

Case Study: Alumni

Thea, MRes Ecology, Evolution and Conservation
Graduation Year: 2011

Job Title: Communications Manager

Employer: The Orangutan Tropical Peatland Project



What does your job involve?

The Orangutan Tropical Peatland Project works to protect some of the most important areas of tropical rainforest in Borneo, including the peat swamps of Sabangau, home to the world's largest Orangutan population. We monitor the behavioural ecology of the forest's flagship ape and cat species, carry out biodiversity and forestry research, and work with our local partners to develop conservation solutions and improve capacity for conservation in the region. A typical work day for me involves either talking to colleagues online or face to face. I need to talk to researchers on site in the rainforest about their experiences, aims, achievements and new findings. I put these on our website and blog as well as adding them to the organisations twitter feed and Facebook pages. The aim is to ensure as much outreach of the information as possible. My responsibilities include all OuTrop's outreach projects and new contact with public / other charities/ companies. Within the job I enjoy ensuring people get an accurate representation of the charity and our work.

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- Thea

Name something you like about your job:

I like the fact that my contract details some scientific research and if I could change one thing about my role it would be that science was more of an integral part of the job.

What are your future plans?

In the future I intend to stay as close to ecological research as possible, via similar jobs to this or perhaps a PhD if I begin to specialise in one area. Right now I am enjoying learning about a wide variety of research, which really suits an outreach role. I would like to be mainly based within the UK.

What part of your course did you particularly enjoy?

At Imperial I enjoyed the practical ecological study and the broad course options, with specific focus, although I'm not sure if they are still available. Aside from that other skills I gained, which I find useful in my current role, are communications and the social side of study, work and hobbies.



What skills did you develop within your degree that you find useful in your present role?

For this role you need good communication skills and an understanding of ecology and conservation in action. You are communicating to a large audience along the way.

Were you involved in any extracurricular activities?

During my time at Imperial I managed to gain valuable experience volunteering with the British Ecological Society, the London Wildlife Trust and also the RSPB. Away from this I was involved in scuba diving and hill walking with IC Union clubs as well as organising socials and doing admin for biology/ecology, especially during Master's year at (the) Silwood Campus.

Could you give us one or more career tips for Imperial graduates?

A tip for present students would be, in terms of your CV it is worth having one document of absolutely everything you have ever done in terms of experience, responsibilities and employment - you never send this out but can use this as a template. You can then tailor this when applying to any job!

