Student Name

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English

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Orangutans

**Introduction**

Orangutans are the great apes and are classified with chimpanzees, gorilla, humans, and bonobos. They are found only in Asia and are known as the world's largest arboreal mammals. They are ancestors of the Ponginae split from the main ape line who are mostly found in Africa. There are ancestors of the Ponginae that split from the main ape line in Africa more than 14 million years ago, from where they spread to Asia. Currently, Orangutan is only found in Sumarata and rainforests of Borneo (Epstein, Judah & Reed, pp. 59-64). Orangutan was mentioned in history in 1760 and this population was classified as separate species by P. aebelii in 1827. This species is commonly known as Orangutan and is scientifically known as Pongo and the Malay word Orangutan is important scientifically as it means "person of the forest". According to IUCN, this species is in the list of endangered species because of its illegal hunting and habitat destruction. From 1950s, the population has declined by 60 per cent and its number would fall another 22 per cent by 2025.

**Body**

Considering the size of this non-human primate, there can be seen, little difference of size in males and females i.e. males 4 ½ ft tall, weighing 130-200 lbs, while females are 4 ft tall, weighing 90-110 lbs. Canines of Orangutan ranges from 26 mm and 25.9 mm and Sumatran orangutan is around 1.4 m and Bornean orangutans have a height approximately ranging from 1.2-1.4 m. Mating in Orangutans is polygynous as each male mates with multiple females (Schmitt, pp. 1193-1211). Due to the semi-solitary nature of orangutans and lack of contact between the adults and infants, no considerable parental investment has been witnessed in them. Orangutan primarily feeds on ripe fruits, young leaves of the barks, honey, insects, inner shoots of plants, veins and flowers (Pangong, pp. 56-63). Durian tree is one of their preferred food that has a sweet smell and cheesy taste. Bodies of Orangutans are adapted to arboreal locomotion. The gestation period in Orangutans lasts for about 250-260 days and the life span in the wild for Orangutans is 30 to 40 years while in captivity this life span is 35 to 45 years. The display of estrus in Orangutans takes 4 to 6 days.

Orangutans do not have many predators naturally so they don’t have to defend themselves much and climbing trees help them in protecting themselves from danger from a variety of land animals. Tigers and other big cats are the predators that are known to make a meal of Orangutans. For developing dominance hierarchy, Orangutan bimaturism helps and for maintaining this dominance, males mostly encounter each other (Nater, pp. 3487-3498). Being very much related to human species, Orangutans show social behavior. Under threat, they stare and inflate their throat pouches for producing large call vocalizations. They also start shaking the branches of the tree when they feel any danger. They access more fruits along with sharing opportunities which leads towards sociability and spend most of the time of their day in the tree canopy while hanging on branches so that they could get support from them (Kamaluddin, pp. 57-68). Considering Orangutans and humans it could be seen that they are similar in terms of DNA and the primate genome sequence shows that Orangutans evolved much like humans or chimpanzees.

**Conclusion**

Taking at a look at the above discussion, it could be said that though there are a few species that are related to humans, Orangutans are closer than others. This species is in the list of endangered species so many experts and researchers are trying to propose new ideas and strategies for conserving Orangutans. One of the most recent researches upon the conservation of this species was conducted in July 2019 in which local Malaysian authorities, particularly in the north-east, are addressed so that more effective steps could be taken for the conservation of this species in Sabah.

Work Cited

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