



## What is a Gibbon?

**G**ibbons are small, arboreal apes distributed in the wild in the tropical and subtropical rainforests of Southeast Asia. They are found in small populations in S. China, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Bangladesh, N.E. India, Myanmar, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Most countries consider them to be endangered, and they are threatened primarily by loss of their forest habitat. Other factors contributing to their demise include poaching, illegal wildlife trade and the use of their body parts in traditional medicines.

Gibbons have long fascinated scientists and lay people because of their agility in the forest treetops. Gibbons are excellent brachiators (arm-swingers), and this is one reason they are so popular in zoos. In the wild, gibbons live in small groups consisting of a mated pair and their dependent offspring. The group occupies a territory, and they defend its boundaries by vigorous vocal and visual display. The vocal display consists of spectacular, bird-like duets between the mated pair, with the young occasionally joining in. This vocalization, or song, is audible for long distances and is the primary way scientists (and poachers) locate wild populations. This haunting melody has become part of the folklore of the indigenous people of SE Asia.

New analysis suggests that there may be as many as 13 gibbon species, whose coloration range from cream to brown, gray, and black. In some species the males and females have sex-specific coloration. The infants of some species are visually distinct from the adults.



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# the Gibbon's Voice

Volume 5, Issue 1, December 2001

## Observations of Previously Undocumented Gibbons and Orangutans in the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary

By Marc Ancrenaz, DVM

Recent surveys seem to show that the majority of the remaining wild orangutan populations in Borneo live outside of the few pristine forest reserves existing within the species' range. Addressing the issue of how orangutans may adapt to significant changes in their natural habitat is therefore a necessary step to find efficient ways of enhancing their prospects of long-term survival. With this aim, the Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation Project (KOCP) was set up in 1998 in the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. This project has been initiated by Hutan, a French Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) dedicated to wildlife preservation, and designed since its beginning in collaboration with the Sabah Wildlife Department.



Etin, subadult male orangutan living at the KOCP intensive study site feeding on fruits

Photo by KOCP staff

Harboring both remarkable wildlife abundance and diversity, as well as rapidly developing human activities, the region constitutes an excellent model to study the relationships between orangutans and disturbed habitat. The Kinabatangan floodplain is located in eastern Sabah (5°10'-5°50'N and 117°40'-118°30' E). Sabah is one of the two Malaysian States located in



Tourists hoping for a good photo during a face-to-face meeting with Bornean elephants.

Photo by KOCP staff

Borneo, the other one being Sarawak. This place is one of the few remaining rainforest wetlands in Southeast Asia. It is home to ten primate species: orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus pygmaeus*), Bornean gibbon (*Hylobates muelleri*), one of the world's largest populations of Proboscis monkey (*Nasalis larvatus*), three other species of leaf monkeys, two

species of macaques, tarsier and loris. Large mammals are also present in this floodplain: wild buffaloes, Sumatran rhinoceros, and Bornean elephants. A herd of about 80 Bornean elephants is frequently seen in the lower parts of the Kinabatangan during its migratory movements. These elephants are half the size of the Indian form. Their origin is still unclear, but it seems that they could be a subspecies distinct from the Asian pachyderm.

The project involves working with relevant government agencies and the region's various stakeholders, which now comprises six main components: 1—Orangutan eco-ethological research in secondary forest, 2—Management of the orangutan populations in the Kinabatangan flood-

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**Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary continued from page 1**  
plain,

- 3—Public awareness of orangutan preservation needs,
- 4—Capacity building for Sabahna conservation professionals and local communities,
- 5—Involvement of the local communities in the management of the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary,
- 6—Assistance of local community development compatible with habitat and wildlife preservation.

The Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary is a corridor of protected forests along the river totaling an area of about 27,000ha. In addition, this Sanctuary is connected to several protected forest reserves (total area of 15,000ha). All these forests appear like a mosaic of different habitat types (mangroves, nipah swamps, fresh water swamps, semi-inundated forests, lowland dipterocarp forests, limestone forests, etc.), all at different stages of degradation and regeneration. There are six main villages along the Kinabatangan River, representing a human population of about 9,000 people. The local people are orangsungai, which means literally "people of the river". These people are traditionally fishermen, and most of their subsistence comes from the river. Hunting forest animals is not part of their usual activities, and they seldom kill land-dwelling animals for food, except deer. This can explain to some extent why wildlife is still abundant in the Lower Kinabatangan floodplain, and also why most species are not afraid of human beings.



