

CHESTER ZOO

SPRING 2016



Z Magazine...

# Features

The official magazine for Chester Zoo  
Members & Adopters



Find out more about the people and animals that feature in the fantastic documentary series that's been going out on Channel 4.



**ACT NOW** to find a vaccine for **EEHV**.

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**STAFF GO WILD** Page 26-27

A team of Chester Zoo staff spent two weeks in Madagascar in the remote Mangabe forest with the MaVoa team.

**Don't Miss!**

**MEMBERS DAYS 2016**  
 Saturday 19 March  
 Friday 1 July  
 Sunday 6 November

**ADOPTERS DAYS 2016**  
 Saturday 5 March  
 Sunday 2 October

Design : viewcreative.co.uk

# News from the Zoo

with Dr Mark Pilgrim  
director general



As this is the first edition of Z for 2016 I wanted to start by saying **Happy New Year to you all**. What a busy start to the year we've had, with the Channel 4 television series, our annual stocktake and of course the delightful arrival of a very precious Eastern black rhino, Gabe.

## New arrivals

I have to say I was over the moon when I heard the news that we had an Eastern black rhino calf in January. For those of you that don't know, my colleague Becca Biddle and I manage the European studbook for this species and so it's an animal that is very close to our heart. Gabe's father, Kirfaru, came from Hanover Zoo just 17 months ago and he's genetically of very high importance to the breeding programme so on paper he's a perfect male to breed from. When he arrived he hadn't bred for ten years, so bringing him in specifically to breed was a little risky for us. As soon as he got here however, we saw that he was trying to mate with Ema Elsa, then 14 months later, Gabe arrived. Gabe is going to play a very important part in the Eastern black rhino breeding programme as he will add to the genetic diversity of Eastern black rhinos in zoos across Europe. A birth of any critically endangered animal is significant but this arrival was truly extra special.

At the end of last year we also received some very special birds from Java, as 12 Javan green magpies arrived from Indonesia. These birds are critically endangered as there are less than 100 left in the wild. Sadly, these birds are on the very edge of becoming extinct and to guarantee we don't lose them forever we need an insurance population. We are the first zoo to work with these birds and I'm happy to say they are already settling in well, so I'm optimistic that we will be successful in breeding this beautiful species.

## Conservation

I spent the first few weeks of the New Year in Madagascar with a fantastic group of people as we went on our annual staff expedition to visit one of our many conservation partners. I get great satisfaction from the staff expedition as it gives people who never usually get the opportunity to go out into the field a chance to see some of the crucial conservation work we do. Our team of 12 were a brilliant bunch who worked very hard in tough conditions without a single grumble! We trekked out to the forest most days to help our project partners Madagasikara Voakajy (MoVoa) conduct population surveys of the Golden mantella frog, lemurs and birds and you can hear all our three weeks in Madagascar on pages 26 & 27.

I talk a lot about our staff working with our conservation partners abroad but we're also passionate about UK conservation and we've been involved with a project on our door step, in Wales. With our help the Vincent Wildlife Trust started Britain's first carnivore recovery scheme with pine martens. This species has disappeared from nearly all of the UK apart from some parts of Northern England and Scotland. As part of the scheme, 20 pine martens were gradually translocated from Scotland to mid-Wales before they were soft released into the wild last autumn and I am pleased to say the we have been encouraged by the success of these translocations. We hope to do the same again later this year and eventually achieve a self-sustaining population which, over time, will spread to other forests of Wales and across the border into England.

## And finally...

As you read this our fantastic documentary series will be coming to an end. The show has featured some wonderful animal stories and also showed the real passion of our keepers - it's a perfect way to show the world what a special place we have here at Chester Zoo.

# FIRST TUATARA

## BRED OUTSIDE NEW ZEALAND



NEW  
ARRIVAL

*Our reptile team has bred an exceptionally rare reptile which is more than 225 million years old.*

The tuatara, which looks like a lizard but actually belongs to a group of animals commonly known as beak heads, or *Rhynchocephalia*, is now native to New Zealand as it became extinct in the rest of the world around 70 million years ago. It's an extraordinarily difficult species to breed and has taken our team 38 years of hard work and perseverance to get a successful hatching.



**Lead keeper Isolde McGeorge has been part of the reptile team since the species came to the zoo in 1977. She took some time to explain this monumental moment:**

"Breeding tuatara is an incredible achievement. They are notoriously difficult to breed and it's probably fair to say that I know that better than most as it has taken me 38 years to get here. It has taken lots of hard work, lots of stressful moments and lots of tweaking of the conditions in which we keep the animals along the way but it has all been very much worth it.

"This animal has been on the planet for over a quarter of a billion years and to be the first zoo to ever breed them outside their homeland in New Zealand is undoubtedly amazing. It's one of the most momentous events for the reptile team at the zoo since we discovered Komodo dragons are capable of virgin births, in 2006.

"When you've worked with tuatara for as long as I have you come to realise that they don't do anything in a hurry. Their metabolism is incredibly slow - they take only five breaths per minute; they need just six to eight heart beats per minute; they only reproduce every four years; and their eggs take a year to hatch.

"We've waited a very, very long time - 12 years with this particular pairing. The night before it hatched I spotted two beads of sweat on the egg. I had a feeling something incredible was about to happen and so I raced in early the next day and there she was. Immediately I broke down in tears - I was completely overwhelmed by what we had achieved. Now that we have all of the key factors in place, the challenge is to repeat our success and to do it again and again."

The team hope to be able to utilise some of the breeding expertise developed with the tuatara to improve rates of success for other species in the collection and the wild, including many critically endangered species.



NEW  
ARRIVAL

# Welcome Gabe

In January we were lucky enough to capture the birth of a Eastern black rhino on CCTV. Just a week later the keepers named the new calf Gabe and he's been out and about on the paddock, with his mum Ema Elsa, ever since. Gabe's arrival was very important as Eastern black rhinos are listed by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as critically endangered in the wild, with less than 650 now believed to remain across Africa.

**Barbara Dreyer, rhino keeper at the zoo, said:** " We hope Gabe brings a lot of attention to the ever-growing need for the conservation of Eastern black rhino populations in Africa that are being slaughtered daily. The criminal gangs aren't slowing down and in recent years there's been a huge surge in illegal poaching, driven by the demand for rhino horn in Asia, as it's 'believed' to have medicinal benefits – although scientific research has already proved it to be completely useless.

" For that reason, Gabe is particularly important to the European breeding programme for the species as he will add to the genetic diversity of Eastern black rhinos in zoos across Europe, helping to save the species from extinction in the future."

Gabe is the third baby born at the zoo to 13-year-old mum, Ema Elsa, who was matched up with dad Kifaru, aged 31, by keepers at the zoo. The calf will now stay by her side for up to two years.

We've has been successful in breeding a number of critically endangered black rhinos and play a vital part in the European breeding programme, which is managed by the zoo's Director General, Mark Pilgrim. Ground-breaking science at the zoo has allowed researchers to monitor hormones levels in our female black rhinos to help discover the best time to introduce them to a potential partner, as well as diagnose pregnancies and estimate when they will give birth.

**Mike Jordan, collections director, added:** " We are one of just a handful of institutions in the world that are working with conservation organisations in Africa - including Save the Rhino International and the International Rhino Foundation - to ensure the long-term survival of rhinos in the wild. Areas we support, both through funding and through the provision of our expertise, include Tsavo, Chyulu and Laikipia in Kenya and Mkomazi in Tanzania. Alongside that, it's important to have an effective breeding programme in zoos to maintain a genetically viable insurance population of the species. That's why we're also responsible for carefully coordinating the breeding programme for the species in zoos across the whole of Europe. In the future, it could be what saves them from extinction. We hope that Gabe becomes a real ambassador for the species."

# OUR MISSION to save a bird on the brink

NEW  
ARRIVALS



*Six pairs of one of the world's rarest bird species - the Javan green magpie - have moved to the zoo from Indonesia in a bid to save them from extinction.*

In an effort to establish a vital insurance population, our bird experts hope to develop the first ever captive breeding programme for the species outside of Indonesia in a last ditch attempt to ensure the continued survival of these highly threatened birds. The Javan green magpie is now believed to number less than 100 individuals in the wild and is listed as critically endangered by BirdLife International and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

**Our curator of birds, Andrew Owen has been working to conserve the Javan green magpies with our conservation partners out in the field for five years; he explains how important this move is for this critically endangered bird:**

" We really are fighting against time to save the incredibly rare Javan green magpie from extinction. Sadly, there is evidence that the species is fast disappearing in the wild as they have fallen victim to the pet trade and an ever shrinking habitat. In fact, they have only been found once in the last 10 years in the wild by ornithologists.

" By bringing twelve of the birds to the UK, we are hoping our new conservation breeding programme will begin to address the desperate plight of this species and ensure a protected population for the future.

" We've been working with the Cikananga Conservation Breeding Centre in Java for five years and our mission to track down the birds with the beautiful green plumage has included trawling markets and interviewing traders. Over time we have managed to rescue a handful of birds and set up a breeding centre and, together, we have been successful in breeding the birds in their country of origin.

