

# Z

CHESTER ZOO

magazine

SPRING 2022



# Z

## MAGAZINE FEATURES



Home interventions  
Page 6-7



Saving the giants  
Page 20-21



New arrival Dobby!  
Page 22-23

For all of the zoo's latest news,  
go to [chesterzoo.org/news](http://chesterzoo.org/news)



As one of the world's leading **CONSERVATION** zoos, we're playing a special role in tackling the global extinction crisis. Right now, our planet's rich biodiversity is sadly **DECLINING** at an alarming rate. The numbers - one million species at risk - can be a little overwhelming but it's important not to lose sight of **HOPE**. Good zoos like ours are making a difference and are finding solutions in the fight to **PREVENT EXTINCTION**.

---

Chester Zoo has been synonymous with excellence in animal and plant conservation and care for more than 90 years. What first began as a forward-thinking, family run zoo back in the 1930s has now grown into a world-renowned centre for scientific research, a conservation academy training more than 400 conservationists a year and a place to engage more than two million annual visitors with conservation and empower people to lead more nature-friendly lifestyles.

Our zoo is a complex centre of excellence brimming with specialists who have decades of experience and highly respected levels of expertise in an array of disciplines. We are a huge team of conservationists, scientists, educators, veterinary experts, botanists, wildlife managers, animal welfare experts, animal behaviourists, endocrinologists, behavioural change experts and environmental policy influencers.

There are examples of the real impact we are having everywhere we look – spanning species great and small. Currently, we're carrying out the world's first pilot study of a new vaccine that aims to educate the immune system of the Asian elephant to fight a deadly virus, called EEHV – a disease that is threatening the survival of the endangered species, globally. This is groundbreaking work, which we're leading on behalf of the international conservation community, and the early signs are encouraging. While the study is still in its infancy and there is a way to go, it appears that the vaccine triggers an immune response. Without the expertise, the high level care and opportunities for close contact offered by good zoos like ours it would be almost impossible to develop a safe vaccine which, if successful, could one day help to prevent extinction of the species.



Meanwhile, we recently re-wilded nearly 40,000 animals following two years of intensive conservation breeding which had been carefully carried out behind-the-scenes at the zoo by our experts. The animals in question were the two remaining snail species in Bermuda – the greater Bermuda snail and lesser Bermuda snail. The Bermudian government asked us some years ago to help them to save these snails from extinction and so trusted us with the care of some of the last few individuals of each species remaining on the planet. Our teams drew on their skill, dedication and experience and developed highly successful conservation breeding programmes at the zoo, breeding the snails in huge numbers – culminating in another 39,604 individuals being counted, prepared, carefully packaged for transport and flown to Bermuda in January. This means that since we started working with the two species we have now released a total of 5,972 lesser Bermuda snails and 63,193 greater Bermuda snails to eight different islands in Bermuda. That really is Chester Zoo preventing extinction on a grand scale.



Enabling us to do this fantastic work like this is our innovative, thriving conservation model. When people visit the zoo or take out a membership, not only do they connect with and learn about wildlife and nature, they help us to generate the vital funds needed to tackle some of the world's most pressing conservation challenges. We are fighting extinction through our conservation, education and research work, here at the zoo, across the UK and in more than 20 countries. This work is only possible because of the success of our pioneering model, which allows us to operate at the scale and urgency that's needed to tackle the environmental emergency we face.

Our work is lauded by leading scientists, conservationists, NGOs, local communities, fellow conservation charities, academics and world governments. Our zoo is a genuine powerhouse for conservation. Our reach and influence extends far beyond our physical 128-acre boundary. Our zoo is a shining example of what real conservation action in the 21st century looks like.

---

*You, our members, are very much part of this success story and your invaluable support is crucial to our fight to prevent extinction. Together, we are securing a brighter future for wildlife on this planet.*

*Jamie Christon, CEO*

New arrival: one of the world's  
**MOST ENDANGERED**  
species of deer!



When our keepers entered the Philippine spotted deer habitat just before Christmas, they were met with a very special and very fluffy new arrival! Mum Nova, who shares the exact same birthday as her new baby, had given birth to a female fawn.

The Philippine spotted deer is one of the most endangered deer species in the world. Originating from the Philippines in South East Asia, this forest dwelling animal is sadly under threat from habitat destruction for logging and farmland, as well as illegal hunting for its meat and for sport.

Zoo Keeper, Emma Evison explains:

"There is little known about this shy species but it's estimated that there could be as few as just 2,000 left in the wild. They're nocturnal and extremely cautious, so it can be challenging to get an accurate number for exactly how many remain. One thing experts are sure of though is that the Philippine spotted deer is vulnerable to extinction - so much of their habitat has already been lost from being converted for agricultural work and, unfortunately, they're also hunted by people in the local area for both food and sport.

"This is why conservation breeding programmes are crucially important to help with the long term protection of this species. It's really special to have one of the most endangered species of deer born right here; it's an amazing event to be a part of, knowing that we're helping to preserve this wonderful species."

The fawn is a second for four-year-old mum, Nova, and dad, Cosmos, also four, and they've both slipped right back into parenthood. They often tuck the little one away somewhere cosy and safe, cuddle up to her at sleep time, and keep a watchful eye over her as she explores her home.

Emma continues:

"Cosmos has been really affectionate and confident with the little one, letting her cuddle up to him to sleep, and Nova is so relaxed. The fawn is an energetic little thing, and often gets the 'zoomies' and races around the paddock, but mum is sq calm and just lets her tire herself out.

"She'll stay on mum's milk for around six months and then she'll start to copy mum and dad's behaviour by trying bits of their food. She'll be fully grown and sexually mature at 12 months, weighing up to 60kg and standing at 80cm, a huge leap from the 3kg and 30cm she was when she was born!

"Philippine spotted deer usually have one baby a year, usually around the winter time. We had a suspicion that Nova was pregnant because her stomach was swelling and getting rounder, but this species tends to hide its pregnancy until the last moment. Then one morning we came in and saw that there was a new fluffy bundle in her bed, which was a wonderful surprise."