Photo by KOCP staff

Botanical training at the KOCP training center

A recent interview conducted by KOCP in the villages of the lower Kinabatangan revealed a high conflict rate with villagers due to orangutan crop-raiding activities in the

orchards during the fruit season. As a result, the KOCP is now trying to implement innovative ways to mitigate these conflicts, and thus to restore more harmonious relationships between the villagers and the orangutans. One solution to reduce the orangutan's rate of damage to fruit production is to place zinc sheets on the largest isolated fruit tree trunks and to pour grease on them. This way, the orangutan cannot climb up the tree and get access to the fruit. It is important to make sure that all the connections with the surrounding trees have been cleared.

Isabelle Lackman-Ancrenaz and Marc Ancrenaz are French scientists with extensive experience with wildlife conservation before starting this project in Borneo. Isabelle obtained her Ph.D. on "Hamadryas baboons conflict mitigation" in Saudi Arabia. She is currently spending much of her time with the local communities of the Lower Kinabatangan, trying to identify the best solutions to improve the prospects for the orangutans' long-term survival. Marc is a wildlife veterinarian. He has worked in Africa and the Middle East with several conservation projects. He is also still involved with the first successful reintroduction project of chimpanzees, which is carried out in Congo by HELP, a Congolese-French NGO, "Habitat Ecologique et Liberte des Primates". For more information about HELP, contact Marc, or Benoit Goossens at:

Goossens@cardiff.ac.uk.

So far the KOCP team is made up of 25 local research assistants, all from the neighboring villages. As part of their duties, they conduct detailed eco-ethological observations of habituated wild orangutans at an intensive study site set up in 1998. At this time, more than thirty different orangutans have been identified at this site. The study site covers about 2 km<sup>2</sup> of over-logged forest. It is about 10 minutes by boat from the KOCP Headquarters, located in the village of Sukau. Within and around the study site, orangutans occur at a very high density (between 3 and 5 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>). Our preliminary data suggest that orangutans show an unexpectedly high behavioral and dietary flexibility, which allows them to survive in the degraded habitats of the Kinabatangan.



Photo by KOCP staff

The KOCP botanical team working at the plant nursery for the forest rehabilitation project

In July, the KOCP staff started to rehabilitate the forest within the sanctuary, and more than 3000 seedlings were planted within the study site. We want to monitor the growth and survival rate for a couple of years, before replicating this exercise all over the sanctuary where necessary.

For the past two years, KOCP and the Sabah Wildlife Department have developed a new methodology to census orangutans from the air. We have recently decided to extend this new method to the entire possible range of the species throughout the State. We hope that next year we will be able to initiate a general survey throughout the State of Sabah. This survey will primarily aim at determining the distribution and the population size of orangutan populations. This census will combine ground censuses and nest counting operations from a helicopter. During the course of this survey, gibbons will also be counted using the classical method of call-count. This information is a prerequisite to orangutan and gibbon conservation, and it will be used to develop a long-term conservation strategy for these two



Photo by KOCP staff

KOCP station established in 1998, at the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary close to the village of Sukau.

species at the State level. We are still today trying to locate the necessary funding in order to be able to start with this crucial conservation action.

The presence of Bornean gibbons in the forests of the Lower Kinabatangan is easily confirmed every morning when the resident couples sing their duets. Every day, several families of gibbons are heard from the KOCP Headquarters in the intensive study site and in the surrounding forests.