" We are committed to supporting our partners in Java and have now brought these beautiful birds to Chester. The new breeding programme is quite probably the only viable way of securing their future in the short term. It will be incredibly hard to change the culture of people keeping song birds in small cages but, with more education, awareness and protection of suitable secure habitat, we hope we can one day return this beautiful species to the wild."

The birds are currently settling in to their special off - show breeding aviaries where our keepers say they are doing very well.



## THE SECRET LIFE OF THE ZOO

Meet some of the stars of the fantastic documentary series that's been going out on Channel 4 at 8pm on Tuesday evenings.

Over two million people have been enjoying the programme all about our zoo and its inhabitants, here's a little more information about some of the stars of the show...



## ANIMAL FACT FILE



## CHIMPANZEES

We have a group of 18 West African chimpanzees here at the zoo - many of whom have featured on the programme, including Boris and Dylan.

Chimpanzees are very sociable animals. In the wild they work together as a team. In the zoo, you can see this teamwork at feeding times and when they're climbing, wrestling, or playing. Our group of chimpanzees have leaders and followers, similar to wild chimps in Africa.

In the wild chimpanzee numbers are declining drastically so they are now listed as an endangered species, which means without important conservation measures they could be wiped out forever.

Chester Zoo runs the Gashaka Biodiversity Project which safeguards the future of chimpanzees in their natural homeland of Nigeria.



### Keeper Profile

**NIALL ORMEROD** has been working with the chimps for 35 years and he's been at the zoo for 44. He loves his job and has been a big part of our successful chimpanzee group.

### Why did you become a Keeper:

When I was growing up in Lancashire I often visited Chester Zoo with my dad who was a member. I've got fond memories of visiting the zoo with him and once when we were having lunch in Oakfield House, George Mottershead came in and sat with us. He asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up and I told him I wanted to become a zookeeper and Chester was the place I wanted to work. I wrote to George when I was 15 asking for a job, I was told I was too young so I wrote again when I was 16 and I kept writing until I finally got a job at 17. I moved from Lancashire to Chester and I've never left.

### What's your favourite animal?

When I was younger I always liked big cats, bears and reptiles. I looked after the big cats and bears until 1973 when I first started working with the chimps and straight away I knew these were my favourite animal. Chimps are intelligent animals; I would say they are more intelligent than some humans, so I find they give you something back when you look after them.

### What's been your most memorable moment in your career to date?

We had the most successful breeding programme in Europe and I played an important part in that success. We are also one of the only zoos in the world to successfully introduce a male chimp into a multi-male group.

### Did you know...?

- Most of the chimps I've named are named after either song titles or artists - from Eric (Clapton) to Dylan (Bob). You need a name which is easy to shout!
- I have pictures of all our chimps, past and present, in our mess room.



## ANIMAL FACT FILE



### Keeper Profile

**PHILIPPA CARTER-JONES** is a member of the reptile team who look after the

frogs; part of the lower vertebrates and invertebrates team here at the zoo.

**Worked at the zoo:** Two years

**What's your favourite animal & why?**

It's hard to pick just one but probably the Surinam toad. Their scientific name is *Pipa pipa* so I was always going to like them, but they're also really fascinating. The baby toads emerge from their mother's back (kind of gross!) rather than hatching from spawn like a lot of amphibians do.

**What's the best part of your job?**

Being surprised with a clutch of eggs that you'd been hoping for a while is always exciting, and watching tadpoles develop over the weeks into little frogs never gets boring. I also really enjoy being in the zoo outside of opening hours, you get to see the animals behaving very differently and it feels like such a privilege.

**What's so special about Chester Zoo?**

It's full of people who really love what they do and there's always something exciting going on. There's a great sense of community and keepers are always helping each other out.

**Did you know...?**

Pip loves travelling and looking at local amphibians. She recently travelled to Slovenia to see the Olm - a rare salamander found in only a few underground caves in Eastern Europe and she has just come back from Madagascar where she was part of the staff expedition looking at the critically endangered golden mantella frog.

SEE MORE  
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### MOUNTAIN CHICKEN FROGS

**This critically endangered species were the stars of episode three but what's so special about these frogs and why are they so endangered?**

They are one of the world's biggest frogs, sometimes weighing in at more than a kilogram. With powerful back legs, they can jump over a man's head or more than two metres long. They are mainly nocturnal, resting in the day (inside burrows, under logs or camouflaged on the leaf litter) and hunting for food at dusk.

The mountain chicken got its name because its meat tastes like chicken. It was widely hunted as a food source on several Caribbean islands but numbers fell drastically due to hunting, habitat loss, the introduction of invasive species of predators and the latest threat to the species is the fungal disease called Chytridiomycosis which wiped out whole populations in several of the islands. Today only a small number of these frogs remain on just two islands, Dominica and Montserrat, where hunting it is now illegal.

We are part of an international campaign which aims to save the mountain chicken and build up frog numbers on Dominica and Montserrat. We support a breeding and research programme which includes trialling the release of young adult frogs onto the island of Montserrat and studying ways to combat disease.

We work with universities and scientists to carry out research, much of which is done in three specially-built laboratories here at Chester Zoo, called A-Pods. One of the A-Pods is entirely devoted to helping save the mountain chicken.

## BEHIND THE SCENES - WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING FILMED AND FILMING THE ANIMALS...

### HAYLEY FROM THE TWILIGHT TEAM

We had a camera crew following us and other keeping staff at the zoo from April through to October. At first it was a bit strange and it took time to get used to a crew being there all the time. I had to explain what I was doing a lot but I got used to it. I wasn't entirely convinced by some of the camera angles and when you're a zookeeper there is no time for hair and makeup but it was nice that they showed a true representation of what it's like being a zookeeper - it's not a glamorous job!

### AND THE ANIMALS..

A lot of the animals are already used to having their photograph taken and were fine when the camera crew came but there were some animals it was impossible to get close-up shots of, so this is when the crew used different types of cameras.

### THE 'GO PRO'

These cameras are really small which means they can be placed in lots of nooks and crannies and the animals don't notice them. They don't have a long battery life so were used to catch quicker moments, such as when our tigers were being crate trained ready for the move into *Islands*.

## ANIMAL FACT FILE



### HUMBOLDT PENGUINS

**Humboldt penguins are social animals, living in relatively large colonies of closely spaced burrows.**

Spike and Rud are the oldest members of our Humboldt penguin colony, which consists of 41 penguins, part of a European Endangered Species Breeding Programme. The colony has an excellent breeding record and many of the youngsters have gone on to join breeding groups in other zoos.

Chester Zoo's penguin enclosure has an underwater viewing area where you can see our Humboldt penguins 'fly' through the water at speeds of up to 25mph.

### Keeper Profile

**ANNE MORRIS** has been here for 18 years. Her husband Paul also works at the zoo on the bird team. They are both passionate about our feathered friends.



### What animals do you look after?

Parrots and penguins, incubation and rearing.

### Interesting facts:

When my husband and I go bird watching around the world you realise how privileged we are to see a bird and say "I've looked after that" or "I've hand reared that" and with that experience you can educate people.

### What's your favourite animal & why?

Bears - because they are so beautiful and so diverse.

### What's the worst part of your job?

Lorikeet pool! You can get covered in it, which is very unpleasant.

### Did you know...?

Anne has travelled with the zoo to Mauritius to work with our conservation partner the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation. She hand reared endangered Echo parakeets and also released them into the wild.



### RIG CAMERAS

This involved fixing three or four cameras into certain areas of enclosures for a short period of time (usually a few days). These were placed into enclosures when the animals were not there (for example in the inside of the elephant enclosure when they were outside) and then operated remotely from a van in a nearby area. This allowed the camera operators to manoeuvre the cameras reactively without the animals noticing and because they were connected to a power source it enabled the crew to watch and capture some great intimate moments that took place over a long period of time. These proved ideal when capturing the incredible birth scenes of Nandita our Asian elephant and Kidepo the Rothschild giraffe.



# WE WILL NEVER FORGET

2 YEAR OLD BALA WAS SADLY  
KILLED BY A DEADLY VIRUS  
THAT AFFECTS YOUNG  
ELEPHANTS GLOBALLY...  
it's time to ACT FOR ELEPHANTS.



## ABOUT EEHV

Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus (EEHV) is a disease that strikes so suddenly that within a few days of the appearance of symptoms a young elephant is very sick. Currently only around one in five survive.

EEHV is a complex virus which affects young elephants typically at weaning age, around 2 years old. In many elephants it can lie dormant and undetectable and never develops into the disease but others are susceptible to it – currently no one knows why some elephants get it and others don't. This disease affects elephants both in the wild and in zoos; we know EEHV has been recorded in at least seven countries across the Asian elephant range in the wild – India, Nepal, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia (Sumatra) and Myanmar.