This rare deer species loves to wallow in mud, so in the summer keepers often create a mud bath for them, which they then can't wait to roll around in. This helps them to cool themselves down in warmer weather.

Male Philippine spotted deers have thick, bumpy antlers that they use to attract females and spar with other males during breeding season. Their herbivorous diet consists of grasses, leaves and buds and they love stripping the bark off of sticks and logs.

Philippine spotted deer have a distinctive pattern of beige spots on their brown fur and have a gestation period of around 240 days.

Now the weather is getting milder, the baby is venturing outside more and more - she's excited to explore her surroundings and can be found near the greater one-horned rhinos and Fruit Bat Forest.





# HOME INTERVENTIONS

*Doing our best for our doorstep wildlife*

The annual Chester Zoo expedition sees a grand team of zoo staff, formed of highly diverse job roles and experiences, make a big impact to one of our conservation projects in as little as a couple of weeks. Over the years, our expedition teams have helped advance parrot monitoring work in Ecuador, through to supporting community work in close collaboration with our regional partners in Madagascar and India.

After the pandemic hiatus of 2020, we were hungry to get going again in 2021, uniting people from across the zoo to focus on a single project. This time, we chose our home turf – the Chester Zoo Estate.

Spanning more than 200 hectares, the zoo estate covers a diverse range of habitat types from grassland through to woodland and wetland. This year's expedition has been all about making our estate the best it can be for wildlife, and helping people to connect with the natural landscape right here on our doorstep.

This fine work of our expedition team wrapped up a great year for UK wildlife in 2021, with even more work to come this year. Keep an eye out on the Chester Zoo YouTube channel for a deeper look into the Chester Zoo 2021 Expedition and advice on how you can get involved!



## Hedgerows



Having so many pockets of diverse habitats over a large area is a fantastic thing, but even more important is to make sure that those habitats are adequately connected so wildlife can move between them. Hedgerows are the perfect way to do this!

A hedgerow provides shelter for animals of all kinds from the elements. It forms a corridor of earth and branches for movement through exposed terrain. Many hedges, if consisting of the right plants, spend much of the year covered in berries, a key food source for countless UK native birds and small mammals.

To increase this connectivity, the 2021 expedition team planted an entirely new stretch of hedgerow consisting of a mix of plant species that either provide food for animals or structural support for the hedge itself. In a few years we should see a thriving hedge ecosystem!

When hedges become too big, they can easily get gappy at the base and lose their function as corridors. To rectify a huge stretch of elderly hedge, the team employed the traditional technique of hedge laying, chopping the hedge stems partway through at the base, and laying them out on top of each other. Practiced for centuries, the laying encourages brand new dense growth from the ground up.



## Nest boxes



Developing habitat to its maximum capacity for wildlife takes time, and while we're waiting it's good to support wildlife in any other way we can. One such way, for birds, is to provide spaces for nesting and roosting while we wait for hedgerow to form or trees to grow.

A nest box provides such a space, and this year's expedition volunteers produced more than a 100 of them for distribution across our estate and beyond, providing much needed refuge for the UK's various native small birds.

## Wildlife Connections Festival



Nature is for all, and our annual Wildlife Connections Festival drew in more than 2000 of you last year to celebrate UK wildlife!

If you were a visitor to the festival, you may well have seen our expedition volunteers in the Actions Arena, sharing easy ways to engage in conservation at home, from building a simple bird feeder from fruit and wire, through to the delightfully messy process of producing homemade wildflower seed bombs.

Head over to the Wildlife Connections area of our website to find a collection of fun and easy nature-focused activities [chesterzoo.org/wildlife-connections](https://chesterzoo.org/wildlife-connections)




## Wellbeing Garden



Tucked away in the zoo's grounds is our staff canteen, where the expedition team rose to the challenge of converting the open but sterile space around it into a brand new wildlife and wellbeing garden. The plan was to create a garden rich with plants and habitat features that are good for both wildlife and people. As the spring dawns and the plants enter their peak growth phase, we'll be seeing a bloom in pollinator-friendly flowers, and new growth in sensory plants that release a cocktail of unique smells into their surroundings.

If you have access to a garden, or any green space, check out our website for easy ways to make it the very best it can be for your local wildlife!



# STORYTELLING POP-UP

at CHESTER ZOO

Saturday 2 April – Monday 2 May 2022

This Easter, REWILD your  
imagination at Chester Zoo!

Stories **POP UP** all over the zoo and throughout April,  
we want to **AWAKEN** your *inner child* and **CAPTURE**  
your *curiosity* with our storytelling **SPECTACULAR!**

Dive into a story brought to life in our **POP-UP** trail or hear the  
**TALLEST** tales in the wildest ways. From song and dance, to  
puppetry, performances and workshops for the whole family. But  
they won't be around for long, so catch them while you can!

## What's on?

- ◆ A brand new, interactive storytelling trail
- ◆ Storytelling sessions where **YOU** decide what happens next!
- ◆ Unique and breathtaking puppetry from Thingumajig Theatre
- ◆ Inspiring song and dance from Amasing
- ◆ One-of-a-kind storytelling and performance from Yan Tan Tethera
- ◆ Creative workshops from puppetry making to story writing
- ◆ Get hands-on in a comic-style **GIANT** illustration workshop with Nikki Pinder
- ◆ Stories from the zoo with our amazing Zoo Rangers
- ◆ And much more!

EXPLORE wildlife. CREATE adventures and  
choose your own ending... Over to you!



**RECORD**

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



The National Lottery Heritage Fund



## From birds to toads - we're working for UK wildlife!

Our local Environmental Records Centre partners, rECOrd, continue to deliver a huge amount of habitat and species monitoring on our Chester Zoo Nature Reserve. They've also begun surveys along our biodiversity corridor, which is the area of land on the north of our estate bordering the Shropshire Union Canal. This area now forms part of our Government funded Green Recovery Challenge Fund project where we aim to create a 10 mile corridor for nature from Ellesmere Port to Chester.