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**Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary continued from page 2**

So far, we haven't observed direct physical interaction between the two ape species at our study site. These two primate species seem to avoid each other most of the time. However, they can sometimes be seen foraging in the same tree, especially when this is a large tree bearing huge



Photo by KOCPC staff

Education campaign organized at the KOCPC stations. Kids spend the entire afternoon at the station learning the importance of orangutans and other wildlife.

quantities of fruits: *Ficus* sp., *Dracontomelon* sp., etc. Most of the time, the gibbons are closer to the terminal branches, and orangutans are closer to the main branches of the middle of the tree, their

weight preventing them from using the smallest branches. When the orangutans approach, the gibbons usually move further away. They sometimes leave the tree altogether... and come back after the departure of their larger relatives!

Gibbons are easier to locate in the forest than orangutans. First, it's possible to hear their territorial duet every morning. During the day, they also emit a contact call on a regular basis when the different members of the family unit have lost sight of each other. This resembles a kind of soft "hoo". They also produce a very short and loud alarm call when they are disturbed. These different vocalizations allow us to locate a group of gibbons in the forest quite easily. Last but not least, when they start moving in the canopy, their fast brachiating movements and their leaps are noisy, and reveal their presence very clearly. In a few words, locating gibbons in the forest is quite an easy task. But observing them directly is another story! Even though gibbons are not hunted in the Kinabatangan forests, these primates are shy and elusive animals. Most of the time when people are lucky, they only have a very short glimpse of these acrobats before they simply disappear in the canopy. As a result, gibbons are difficult animals to study intensively. However, if the observer is very careful to approach a site where gibbons are suspected to rest or to feed, it becomes possible to observe them. In the near future, KOCPC would like to habituate several groups of gibbons to the presence of human observers in order to conduct detailed eco-ethological observations on this species. Indeed, it appears that orangutans and gibbons share most of their food in the disturbed habitats of the Lower Kinabatangan. Thus, we would like to investigate more precisely subjects like food competition between these two species of sympatric primates, feeding behavior of gibbons in degraded habitat, impact of forest fragmentation on gibbon sociality and territoriality, etc.

In the Lower Kinabatangan forests, there are three different colorations of gibbons with the same vocalization; the most common is light brown with dark underparts. Some other individuals are totally grey or totally black. The younger animals appear to be greyish or brownish before they grow older and they take their adult coloration. There apparently is no direct relation between the sex of the animals and the different coloration patterns, nor between the voice and the different coloration in adults. However,

further studies need to be carried out in order to investigate these topics and to confirm these preliminary observations.

A very special gibbon has been observed several times at the KOCPC study site. The general color of this individual is brown, like many other gibbons. But this special individual is about twice the size of the normal gibbon. Indeed, its size approximates that of an adult female orangutan. Once, this individual was accompanied by a grey adult gibbon who was about half of the size of the giant! There is no tale of the gigantic gibbon in the local traditions, and no scientific record of such a large gibbon has been found in the literature so far. Thus, we hypothesize that this variation is an individual abnormality. However local tales frequently refer to a creature called Batutut. The Batutut is described as a large, black, hairy bipedal creature, walking upright on the ground and unable to climb up trees (or climbs with great difficulty). This creature is very aggressive, and many stories tell how people wandering in the forest are attacked by the Batutut. These observations are especially frequent close to the villages and the orchards where it comes to eat people's fruits and vegetables. Some local people think that the Batutut could be a very old male orangutan, unable to climb up trees because of his disabilities. This would explain the dark color of the animal, the fact that it is seen walking on the ground close to the villages, and that it is not afraid of people. However, for some other local people, the Batutut would be some other very secretive creature still unknown to science and surviving in the deeps of the Bornean jungle. Who knows?

**Acknowledgments:**

The KOCPC wouldn't exist without the support and the collaboration of the Sabah Wildlife Department and Patrick Andau, Director of the SWD. We express our warmest thanks to the KOCPC's team of 25 research assistants, as well as to our partners who support orangutan conservation in Sabah: Pittsburgh Zoo (through a Research Fellowship grant), Bushgardens Zoo, Cleveland Zoo, Columbus Zoo, Brookfield Zoo, Lincoln Park Zoo, Disney Animal Kingdom, National Geographic Society, ZooParc de Beauval, Apenheul Zoo, WWF (Netherlands, UK, USA, Finland, Malaysia), US Fish and Wildlife, Darwin Initiative UK, ASP and Malaysian Airlines.