## WHY WE'RE FIGHTING TO BEAT EEHV

We've lost five young elephants to this terrible disease, most recently female calf Bala, followed six weeks later by playmate Hari just before his third birthday.

This was devastating, not only for the established family herd at Chester who mourned their loss, but also for the keeping and veterinary staff who had been working so hard to save the youngsters, and our visitors who watched them grow up. It became a race against time with staff carrying out daily blood testing as soon as the first traces of EEHV were detected in both Bala and then Hari. The teams began immediate treatment using anti-viral medication but sadly, despite the early intervention and rapid response of the teams, the treatments were unsuccessful and soon Bala and then Hari died.

We need to ACT NOW to find a vaccine for this disease for good.

We're already part of the global conservation community committed to researching EEHV and finding ways of improving outcomes for elephants that develop the virus. The work that we've been supporting has led to the development of a blood test to detect EEHV.

We now want to increase our support to help scientists grow the virus in the laboratory so that they can create a vaccine and determine what drugs are most effective. At present, drug treatment is effective in only around one-third of cases and survival rates overall are around 20%.

This is why we need your help. Chester Zoo is launching an appeal to help fund more vital research into this deadly virus and help find a way to stop young elephants dying so soon before their time.



## NEVER FORGET

With your help we can increase our efforts and fund a number of different research projects; from understanding the natural immunity in some wild populations to culturing the virus and identifying which drugs are most effective in treating the disease, as well as ultimately finding a vaccine to eradicate it both in zoos and in the wild.

If we don't act now to stop this lethal disease more young elephants will die.

Give a donation now online  
[chesterzoo.org/neverforget](http://chesterzoo.org/neverforget)

Text HARI16 £5 to 70070 to give £5

Send a cheque to 'Never Forget',  
Development Office, Chester Zoo,  
Caughall Road, Chester CH2 1LH

For cash donations pop into  
Guest Services or Membership  
when you're next at the Zoo.

Join us in our campaign to find an answer to this fatal virus. Without it young elephants around the world will continue to die.

DONATE NOW to aid this invaluable research and help us to put a stop to the devastating virus EEHV. By ACTING FOR WILDLIFE we can make a difference to these young elephants.

Visit [chesterzoo.org/neverforget](http://chesterzoo.org/neverforget)

for more information about how your DONATION CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



# SUMATRAN ORANGUTANS move into their new home...

Earlier in the year we unveiled a brand new home for our Sumatran orangutans and family of silvery gibbons – a new species at the zoo!

The exhibit, which is part of *Islands*, has been carefully designed by our expert primate keepers, conservation team and specialist architects from Germany. It is the new playground for our seven Sumatran orangutans *Tripa, Tuti, Indah, Emma, Subis, Puluh* and *Siska* who are neighbours to silvery gibbons *Alven, Tilu* and their new baby, who's only three months old.

Their new home includes state-of-the-art breeding facilities and a host of climbing opportunities reaching heights of 15 metres using ropes, rockwork, trees, webbing and sway poles – carbon fibre poles that have been specifically designed to 'sway' similarly to trees when orangutans move from one to another above the forest canopy when foraging for food.

Tim Rowlands, curator of mammals, explains:

"We've created this fantastic new environment for the Sumatran orangutans and the silvery gibbons and I'm pleased to say they've settled into their new home really well. As well as creating a new space for these species we also want to encourage visitors to learn more about them and the long-term projects we're involved with to try and protect them for the future.

"We're working with a number of conservation partners to restore and protect habitats across Sumatra and Borneo. Habitat destruction, to make way for palm oil plantations is something that's really impacting on animals like orangutans and gibbons. As well as working out in the field, we're also encouraging businesses to source palm oil products from sustainable retailers in their supply chain, here in the UK.

"Without vital conservation efforts, Sumatran orangutans and silvery gibbons could both become extinct in the near future and we want to showcase just how much careful work goes into the conservation of such charismatic species. I hope we'll inspire a new generation of people to really care about wildlife, especially those species that are hanging on to survival by a thread."



It's time to dust off your garden gloves or find your binoculars, as we want you to help us join one wildlife friendly place to a next...



Wildlife

# CONNECTIONS

Did you know, we rely on many UK species for our food and even the air we breathe?

From the tiny bugs to the bigger mammals; they all contribute towards a healthy environment that is vital for our survival.

The UK is quite a crowded place with more and more buildings, houses and roads popping up all over the country. Unfortunately we've created barriers for the wildlife around us and a lot of species have been restricted from moving from place to place.





Sarah Bird, our UK biodiversity officer, said:

"The few places that do provide a safe haven for our local wildlife are surrounded by barriers making it difficult for them to find food, shelter and a mate to breed with.

"Together with some of our local project partners we mapped out all the nature reserves, areas where wildlife is protected, and all the parks and green spaces we could find details for. We were concerned with the results! We found that there is so little space across Cheshire, the Wirral and North Wales where nature is really safe, and the safe places are just tiny islands on a map! These spaces are surrounded by landscapes that are not so good for wildlife.

"At this point I looked despondently out of my office window; at the grass, the carpark and the trees. I remembered the hedgehog that we fed on the office lawn last autumn, and the bumblebees and butterflies I watched in the zoo carpark during the summer...

"There was the answer - the difference we can all make!

"By making small changes to improve the spaces where we live and work we can make the whole landscape better and safer for wildlife, and make the vital links between nature reserves, parks and protected areas. We can take action for wildlife in our gardens and so many other places - like the grounds at schools, community centres and residential homes!"

### That's why we're calling on YOU to get involved!

By working with local people, community groups and conservation organisations we can work together to create safe routes through our neighbourhoods.

The first bit is easy - it's important to do some wildlife **WATCHING AND RECORDING** to find out what is already living in your garden or green space. Yes, it's as simple as it sounds! Spend as little or as much time as you want just watching what wildlife visits your garden, local park or green space. Make a note and, if you can, a picture of what it was you spotted. Also note down how many were there, when you saw it and where you saw it. Then record it by adding your findings to our form: [chesterzoo.org/record](http://chesterzoo.org/record)

Knowing what you have in your garden already will help when planning what changes to make. You'll also notice different animals and plants appearing as the seasons change throughout the year.

Here are just a few simple things you can do to become a **WILDLIFE CHAMPION** in your area:

### MAKE A HEDGEHOG MONORAIL

Did you know hedgehogs can move up to one mile in one night? You can help make their journey easier by leaving hedgehog sized gaps in fences or gates. A simple hole in a fence means a hedgehog can move around more easily to find food and shelter (and hopefully avoid roads).

**Remember! Check with your neighbours first if you do change any fences or walls!**

### BUILD A BUG HOUSE

Insects are fascinating in themselves, and are on the menu for a lot of our local wildlife, including birds, bats and even hedgehogs. Build a bug house by 'leafing' leaf litter (see what we did there?), start a compost heap or a pile of logs in a dark corner of your garden. If you have plenty of juicy bugs in your garden you'll probably start seeing more animal and bird visitors.

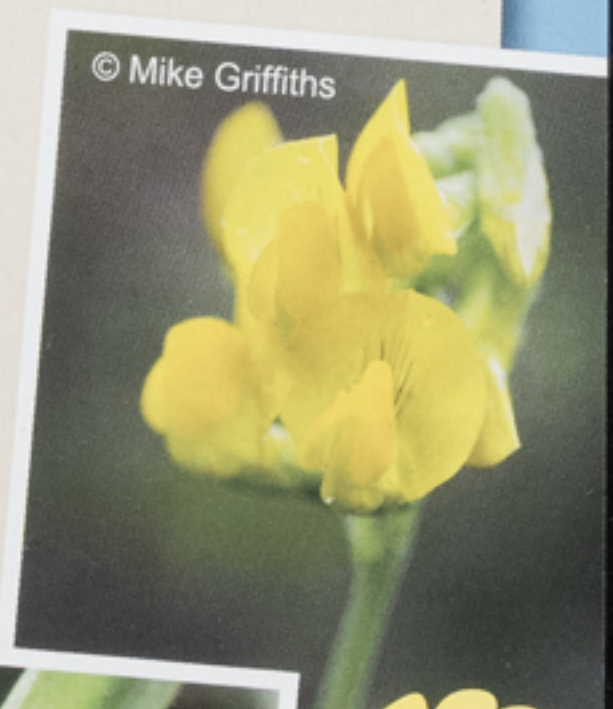
We've got **PLENTY** of guides and resources on our website to help you get started and **TAKE ACTION**. On top of this we'll also have insights from wildlife experts, updates on the work we're doing in the community and what activities and events we've got taking place **AT THE ZOO**.

Whether you're new to this or have a wildlife wonderland already, don't forget to tell us what you're up to! We want to hear what actions you've completed and what you see!

[chesterzoo.org/connections](http://chesterzoo.org/connections)



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# Wonderful Wildflowers



## Wildlife CONNECTIONS



Wildlife Connections encompasses all things wild, from the birds and the bees to the hedgehogs, hedgerows and wildflowers. There are lots of species of wildflowers that come in an array of colours and sizes. Not only do these beautiful flowers add colour to your garden, they are very valuable for other local wildlife too.



