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Chez Nous

Canadian Trip

Patricia and I were in Canada in September, combining the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens Conference with the opportunity to take a holiday on a 65 foot ketch, visiting out of the way ports of the British Columbia coast.

The area is vast, with great islands virtually uninhabited, except by trees, wolves, deer, bald eagles (lots and lots of them) and bears. We were there at the time of the salmon run, when the several species of Western Canadian salmon come up river after five or six years in the Central Pacific and struggle up to where they are to spawn and, having spawned, to die.

There were thousands of salmon, some still making their way upstream, some spawning, some dying and most dead.

Bears

With this amount of readily available protein on hand it was not surprising for us to be able to see the eagles and the bears coming to the river to feed. We were not at the much-filmed spot where the bears catch the fish in the waterfalls.



Our bears were much more energy conscious and helped themselves to the fish lying in the pools at the end of their run. We saw black American Black bears and we saw two white American Black bears. These bears are off the tourist track so treat human beings with laudable circumspection and do not associate them with titbits or with garbage cans.

We were looking at truly wild bears, and it reinforced in me just how important it is, when there are so many species needing help, that we do not keep species unlikely to need help in our zoos. When they do need help, we have to do as much as we reasonably can to bring them into their normal adaptive ranges of ecological, social and behavioural stimuli as much as their simpler physiological requirements of nutrition, temperature and so on.

Conservation

So often we hear the criticism that conservation should be done in the wild and not in zoos – as if these are alternatives in every case. In many areas there is sufficient wild left to make it worthwhile trying to save the most vulnerable species within their habitats.

For some species the fight for the wild has already being lost and their only hope is long-term breeding in zoos. For many more species it is touch and go whether the wild can be saved and the world would be wise to double-bank its efforts both to save the wild and to have a viable breeding population in zoos. I do not believe that the American Black bear has yet got to the stage where it is prudent to build up a conservation driven zoo breeding programme. I am not so sure about such species as the Sloth bear and the Malayan Sun bear. When we have got all of our current changes behind us and have the means to do so, we can look once again at helping a threatened species of bear by managing a breeding colony here at Chester, but the habitat we keep them in must go far further towards making the bears feel as much at home here as they have done in the wild.

These are high flown aims, extremely difficult to achieve to the satisfaction of our critics, but much easier to achieve, in my opinion, to the satisfaction of the animals themselves. I want, one day, to see a group of bears at Chester as much at home as the bears we saw in Canada, remembering that we saw them at the least harsh time of their year.

Members' tickets

I would like to float an idea for members. Each member has the right to buy up to 20 tickets at half price for friends. In practice the average number of tickets taken up is about three per member. We wonder whether members might prefer being sent a number of tickets to give to family and friends, which give a half price discount at the

gates. The benefit to the zoo would be exactly the same, the benefit to the members would be they could give away apparent largesse without having to put their hands into their pockets. If you have any views, how about dropping me a line, so that we can judge what you think of the idea?

Our full membership is now over 3,200 and is growing all the time. When we have 10,000 we will be able to neutralise the negative cash flow for the month of January, provided of course that you all pay on time! We also have over 1500 Junior Members, a great advance on the original four twelve years ago!

Retirements

Three of our over 65's members of staff have recently retired. All three served in the war, the last of the zoo's staff to have done so. John O'Reardon earned the British Empire Medal for outstanding service during the emergency in Malaya. Derrick Thompson was a young "matelot" on cruisers in the British Fleet in the Indian Ocean. Fred Carson was awarded the Military Cross for his work clearing the D-Day beaches of obstacles and mines before the first waves of infantry and armour came ashore. We wish them all a long and happy retirement and say thank you for the years of their lives they gave up for this country – not forgetting to say a very warm thank you for the work they have put in at the zoo.

M.B.E.

Much more recently honoured amongst our membership is Molly Cresswell, who was given the M.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her efforts at raising funds in the Shropshire area for conservation. Well done!

This is the last issue before Christmas, so may I say, in spite of this year being such a dull one for the zoo (and for almost everybody else who has to depend on visitors for their income), a very happy Christmas and New Year.

John R. Brambell



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NOTICE BOARD

MEMBERS' MEETINGS 1992/93

Please Note: The new access road to the lecture hall from the A41 is now open. Take the road signed "Park and Ride" at the new roundabout close to Mostyn Garage and then follow special zoo signs to the lecture hall, which will be in place for meetings.