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### Conservation Efforts Achieved Through Talk Radio and a Rescue Center in Central Kalimantan

By Aurelien Brule (Chanee), Program Director, Etho-Passion President ([www.kalaweit.org](http://www.kalaweit.org))  
Translated into English by Brigitte Benchihol

The devastation of the Bornean forest by logging companies, conversion of the forest into plantations for palm tree oil, illegal logging in national parks, and hunting and illegal trade of wild animals are very serious issues for the future of Bornean gibbons (*Hylobates muelleri*). Since the 1960s, conservation programs and the study of orangutans (*Pongo*



photo by A. Brule

4 yr. old *H. agilis albibarbis*, housed with 2 other subadult gibbons.

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**Conservation Efforts in Kalimantan continued from page 3**

*pygmaeus*) have been organized by occidental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in collaboration with the Indonesian government, but, until now, indigenous gibbon populations have received little attention.

There are two gibbon species found in the native habitat of Borneo: the Bornean agile gibbon (*H. agilis albibaris*) in SW Borneo (Indonesia); Mueller's gray gibbon (*H. muelleri muelleri*) in SE Borneo (Indonesia); Abbott's gray gibbon (*H. muelleri abbotti*) in W. Borneo (Indonesia); and the Northern gray gibbon (*H. muelleri funereus*) in N. Borneo (Indonesia and Malaysia). In 1998, the French association Etho-Passion (EP) conducted a three-month survey in



Aurelien Brule (Chane), has been fascinated with gibbons since seeing them in a French zoo at the age of 12. He feels his sole purpose in life is to help them.

photo by Leo Production of France

Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo) with the ambition to start a conservation program for the island. Convinced of the urgency of the situation, in 1999 EP started negotiations with the department for Conservation and Protection of Nature of the Indonesian Forest Ministry to create The Kalaweit Program. Discussions continued for 8 months before the fieldwork began.



photo by A. Brule

Cek, a 4 yr old male *H. m. muelleri* confiscated by police and brought to Kalaweit

Two years later, there are numerous activities of The Kalaweit Program (kalaweit means gibbon in the Dayak dialect used by the local people), located in Bukit Baya Raya National Park (BB BR), a 200,000ha reserve in the central province of Kalimantan. The most important activities of the Program are:

a) Education/Information to the local people. For the first time in the history of conservation in Indonesia, EP started a program for the education of the local population through FM

socialization enclosure for gibbons 3-6 yrs. old, consisting of 3 connected cages, each 5m x 6m x 6m

radio stations in all the provinces of Kalimantan. This was accomplished by announcing every day on the radio (length: 1 minute, 5 times a day) why it is forbidden to hunt, buy or raise wild gibbons. Also, EP explains the health risks for humans as well as gibbons while gibbons are in human surroundings, which has become very convincing. On a regular basis, live radio shows are set up where EP members



photo by A. Brule



photo by A. Brule

Night box for infants up to 2.5 yrs, which is located inside a building next to their play cage

can answer questions from the listeners. The listeners in Palangka Raya, the central province of Kalimantan, are 15-30 years old, the age group most interested in gibbons as pets. After the great results that EP has received in Palangka Raya, EP is now starting to collaborate with radio stations in the following cities of Kalimantan: Benjermasin, Balikpapan and Pontianak. EP is establishing a radio network with 15 local radio stations and is collaborating with schools near the National Park to host children at the Kalaweit Center for a local information program. Financial and medical help are given to the villages that collaborate with EP and are not harmful to the National Park BB BR. For example, each week the association buys fruits, cultivated by the local people, for the animals housed by EP.

b) Protection and scientific study of the wild gibbon population. EP is stationed in the forest and offers its facilities to the international scientific community in agreement with the government and The Sciences Indonesian Institute. EP also assists the local and national government to structure concrete and rational plans for the protection of the National Park.

c) Rehabilitation. Several gibbons were confiscated by the authorities from local inhabitants (or donated spontaneously), and EP is trying to organize a rehabilitation plan for these small apes. This initiative is sponsored by the Program of Rehabilitation of Orangutans from the BOS organization managed by Dr. Willie Smits who created the Nyaru ñ Menteng Orangutan Reintroduction Project in Kalimantan. EP has already received 23 gibbons and has had very positive management success. The most important was the successful rehabilitation of a mature female, with plans to release the first two gibbons in December 2001 on an island where there are no wild gibbon populations. The actual situation that gibbons are in is very worrisome. EP is planning in the future to create similar projects on other islands in Indonesia and hopefully in other parts of South-east Asia.