Within this exciting plan we are improving our zoo estate for biodiversity by creating a new pond, planting a native species orchard and managing habitats such as reedbed and grasslands. There will also be further ecological survey work to inform the management practices including wintering and breeding birds, invertebrate surveys, bat surveys and a focus on amphibians and reptiles too. Last year's work by rECOrd focused on botanical surveys which have given us a lead on how best to manage some of the grassland areas.

The results from the 2021 monitoring work by rECOrd on our nature reserve and adjacent habitats will be shared soon, but we can now reveal that 658 species records were made, many of those being of invertebrates. Also, breeding bird territories increased by 19%. Given that biodiversity in the UK is facing a major crisis we're really proud to be able to demonstrate that we're working hard on the zoo estate to make space for wildlife. The nature reserve has become a very special site and with the expertise brought by the rECOrd team, combined with the habitat management skills from the zoo's Botany and Horticulture department as well as input from the UK Field

Programmes team, it goes to show that team work is key to make gains for biodiversity.

Over the winter we carried out some habitat works on a number of our ponds at the zoo, concentrating on vegetation management, shade reduction and making the margins better for amphibians. These works have been carried out using tracked long reach excavators and while it can look drastic at the time, it's by far the best way to rejuvenate ponds so they 'bounce back' and settle down by the time the winter is done.

The huge amphibian population at the zoo makes spring a very exciting time as we begin evening torch surveys to count as many great crested newts, smooth newts, toads and frogs as we can. We have one of Cheshire's largest great crested newt populations with thousands of them relying on our site (including our Lazy River Boat Journey!) to breed and thrive. Providing not just aquatic (ponds) but terrestrial habitat is key to their survival as well as good connectivity through the landscape.

Those first sightings of frog spawn appearing in ponds is always a spring highlight and you can help by recording what you see in ponds near you. Frogs and especially toads are in decline and by recording what you spot is a great way to contribute to citizen science. The Freshwater Habitats Trust run a big spawn count which you can take part in and as always we urge you to record any of your wildlife sightings with your Local Environmental Records Centre too.

**Helen Bradshaw, Regional Field Programme Manager**



**PREVENTING  
EXTINCTION**



Keep up to date by following  
[@ScienceatCZ](https://twitter.com/ScienceatCZ)



# Meet the Design Team



Tony  
Lead  
Architectural  
Technician



Aleks  
Architectural  
Technician



Janine  
AutoCAD  
Technician



Steve  
Architectural  
Technician



Ian  
Design Team  
Manager



Here at the zoo we're always working to improve our visitor experience and make sure there are new and exciting things to discover. With that in mind, we caught up with our Design Team Manager, Ian Palgrave-Neath to find out more about what the Design Team do, as well as some upcoming exciting developments.

## Our Design Team



"So, there are now five people in the team: Tony Izzard, Aleks Sawicka, Steve Lindop, Janine Cudden and myself. We're a really close-knit team and work well together. The team, as architectural technicians, will design the buildings to a position where we are able to pass them over to a contractor, to then build them.

"We also work with project liaison officers – Ian Hickey and Chloe Cain who sit within our department, but are part of the animal and plant directorate so work closely with the Curators. They will put a project brief together which considers animal wellbeing, their natural behaviours and lots of other important considerations. The Curators and team leaders are a really important part of the process, establishing the project

requirements. We'll then work with the Conservation, Education and Engagement Team, as well as the Interpretation team too. This means we get to work with lots of different people and build new working relationships."

## Developing new habitats

"One of the first things I did when I joined the team was assemble the Design Team for a new planned habitat at the zoo that will recreate the Savannah. It had been on the drawing board since 2017, about a year before I joined. We were due to be on site in 2020/2021 but we chose to defer it for three years due to COVID-19.

"After a huge effort by our teams, and external consultants we felt quite sad about the delay. We've now started working on this project again, working with internal stakeholders to look at the project. We were able to look at the whole scheme and see where we could improve sustainability credentials. The great thing is the launch of the zoo's Conservation Masterplan has brought about the allocation of resources. This extra financial resource will enable us to re-look at options we were unable to fund in the original scheme, including using green energy on-site using biomass. This will help us on our route to carbon net zero."

## Our carbon net zero target

"Our ambition has always been to be as sustainable as possible, but the target has brought this sharply into focus. The real commitment from the organisation has given us the resources to do that.

"An example of this is a recent building restoration project, which has been the first new development since the Conservation Masterplan. Initially, we have stripped the building and the polystyrene ceiling tiles went off to a company who'll use them to make sustainable energy, rather than these going to landfill. We paid a little bit extra for that, so we're putting words into action. The building's frame is predominantly timber, and we'll be using recycled insulation materials, and using green energy – an air source heat pump – which will provide underfloor heating in the main events space."

## Building restoration and conservation

"The greenest building you can do is reusing an existing one. We talk about embodied carbon which is the carbon that is involved in the manufacture of a product. If you're reusing a building, the carbon is produced just once. You're not using carbon to knock something down, with some of this waste going to landfill if it cannot be recycled, and then using more carbon for new materials.

"For the recent building restoration project we're working on we are restoring a lot of the building's historic features, exposing original floors, glazed bricks and repurposing cast iron windows. This building is Grade II listed because of its association with The Oakfield. We'll be bringing in modern materials such as insulation where we can to increase green credentials."

## Design project challenges

"Every project has its challenges. The existing building we're working on for the restoration project houses two different species of bats, including a roost of county significance. We're building a new bat barn behind the lemur walkthrough to offer an alternative roost."

## Upcoming projects

"We have lots of other exciting plans in the works for the zoo as well. We're bringing tamandua on show which is an animal in our collection that is currently off show. We're also building an indoor habitat similar to the lemur houses and we've just completed the build of our goat habitat, on the way up to lions. On the other side of lions, we have a peacock aviary that is currently being built. These new habitats will increase animal visibility on some of the longer routes to the main attractions.

# experiences at CHESTER ZOO

We're excited to share some of our INCREDIBLE new experiences! A Chester Zoo Experience gives you the opportunity to get CLOSER than ever before to some of our REMARKABLE plants and animals.