Planting wild flowers in your garden or green space is just one of the many easy ways to get involved in **Wildlife Connections**, and they can be grown anywhere – in a patch of soil, window box or a simple container. Planting UK native wildflowers is best because they are hardy, resilient and well suited to our climate and soils; plus many are easy to grow in the garden. But, there are lots of lovely garden plants that are good for wildlife too, so you don't have to stick to native species.

Spring is a great time of year to start planting so here are a few hints and tips on choosing which wildflowers to grow, where to plant them, and how to do it:

### What to plant?

Try to get different types that flower at different times throughout the year - you may need to do a bit of research into which plants flower in which month. The result will be lovely for you and your garden and also great for wildlife as you'll be providing food for bees all year round.

**Tip:** why not try and plant night scented stock and tobacco, they open in the evening and attract moths. It's good to choose at least some native species.

Have you already got wild plants in your garden or plot? Then don't disturb something that's already good for wildlife, why not record them on our recording form instead? [chesterzoo.org/record](http://chesterzoo.org/record)

### Where to plant?

It's important to remember that different plants thrive in different environments – is your wildflower spot shaded or sunny, wet or dry? There are good wildlife plants for all these areas, but it might be worth doing a bit of research beforehand to see which plants are best suited for your space.

**Tip:** Why not just try leaving a patch of grass to grow longer? This will encourage plants like dandelions and daisies to grow in the lawn.

### How to plant...

Clean up the soil you're going to plant your flowers in – remove as many weeds and roots as you can. Some weeds are also wildflowers too so you could leave some to be a part of your wildflower patch.

**Tip:** Good ways to clean soil are to cover the plot with old carpet for several months, or to dig and turn over the soil with a spade so that weeds are buried at least 30cm underneath.

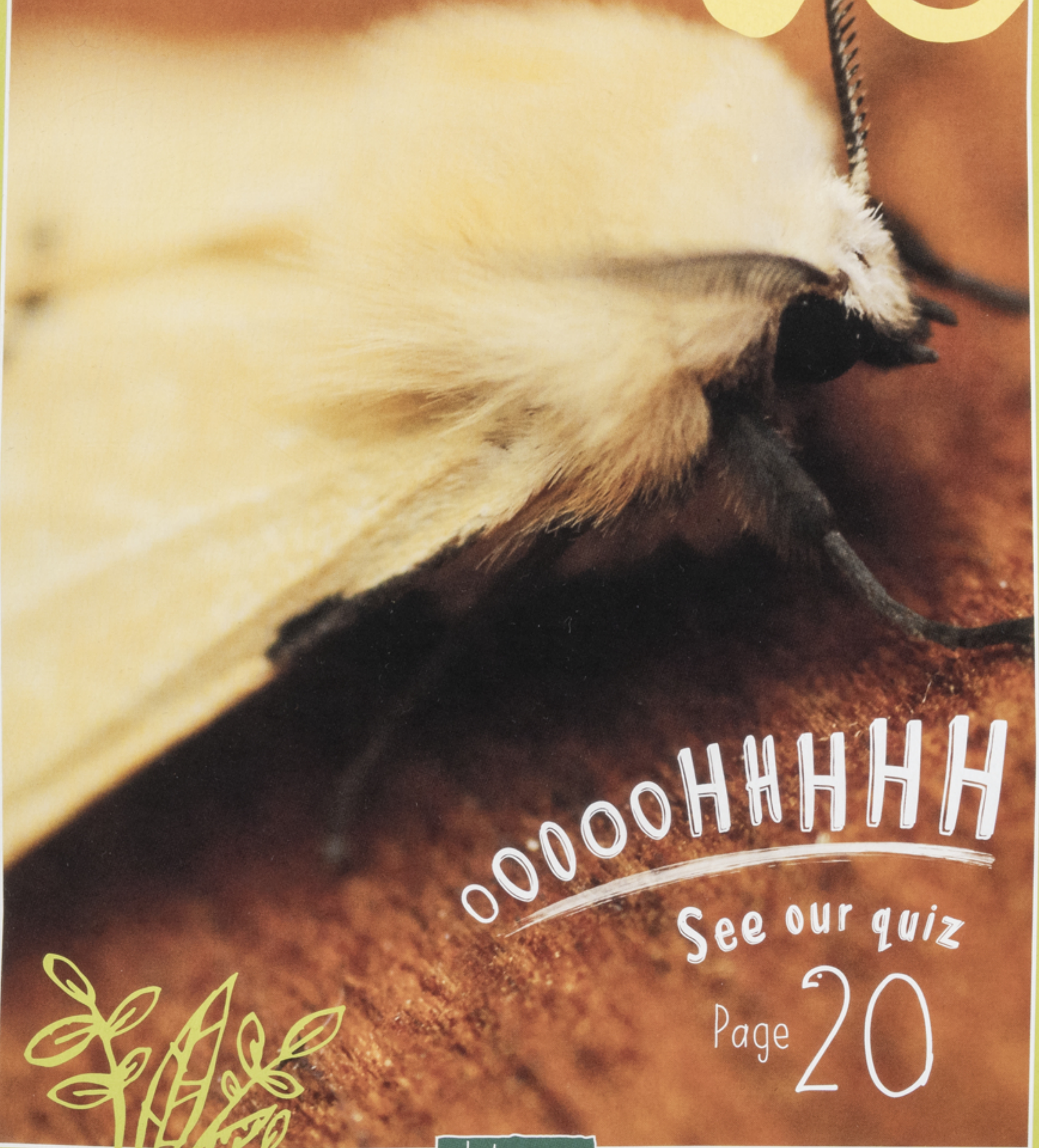
After planting your wildflowers don't forget to keep an eye on what wildlife starts to visit you throughout the year. If it's given you the bug to make more changes to your garden to make it even more wildlife friendly, then why not make homes for the bugs, birds and bees that are visiting your garden as a result of the flowers you've planted?

Find out more at  
[chesterzoo.org/connections](http://chesterzoo.org/connections)



SPRING 2016

# kids zoo



ooooHHHHH

See our quiz

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**JUNIOR  
MEMBERS'  
PROGRAMME**

# Events 2016

Most events on our programme are open to all our junior members aged between 8-18 (with the exception only of the Day-with-a-Keeper and the Summer School which are for older children). So if you fancy coming along, please book yourself on an activity.

## TRACKS & SIGNS

**SATURDAY 19 MARCH**

One of our most popular events each year! You will see the zoo from the animals point of view. We give you the opportunity to go inside some of the enclosures to search for footprints and then make them into plaster casts. Hopefully, you will have a souvenir of your day to take home with you.

**Eights and over can come along and join the messiness.** We will meet outside Oakfield House at 11.00am, returning there for collection at 4.00pm. **You will need a picnic lunch, and it is important that you wear clean, very old clothes and absolutely clean wellies please.**

## HOO FARM

**SATURDAY 23 APRIL**

We will visit the wide variety of animals at Hoo Farm near Telford where they have all the regular farm animals as well as a lot of exotic animals such as alpacas, bats, foxes, raccoons, meerkats, snakes, frogs, lizards, parrots and all sorts. There will be a lot to do whatever the weather! It will be a lovely day out.

**Eights and over are asked to join us.** The bus will leave the Cedar House staff car park at 10.00am, and we will return there for 4.30pm. **Bring a picnic with you.**

## PEAK WILDLIFE PARK

**SATURDAY 21 MAY**

This is a new venue for the junior members and will be a good opportunity to visit another zoo in this beautiful location on the edge of the Peak District National Park.

The bus will leave the Cedar House staff car park at 9.30am – returning there for 5.00pm. **Eights and over (with picnics) are welcome to join us.**

## THE GREENWOOD CENTRE

**SATURDAY 25 JUNE**

Back by popular demand! This park, situated in the foothills of Snowdonia, is an amazing mix of an environmental park offering fun and games as well as good education – including den-building, and various self-propelled 'rides'. Definitely not to be missed.

**Eights and over** should be ready to leave the Cedar House staff car park at 9.30am and we will return for 5.00pm. **Bring a picnic.**



## DAY WITH A KEEPER

**THURSDAY 28 JULY**

This is a unique opportunity offered to junior members to spend a day working alongside a zoo keeper. The work can be tough and demanding so we strictly limit this event to those juniors of **12 years old or over**. We try to match juniors to their favourite section, but places are limited so this cannot be guaranteed. Please arrive prepared to work hard, with squeaky-clean wellies and an additional completely clean set of clothes to work in.

Owing to the zoo's biosecurity measures, it is important that the clothes you wear to work on the sections have not been in contact with any farm animals, or even your pets at home, since they were last washed.

We will meet outside Oakfield House at 10.30am, and the day will finish at 4.00pm. **Please bring a packed lunch. Please note:** bookings for this event will not be taken before 9.00am on Thursday July 14 2016, (01244 650215) and will be strictly on a first-come, first-served basis.

