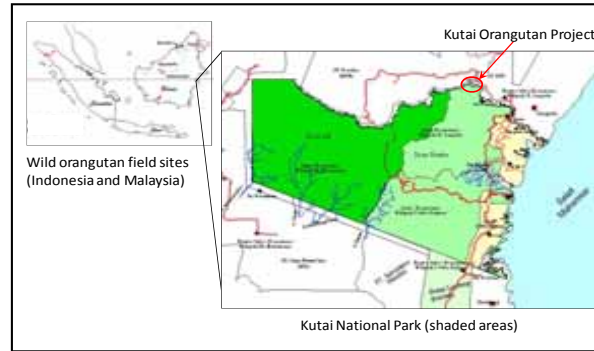
East Kalimantan and Kutai NP

Morio in E Kalimantan are isolated from, and probably differ from, *morio* in Sabah. They are also much more vulnerable to extinction, with a fragmented population of only ca 5,250. Kutai NP is especially important as one of the few remaining protected strongholds of *morio* in East Kalimantan. The population, estimated at 600, is a priority population for conservation. Some recently suggested Kutai’s orangutans were already virtually eradicated, but systematic surveys in 2010 found good evidence that they number 1000 or more.



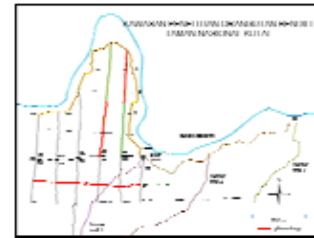
Project Location

KOP’s field site is located on the north boundary of KNP. Current work focuses on 4-5 km² along the south side of the Sangata River.



Project Facilities and Staff

- Security post
- Standard field equipment
- Vegetation plots
- Weather station
- Transect grid
- Transportation
- Mess (Bontang)



KOP field team: A Russon, P Kuncoro, A Ferisa, Muhammad Yunus, Rachmad, Supardi, Pian, Sutarmono, Balai TNK counterpart

Activities

Research

- Orangutan presence and prevalence
- Orangutan ranging : habitat use, food selection, travel patterns
- Vegetation, phenology, orangutan foods
- Providing training, learning, and study opportunities

Conservation

- Monitoring
- Biodiversity
- Education (awareness, training)
- Orangutan protection/management proposal advice

Findings

Orangutans

- are plentiful in and around our field site: > 27 encountered in 16 mo
- all have been healthy, and appear to be reproducing normally

Kutai NP habitat

- is recovering from extensive fire and poaching damage
- supports important flora and fauna, including threatened species

Morio behavior in KNP

- KNP orangutans travel much farther than commonly believed
- they often travel and forage on the ground, females included
- they may migrate inland seasonally
- they choose efficient foraging routes, and share standard routes

Morio diet at KNP field site

- high on vegetation, especially lianas, barks, terrestrial herbs, and palm fallback foods

Other unusual behaviors

- KNP *morio* nest in their food trees