"An experience day can turn your zoo visit into an adventure! Our unique packages make for an unforgettable day where you can meet our experts, dine in surprising locations and even take a peek behind the scenes. You'll also be contributing to our conservation work both here and around the world, helping to prevent extinction."

Kirsten Wicks - Experiences Manager



## Tropical Adventure for Two

Bring a friend, and become a zoo VIP on an extra special tour of our reptile, bug and aquarium habitats where you'll meet some of the world's most endangered species.

Lay scent trails for our Komodo dragons, bathe our radiated tortoise, visit our chameleons in their Madagascan habitat and meet our bug and aquarium residents before refuelling with a delicious meal for two at The Oakfield.

Maximum of 2 people. Suitable for ages 16+

## Chameleon Experience

Have you ever wondered why a chameleon changes colour or how they are able to climb the tallest of trees?

Immerse yourself in the colourful world of the chameleon and discover all there is to know about this incredible species. You'll even get the chance to feed them in their Tropical Realm habitat!

Maximum of 2 people. Suitable for ages 11+



## Butterfly & Bug Experience

Join our expert keepers in The Butterfly House and get closer to the magic of truly unique butterflies and incredible bugs!

You'll get hands on filling up food and nectar, and learn all about the work we do with some of our most endangered species!

Maximum of 2 people. Suitable for ages 5+



## The Secret Life of the Zoo Tour

Hop aboard our special tour bus and embark on an exclusive tour of our spectacular 128 acre zoo! Discover what it takes to get the zoo ready for a busy day and take a look behind the scenes – you *might* even spot some of the animal stars of our TV show (and keepers!).

After experiencing the sights and sounds of the zoo you'll finish your tour at Monsoon Forest, just in time for zoo opening where you will continue your adventure!

Maximum of 20 people. Suitable for ages 5+



As a zoo member, you can get **10% OFF** on all our Meet, Dine and Explore experiences.

Call us on 01244 380280 to book!



Lilac-breasted roller

# Saving the GIANTS



One of the rarest species of snails in the world, the giant magnolia snail, has hatched at the zoo! After just five of these precious snails arrived here in Chester back in 2017 to help prevent their extinction, our expert team has now bred them for the third time, welcoming 30 more hatchlings into the world.

Thought to be extinct in the wild, no one had seen these snails in their home in South East Asia for decades until they were rediscovered in 2012. In 2019, just 39 individuals were found in a tiny valley in a national park in Vietnam after two months of searching.

Today, it's thought that there are as few as 200 of these special snails left in the wild, and there are just 70 in zoos around the world – less than snow leopards and giant pandas! They're under threat from habitat loss and being eaten as a delicacy. They are also collected for their shells which are sadly then sold as ornaments at high prices because they are so rare.

Tamas Papp, our Lead Keeper of Lower Vertebrates and Invertebrates, explains:

"This species is extremely rare, which makes this breeding success so important to the future of their existence. Like lots of species in South East Asia, habitat loss is a huge factor as to why there are so few left in the wild.

"When they arrived here at the zoo a few years ago, we were elated to work with such an elusive species and do all we could to bring them back from the brink of extinction.

"When you're breeding something this rare, every single specimen is so important. Working with a species which is rarer than a mountain gorilla and more secretive than a coelacanth, seeing them breed after years of research, learning and hard work is absolutely amazing. The morning we saw that they'd hatched, it was a real celebration for the team. It's the reason we want to be zookeepers – to help save species from extinction."

Very little is known about the snails' behaviour in the wild, so breeding them has been a very intricate process. The team replicated different types of food that they might find in the wild, providing them with fresh fruits and vegetables which slowly unearthed their eating habits. They get through as much as a few cubic metres of leaves every year, an impressive amount for an animal so small!

"These magnolia snails are actually very shy, so we have to look really carefully to find them in their habitat," added Tamas. "In South East Asia they have lots of predators, so they protect themselves by hiding away. We created a habitat that replicates the conditions they were found in in the wild, and got creative with their food, monitoring what they do and don't eat each day. When the eggs are laid, they're very fragile, so we have to be extra careful with them - it's intricate and delicate work.

"These snails will lay around 100-150 eggs at a time, but only around 10-20 will hatch after around three weeks. The rest of the eggs are infertile and actually become food for

the babies, giving them a huge boost of protein, which helps them grow from a tiny 6mm and weighing less than a gram, to tripling their weight in just a couple of weeks. Fully grown adults measure around 100mm and weigh 150g, so they're much bigger than snails we find in the UK!

"When the babies first hatch, they're almost completely see-through, but as soon as they start to feed within the first 24 hours, they become a light pink colour. When they reach adulthood, their shell turns a dark chocolate-brown colour with light stripes, which helps camouflage them from predators.

"We hope that this breeding success will help to establish a backup population in case this species becomes lost entirely in the wild and, eventually, we're looking to develop a reintroduction programme to help this fascinating species thrive in South East Asia."

It's a girl!  
Say hello to special  
new arrival, Dobby

### FUN FACTS

The word *aardvark* translates to "earth pig" in the language of Afrikaans. These nocturnal animals use their long noses and keen sense of smell to sniff out ants and termites, which they lap up with a long tongue measuring up to 25cm, covered in sticky saliva. Aardvarks use their powerful claws to tear open termite mounds, as well as to dig underground burrows in which they sleep.



Dobby the *aardvark* calf arrived overnight to parents Oni and Koos back on 4 January and has become something of a media superstar since news of her birth emerged.

Nicknamed due to her slight resemblance to the famous Harry Potter character of the same name (at least that was the initial reaction of her keepers and so the name has since stuck!), Dobby has appeared in over 1000 pieces of media coverage around the world and has so far been seen by more than 3.5 million people on our own social media channels! She's appeared on everything from *The One Show* and *BBC Breakfast* in the UK to *CNN* in the USA, has been the focus of much attention on TV channels in India and even made headlines as far away as New Zealand.