## JUNIORS' SUMMER BBQ

**THURSDAY 4 AUGUST**

This is your opportunity to be in the zoo when there are no other visitor noises to distract you and the animals. We usually aim to have a speaker to chat to you or to engage in craft activities or to do zoo tours during the evening, but you can be sure to find it relaxing.

We would like to invite children **aged eight and over** to join us for a 7.00pm start, when you should arrive at the main entrance. **Parents are asked to collect juniors from the main entrance at 9.45pm please.**



## JUNIOR MEMBERS' SUMMER SCHOOL FROM 8-12 AUGUST INCLUSIVE

Please note that the two week booking rule does NOT apply to this event and EARLY BOOKING IS ADVISED (anytime from December 2015 onwards).

The summer school is open to juniors aged 13 and above. Participants must be able to attend all five (full) days and the cost will be £190 for the week.

A full programme of events for this action-packed, but informal week will be issued closer to the time to those who have booked places, but essentially the Summer School will encompass a wide variety of theoretical and practical training including a mid-week field trip, live mammal trapping, tours of the zoo, and talks from a variety of zoo staff. It is a fantastic opportunity to get to know about the real workings of a modern zoo and will appeal especially (but not exclusively) to anyone wanting to follow an animal based career.

## TWYXCROSS ZOO SATURDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

It is always nice to see how other zoos do things. Be prepared for a fairly long bus journey but it will be well worth it!

**Eights and over** are asked to join us, meeting at the Cedar House staff entrance at 9.00am, and we will return there for 5.30pm. **Bring a picnic with you.**

## TATTON PARK HOME FARM AND THE DEER RUT SATURDAY 22 OCTOBER

We will start the day with a visit to Home Farm where we'll find out how the farm used to work many years ago when Tatton Hall was a family residence. Then head out into the park to identify some of the different deer species that reside there which is especially interesting in October when the Red Deer will be in their rut.

**Eights and over** should be ready to leave the Cedar House staff car park at 10.00am and we will return for 4.30pm, **please bring a picnic with you.**

## WIRRAL COUNTRY PARK – THURSTASTON SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER

We will start our walk at Thurstaston and will amble along the Wirral Way from there, back to the dungeons and then on as far as we want to go!

We will leave the Cedar House staff car park at 11.00am and return at 4.00pm. **Over eights are invited to attend and you should bring a picnic with you.**

## CHRISTMAS PARTY FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER

Our annual 'bash' welcomes juniors of eight and over to enjoy an evening of games, disco music, and a great hot-dog and beef-burger supper. You will need to bring along a cushion to sit on – and a torch to find us!

The venue will be June's Pavilion. Access can be gained through the main entrance. You should arrive at 7.00pm, with your cushion and a torch, and we will guide you to the venue. **Parents should arrange to collect you from the main entrance at 9.45pm.**

**Please Note:** Bookings must be made for all events. Please ring Penny Rudd at the zoo on 01244 650215, not more than two weeks before the event you would like to attend (except the junior members' summer school for which bookings are taken from December 2015 onwards). Places are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and may be limited. This list is provisional and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter dates and venues. You will be informed of any such changes in Z magazine and not by individual letter, so please keep up-to-date by reading the junior pages in each issue. A charge will be made to cover the cost of those events which involve transport, entry fees, materials or the provision of food, and you will be advised of this at the time of booking.

# Moths

Cool stuff you never knew about moths

## Moths are great mimics...

Some moths pretend to be other animals like wasps, tarantulas and praying mantis and by impersonating these horrible tasting bugs they avoid being eaten! Pretty clever, eh?

## Did you know...

The bird dropping moth actually looks like a bird's dropping?!

## Some adult moths don't eat at all...

The luna moth doesn't even have a mouth and can't eat or drink! It only lives for a week so its main aim is to find a mate.

## A male moth can smell a female more than 7 miles away...

Moths do all their smelling through their antennae (and male moths have larger antennae than females!).

## Moths get eaten...

If you're a moth, you're an important snack for loads of other animals – like other insects, spiders, frogs, toads, lizards, shrews, hedgehogs, bats and birds. Moths must be pretty tasty!

## Moths are full of goodness...

...And are a nutritious snack! Fancy eating them? They could be the next superfood! In some parts of the world, moths are a major food source for people, as they are packed with proteins and good fats!

## Finding their way in the dark...

Some moths use the moon and stars to navigate at night, but some also use the Earth's magnetic field (a bit like using a compass). How smart is that?

## There are loads of moths...

Experts reckon there are over 200,000 species of moth around the world. In Britain we have around 2500 different types!

## The pollinators...

Moths are important because they pollinate flowers. These flowers tend to be white, smell nice and open at night, perfect timing for when the moths are out and about.

## Fast as a moth...?

Moths can reach some really impressive speeds! The Sphinx Hawk Moth is the fastest moth in the world reaching up to a speedy 30 miles per hour. That's going some!



Ermine moth



Garden tiger moth



Light emerald moth



# Moth Quiz

1 Moths are close relations to:

Butterflies  Stick Insects  Flies

2 Most moths are active at night so they are:

Sleepy  Nocturnal  Diurnal

3 The main body parts of a moth are:

Head, arms & legs  Head, brains & wings

Head, thorax & abdomen

4 Tell us your best insect related joke!

# Moth Joke..

What's the biggest moth in the world?  
A mammoth!

# Find out who's flying around in your garden at night

As part of our wildlife connections campaign we want you to look out for wildlife in your garden and local area.

A moth trap is a quick and easy way for you to get close to wildlife and it will also encourage other animals to come into your garden too. So if you want to see which moths are visiting your garden at night why don't you try setting up this simple moth trap?

## YOU WILL NEED:

A MOTH IDENTIFICATION BOOK OR ONLINE GUIDE TO HELP YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT TYPE OF MOTHS YOU SEE  
E.G. COLLINS MOTH GUIDE

A LARGE WHITE SHEET (AN OLD BED SHEET IS IDEAL)

A TORCH

A CAMERA (OPTIONAL - TO TAKE PHOTOS OF THE MOTHS)

## Getting Started

- 1 Hang the sheet over the washing line.
- 2 Place the light behind the sheet to attract the moth.
- 3 Wait for the moths to rest on the sheet so you can identify them and take photographs.

Draw your favourite moth here!

ENJOY NATURE

Here are a few moths you may spot in your garden...

Poplar hawk moth



Cinnabar moth



Elephant hawk moth



**NEW**

Are you aged between 8 and 11?  
Do you love animals and wildlife?  
If so, come and join our brand new club!

It's going to take place in the zoo on Sunday mornings - more details will be released soon, so keep a look-out on the member portal and on our emails for more information.

## Moth Recording Sheet

Here is an example of a recording sheet so you can make your own.

MOTH	PATTERN	KEY FEATURES
CINNABAR	NO	RED / BLACK
GARDEN TIGER	YES	BROWN / ORANGE

## UK, EUROPE & THE TERRITORIES, UK

The proposed plan for the pine marten recovery project, of which we are a major partner, was to translocate 20 individuals from Scotland to Wales.

With the help of our staff and our specially designed soft release cages, the target of 20 individuals was met. The pine martens are now being closely monitored using the GPS collars they were fitted with before being released into Wales.



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## LATIN AMERICA, ECUADOR

The Ecuador Amazon parrot was only recognised as a species in its own right in December 2013 after years of study by our director general, Dr Mark Pilgrim.

In 2014, ten members of zoo staff went on an expedition to Ecuador, visiting our project partners Pro Bosque. The team followed the bird and gathered new information about its behaviour and feeding habits. The data collected will help to protect this beautiful bird from extinction.

The findings our Chester Zoo researchers gathered on this expedition, in the Cerro Blanco forest, led to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifying this bird as endangered. We hope to repeat the Cerro Blanco survey every three years (the next one being in 2017) in order to build up a long-term dataset that would allow researchers to monitor the parrots' population dynamics.

There is still plenty more to discover about this bird, and our research on this fantastic species continues. Two members of staff have recently returned from Ecuador after finishing conducting surveys of the coastline which is thought to be home to the parrot. This information will indicate the effects of forest clearance – keep an eye on our Act for Wildlife blog for updates.



See page 26 for an update from the 2016 expedition team who have just returned from Madagascar.



## AFRICA, KENYA

For centuries in East Africa the hunting and killing of lions has been a traditional rite of passage to manhood for Maasai Warriors.

Conservation experts have worked together with spiritual leaders, village elders and leading Maasai figures to develop the Maasai Olympics and stop the killing of animals. The event takes place every two years and aims to change the attitudes of Maasai Warriors and communities, replacing the competition of wildlife hunting with sport. We are a proud supporter of the event and we are looking forward to the next event which will take place later this year – watch this space for updates!

## AROUND THE WORLD



## SOUTH EAST ASIA, JAVA

To hear the latest updates on our work with the critically endangered Javan green magpie, see page 5.

## MADAGASCAR & THE MASCARENES, MAURITIUS

We have been actively working in Mauritius on passerine conservation projects for over two decades as a major partner of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF).

