



# The Intimate Ape: Orangutans and the Secret Life of a Vanishing Species

*Shawn Thompson*

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Kusasi is a three-hundred-pound male who could rip your arms and legs off like daisy petals if he wanted. Princess was taught sign language by a researcher and had a limited ability to combine vocabulary. . .

For centuries the shaggy red orangutan lived in peaceful seclusion in the jungles of Southeast Asia and kept the ancient secrets about its quiet, contemplative nature. But that time has come to an end, as one of the earth's most intelligent creatures has, sadly, also become one of its vanishing species.

"I went up a muddy brown river called the Sekonyer into the jungles of southern Kalimantan, on the island of Borneo, to see orangutans as they really are and to know them the way they deserve to be known. . ."

In *The Intimate Ape*, journalist Shawn Thompson brings together a global assemblage of primatologists, conservationists, and volunteers to reveal the intricate life of these majestic primates. As he travels through the steamy rainforests of Sumatra and the jungle river valleys of Borneo, visiting nature preserves and observing conservation programs, Thompson describes the emotional and intellectual lives of orangutans and recognizes the people who have committed their lives to understand, protect, and ultimately rescue this powerful yet sensitive relation of humanity.

"An extraordinary book that adds to our understanding of the animal world." --From the Foreword by Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson

After 17 years as a reporter, photographer, and editor at newspapers in Ontario, **Shawn Thompson** became a full-time assistant professor in the journalism department at Thompson Rivers University, in British Columbia, Canada. He has traveled the world to find orangutans and interview orangutan scientists, including trips to Sumatra and Borneo (the only places in the world where orangutans are found in the wild), Java, the Philippines, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United States. He lives in the small city of Kamloops, in the mountainous interior of British Columbia. This is his sixth book.

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#### **Paul Green:**

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