Adding to the fact she's a first for us here in Chester, with only 66 *aardvarks* found in zoos across Europe and a mere 109 in zoos worldwide, we're one of just a small number of zoos caring for the species – making Dobby's arrival an even bigger cause for celebration. She'll eventually join a conservation breeding programme that only a handful of zoos are part of globally.

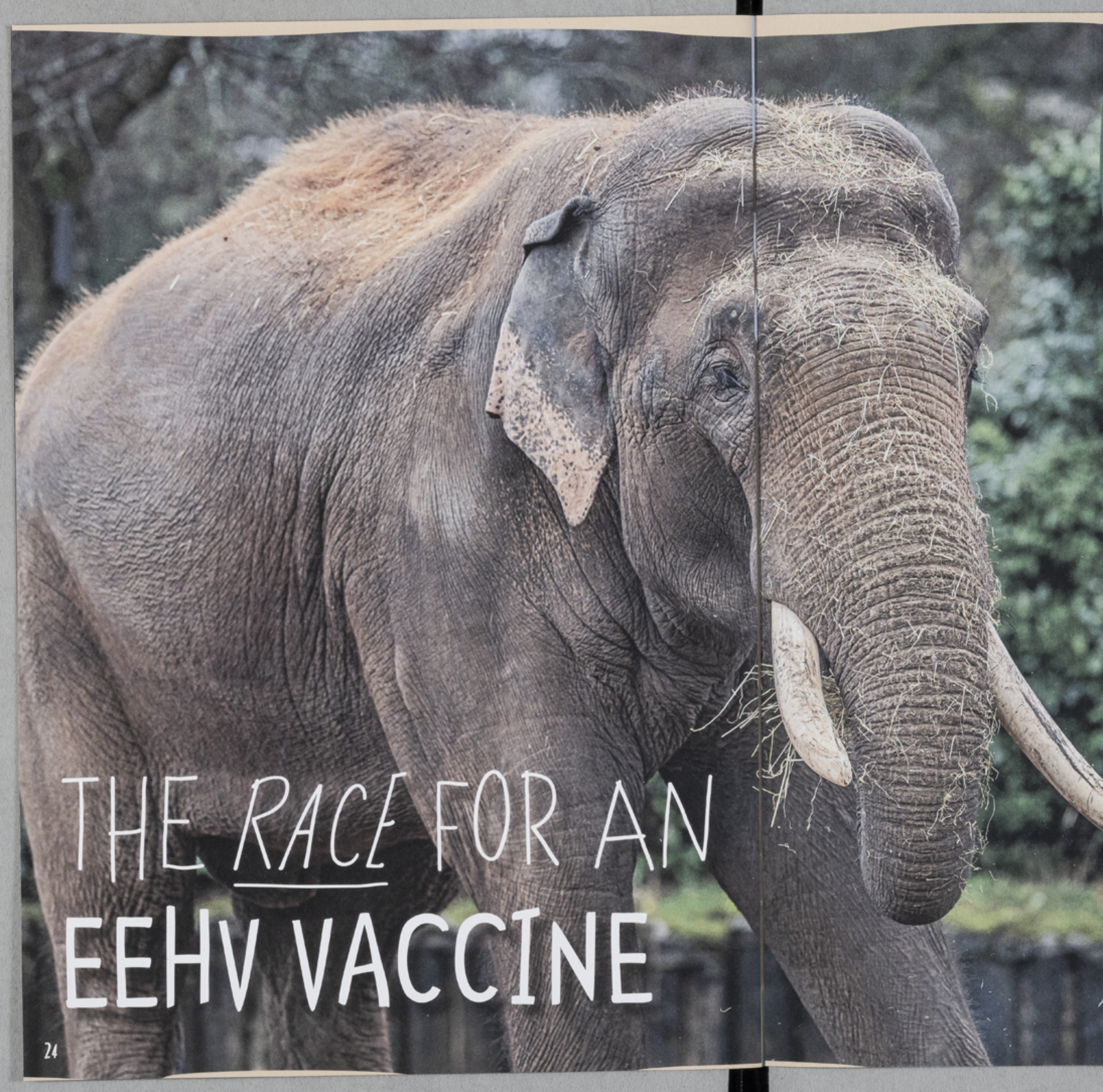
And if all of that wasn't exciting enough then her story gets more and more interesting!

*Aardvark* parents are notorious for being a little clumsy around their newborns. So, in her early weeks, when she was at her most tiny and most fragile (she weighed just 1.1kg at birth), our amazing keepers protected her from any accidental knocks and bumps by helping Oni out with supplementary feeding sessions at their homes throughout the night, until she grew stronger.

Dave White, Team Manager at the zoo, said:

"Caring for Dobby has been a new challenge for us – but it's been a stroll in the park in comparison to looking after my own children! In the evenings, when Oni and Koos were out exploring and feeding, we'd carefully place Dobby into a special incubator and take her home to feed with warm milk every few hours. She'd then spend all day bonding and snuggled up with Oni inside their burrow.

"Now, we're more or less at the point where we're stepping back from our role in her developing and leaving her in the very capable hands (claws) of mum!"



# THE RACE FOR AN EEHV VACCINE

It's been an exciting start to 2022 for elephant conservation!



Earlier this year, we announced we've entered the very first stages of testing a pilot study for a vaccine to protect young elephants against elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus (EEHV), a highly lethal disease.

In an exclusive Z Mag interview, we talked to Dr Javier Lopez, our Head of Veterinary Sciences, to learn more about how we got to this landmark moment, and the journey ahead to reach our ultimate goal.

**How did we get to this point, where we can begin testing a vaccine for EEHV?**

"More than 10 years ago, Chester and other leading zoos around the world began to realise the threat posed by EEHV. We lost a number of young elephants, which hit us hard. From the very outset we were involved in research to understand the disease and how to treat it.

"Around five years ago we had a massive outpouring of support for our Never Forget campaign. This allowed us to enter into a new partnership with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), and the University of Surrey. The donations funded a huge research project, and together we stepped up our studies on behalf of the international conservation community.

"The idea of a vaccine was science fiction back then though. We didn't have the knowledge to make it happen. We focused on treatments for EEHV, and that has helped massively. But treatments alone aren't enough to save elephant lives.