Two of our bird keepers (Steve Williams and Lauren Hough) spent three months with the MWF team, locating nests and harvesting eggs of the endangered Mauritius cuckoo shrike to hand rear chicks. Once fully fledged and able to fend for themselves, the chicks are to be released back into the wild at a different site.



## SOUTH ASIA, NEPAL

Thank you to those who supported our 2015 Big Give Christmas Challenge.

Through your donations we managed to raise over £3,000 for our Living with Tigers project. These vital funds will go towards supporting our team working closely with the villages in Bardia National Park and Chitwan National Park, Nepal helping people to live safely alongside tigers. Since our last update, we have now recruited a project officer for our Living with Tigers project who will oversee all of the project's activities at the Chitwan site. Exciting work is underway!

# NEWSFLASH!



## MEET HEAD OF CONSERVATION SCIENCE

Dr Alex Zimmermann

Alex is the head of conservation science here at the zoo. She joined as our first conservation staff member 16 years ago and is the brains behind our projects that specialise in preventing human-wildlife conflict: our Assam Haathi Project, Living with Tigers project and our research on jaguars in Latin America.

Not only does Alex's main expertise lie in human-wildlife conflict she also leads the research and development side of our conservation work, which involves developing field projects and scientific research to help solve some of the difficult challenges in wildlife conservation.

## CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS!

We've worked with Pati Medici, founder of our project partner the Lowland Tapir Conservation Initiative, for over 13 years.

She has recently released a fantastic TED talk all about Brazilian tapirs. This is a pretty big deal and great coverage for tapir conservation worldwide! Watch Pati's talk on our Act for Wildlife blog and discover more about our work with the Brazilian tapir too.



© TED

**ACT FOR WILDLIFE**






© Scottish Wildcat Action

## CAUGHT on camera

Could this be a Scottish wild cat?

In our last edition we gave you an update on our partnership with Scottish Wildcat Action and the camera traps we funded for their population surveys. We recently received this photo and judging by the shape of its' tail, this could very well be a wildcat - the team will be investigating to find out...

Keep up to date with all our conservation work on our **ACT FOR WILDLIFE** blog or social media channels:

actforwildlife.org.uk  @ActforWildlife  facebook.com/ActforWildlife  @actforwildlife

# CONSERVATION NEWS

FROM AROUND THE WORLD!



## WHAT'S GOING ON IN GASHAKA?

Our Africa field programmes coordinator, Stuart Nixon, has recently returned from Nigeria after spending time with our Gashaka Biodiversity Project team - preparing for future field surveys in the Southern part of Gashaka Gumti National Park (you may have heard all the details of this at our last members' talk in February).

Little is known about this part of the forest so we look forward to seeing what the team discover! Stuart and the team will also be carrying out a survey on the remaining Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee population.



## RHINO PROJECT VISITS

Stuart also travelled to Kenya and Tanzania with Scott Wilson, head of field programmes, to visit our field sites and partners.

This visit follows the poaching incident we mentioned in our last edition. They spent time both at the Mkomazi National Park, Tanzania and Chyulu Hills National Park, Kenya to assess if there were other ways in which Chester Zoo could help these National Parks protect their rhino populations. We're helping to re-build their perimeter fence in Mkomazi to keep poachers out and we're also supporting the campaign to make Chyulu Hills an Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ). Gaining IPZ status means that the seven remaining black rhino of Chyulu are able to range within the National Park, unfenced, with higher numbers of security and law enforcement personnel deployed tasked with ensuring their protection.

## INTRODUCING: PAINTED TERRAPIN PROJECT

The critically endangered painted terrapin is threatened by egg poaching in Sumatra and we are working with a project to conserve this species.

Terrapin eggs are being protected during their incubation period on beaches, with help from community groups. Once hatched, the hatchlings are released back into the wild and will be monitored to check their progress.



© Joko Guntoro

# STAFF GO WILD



Just south east of Africa sits the fourth largest island in the world: Madagascar. It is home to some of the world's most extraordinary wildlife and the majority of species found here exist nowhere else on earth.

**We're working with our partners Madagasikara Voakajy (MaVoa) on a number of vital projects to help safeguard the diverse range of wildlife on this unique island.**

A team of Chester Zoo staff has recently returned from an expedition to Madagascar where they spent two weeks in the remote Mangabe forest with the MaVoa team.



*Despite the beautiful surroundings and wonderful wildlife, the team had plenty of hard, muddy and sweaty work to do!*

They were lucky to call the 27,000 hectares of forest their home as they returned to their tents at the end of a hard day of manual labour.

Running through the forest are many small rivers, streams and ponds and this is where we've been spending time researching one of the smaller, often overlooked species of Madagascar: the golden mantella frog. The forest is home to the only remaining population of this critically endangered species.

We know the golden mantella needs healthy rainforests and clean freshwater ponds to thrive but its habitat is at risk due to logging, mining and a slash and burn agriculture. Despite the size of this species, the threats it's facing are huge!

**Julie Hanta Razafimanahaka, director of MaVoa, explains:**

"To summarise the threat to golden mantellas: they're in conflict with people in general. Rice is the main dish in Madagascar and all across the country people grow a lot of this crop! The ponds the frogs rely on are also one of the best types of conditions for growing rice. So, local people tend to convert the ponds into rice fields; and one of the traditional ways to plant rice in this area is the slash and burn agriculture: chop down forest, burn it and then plant the rice."



Over the past few years we have concentrated our conservation efforts in Madagascar on this tiny species of frog (they're less than two grams in weight and only one cm in length!) conducting important research into their population size.

That's why the main focus of this year's expedition was continuing with population surveys of the golden mantella using a technique that Chester Zoo's curator of lower vertebrates and invertebrates, Dr Gerardo Garcia, developed.

As they are so small and don't have natural markings, it's almost impossible to identify individuals. The elastomer marking technique involves using implanted fluorescent silicone under the skin of the frog making it easier to identify whether they've been recaptured. Getting more accurate results is vital to finalising a long term plan into how to manage and protect the population of golden mantellas in the wild.

Prior to the expedition the team were given some intensive training in frog handling techniques and getting to grips with the elastomer marking. Carrying out this activity involves great team work!



↙ Spending time with local schools to raise awareness of conservation issues ↘



The Mangabe forest is also home to a number of lemur species.

**Julie added:**

“The BEST thing about the Mangabe Forest is you can wake up in the morning and hear the indri’s – no other noise apart from the indri.”

And that’s what our expedition team experienced, the unique alarm clock of the indri lemur.

The indri is just one of the nine species of lemur that is believed to be in the Mangabe forest. This animal, like the golden mantella, is also threatened by deforestation; however lemurs are also being hunted for their meat by some local communities.

Another important part of protecting wildlife in the Mangabe forest is engaging and working closely with local communities to promote local biodiversity and raise awareness of the importance of their local wildlife.

The team spent some of their time out of the forest meeting the children from local schools.

MaVoa organise awareness campaigns to educate local children and adults on protecting lemurs. They do this through their indri mascot who attends community events and educates through dance and song – an event our expedition team were lucky enough to see for themselves! They also have a mantella mascot who we worked with more and took out on all the school visits.

The expedition team also set up some camera traps within the forest to run some of the first studies on the species of lemur that are believed to be present in the Mangabe forest. The aim is to monitor the lemur populations and assess how the awareness campaigns are changing the attitudes of the local people and therefore impacting the number of lemurs in the forest.

**DISCOVER MORE...**

from the Madagascar expedition team and read more exciting updates from their trip by heading over to Act for Wildlife blog:

**ACT FOR WILDLIFE** .org.uk/blog



Sifaka lemur ↗



↖ Indri lemur

# FUNDRAISING NEWS

## TOP 5 REASONS

### to cycle for wildlife at this year's RideLondon

This is your year to experience the very best of cycling at the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 on Sunday 31 July 2016. The event ballot is now closed but we have charity places up for grabs, so now's the time to join the team! Here are five of the many reasons why getting on your bike for wildlife could be the best thing you do in 2016.



Team Act for Wildlife about to set off on a training bike ride



A view of The Mall from Jon Walker and Matt Townsend, Ultimate Creative Communications, who cycled RideLondon for Act for Wildlife in 2015

#### 1. Help save some of the world's most endangered wildlife

Every penny that you raise in sponsorship by taking on this 100-mile cycle challenge goes directly to our wildlife conservation out in the field.

#### 2. Be part of the largest cycling festival in the UK

150,000 spectators to cheer you on, over 25,000 cyclists to ride along with you and 150 of the world's top professional cyclists to inspire you. Plus, BBC Sport and British Eurosport will be showing live coverage.

#### 3. Find your motivation to get fit

We can provide you with the challenge of a lifetime and a cause to fight for.

#### 4. Join Team **ACT FOR WILDLIFE**

As a conservation champion in your very own Act for Wildlife cycling jersey, you will have the full support of the team here to help you with your fundraising and training.