EP is supported by many conservation organizations and works closely with the International Center for Gibbon Studies (California, USA) managed by Alan Mootnick.

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**The Oldest Living Mueller's Gibbon**  
*(Hylobates muelleri)*

By Graeme Strachan

At the Wellington Zoo, New Zealand, a male gibbon named "Nippy" has outlived all of his former cagemates. Nippy arrived at the Wellington Zoo in 1949 at the estimated age of 2-3 years, and is estimated to be 56 years old on 1 January 2002. This gibbon is light gray with a dark cap and genital tuft. This coloration is similar to an Abbott's gray gibbon (*Hylobates muelleri abbotti*) which is found near the border of the habitat of the Northern gray gibbon (*H. muelleri funereus*) in North Western Borneo (pers. comm. A. Mootnick.) A tape of Nippy's vocalizations was sent to Thomas Geissman, who confirmed that Nippy is



photo by G. Strachan

Nippy at 55 years of age

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**The Oldest Living Mueller's Gibbon continued from page 4**  
an Abbott's gray gibbon. Typically an Abbott's gray gibbon would not have a dark cap.

Nippy was housed with two female gibbons at different times from 1950 until the mid 1980's. Sadly there was no successful breeding. I started at the zoo in 1988 and Nippy was with an old spider monkey at that time, who died a few years ago. The reason he does not have a cage mate now, is that all our 70 other primates live in social groups with none in a situation from which we want to remove them. Considering Nippy's advanced age, another primate might be too energetic for him, and we do not want to pair him up only to lose him and then have another lone animal. It sounds hard on Nippy, but we do not want to put another animal in that situation. We currently house Nippy in an area where he has a lot of visual contact with the zoo staff.

During last winter Nippy began to slow down, but he bounced back by summer time. His activity levels vary from day to day. Sometimes he just rests in the sun and the next day he can be very active, with vocalizing. He is currently on permanent treatment for conjunctivitis. He enjoys our mutual grooming sessions, and afterwards he brachiates around his enclosure and shows a bit of his cheeky behavior. The zoo staff regularly places new vegetation and branches in his enclosure, and he has a grass floor planted over the concrete. He plays with toys, but his



photo by G. Strachan

Nippy playing in 2001

favorite is a very simple enrichment device—removing mealworms out of a plastic jar that has a few holes in it.

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**Javan Gibbon (*Hylobates moloch*) Birth**  
by Alan Mootnick and Patricia Dahle

We are pleased to announce the birth of another Javan gibbon (*Hylobates moloch*) at ICGS on 6 Nov. 2001 at 5:04 PM. The newborn gibbon is only the third Javan gibbon ever born in the USA, and joins two brothers, Isaac (born at ICGS 19 Jan. 1998) and Reg (born at ICGS 29 Jan. 2000), the first and second gibbons of this species to be born in the USA.

This infant, a male we named Lionel, was born after a 3 hour labor. Chloe, the mother, facilitated the birth by standing, bending over and pulling the baby out with her hands. There was just a one year and nine month interval between this birth and the second, Reg's, birth--the usual interval is two years.

Chloe is an 11 year old Javan gibbon who is on loan from



Lionel, male Javan gibbon, born at ICGS 6 Nov. 2001

photo by Riverlight Productions



photo by A. Mootnick

Chloe, female Javan gibbon



photo by S. Kokel

Shelby, male Javan gibbon

the Assiniboine Park Zoo in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, where she was born. Their father is an 18 year old Javan gibbon, Shelby, who was born at the Perth Zoo, Australia. The two were introduced on 18 August 1996.

There are only nine Javan gibbons in the USA; all are here at ICGS. Worldwide there are only 4 institutions that house breeding pairs of Javan gibbons.