"Technology has advanced, and so has our understanding of EEHV thanks to our partnership. Five years ago we would never have expected it, but now we're in a place to take a trial vaccine through the testing process. We can now try to win the race before EEHV threatens an elephant again."

**What have we learned so far from this very first pilot study?**

"It's still very early days and right now we're examining the evidence and looking for anything that would send us back to the drawing board.

"First, we need to know that the vaccine is safe. It's a simple vaccine, with similar technology used successfully in producing vaccines against countless diseases in the past, for a number of species. We need to remove any doubt though, and we're greatly encouraged to see absolutely no evidence of any adverse effects in Aung Bo, our herd's bull elephant and first recipient of the pilot vaccine.

"We also need to know that the vaccine produces some kind of immune response. We've seen this in our trial too, which is encouraging, but equally we're not getting carried away until we have much more concrete data.

"What this pilot study has told us so far is that we aren't yet in a spot where we need to go back to square one, instead we can continue on the long road to reach our final goal."

**What are the next steps in developing the vaccine?**

"So for now we need to increase our sample size and extend this pilot study to more elephants."

"Once this is complete and the research conclusions made, we hope to be able to enter a full clinical trial of the vaccine. In a clinical trial, we'll test far more complex questions, such as finding the right vaccine dosage to offer the best protection, and if booster shots would be required to maintain immunity. Ultimately, at the end of this trial we should have a vaccine that we can say offers a young elephant protection against EEHV. This is where we want to get, as quickly as possible."

**If we're successful, what does it mean for elephant populations around the world?**

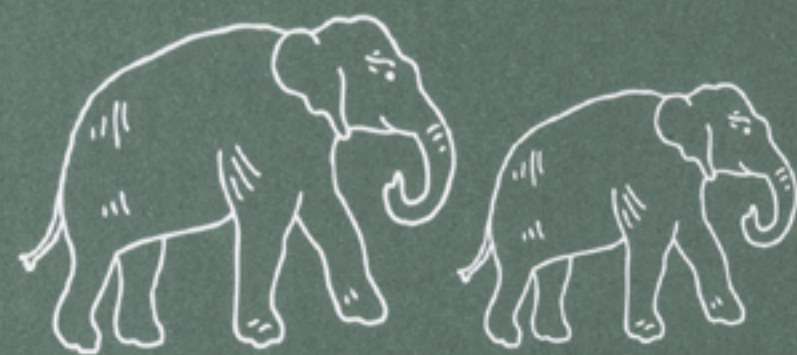
"Success would be game-changing. At the moment, I would say EEHV is the single biggest threat to us carrying out elephant conservation in the wild. It has been devastating to our work, so halting the damage done by this disease would be a lifeline for future efforts."

"If the decline of wild populations continues, we have to be sure we can maintain elephant genetic diversity around the world."

"EEHV exists in the wild and the disease is difficult to study without close access to elephant herds. EEHV has already been confirmed in nine countries across its range and may well even be a far bigger problem in the wild than we realise, especially when combined with the challenges elephants are facing under habitat loss and fragmentation."

"A vaccine may allow us to turn around an otherwise impossible situation."

"Simply put, achieving this vaccine in the next few years will stop the suffering of any elephant that contracts EEHV. It can help us tackle what may be one of the greatest threats to the long-term survival of all elephants."



## NEVER FORGET CAMPAIGN

Since the campaign launched in 2016 we have seen some ups and downs for the Hi Way herd here at Chester Zoo. In October 2018 we lost two much-loved calves to EEHV, and Nandita and Aayu are still very much missed. In March 2019, we were all terribly sad to learn that Indali had tested positive for EEHV but thanks to our increased knowledge of the virus and the pioneering treatments carried out by our conservationists, Indali is still with us today.

EEHV is a devastating virus that affects Asian elephants worldwide, and we are determined to stamp it out for good. Thanks to our amazing donors, we've been able to find out much more about this terrible disease, but now the time has come to push forward and build on our knowledge to start developing more effective treatments and, even better, a preventative vaccine that will protect the Hi Way herd and Asian elephants around the globe.

Find out how you can help at [chesterzoo.org/neverforget](https://chesterzoo.org/neverforget)

Want to get mum an *extra* **SPECIAL** Mother's Day present this year?  
We have the **PERFECT** gift for mum here at the zoo!



### Mother's Day jewellery gift - Mum's Never Forget

Choice of jewellery items and gift card

Earrings and necklace £28.00

Necklace and bracelet £32.00

Necklace, earrings and bracelet £44.00

Each comes with a choice of greetings card.

This beautiful range of elephant themed jewellery makes the perfect gift for mum because everyone knows that mums never forget the important things!

### Mum's night off

A delicious selection of sweet treats just for mum.

Give mum the night off to put her feet up and relax for an evening with her favourite book or film and some delicious sweet treats.

Comes with a choice of greetings card.

£14.00



### Scarf gift set

These beautiful animal print scarves are perfect for keeping warm and look great with a variety of outfits, making them truly versatile wardrobe essentials.

Scarf, scarf hanger and choice of greetings card.

£15.00

≡ Mother's Day gifts ≡  
from the zoo

# ≡ Fundraising update ≡

## SAVE OUR ZOO

We were delighted to learn that three of our Save Our Zoo fundraising superstars have been chosen to receive Zoo and Aquarium Hero awards from the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA). Brendan Rendall, Ollie Mitchell and Kids Planet nurseries are among 17 recipients of the award, which also include comedian Bill Bailey and the stars of hit CBeebies show One Zoo Three.

These new awards reflect the inspiring and vitally important work happening across the country to support zoos and aquariums as they work to tackle the twin issues of climate change and biodiversity loss. These first recipients reflect the support provided through the exceptional challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Our incredible Save Our Zoo campaign ran from June 2020 through most of last year and raised around £4 million, meaning the huge hole in our finances caused by the effects of the pandemic was not as catastrophic as it may otherwise have been.