#### 5. Experience cycling history

Be part of this year's Olympic buzz, starting your ride at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Enjoy the unique experience of cycling on closed roads in London, before finishing on the iconic landmark The Mall.

LOVE A CHALLENGE

#### FIND OUT MORE ONLINE

[actforwildlife.org.uk/cycle/ride-london](http://actforwildlife.org.uk/cycle/ride-london)  
Email [development@chesterzoo.org](mailto:development@chesterzoo.org)  
or call 01244 650229

## THANK YOU

### TIGER TRAILERS!

Family run manufacturing firm Tiger Trailers is helping Chester Zoo to protect tigers from extinction in the wild.

By working with local communities and conservation groups in Nepal Chester Zoo is supporting an environment where humans and tigers can live together safely.

Since we partnered with Tiger Trailers back in 2014 they have made a donation to our Living With Tigers conservation project for every trailer they have sold.

After our first year of working together, we're really pleased to announce they've raised over £4,000!

Alison Cartwright, tiger's coordinator, said: "We are proud to be able to contribute to this project. Not many people are aware that Chester Zoo carries out essential conservation work all over the world. We are delighted to be contributing to the protection and conservation of this fantastic animal."

We look forward to working together with Tiger Trailers again in 2016. Keep an eye out for updates!



## GET 'ON YER BIKE' AND VISIT THE ZOO!

Following successful achievement of a workplace grant from *itravelSMART*, we now have bike lockers at our main entrance which all zoo visitors and staff are free to use.

The six lockers are free to use at any time, simply bring your own padlock in order to secure your bike. If you don't have your own padlock, we have some available for hire in exchange for a refundable £5 deposit from our Guest Services Pavilion (terms and conditions apply).

The lockers are located next to the existing bike racks at the main entrance. Don't forget that if you travel to the zoo by bicycle, you can also receive a 15% discount on day admission. Please see [chesterzoo.org/plan-your-visit/how-to-get-here/bike](http://chesterzoo.org/plan-your-visit/how-to-get-here/bike) for further details.

To plan your cycle journey you can view the local active travel maps online at [itravelSMART.co.uk](http://itravelSMART.co.uk) or download the itravelSMART mobile travel app. We are very grateful to ItravelSMART who have supported a number of our sustainable travel initiatives over many years.

## CHESTER ZOO "100 CLUB"

WINNERS OF THE RECENT PRIZE DRAWS WERE:

### OCTOBER 2015

£100 Mrs Gillian Edwards, Crewe  
£100 Mr Jason Spencer, Saltney  
£100 Mrs Cerian Jane Graham, Chorley  
£50 Mrs Lorna Harrison, Tarporley  
£50 Mrs Mary Doogan, Waverton  
£50 Mrs Katy Leach, Chester

### NOVEMBER 2015

£100 Mr I D Ogden, Ashton-under-Lyme  
£100 Dr Terry Gleave, Holywell  
£50 Miss Carena Graham, Chester  
£50 Mr D M Lloyd, Middlewich  
£50 Mr Neville Jones, Chester  
£50 Mrs Kay Ashton, Frodsham

### DECEMBER 2015

£100 Mrs Wendy Channon, Chester  
£50 Mrs Ruth Fitzpatrick, Heswall  
£50 Mrs Susan E Smethurst, Bebington  
£50 Mrs Anne Ursell, Hartford  
£50 Mr Andrew Stevens, Bridlington  
£1000 Miss Margaret Harris, Birkenhead

Membership of the 100 Club is still invited. All prize winners will be notified by post and will be listed in the next edition of Z. Please inform us as soon as possible if you change address. If you wish to participate, please contact the development office on 01244 650 229.

# Talking Conservation...

2016 SPRING  
PROGRAMME  
APRIL-JUNE

We have some really great talks lined up for the next few months and hope you'll find them interesting and enjoyable. Our talks are planned to bring you up to date with the work your membership supports.



## Madagascar Expedition THURSDAY 19 MAY

In January a team of 12 staff from the zoo travelled to a remote forest in Madagascar which is home to the only remaining population of the golden mantella frog (*Mantella aurantiaca*) – a critically endangered species. The team worked to survey and assess the situation for the frogs in the wild. They also ran some of the first camera trap studies on the nine species of lemur believed to be present in the forest and created the first bird list for this little studied newly protected forest. All 12 also visited local communities promoting the biodiversity of Madagascar and raising awareness of conservation issues both locally and globally. Come along to meet the team and learn all about their expedition.



## Members' Talks

held in the Geraldine Russell Lecture Theatre (near main entrance off the A41), start at 7.30pm and:

- Free to members (please bring your membership card & welcome letter)
- We offer a special rate of £2.00 to adopters
- Members of the public & guests are welcome (£3.50 for non-members)
- Our Lecture Theatre seats up to 170
- Post-talk refreshments give you the opportunity to have an informal chat with speakers, zoo staff and fellow members

## The Silent Kingdom: An overview of Chester Zoo species & programmes WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL

The lower vertebrate and invertebrate kingdom is one of the most fascinating and encompasses some of the most critically endangered species. We might think of them as 'little brown jobs' but Gerardo Garcia, curator of lower vertebrates and invertebrates, will show you that they really are superstars and that they all need a backbone to withstand the dangers they face. We support a number of projects and Gerardo will give you an update on these as well as introducing you to the zoo's own weird but wonderful superstars.



## Islands and Beyond THURSDAY 16 JUNE

Now that *Islands* is complete, Simon Mann, development director, will offer an evaluation of the project, looking at what worked and what didn't from the perspectives of visitors, project teams and the zoo. He'll also be updating you with what's happening next in *Islands*. Simon will also be sharing the zoo's masterplan development with you: what's coming up, strategic objectives, approach and challenges, our ultimate vision and timeframe for delivery. It's all exciting stuff.

## Interested in attending?

Please call Kate in education on  
01244 389444 or email  
[k.branksin@chesterzoo.org](mailto:k.branksin@chesterzoo.org)  
Booking essential.



# Keith Done

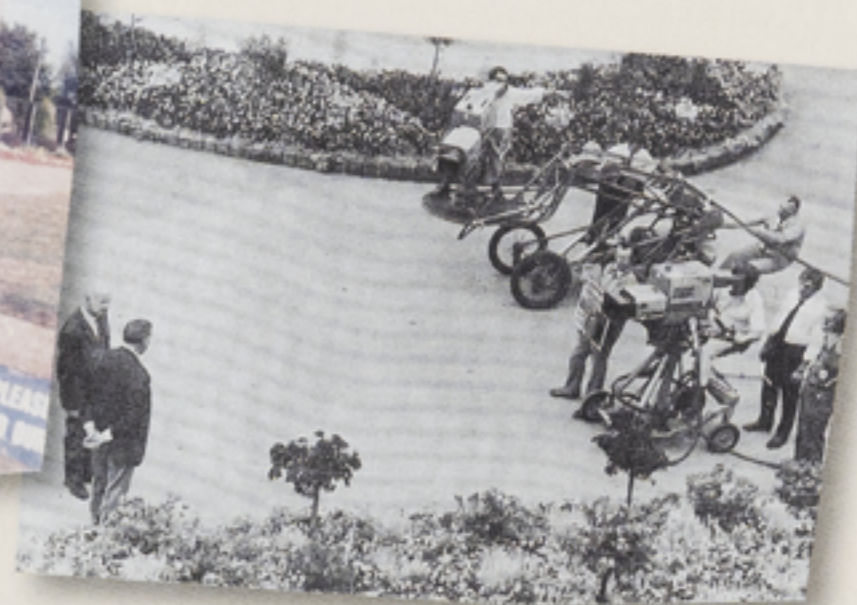
Last month our longest serving member of staff, retired after 46 years of loyal service. Keith Done started here as a gardening apprentice in 1969 and as he prepared to hang up his gardening gloves he took the time to share some of his special memories...

**The Animals:** When I first started working here I was just 15 and worked in Pachyderm House which, at the time, was home to elephants, hippos, black rhinos and tapirs. What a great place to land your first job! I helped maintain the magnificent hanging baskets in the house and other plants and flowers in and around the area. On paper this sounds like a dream job - and it was! Every job has its pitfalls though and putting large animals in reach of fragile plants meant it was a daily battle to keep the plants and flowers not only tidy but alive!

**The Plants:** After working in many iconic areas of the zoo including the rose gardens, the lecture theatre gardens and the sunken garden, it was in the very place where Albert Mottershead started the zoo gardens - the greenhouses - that I really found my niche. At one point there were over 160,000 bedding plants in the greenhouses. That's a lot of plants to look after but that didn't faze me and it was here that I thrived. For me this is what gardening is all about, getting a cutting, sowing a seed, watching the plant grow and then putting it on display for everybody to see. There are moments when things don't go your way and after giving hours of care and attention to a plant or flower, it die. This still gets me down after all these years and it has definitely been the worst part of the job.