Javan gibbons, one of the rarest of the 13 gibbon species, are native to central and western Java (which is one of the most densely populated islands in the world), where they live in fragmented rainforests. The current census of the Javan gibbon in the wild is estimated to be less than 2,000 individuals. ICGS is proud to have added 3 more to the total captive population.

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**Pileated (*Hylobates pileatus*) and White-Cheeked Gibbon (*Nomascus l. leucogenys*) Breeding Success at the International Center for Gibbon Studies**

by Alan Mootnick

The International Center for Gibbon Studies (ICGS) is pleased to announce the birth of a female pileated gibbon (*Hylobates pileatus*), named Kanako, on 26 January 2001. The infant was born to JR, a captive born 13 year old female on breeding loan from Gladys Porter Zoo, Brownsville, TX. The sire is Birute, a 21 year old male born at the Phoenix Zoo. The infant is also housed with her sister, Valentina, who was born at ICGS on 27 July 1998 and her brother, Mateas



Photo by A. Mootnick

Pileated female, JR and infant, Kanako, born 26 Jan. 2001

Binti, born at ICGS on 1 September 1995. This compatible family group represents the only current breeding of pileated gibbons in the western hemisphere. Once our subadult male is peripheralized from his family group, we will house him with one of our adult pileated females.

There are less than 20 pileated gibbons housed in only four institutions in the western hemisphere. Currently the only captive breeding of pileated gibbons consists of a pair in Japan, two pairs in Thailand, one pair in France, two

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**Breeding Success continued from page 5**  
pairs in Switzerland, a pair in England, and the pair at ICGS. Because of the small captive gene pool, ICGS is proud to have added another member to the worldwide census of this rare species.

The current estimate of pileated gibbons in their native habitat is 10,000 in SE Thailand, 30,000 in W. Cambodia, and 10,000 in Laos.

I was in Japan with my friends, Dr. Hiroshi Hori and Kanako Tomisawa, when our pileated female, JR, gave birth. We decided that if the infant was a girl we would name her Kanako, and if it was a boy we would name him after Dr. Hori. Thus, she is called Kanako.

A female northern white-cheeked gibbon (*Nomascus l. leucogenys*) was born 15 June 2001 at ICGS, the second offspring of this pair. The sire is Vok, an 18 year old male who was mother-reared at the Melbourne Zoo, and the mother is Ricky, a 16 year old female who was mother-reared at the Perth Zoo. The mother allowed her first male offspring, Dexter, born on 31 July 1997, to nurse until he was 3 years of age. This family group of northern white-cheeked gibbons is the only representative of this blood line housed in the western hemisphere. We are proud to be able to contribute to the North American gene pool of this species. There are fewer than 10,000 northern white-cheeked gibbons found in their native habitat of NW Vietnam, N. Laos, and S. China.

A few days after Ricky gave birth, a friend, Pat Arman, came by with his grandchildren to see the gibbons. The children were delightful and very well behaved, and I especially liked his grandson's name. With their permission, we named the newborn Parker, which means "keeper of the park". So, our new female white-cheeked gibbon will be the keeper of the park, at least when she gets older.



photo by A. Mootnick

Female white-cheeked gibbon and her infant, born 15 June 2001

In a paper published in 1998<sup>1</sup>, Allman and his colleagues explored differential mortality in terms of caregiving. They hypothesized that males will have a survival advantage in species in which males assume many caregiving responsibilities. Their sample of nine primate species included white-handed gibbons and siamangs. They found that in the former species, females (the primary caregiver) had a survival advantage over males. They noted that in siamangs, males had a slight (not significant) survival advantage over females, which they attributed to the direct paternal care provided by male siamangs.

We focused on these two pairbonded species to further explore Allman's hypotheses and conclusions. Our data were drawn from the North American Regional White-handed Gibbon Studbook and the European Siamang Studbook. For both species, we tested the null hypothesis that males and females have the same mortality rates. Because mortality differences may become apparent or more pronounced at particular life stages, we ran logistic regressions on four reproductive age groups spanning 8 to 20+ years. We also compared the overall mortality rates of siamangs and white-handed gibbons.