Dr Jo Judge the CEO of BIAZA said: "The Zoo and Aquarium Heroes are inspirations to us all. Whether they have been making us laugh on TV or raising money in bake sales, they are testament to the fact that we can all make a difference in our own way. While it's not quite the New Year's Honours, we hope that this in some way recognises the efforts put in by every-day heroes making a difference."

"Like so many of us, zoos and aquariums have faced extraordinary challenges over the past two years. The support of fundraisers, entertainers, conservationists, and the millions who support zoos and aquariums have been a source of real light in the darkness."

We truly do value each and every one of you that raises funds to support our work and are super proud that three of these new awards have gone to supporters of our zoo.





## Neville Family Legacy

Last year we lost two loyal zoo members and adopters; John and Joyce Neville were supporters and regular visitors since the 70s but sadly passed away within two weeks of each other towards the end of 2021. The zoo had been an important part of both their lives and they were passionate about the animals here in our care. It had been their wish to support the zoo through their legacy, both leaving gifts to the zoo in their wills, which along with collections taken at their funerals have been put to good use by two of our teams.

John and Joyce's children Terry, Mike and Tracey came to visit us to see how the donations have been used and had a lovely day of reminiscing. They chose to use their Dad's legacy to support the care of our vultures - John's chosen adopted animal. Thanks to John's legacy and the generosity of attendees at his funeral, our African white backed and white headed vultures now have a heated area to perch on, which our bird team explained helps with potential frost bite issues in their claws. Joyce had always loved our orangutans, so her legacy has been used to help with their care and provide enrichment for their lives. The primate team chose to use the donation to fund a new feeding system for their habitat over in Monsoon Forest that encourages and rewards their natural curiosity and foraging skills.

Terry, Mike and Tracey have many treasured childhood memories of time spent at the zoo. Prize for the most memorable trip however goes to a particularly smelly one. Mike recalls, "At one time the zoo was offering tiger poo for people who had issues with cats in their gardens, so my Mum and Dad decided it would be a good idea to get some and we travelled home to Preston with it in the boot; let's just say it was a very long journey!" He added, "It did the trick though and the problem cats never came back!"

Terry, Mike and Tracey were delighted that their parents' legacy has been able to help the animals they loved so dearly. "The zoo meant so much to them and has been such an important part of their lives and it is comforting to see that continue even after they have gone."

If you would like to speak to someone about Legacies or In Memory giving, please call Tanya on 01244 650 229 or send an email to [fundraising@chesterzoo.org](mailto:fundraising@chesterzoo.org)

# Race for the Rainforest

Back in 2019 we established our Race for the Rainforest which was initially a group of corporate supporters taking on the challenge of the gruelling Borneo Ultra Marathon to raise funds for the reforestation and management of an area of former oil palm plantation in Borneo. Plans changed somewhat but Race for the Rainforest is now bigger and better! Most importantly, you can get involved in this inspiring campaign to work alongside our partners HUTAN to aid the wildlife of Borneo.



Despite the pandemic, work has continued and the reforestation team have been able to reforest areas along the Kinabatangan to reconnect the landscape and help the orangutan population there to survive and thrive. Last year over 45,975 seedlings from 49 different native species of trees were planted. With your help we aim to build on this success in the coming years and at least double the number of trees planted.

An exciting new project has also started looking into the hornbill population in the area, understanding their distribution and conservation status. As part of this project, wardens will patrol key habitat to protect the hornbills living there.

All this is part of our effort to prevent extinction in this area of critical importance to biodiversity and conservation, BUT we do really need your help to continue this incredibly important work. Your support is vital to ensure that the rainforests of Borneo can once more thrive and be a home to the many species that are currently under threat.

Check out our fundraising pack  
[chesterzoo.org/racefortherainforest](https://chesterzoo.org/racefortherainforest)  
 for some amazing ideas for activities to  
 fundraise as a family, at work or in school.

Places are limited  
& often get snapped  
up fast, so make sure  
you **BOOK SOON!**  
[chesterzoo.org/events](http://chesterzoo.org/events)

# Junior Programme 2022

Discover, explore, share & learn

We have loads of EXCITING ACTIVITIES available to Junior Members.



## Conservation Tots – under 5's

Got a little tot in the family? We're hosting coffee mornings with a difference!

Calling mums, dads, grannies, grandads, families and little tot minders – bring your little tot to the zoo to play games, explore and have messy fun! Join us for our conservation tots sessions for lots of EXCITING activities for just £2 per child.

The sessions run from 10:30 am until 11:30 am every Wednesday during term time. Places are limited so head over to our events page on the Chester Zoo website for more information and to book your place!

These activities are for you and your little ones to enjoy together. The sessions are ideal for 1-3 year olds, but other children up to the age of 5 are very welcome.

Keep an eye on the website for when booking becomes available.

# MINI RANGERS – SCHOOL YEARS 1-3

Do you know a trainee conservationist in primary school years 1-3? Our Mini Rangers activities are an opportunity to come and explore at the zoo!

## Mini Ranger Holiday Clubs

Join our Mini Ranger Holiday Club for three days of fun at the zoo. Our holiday clubs are perfect for young animal lovers who want to learn, play and explore while learning all about wildlife in the magical setting of Chester Zoo. Our activities take place both in and out of our Learning Centre and include zoo trails, games, arts and crafts, and much, much more!

**Easter Holiday: 5 April - 7 April**

**Summer Holiday: 6 July - 28 July OR**

**16 August - 18 August**

The holiday club runs from 9.00am - 4pm.



## It's back! Zoo Keeper Career Day

We are very excited to announce the return of our Zoo Keeper Career Day for those aged 15-17. We have been working hard to create a full day programme full of valuable insights and hands on experiences with our expert animal team and wider zoo teams.

Further details and information on how to book will be available on the events section of the website at the end of March.

## Junior Rangers – school years 4-6

Our Junior Ranger activities are perfect for children who are currently in primary school years 4-6.

## Junior ranger camp

### Member exclusive!

Do you love wildlife? Are you a member of the zoo? If so, Junior Rangers will be perfect for you!

