

ORANGUTANS



Female Orangutan
with babies

Orangutans live in the tropical rain forests of only two islands in the world – Sumatra and Borneo (in Malaysia and Indonesia). In Malay, "orang utan" means "person of the forest." They are the largest arboreal (tree dwelling) animal in the world, reaching heights of 4-5 feet and weights of 125-235 pounds or more. Orangutans are reddish-brown in color and some males grow white or yellow beards. They have bare faces with round eyes and small ears; long shaggy hair; long arms; and curled fingers and feet. Males are much larger than females and develop large pads on cheeks called

“flanges” and large throat pouches when they get older



They spend most of their time in trees and eat mostly fruit, leaves, flowers, buds, bark and insects. As they grow older and heavier, they become slower and more cautious, testing each branch before putting their full weight on it. When they do come to the ground on occasion, they usually walk on all fours (quadrupedal). Orangutans' arms are stronger and longer than their legs (1½ times longer). Their reach from fingertip to fingertip can be as long as 8 feet. They pucker up their lips so they can feel the texture of a piece of fruit or food before they bite into it. Orangutans have been seen in the wild catching and eating a small animal called a slow loris. Females only give birth every 7 to 9 years. Females raise their babies alone. Orangutans can live up to 40 years in the wild and sometimes over 50 years in captivity.