For both species, male and female mortality rates were the same for the two older reproductive age groups (16 years and 20 years), but male siamangs had an advantage over male white handed gibbons in the first two reproductive age groups (8 years and 11 years). In all four reproductive age groups, siamangs of both sexes showed a survivorship advantage over gibbons of both sexes. We cannot easily attribute the siamang's survival advantage to the male's expanded parental role, because we found no consistent difference between the two siamang sexes. Instead, the survival advantage observed for siamangs versus gibbons may be related to the siamang's larger body size and slower development.

<sup>1</sup>Allman, J., Rosin, A., Kumar, R., Hasenstaub, A. 1998. Parenting and survival in anthropoid primates: Caretakers live longer. *Proceedings National Academy of Sciences* 95(12):6866-6888.

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**Alan Mootnick Awarded Paws of Fame**



photo by E. Summers

Martine Colette, Founder of Wildlife Waystation, with Alan.

On Sept. 22, 2001, The Wildlife Waystation honored Alan Mootnick with a Paws of Fame Award at their gala 25 year Silver Safari Brunch. Alan was commended for his extraordinary commitment to the International Center for Gibbon Studies and its inhabitants and for his concern for all animals' welfare.

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**Differential Mortality in Captive White-handed Gibbons (*Hylobates lar*) and Siamangs (*Symphalangus syndactylus*)**

by Christina Klein and Lori K. Sheeran

**Abstract**

Differential mortality refers to differences in the mortality rates of males and females of a species. Polygynous species are often characterized by the existence of male secondary sexual characteristics, more intense and greater amounts of male-male mate competition, male emigration, and little or no paternal care. In these species, males often exhibit higher mortality rates than do females. Monogamous nonhuman primates typically lack male secondary sex traits and have reduced male-male mate conflict, bisexual emigration, and increased paternal care. Differential mortality is often reduced or absent in pairbonded species.

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**Please see our website at [www.gibboncenter.org](http://www.gibboncenter.org) for an extensive catalog of gibbon and other primate-oriented gifts such as tee shirts and plush, and some special vintage toys.**  
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**Visitors**

In 2001, we were honored to be visited by old and new friends:

Alan (right) with Karl Gunderman, who is a primate keeper for the Javan gibbons at Howletts Wild Animal Park, Berkesbourne, UK, where they house the largest group of captive Javan gibbons in the world.



photo by ICGS staff

Left to right: Jennifer Ingle, President and Producer Zoolife International/Riverlight Productions; Alan; Marc Anrenaz, DVM; Juanita Kempe, conservation advocate/activist



photo by ICGS staff



photo by ICGS staff

Alan with Warren Brockelman, PhD, professor of Biology, Faculty of Science at Mahidol University, Thailand, who has been studying gibbons in their native habitat in Khao Yai National Park, Thailand for 31 years.

Alan; Jennifer Craig, who donated her painting; and Brian Stokes, Anthropology professor at Saddleback Community College in Mission Viejo, CA



photo by ICGS staff



photo by ICGS staff

Alan with Dr. Subramaniam Vellayan, Chief Veterinarian of Zoo Negara, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



photo by A. Mootnick

Jennifer Craig was so inspired by her visit to ICGS that she painted this beautiful watercolor painting and donated it to the Gibbon Center. It depicts several species of gibbons high in the treetops within a city, bustling with traffic and people below.

**Consultations with Asian Zoos on Gibbon Captive Management**

by Alan Mootnick

Left to right: Jennifer McNary, Los Angeles Zoo Curator of Mammals; Jay Petersen, Collections, Primates Manager of Brookfield Zoo; Raffaella Commitante, doctoral student at Cambridge University; and Alan; wearing some of Alan's hat collection.



photo by ICGS staff

In January, I visited Taiwan to present a 2-day workshop on captive management and species identification of gibbons. I also assisted the Taipei Zoo in deciding which gibbon species would be best for their breeding program. I was pleased to see that their gibbon breeding enclosures are excellent. I visited the zoos in the northern region of Taiwan, as well. Later I went to Iloilo in the Philippines where I presented a paper on captive breeding of gibbons at the SEAZA (South East Asian Zoological Association) Conference.



photo by ICGS staff

Left to right: Alan Mootnick, Joseph Miller, Gene Albrecht, PhD, Leigh Albrecht, their sons Jeffrey, Allen, and Clayton, and Bruce Gelvin, PhD.