12 DECEMBER 1992

Members' Christmas lunch in Oakfield restaurant at 12 noon; talk by Dr John Raines entitled "Migration through Israel" will start at 2.30 pm in the Lecture Hall. Ring Maureen (0244 380280 ex 203) to reserve your place for the Christmas lunch. Members are welcome to come to the meeting without taking lunch.

16 JANUARY 1993 - 2.30 pm in the Lecture Hall "Wildlife in Kenya" - Mr Ian Ogden. Display of winners from 1992 Zoo Photographic Competition.

13 FEBRUARY 1993 - 2.30 pm in the Lecture Hall "Upland River Birds" - Dr Stephanie Tyler.

16 MARCH 1993 (Tuesday) 7.15 for 7.30 pm in the Lecture Theatre. President's Evening "Conservation Research in Korup Rainforest" - Dr G McG Reid, Curator-in-Chief. Our President, His Grace the Duke of Westminster, will attend this meeting. Tickets £6.50, to include a buffet supper. Prior booking is necessary - please contact Maureen in the membership office.

24 APRIL 1993 (provisional) 2.30 pm in Lecture Hall "A Zoo Review" by the Director, Dr M R Brambell.

8 MAY 1993 AGM - 2.30 pm in Lecture Hall.

A token admission charge of 50p for meetings, covers expenses and includes tea and biscuits.

RAFFLE

Our raffle this year raised over £4,800 for the Mauritius Kestrel Aviary appeal. Many thanks for your support. The list of prize winners is on display at the zoo gate, or on request. All prizes have been dispatched.

ADOPTA DAY QUIZ WINNERS

(11 and 17 October 1992)
The first all-correct answers drawn were from Hannah Naseem and Mrs M Finch (both are penguin adopters). The winners have received zoo vouchers.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

A polite reminder that subscriptions for 1993 are due on 1 January next! The subscription rates, as agreed by Members at the AGM, are as follows:

Annual :	under the age of 65	£28.00 pa
	aged 65 and over	£21.00 pa
Joint :	both under the age of 65	£50.00 pa
	one under the age of 65	£45.00 pa
	both aged 65 and over	£38.00 pa
Junior :		£10.00 pa

A special plea from your Membership Secretary, Maureen Allsopp! Many members pay by standing order, and a lot of these orders have not been amended since the last change in subscription rates. This means a lot more time and expense is incurred in contacting members. If your subscription is paid by Banker's Order, please ensure it is for the right amount.



ELEPHANT EXPERIENCES!

If you missed the 1992 elephant evenings, make a note of these dates now! The elephant keepers will welcome visitors to a mammoth evening of entertainment and enlightenment on three Thursday evenings in the Summer - 3 June, 1 July and 5 August. Included in the programme will be a demonstration of elephant handling, with a keeper running through commands with one of the animals; a video presentation, showing behind the scenes work on the elephant section; a "hands on" session, giving visitors the opportunity of close

contact; an elephant crossword, with prizes; question time, with a short tour of the island. A stall selling elephant themed items will be available, and the keepers hope to conclude the evening with an auction. Any donations of suitable items for this will be gratefully received!

Tickets will be available in the Spring, and as numbers will be kept to a maximum of 70 for each evening, we expect a sell out.

Details of cost and ticket availability will be in the Spring issue of Zoo Life.

IT'S IN THE SACK!



◆ Hide and Sack is a great game



◆ Is this what they mean by hitting the sack?

Sacks are topical in December – but Santa might be surprised to find his sack full of oranges!



◆ Sack-re bleu! How did I get up here?

The orang utans and the chimps enjoy sacks as playthings, but the heavy canvas type needed are not easy to get hold of. The staff are grateful to the GPO for their generous gift of several thousand of these sacks, most of them from Manchester and the Liverpool Bag Centres.

NEW TEACHING STAFF



A warm welcome to two new members of the Education Division. Judy Moss and Joan Butler joined the zoo in September and are contributing their specialist knowledge and experience to the comprehensive service

provided for school children and teachers.

Joan Butler (left in the photograph) is from Preston Brook and has spent the past 16 years as Head of St. Ambrose Nursery and Infant School in Speke, Liverpool. Her knowledge of the current National Curriculum requirements will be invaluable in helping to plan cross-curricular work for primary children.

Judy Moss from Lymm is a specialist in physics. She was Head of Science at Sale Grammar School and her main task will be to produce a series of independent packages of material for teachers of physics in the 11 – 16 years sector, and of science for the primary sector. The packs will continue the policy established by Head of Education, Brenda Norgain, of proving the value of the zoo as a base for study of many curricular subjects other than pure biology.

