



Charlie



ORANGUTAN FOUNDATION
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Charlie has two sides to his personality. In his sleeping enclosure he is ever so nice and sweet. He reaches his arms out to try and grab anything nearby and presents his hands for any passers-by to hold. When someone does so, Charlie is jubilant. He digs his thumb into the person's fingers as if to brand the hand and swings the hand back and forth. Despite the hand mauling, Charlie still gives off the impression of placidity and calmness.

This is just him being energy efficient. Once Charlie is out of his sleeping enclosure, it's a different story all together. He bursts onto the scene like a runaway train. Along with his friend Howard they make a dynamic duo as they race around the forest together. Charlie swings up to the tree tops and looks around. Now he is alert and active. His large eyes seem to pop out of his face, darting eagerly from side to side almost as if looking for trouble.

Charlie continues growing. His arms are getting longer and his reach is extending further. Orangutan arms can span up to 8 feet which helps them perform their daring acrobatic feats. Charlie is among the best of them. His face is long and has even started curving with rounder semi-circular edges that one day may become full on cheek pads. There is no telling when an orangutan male will become "flanged" but it can take up to 20 years before the flanges fully develop. Sometimes it can be sooner. Charlie still has a way to go. As he matures, becomes stronger and more determined, we have to think about what is best for Charlie going forward.

One route OFI is considering is to arrange to place Charlie into a forested area which would be essentially an island with a dry moat and wall into the ground, also known as a "Haha". Here he could spend all day outside in the forest and sleep in a canopy nest while OFI could monitor his response to long term foraging, climbing, and general adaptation to the forest. If he meets all the requirements, we would prepare to release him back to the wild. This is the ideal outcome for all the orangutans under our care and all signs point to Charlie being able to flourish in the great forest. A personality such as Charlie's cannot be contained. One thing is certain, next year should see big changes happen for Charlie.

Orangutan Foundation International Australia Foster Program

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