Later in January, I went to Japan where I discussed species identification and captive management at the Yokohama Zoo, at a meeting on gibbons that was sponsored by the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG). For three years, I, along with Hiroshi Hori, DVM, and Kanako Tomisawa, had been planning the first gibbon workshop ever held in Japan and decided to schedule it near my 50th birthday. It was a wonderful birthday, which also coincided with the end of the Chinese New Year. The workshop was a great success—even better than we anticipated.

In February, I went to Thailand and was able to assist four of the five major Thai zoos with gibbon species identification and captive management techniques. The Thai zoos are wonderful and quite large—one was 2000 acres and two were 500 acres. The Thai Zoo Association receives money from the Thai government for improvements and has held workshops at each zoo for enrichment for their animals.

## Facts about ICGS

The International Center for Gibbon Studies is a nonprofit organization devoted to the study and conservation of these increasingly rare apes. Among the species housed at ICGS are white-cheeked gibbon, *Nomascus l. leucogenys*; siamang, *Symphalangus syndactylus*; pileated gibbon, *Hylobates pileatus* and Javan or moloch gibbon, *H. moloch*.

ICGS specializes in noninvasive behavioral studies on gibbons, conducted by students, scientists, and volunteers working at the center. Several mated pairs have produced offspring, making an important contribution to the world's captive gibbon population, both in terms of numbers and genetic diversity of the species. Offspring are housed at ICGS in species-typical family units until they reach adulthood. At that time, they are removed from the family and housed with a mate, just as they would normally do in the wild. ICGS also offers free advice to zoos, governmental agencies, and gibbon rescue centers throughout the world. A portion of donations are given to projects devoted to the conservation of wild gibbon populations, especially in Java, India, China, and Vietnam.

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**Graphic Design:** Patricia Dahle, Terry Olsen

## Director's Corner

by Alan Mootnick

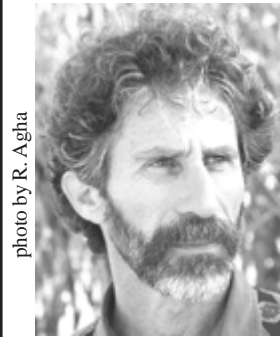


photo by R. Agha

Alan Mootnick

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of The Gibbon's Voice. Through the publication of this newsletter, we plan to emphasize the endangerment of gibbons and their unique behavioral and ecological adaptations. This newsletter summarizes past and ongoing noninvasive behavioral research at ICGS. Each issue profiles a different

gibbon species and highlights its unique features. All issues advertise opportunities at ICGS and other venues. I hope you will consider subscribing to future volumes.

### GIFTS

Have you thought about making a gift to ICGS of real estate, stock, life insurance, a vehicle, or cash? Check with your tax accountant to see if this type of deduction is right for your tax situation. You may be able to save a large amount of money on your taxes, and at the same time, make a huge difference in our ability to help the gibbons.

**All contributions are tax deductible as provided by law. Federal tax exempt number is #95-4256306**

Yes, I would like to make a donation to ICGS. I have enclosed:

\$10\*    \$25\*\*    \$50\*\*\*    \$100    \$250    \$500    \$1000    \$5000   Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*Donation of \$10 or more includes 1 year subscription to newsletter.

\*\* \$25 or more makes you eligible for our Membership Program. For information, check here. \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* \$50 or more makes you eligible for our Adopt A Gibbon program. Check \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.

ICGS also needs volunteers for feeding the gibbons, data collection and general maintenance. For information about volunteering, check here \_\_\_\_\_ or contact Patricia Dahle at [gibboncenter@earthlink.net](mailto:gibboncenter@earthlink.net), phone 661-943-4915 (9am-8pm Pacific Time), see our "How to Help" page at our website at [www.gibboncenter.org](http://www.gibboncenter.org), or write to ICGS.

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