Farewell In Triplicate



These three members of staff retired in October – from the left, Derryck Thompson, John O'Reardon and Fred Carson. Derryck's main task has been in helping zoo staff make the transition from typewriters to computers; John will be known to many members as the man who greeted them at the Time Office gate; and Fred Carson has been associated with the zoo for many years, as Council Member, then Estates Engineer and, more recently, Project Engineer.

ZOO REVIEW

Tamarin Bridge

The "open door" experiment - described on this page - for marmosets has been so successful, the policy has now been extended to the cotton-top tamarins. The tamarins have their enclosure on the bank of the canal, opposite the zebras, and a tunnel-bridge has been constructed, giving them free access to the island.

Picture Presentation

When next in Oakfield House, look out for the handsomely framed painting on the staircase wall. It is one of Eric Peake's paintings of Hyacinth Macaws - the "blue parrots" of Roger Wilkinson's article elsewhere in this issue.

The painting was presented to the zoo by Dave Blynn, U.S.A., on behalf of Avian Art USA/UK.



Alice Adopts the White Rabbit



The first official engagement for the Lewis Carroll Society's newly elected Alice each October, is to visit the zoo and renew the Society's adoption of a white rabbit.

This year's Alice, pictured above, is 11 year old Caroline Perry, from Moore, Warrington.

Visitors have been intrigued and delighted to watch the marmosets in their new tree house. Senior Keeper Alan Woodward reports on their progress.

Four common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*) arrived in the collection in April, and were housed in a purpose built house in a tree just outside the Oakfield. At first, this structure looked rather out of place, situated high up in the branches of a tree; but when considering the aboreal nature of the inhabitants, it is the best place for it.

The indoor quarters are heated by two tubular bar heaters at the base, giving a maintained temperature of 75 degrees. Inside there are also branches and a smaller box to give the marmosets more security when required. Outside, there is a small run, and on their second day the animals were encouraged on to this, to give them a chance to survey their immediate surroundings.

MARMOSETS AT LARGE!

The group consists of an adult female and her three male offspring. They are fed twice daily and water is available in the house.

They settled in their new quarters very well, and remained there until 14 May, when the door opened onto the outside world.

At first they were wary of their new found freedom but quickly adjusted to their new way of life. There have been a few close encounters with crows, which had proved to be a bit menacing - but the crows also seemed a bit perturbed by this new inhabitant! Another encounter was with a squirrel going up the tree, just as a marmoset was coming down. When they met head on they both decided to change direction at quite a fast pace!

Apart from their basic diet, the marmosets have been seen to catch moths, butterflies, caterpillars and earwigs, which seem an enjoyable supplement.

The marmosets range between the Red-crowned cranes and as far as the owl aviaries, very rarely coming down to the ground. There has been only one near-mishap. This was when a marmoset was lost for two days and was eventually found inside a bush in an owl aviary only feet away from a well-fed owl! This animal was retrieved and never went back again. On another occasion one was found sitting on a dustbin near the Oakfield kitchen. He was quickly retrieved and taken home.

To-day, now the weather is getting colder, the marmosets are remaining more in the immediate vicinity of their house, just making the odd foray now and again but all returning by late afternoon.

This project with the marmosets has proved very successful and forms the foundation for other projects with similar species.



Just a few of our favourite photographs taken in the zoo over recent months.

- ◆ Main Picture: Orang-utan mother and baby. A piggy-back is the best way to travel!
- ◆ Top Left: Is there a collective noun for coatis? Looking at this picture, a "tangle" might be a good one!
- ◆ Top Right: Mud, glorious mud – there's nothing quite like it for a Great Indian Rhinoceros.
- ◆ Above: Have the chimps invented a new team game?



THE SIGN OF THE BLUE PARROT

◆ Hyacinth Macaws – the “Blue Parrots.”

Although Brazil is the largest South American country, it does not have the largest number of bird species – that honour belongs to Colombia, which has the advantage of the Andes. However, Brazil does have the dubious distinction of a longer list of threatened species, due, in part, to deforestation on the Eastern Atlantic seaboard, whose remnant forests now hold so many of Brazil's threatened species.

Brazil has many birds presently or previously held at Chester Zoo. So it was with particular anticipation that I arrived with four other bird watchers at Rio de Janeiro in July. We were met by a friend who works in Rio, and headed straight off to Brazil's only mountainous region, some 150 kilometres North West of Rio, now protected as the Parque Nacional do Itatiaia. As a non-hispanic speaker, this gave me real problems. The nearest I could get was “Itatchyaya” – “it” as in italic, “atchy” as in patchy and “aya” as in hello!

