



Dr. Gary L. Shapiro – Speaker Profile

Conservationist, Educator, Nonprofit Leader, Researcher, Author, and EcoTour Leader

Dr. Gary L. Shapiro is a renowned conservationist, speaker, and author with over fifty years of experience studying and advocating for orangutans and their long-term survival. As the author of ***Out of the Cage: My Half Century Journey with Indonesia's 'person of the forest'***, Dr. Shapiro brings a wealth of knowledge about wildlife conservation, environmental education, and human-animal communication. His groundbreaking work in Tanjung Puting National Park, Borneo, from 1978 to 1981, included teaching sign language to ex-captive orangutans, helping to illuminate their intelligence and cognitive abilities.

Dr. Shapiro is also the co-founder of the Orang Utan Republik Foundation, which supports education initiatives and scholarships to empower Indonesian students to become conservation leaders. His work focuses on promoting sustainable conservation efforts, raising awareness about the plight of orangutans, and engaging audiences in meaningful conversations about the human impact on endangered species.



Topics of Expertise: Key Accomplishments:

Orangutan Conservation:

From the field in Borneo and Sumatra to global efforts, Dr. Shapiro discusses how conservation can help protect one of our closest relatives in the animal kingdom.

Human-Animal Communication:

Drawing on his pioneering work teaching sign language to orangutans, Dr. Shapiro offers insights into the intelligence and emotional depth of these creatures.

Ecotourism & Wildlife Advocacy:

As a leader in eco-tourism, Dr. Shapiro shares his experiences guiding conservation-focused tours and inspiring global wildlife advocacy.

Education for Conservation:

Passionate about education, Dr. Shapiro speaks about the role of education in empowering local communities to become stewards of wildlife and the environment.

Great Ape Personhood:

Dr. Shapiro explores the evolving legal and ethical case for granting great apes legal personhood status, focusing on their advanced cognitive abilities and the moral obligations we hold toward them as sentient beings.

- Co-founded and administered the Orangutan Foundation International and **Orang Utan Republik Foundation**, two organizations dedicated to orangutan and wildlife conservation.
- Led innovative research in teaching orangutans sign language, which contributed to a greater understanding of primate intelligence.
- Developed successful ecotourism programs in Indonesia, including the Orangutan Caring EcoTour.
- Author of “**Out of the Cage**” and several forthcoming titles on orangutans and conservation.

Presentation Style:

Dr. Shapiro is an engaging and passionate speaker who captivates audiences with his storytelling, personal experiences, and deep understanding of both scientific and cultural aspects of conservation. His presentations are ideal for conservation conferences, academic institutions, environmental organizations, and ecotourism groups.

Availability: Dr. Shapiro is available for keynote addresses, panel discussions, and workshops both in the United States and internationally. He is also open to virtual speaking engagements and interviews.