Junior Ranger Camps run every Sunday for five weeks. Each week we explore different parts of the zoo and learn about our amazing animals and incredible conservation work. This year our topics will be advertised on our website so you can book the camp that is best for your Junior Ranger. Our Junior Ranger Camps run from...

**24 April - 22 May - Reptiles and amphibians**

**19 June - 17 July - Wild habitats**

## Junior ranger holiday club

Our 3 day holiday activity club is perfect for young animal lovers and future conservationists. Discover the amazing animals, habitats and the remarkable conservation work taking place all around the world.

All of this learning happens through a range of fun activities both in and out of our learning centre, including zoo trails, conservation action, practical skills, games, arts and crafts, and much, much more!

Club topics will be announced soon, keep an eye on our website for updates.

**Half Term: 31 May - 2 June**

**Summer: 2 August - 4 August OR 23 August - 25 August**

The holiday club runs from 9.00am - 4pm.

Booking will be available for our holiday clubs in early 2022.

## Junior Conservationists – school years 7-9

Our Junior Conservationist activities are perfect for secondary years 7-9 who want to learn more about how we prevent extinction.

### Junior Conservationists Skills Courses

Our skills courses are the perfect opportunity to gain practical insight into different methods, tools and skills used in the field and in the zoo. From collecting data on animal behaviour to conducting an ecological survey on our Nature Reserve.

**7 - 21 May - Field Skills and Ecology**

### Junior Conservationists Holiday Course

Join us this summer for a holiday event with a difference. During our three day Junior Conservationist Course, we'll be mixing games and activities with deeper exploration of conservation topics. Perfect for Junior Conservationists with an interest in learning more about how we prevent extinction around the world.

Junior Conservationists will receive a certificate upon completion of their course as a token of their achievement. Further details of our course will be released in spring so keep an eye on the website for updates.

**Our Junior Conservationists Holiday Course will be running 9 August - 11 August.**



## YOUNG CONSERVATIONISTS – SCHOOL YEARS 10-12

Our Young Conservationists activities for secondary school years 10-12 are great for future conservationists that are interested in learning more about the work of the zoo and exploring conservation careers.

### Young Conservationists Skills Courses

Our skills courses are the perfect opportunity to gain practical insight into different methods, tools and skills used in the field and in the zoo. From collecting data on animal behaviour to conducting an ecological survey on our nature reserve, these courses provide young conservationists with real conservation skills and the opportunity to practice conservation techniques.

**7 - 21 May - Field Skills and Ecology**

### Young Conservationists Holiday Course

Join us this Easter and summer for our Young Conservationist Course. Do you know a young person interested in pursuing a career in conservation? This week long course is the perfect opportunity to gain valuable insight into the world of conservation careers at Chester Zoo.

Young Conservationists will receive a certificate upon completion of their course as a token of their achievement. Further details of our course are available on the website.

**Our Young Conservationists Course will be running 4 April - 8 April and repeated 8 August - 12 August.**

# Members update



## Z Mag is going digital!

Don't miss out on future issues!

In line with our sustainability goals to be carbon net zero and a zero waste operation by 2030, next year Z Mag will be going fully digital. The good news is we're hard at work to ensure the all-new digital Z Mag will be better than ever – utilising a range of exciting and innovative features we simply wouldn't be able to offer in the print edition.



Make sure you get the new digital Z Mag sent to your inbox by providing your email address. If we don't have your email address or if you're unsure, scan this QR code to let us know how to reach you so we can stay in touch.

## Members Days 2022

We are so pleased to be able to bring back our special Members Days for you this year!

Our Members Days are the perfect opportunity for you to share your favourite zoo with your friends and family and bring them along at a discounted rate! Bring along up to four guests for the perfect day out!

The next 2 Members Days are: Friday 18 March & Sunday 19 June.

Half price guest tickets are available by pre-booking only (4 per member). You can book tickets online or by contacting us on 01244 380280.

## Annual General Meeting

One of the fantastic benefits of being a member is that you can make a direct influence on important decisions regarding the future of the zoo. Our upcoming AGM will give members the chance to vote on a range of issues that affect how the zoo is run.

To ensure the voting process is as easy as possible we will be in touch via email with information on how you can vote online. If you haven't already provided us with an email now would be a great time. You can contact our Membership Team on 01244 650 208 or [membership@chesterzoo.org](mailto:membership@chesterzoo.org)

The voting will be overseen by an independent organisation to ensure that the process is transparent and fair. If you don't have access to email please contact us and we will make alternative arrangements.

## Share your memories



We always LOVE hearing zoo stories from our visitors and we want to CELEBRATE what Chester Zoo means to you, our members!

Every photo and video taken is part of our valuable history and we wouldn't be the zoo we are today without the wonderful support of our members and visitors. That's why going forward we want to dedicate more time to YOU – our fantastic members!

So if you've got a photo, video or story that you'd like to tell, we'd love to hear from you. We might even feature it right here in a future edition of Z Mag! Did you get an amazing shot capturing the giraffe's best side? Or the perfect selfie with our red pandas? Well, we want to see it! Want to tell us about your favourite animals or any fundraising you've been up to to support our mission to prevent extinction? We'd love to hear more about it!

We're SO grateful to our members and can't wait to see all of your wonderful memories. If you'd like to submit your zoo story email us at [marketing@chesterzoo.org](mailto:marketing@chesterzoo.org) or share on social media using [#ChesterZooMemories](https://twitter.com/ChesterZooMemories).



Get ready to **ADVENTURE**  
into our **WILD WORLD**  
**THIS SUMMER**



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

**Chester Zoo**  
Upton-by-Chester  
Chester CH2 1LH

Email: [info@chesterzoo.org](mailto:info@chesterzoo.org) [www.chesterzoo.org](http://www.chesterzoo.org)

Receive your copy of Z magazine digitally  
Get in touch with our Memberships team  
via [membership@chesterzoo.org](mailto:membership@chesterzoo.org)  
to ensure you get your copy via email.

Our Chester Zoo Z magazine has been produced using vegetable based printing inks and is printed on sustainable FSC resourced uncoated paper. The outer packaging and magazine are also fully recyclable