Forest Areas

We spent four days birding the tracks from the lower forests through cloud forest and above the tree-line into the thin air of the paramo. The forested areas were the hardest to bird. The tracks gave good opportunities to see the more conspicuous birds, but smaller grovellers needed encouragement to show themselves, by

The adventures of Chester Zoo's Curator of Birds on his recent trip to Brazil. Words and pictures by Dr. Roger Wilkinson.

playing tape-recordings of their calls. That was how elusive birds like Large-headed Flatbills were persuaded into the open – in response to the apparent intruder calling in their territory. Other birds were located first by ear and then searched for. Swallow-tailed Manakins gave away their presence by their distinctive calls. These gorgeous blue and red jewels were surprisingly difficult to see in the shadows of the thick bush vegetation. More conspicuous were the many species of Tanagers, including such gems as Diademed, Green-headed, Burnished-buff, Black-goggled, Brassy-breasted, Gilt-edged and Golden-chevroned. Several Red-breasted Toucans and a pair of Saffron Toucanets (both considered “near-threatened”) were amongst the many avian highlights. Guianan tree squirrels were relatively common and a family group of Masked Titis had the monkey watchers twitching.

Cotingas

Birds restricted to this small montane area of Brazil include the Itatiaia Spinetail, a small brown job found only in the short moorland-like habitat above the tree-line. Birds of the cloud forest included the handsome local

Black and Gold Cotinga. The Cotingas are a beautiful and fascinating family, which includes Cocks of the Rock, Bellbirds and Umbrellabirds – some of the world's most spectacular birds. David Snow's excellent book “The Cotingas” has some stunning plates, including one of the tiny goldcrest-like Kinglet Calyptura, which is known only from a few museum specimens collected in the vicinity of Rio de Janeiro and nearby Serra dos Orgaos. It has not been seen this century and is almost certainly extinct. How I would have liked to see that bird!

The Pantanal

Leaving an excellent area like Itatiaia was difficult but made easier by the knowledge that our next birdwatching was to be in that tremendous wetland, the Pantanal, which borders on Bolivia.



◆ Pandanus fruits, some opened at the top – the tell-tale signs that the Blue Parrots have been here.

It was a five hour flight from Rio de Janeiro.

But before that, we had to find our way back to Rio – normally a two or three hour drive. Wanting to search for birds during daylight hours, we delayed leaving until mid afternoon, but were further delayed at a police road block. Our friend in Brazil had generously lent us his car, but unfortunately had not left a letter explaining this, and it transpired the car's papers were out of date. After some awkward moments spent watching a policeman practice his gun skills, they decided to let us on our way. The chief policeman fortunately knew sufficient English to understand we were not criminals!

The Pantanal was outstanding. Sparing details of the difficulties in arranging a four-wheeled drive jeep and driver for our enlarged party of now seven, we left Cuiaba on the road to Pixaim. Soon we were into some serious "zoo-time" birding. Four Greater Rheas first demanded our attention, then a pair of Red-legged Seriemas were seen from our moving vehicle before we stopped for the first of many Jabiru. A pair of these huge storks stood, unperturbed by our clicking cameras, beside a tiny roadside pool. The wealth of birds was astonishing, with "Chester Zoo specials" including a trio of Bare-faced Curassows and two Sun Bitterns.

Room mates

The night was spent at Hotel Poussada Pixaim, where our room mates included mole crickets and two frogs. Next day we had a lie-in (until 5 am!) then set off down the 240 km dirt track known as the Transpantanal Highway. Over 50 Jabiru, 11 Maguari Storks and numerous Wood Storks, Spoonbills and many kinds of Ibis and Herons were seen, as were an astonishing total of 34 Southern Screammers. The Pantanal is seasonally flooded and our visit was made in the dry season when the water birds were concentrated in the remaining wet areas running alongside the elevated highway. "Zoo time" continued with other large and gaudy birds including Blue-fronted Amazons and Toco Toucans punctuated by celebrity appearances of Capuchin and Black Howler monkeys. Capybaras were surprisingly scarce and a group of Asian Water Buffalo unexpected. Birdwatcher's birds included the amazing Red-billed Scythebill – a rather drab brown bird with a very long curving red bill – and the shy Sungrebe. Five Chestnut-bellied Guans (now on the IBCP checklist of threatened birds) briefly showed



◆ A pair of Jabiru

themselves, as did the more numerous Common Piping Guans and Chaco Chachalacas.

