

Bess



Bess is the oldest orangutan at the Phoenix Zoo and the mother to Jiwa. She lives with Michael. Bess is very smart and was taught by her keepers to get something in the exhibit and bring it back to keepers to trade for a reward. She has the patience and intelligence to solve any puzzle, especially when food is involved. She will make tools to figure out how to get the treats. Bess also loves to play with water, especially on those hot summer days. She can be found under misters, a wet palm frond or even a wet blanket when temperatures rise. Keepers will sometimes put food in a pool or tub of water and Bess will be the first one in and the last one out.

Michael



Michael is the father of Jiwa and lives with Bess at the Phoenix Zoo. Michael is a lot larger than the other orangutans since he is a male orangutan. With his big fingers, Michael often will use sticks or other tools to get food from the enrichment. He doesn't have the same amount of patience as the other orangutans, so with enrichment items, Michael will get as much food as he can in a short period of time and move on to the next item. His favorite enrichment involves food, especially honey. When not interacting with food, Michael will spend his day watching zoo guests and taking a nap.

Jiwa



Jiwa, born in 2014, is the youngest of the orangutans at the Phoenix Zoo. He is the son of Michael and Bess and lived with them until recently. Now he lives with Rayma, who is his relative. They like to play and keep each other company. Jiwa is quick to catch on to new things. He will transform any form of enrichment to a new toy. Keepers will occasionally put footballs, basketballs, tennis balls and even hard plastic balls called boomer balls in the exhibit. Jiwa will be the first to play with these! He tries to bounce them, bang them against a wall, or bite them. Keepers will also use a laser pointer and he will go touch the light. He was the first to master this and will even go on the opposite side of the exhibit to do it.

Rayma



Rayma is the newest orangutan of the group! She came to the Phoenix Zoo in 2019. She lives with Jiwa. Rayma enjoys climbing. When puzzle feeders or any food enrichment is put up high on ropes or the exhibit towers, that is the first thing she goes to. She will balance, hang, and sit in weird positions on the ropes as she gets honey off the enrichment. Often, when Rayma is looking at guests or working on enrichment closer to the ground she brings something to sit on. A box, or even a toy, is the perfect chair for her.