Hyacinth Macaws

Along the Transpantanal highway was a small kiosk set in a grove of Pandanus Palms. An old lady hobbled across from a derelict cottage to open up the kiosk. We were offered warm beer or cold coke. This was the area where that charismatic "mega-parrot" the Hyacinth Macaw had occasionally been seen – and this was one bird that I had to see whilst in Brazil. Searching the ground I found palm nuts that had been opened by a clean bite across the top. Surely this was the work of Hyacinth Macaws and a sign of that blue parrot. But the nuts were old and the trail seemed cold. So diverted and drawn on by the ventriloquial calls of

an elusive Undulated Tinamou, we entered the swamps.

On returning to the kiosk, the old lady told us she had heard Hyacinth Macaws calling whilst we were away on our unfruitful search for the Tinamou! This was more than I could take, and I set off walking into an area of tall trees where I suspected the birds might be hiding. Excited calls preceded the birds flying off across the road, in full view of my delighted companions. From within the trees, I could see only trees! But my disappointment was brief, and I soon had excellent views of two pairs of Hyacinth Macaws and a pocketful of the Pandanus nuts they had been eating. The Macaws are adept at biting these incredibly hard fruits open, to secure the small, fatty seeds inside. Joy at last! I could now relax and enjoy the rest of the day's birds,



◆ Golden-chevroned Tanager

included Yellow-naped Macaws, Yellow-chevroned Parakeets and Monk Parakeets.

More Room – mates!

Hundreds of Caimans were seen in pools beside the road, mostly concentrated in the deeper water crossed by bridges. The last of the many rickety bridges over water channels along the Trans-Pantanal Highway was in total collapse. We had to pay the extortionate price of 150,000 cruzeiros (nearly £20) to have ourselves and our vehicle rafted to the other side. It was either that or return in the dark over 200km along the dirt road. There was only one hotel at Porto Jofre – a monopoly which allowed them to charge a million cruzeiros for two rooms shared between the seven of us. Our room was also occupied by leeches, frogs and a scorpion – a better selection than the previous night. Perhaps, as the wording on the hotel sign indicated, this was indeed: "The pelce where so far mother nature has collected so many beautles"

Next day was outstanding, with early morning views of an Undulated Tinamou glimpsed between clumps of dense undergrowth. Four Bare-faced Curassows, five each of Sungrebes and Toco Toucans and a total of thirteen Hyacinth Macaws were seen as well as

concentrations of waterside birds, including 25 Maguari Storks, dozens of Jabiru and hundreds of Snail Kites. Other common raptors included Roadside, Savanna and Black-collared Hawks.

Two more days in the Pantanal added further sightings of many of these birds including more Hyacinth Macaws. New birds included Great Horned Owls and White Woodpeckers.

Photography

On the return journey we stayed again at the Hotel Poussada Pixaim, and allowed ourselves time for photography. Photo-opportunities were presented by rather tame Yellow-billed Cardinals and Silver-beaked Tanagers feeding on discarded food. A pair of Jabiru Storks nesting close to this hotel were unusual in that the female had a completely red head totally lacking the black colouration shown by all of the hundreds of other Jabiru we had seen. The Pantanal trip was completed with a visit to the Churrasco in Cuiaba where we enjoyed an excellent meal of unlimited barbequed skewered meats washed down with "Antarctica" lager and finished off with a glass of "Caipirinha". An excellent finale to this first very full eight days in Brazil.

◆ Black-collared Hawk.



CONSERVING CATS

NOW DUE FOR MODERNISATION, THE CAT HOUSE NEVERTHELESS HAS A PROUD HISTORY IN TERMS OF BREEDING RARE AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AS WELL AS SOME MORE COMMON BUT 'DIFFICULT' KINDS. IN THIS IT HAS ACHIEVED FAR MORE THAN MANY OTHER ZOOS WHICH HAVE TRIED TO BREED THE SAME CATS.

**Dr Gordon McGregor Reid,
Curator in Chief, reports:**

In October I had the pleasure of chairing a Cat Conference and Workshop organised by the Association of British Wild Animal Keepers (ABWAK) in association with the Ridgeway Trust for Endangered Cats. ABWAK is a non-profit making organisation serving those with an interest in keeping wild animals generally. They regularly organise meetings and workshops on particular groups of animals. The aim is to improve co-operation among wild animal keepers, both nationally and internationally; and ultimately, to support the conservation of wildlife throughout the world. Similarly, the Ridgeway Trust works for the preservation of rare and endangered cats through conservation breeding, research, habitat protection and education. It is,

therefore, natural that these two organisations should get together at Chester Zoo for what proved to be an action-packed day.

Conservationally sensitive species covered during the conference included Scottish Wildcat, Asian Lion, Clouded Leopard, Cheetah and Sumatran Tiger. There were also fascinating talks on feline viral diseases which affect wild and zoo populations and on international action plans for felid conservation.

The workshop sessions were designed to invite debate on improving cat management in terms of determining ideal enclosure sizes, optimum designs and the use of behavioural enrichment techniques. Animals discussed in this context were large paddock cats (such as Lion, Tiger); temperate zone cats (Lynx); arid zone cats (Black-footed cat); large arboreal cats (Leopard, Jaguar); Cheetah and small tropical zone cats (Margay, Geoffroy's). Chester Zoo's Rick Green has been particularly involved in the breeding programme for Geoffroy's Cat and, indeed, delivered a fascinating talk on this subject at the opening of the conference.

Chester's Cat House has been in operation for more than a quarter of a century and very many species have been held and bred there. Since 1982

when ready for breeding. Social cats are also sometimes held separately just prior to mating to stimulate sexual activity.

A steady breeding success over the last ten years has resulted in large numbers of offspring being raised and often transferred to help with breeding programmes in other zoos. This provides the eventual prospect of returning particular species to the wild in cases where the natural population has declined or become extinct due to human activities. We have had particular success in breeding Caracal, Geoffroy's Cat and Jungle Cat (17, 19 and 28 young produced 1982 - 1992). In 1984 we gained a national award in recognition of our breeding success with the Jaguarundi and a second award in 1987 with the rare Margay

from South America. We gained a further award in 1990 for a second generation breeding of the Geoffroy's Cat. The total number of cats produced to date is 110, with the programme only limited by available space and other zoo resources.

The traditional Cat House design has allowed for close keeper contact which ensures that breeding cycles can easily be monitored and acted upon. The concrete floors are stark but they are hygienic and have prevented disease outbreaks

which would set back breeding. Nevertheless, the Cat House building is now old and the entire set-up is scheduled for a major upgrading in our new Masterplan for Chester Zoo. The aim is:

- to limit the number of cat species held and concentrate on those which are listed as severely threatened in the wild. In line with this plan, we have already reduced the number of species held from 14 to 10, with further reductions envisaged.

- create separate spacious and naturalistic cat enclosures outwith the existing building (which is due for demolition, starting at one end).

These planned moves will allow us to maintain our distinguished conservation breeding record, learn lessons from the original cat house and at the same time incorporate improved designs which are better for the animals and also for the viewing public.



◆ A trio of caracals - a species successfully bred in Chester Zoo Cat House.

the house, now managed by Paul Howse and Joyce Dodd, has concentrated its breeding efforts on many different kinds of small to medium-sized cats: Black Leopard, Caracal, Geoffroy's Cat, Jaguarundi, Jungle Cat, Margay, Northern Chinese Leopard, Northern Lynx, Ocelot, Persian Leopard, Puma, Scottish Wildcat and Serval (there are other 'big cats' elsewhere in the Zoo).

All of these species have mated and produced healthy young which usually survive to maturity. In our controlled programme not all cats are bred every year. But in a single year 11 are produced on average and there have been as many as 21 kittens raised in total! Cats which are solitary in the wild are kept on their own except

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY -

Our annual Christmas Party, when apart from the opportunity for a good disco bop, there will be games and a hamburger and hot-dog supper. Everyone who can cope with a late night is welcome to come along and enjoy the fun.

Juniors should arrive at the staff entrance at 7.00 p.m. and parents may walk youngsters over to the Jubilee from there. Collection should be arranged for 10.00 p.m.

THE CONTACT SESSION -

Saturday 23rd January 1993

This is one of the most popular events in the Juniors' calendar, and this year we will be meeting as usual in the lecture hall to meet some of the creepy crawlies and some of the zoo's slightly cuddlier residents too.

We will meet outside the Oakfield at 2.00 p.m. and walk down to the lecture hall. Older Juniors may drift away from the lecture hall after 3.15 p.m., but everyone must be back at the Oakfield for collection at 4.00 p.m. Over eights are welcome.

THE SEA LIFE CENTRE AND BLACKPOOL ZOO -

Saturday 20th February 1993

This will be a busy day for us when we will be visiting the Sea Life Centre at Blackpool during the morning, where we have arranged to have a special guided tour around the Centre, which includes the famous 'shark tunnel', and then we will travel on to spend the afternoon at Blackpool Zoo.

The bus will leave the staff car park promptly at 9.00 a.m. and we will be back for 5.00 p.m. Please bring a picnic lunch and be prepared for walking around outside at the zoo as well as indoors at the Sea Life Centre. Over eights are welcome.



MEMBER'S FIELD TRIPS AND MEETINGS 1992/93

TRACKS AND SIGNS -

Saturday 20th March 1993

This is your opportunity to scour the animal enclosures for footprints and then to make plaster casts from them. We choose March for this event as it tends to be really nice and muddy, so please wear old clothes and wellies are essential.

We will meet at 11.00 a.m. outside the Oakfield, and will meet back there at 4.00 p.m. Over eights are invited along and should bring a packed lunch.



*Penny and all
the zoo staff
wish all our
juniors a
Happy Christmas
and a really
great 1993*

CROXTETH FARM PARK -

Saturday 17th April 1993

It is a while since we visited the excellent Home Farm at Croxteth Hall on the outskirts of Liverpool. This is an opportunity to see many examples of rare farm breeds of sheep, cattle, goats and poultry and to see the way a farm was run during the last century. The bus will leave the staff car park at 10.00 a.m., and will be returning around 4.30 p.m. Over eights are invited and everyone should bring a picnic.

THE ELEPHANT EXPERIENCE -

Saturday 15th May 1993

One of the great favourites amongst zoo's animals is our exceptional group of Asian Elephants. This will be an evening of quizzes and question-time and will be a great chance to meet our elephants and to ask their keepers all about them. For those who love elephants, and even for those who are not so keen, this will be an evening not to be missed.

We will meet outside the Oakfield at 5.45 p.m., and will go for a picnic in the grounds before going down to the Elephant House. We will be back at the Oakfield for parents to collect at 8.00 p.m. Over tens are welcome, and remember to bring a picnic with you.

HILBRE ISLAND -

Saturday 12th/Sunday 13th June 1993 - Date to be confirmed

We will have to confirm that date of this trip later when we know more about the tide timetable details. We plan to walk over to Hilbre during low tide and stay on the island over a tide to watch the seals and birdlife.

Over tens are welcome to join us when we leave the staff car park. Times of this trip will be issued in a future edition of Zoo Life.

DAY WITH A KEEPER -

Saturday 17th July 1993

Our over twelve year old Juniors are invited along to spend a day working alongside some of our keeping staff. This is a strenuous event with lots of hard work, and remains one of the hugely popular days of the year.

Juniors meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30 a.m. and you must wear wellies. The day will end at 4.00 p.m.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

"The camp was beautiful, and I was put in charge of the entire nature programme - so I had to set about a whole schedule to last nine weeks. I had all the age groups in the camp, from the youngest three year olds, to the oldest group of 14 year olds. Nature had been a complete wash-out in previous years. The kids had hated it. So I was determined to make my programme a success.

The camp was a university, so a classroom was not a problem and I began to request equipment - which I usually got. I knew that to keep the children enthralled, live specimens would be needed. I obtained funds to spend in the local pet store, and the Life Guard gave me four fully equipped aquariums, and various others were also donated. The children collected a lot of livestock from around the camp - a wildlife haven. We had catfish and bass from the lake, which the children fed with hotdog sausage of all things! We had bullfrogs, toads, tree frogs, minnows, tadpoles, a gopher tortoise, a box turtle, a land hermit crab, various snakes, anoles and geckos, locusts, dung beetles and goldfish. But the firm favourites were "Binky" and "Nigel", two baby hamsters, adored by the children. We also had people bring in various animals. For example two

Earlier this year, ex-Junior Steven Heywood asked Penny Rudd for a reference to support his application to spend the Summer working as a Nature Counsellor at Camp America in Florida. This Penny was delighted to do. Steve had been an enthusiastic member of the Junior Club, had spent his work experience period in the Giraffe House, and helped out at meetings after leaving school.

He's now at Agricultural College in Lancashire, and sent Penny a long letter about his experience at Camp America. Space prevents printing it all, but here are some extracts:

ferrets paid a visit one day, thanks to one of my fellow counsellors!

Around these animals I planned various activities - bug hunts, pond dips, track studies in sand trays, leaf and tree studies, biology lessons, as well as various nature crafts and nature art lessons. I also used to run the after-camp arts and crafts so this was an extra challenge. Among things made were playthings for the hamsters, Disney castles, animal masks, fish mobiles and a huge coral reef mobile.

I was known by everyone as "Father Nature" - which has quite a nice ring to it I think!

It wasn't all work. I went snorkelling at Florida Keys and came face to face with Nurse Sharks, Barracuda and Manta Rays.

After camp, I went travelling with



◆ Stephen Heywood with two of his "teaching aids."

friends. We went camping in the Blue Ridge Mountains, real bear country. When I awoke every morning, our tents were surrounded by white-tailed deer.

I also visited Washington, where the highlight was a trip to DC National Zoo. There I saw animals which I had never seen before - white tigers, Komodo dragons, Secretary birds, Malayan tapirs, kiwis and pandas. They also have a fabulous invertebrate house, with touch tanks and activity rooms, a huge reptile and amphibian house and a huge walk-through flight aviary."

Steven was voted "Best Counsellor of the Year" by the children and the other counsellors - so he obviously made quite an impression!

GO WILD!

Do you want to belong to the wildest green club around? Then join "Go Wild!" - the World Wide Fund for Nature's great young people's club for 7 - 14 year olds. Here's what members receive . . .

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ZL1



Arrivals Births and Hatchings

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 1992



◆ Kinkajou



◆ Onager

MAMMALS

Red-ruffed Lemur	<i>Varecia variegata rubra</i>	0.1	received
Celebes Macaque	<i>Macaca nigra</i>	0.0.1	born
Kinkajou	<i>Potos flavus</i>	1.0	born
African Crested Porcupine	<i>Hystrix cristata</i>	0.0.2	born
Coypu	<i>Myocastor coypus</i>	1.0	born
Onager	<i>Equus hemionus onager</i>	0.2.0	born
Guanaco	<i>Lama guanicoe</i>	2.1	born
Bongo	<i>Tragelaphus eurycerus</i>	1.2	received
Red Lechwe	<i>Kobus leche</i>	1.0	received
Eland	<i>Taurotragus oryx</i>	0.1	born
Nilgai	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>	1.1	born
Scimitar-horned Oryx	<i>Oryx dammah</i>	1.0	received
Arabian Gazelle	<i>Gazella gazella arabica</i>	2.0	born
Gemsbok	<i>Oryx gazella gazella</i>	1.0	received
Congo Buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer nanus</i>	0.1	born

BIRDS

Caribbean Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber ruber</i>	0.0.2	h'tchd
White-faced Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
Rosy-billed Pochard	<i>Netta peposaca</i>	0.0.7	h'tchd
Andean Condor	<i>Vultur gryphus</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
Variable Chachalaca	<i>Ortalis motmot</i>	0.0.3	h'tchd
Crowned Plover	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
Pink Pigeon	<i>Nesoenas mayeri</i>	1.0	received
Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
Mountain Witch Dove	<i>Geotrygon versicolor</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
Pink-necked Green Pigeon	<i>Treron vernans</i>	0.0.2	h'tchd
Black-winged Lory	<i>Eos cyanogenia</i>	0.2	received
Blue-eyed Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua ophthalmica</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
Thick-billed Parrot	<i>Rhynchopsitta pachyrhyncha</i>	0.1	received

BIRDS continued

Lesser Vasa Parrot	<i>Coracopsis nigra nigra</i>	0.0.4	h'tchd
Schalow's Turaco	<i>Tauraco schalowi</i>	1.1	h'tchd
Red-eared Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	0.0.1	h'tchd
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>	1.0	received
Silver-billed Tanager	<i>Ramphocelus carbo</i>	0.0.2	h'tchd

REPTILES

Tokay Gecko	<i>Gekko gekko</i>	0.0.2	bred
Leopard Gecko	<i>Eublepharis macularius</i>	0.0.11	bred
Malayan Sail-finned Lizard	<i>Hydrosaurus amboinensis</i>	0.0.2	bred
Brown Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus basiliscus</i>	0.0.22	bred
Cuban Boa	<i>Epicrates angulifer</i>	0.0.3	bred
Boa Constrictor	<i>Constrictor constrictor</i>	1.1	received
Colombian Rainbow Boa	<i>Epicrates cenchria maurus</i>	0.0.1	received
Emerald Tree Boa	<i>Corallus caninus</i>	0.2	received
Burmese Python	<i>Python molurus bivittatus</i>	1.0	received
Puff Adder	<i>Bitis arietans</i>	1.1	received

FISH

Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis pyrrocephalus</i>	13	received
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis velvet back</i>	13	received
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis xenognathus</i>	28	received
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis riponianus</i>	46	received
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis nyererei</i>	17	received
Ikan Temoleh	<i>Probarbus jullieni</i>	5	received
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis argens</i>	150	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Hap. nyererei</i>	61	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Hap. xenognathus</i>	35	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Hap. riponianus</i>	42	bred
Fire Clown Fish	<i>Amphiprion ephippium</i>	3	bred
Panda Catfish	<i>Corydoras panda</i>	20	bred
Seahorse	<i>Hippocampus kuda</i>	6	bred

Key: Col.1 = Male, Col.2 = Female, Col.3 = Young, or unknown

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