After working with hundreds of plants and flowers my favourite species has to be the orchid. I've worked with our national collection of orchids for the last ten years - it's made up of more than 2,500 colourful and exotic plants and it's beautiful. We hold the national collection of the orchid sub-tribe, *Pleurothallidinae*. These are truly special plants, originating from South America, where many are now threatened with extinction and I'm very proud to say I've done my bit to help save this species. If you haven't seen our collection of orchids yet I would recommend you spend some time exploring the area, it's full of rare species as well as some of the more common ones including my favourite, the slipper orchid.

**The People:** I've met and worked with many of the zoo's gardening greats including Walter Worth, Mark Sparrow and my first boss Philip Gallup. Mr Gallup became head gardener in 1953 and was responsible for designing and implementing some of our most iconic gardens, making them a very important part of Chester Zoo. He was my boss when I joined and I learnt so much from him. He nurtured his team giving us the knowledge and confidence to make the zoo gardens the best they could possibly be and it was a real pleasure working with him. I was also lucky enough to work here when the zoo's founder George Mottershead was still managing the zoo. He was a real character and so passionate about the zoo he built. His passion for the people, plants and animals emulated through every member of staff and I think it still does; I've always been very proud to say I work for Chester Zoo. The last 46 years have flown by and I'm retiring with many special memories that will stay with me forever. I've worked with some fantastic people, some wonderful plants and next to some of the most endangered animals in the world - it's been a blast!



(A selection of our orchids in flower can be found in Plant Paradise, next to June's Pavilion. Our wider orchid collection is by prior appointment only. Please call reception on 01244 380280)

# DINOSAURS

THEY'RE BIG,  
THEY'RE FIERCE.....  
AND THEY'RE BACK.

28 May - 4 September 2016

After three years away our award-winning DINOSAURS return for another unforgettable summer.

Take an exhilarating journey back to the Jurassic age when these gigantic creatures roamed the earth. You'll be able to get up close to these prehistoric predators as the largest collection of dinosaurs to date, visit the zoo.

You can see the Giganotosaurus, one of the largest dinosaurs of all with his huge skull, sharp teeth and three fingered claws. There's the Utahraptor, the ravenous raptor with its saw-edged teeth, curved claws and feathery limbs. We've also got some gentle giants in the collection including the Brachiosaurus, a plant eating creature, which has an extremely long neck and small head.

**Dominic Strange, head of commercial operations said:** "We know that our visitors love dinosaurs and that kids can't get enough of the amazingly life like creations that we've had here in previous years. After two years of work on a new set of dinosaurs we're confident that they won't disappoint. We can't wait to see the reaction on the faces of the children that visit"



## NEW IN THE SHOP ...

### ROOT CANDLES

The founder of this family company made huge advancements within the bee-keeping industry in the 1860s, using this expert knowledge the company branched out and started making pure beeswax candles.

140 years later they're still producing authentic beeswax, and now natural soy wax candles, in a wide range of beautiful fragrances. We stock a large collection in a plethora of scents that are perfect for a spring day.



### BACKYARD SAFARI

This is a line of children's outdoor and nature gear offering products such as adventure shelters, compasses and safari vests.

The range is aimed at nature loving children to encourage them to find and observe creatures that share our world. If you know a child who's mad about nature then a product from this range could make a perfect present



For more details about our **Gifts, Experiences or Charity Gifts** go to [chesterzoo.org/gifts](http://chesterzoo.org/gifts)

WHAT'S  
NEW?

# BEMBE KITCHEN

If you've visited recently you may have noticed that our café at the front of the zoo has gone through a transformation.

The whole restaurant has had a complete makeover; we've replaced the fixtures, fittings and given the whole place a brand new look. Now after weeks of work we are very excited to reveal to you our brand new deli 'Bembe Kitchen'

As soon as you walk into Bembe Kitchen you'll notice it has a fresh and contemporary feel with light walls, colourful chairs and modern lighting. It's a perfect place to have a coffee and cake with friends or enjoy a light lunch with your family.

There's a lot more to Bembe Kitchen than the atmosphere, we're serving a delicious array of foods and drinks that we know you'll love. If you want a light lunch then Bembe Kitchen is the place to dine on your visit to the zoo, with a selection of fresh sandwiches, a range of sophisticated salads and some delicious artisan breads and sausage rolls.

We'll also be serving a selection of hot dishes too: there'll be a few including our chilli and homely cottage pie and these will be supplemented with a range of dishes that reflect the time of year using a selection of seasonal ingredients. There will, of course, be our usual fantastic selection of coffee, cakes and biscuits as well as some cool cold drinks.

So next time you visit, why don't you come into Bembe Kitchen and see what we've done with the place.



CHESTER ZOO

MEMBERS ONLY SPECIAL

## SAY CHEESE!

You can get a personalised poster with our cheeky macaques

Get your **POSTER** FOR ONLY **£5**



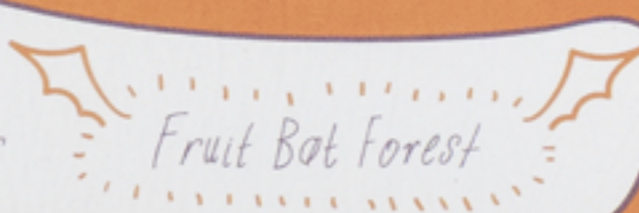
Don't forget to collect your wristband

& visit our **EXPEDITION PHOTOGRAPHERS** at



THE **Realm of the Red Ape**

or



**Fruit Bat Forest**





# DO YOU FANCY being a Zoo volunteer?

We'd like to increase our team of visitor engagement volunteers at the zoo.

The role involves talking to our visitors about our new *Islands* exhibit, the wider zoo and its amazing species, as well as engaging with visitors about the conservation work the zoo is involved with both in the UK and around the world.

You need to be able to attend four days of training sessions, which will be held once a week throughout May. We will help you to learn the information you will need to talk to visitors and deal with situations, supporting you to grow in confidence. We will then ask you to volunteer for three hours per week.

You must be over the age of 18 to volunteer and be confident to engage in conversation with visitors. We will be holding two open days to give you more information about this opportunity. These will be on Saturday 12 March and Thursday 24 March.

There will be limited spaces so please email Nicola Buckley [n.buckley@chesterzoo.org](mailto:n.buckley@chesterzoo.org) to reserve your place. We'd really love to hear from you. We have already recruited over 130 volunteers. This is what they have to say about their volunteering experience with us so far:

#### SIMON

"It's one of the most rewarding experiences I've had, being able to engage with visitors young and old about the amazing conservation work that Chester Zoo undertakes."

#### LISA

"Helping to bring *Islands* and the main zoo to life for our visitors is great! Whether that be sharing interesting facts about conservation, pointing out some of our less obvious exhibits or chatting about the animals with life long members, it's guaranteed that even on a wet and windy day you will manage to smile! I learn something new everyday and consider it to be a real privilege to be part of."

#### KAREN

"I would highly recommend the role of a volunteer. I am really enjoying the experience of engaging with the visitors, working as part of a great team, gaining knowledge and confidence all the time. It's a great environment to volunteer in and I'm looking forward to exciting times ahead with the team, to further improve the visitor experience and help get across the important message of conservation."

#### POLLY

"I really enjoy being a volunteer at the zoo: interacting with the visitors, telling them about our conservation projects, telling them about the animals that they are seeing and giving more information about them."



# CHESTER ZOO STOCKTAKE

MAMMALS: 81	BIRDS: 135
REPTILES: 56	AMPHIBIANS: 25
FISH: 106	INVERTS: 109
MAMMALS: 864	BIRDS: 1365
REPTILES: 464	AMPHIBIANS: 719
FISH: 14236	INSECTS: 3179
ANTS ARE COUNTED AS COLONIES	WE HAVE 2 ANT COLONIES

TOTAL: 20,827

## It's a Stocktake

The New Year started with a mammoth challenge for keeping staff as they carried out our annual stocktake. They had the formidable task of noting every individual mammal, reptile, amphibian, fish, bird and invertebrate in their care. After weeks of counting, we totted up the numbers and confirmed that we started 2016 with 20,827 animals in the zoo and 512 species!

The compulsory count, which covered species ranging from the tiniest frog to the largest elephant, is a legal requirement and part of the zoo's licensing. The data collected is also used to help plan international breeding programmes for endangered species.

The zoo's records coordinator, Liz Ball, responsible for compiling the information from the count, said:

"The data we gathered during the census has been logged into an electronic records system where every animal has its own 'passport' telling us important things like who it is, where it was born and details of its ancestry. This information is shared with zoos around the world and is a vital tool in the management of international conservation breeding programmes for endangered species"

"There was little doubt that the challenge for the teams doing the counting this time around was bigger than ever before. Not only have we had a huge number of breeding successes, we've also seen lots and lots of new species come in to take up residence in our new Islands development, which opened last July. This includes around 10,000 new fish!

"It's taken a lot of work to count all the animals in the zoo but it was worth it and I'm very happy that our collection has risen by over 8,000 from last year"





WE'RE BACK!

Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, Chester, CH2 1LH  
Tel: 01244 380280  
Fax: 01244 371273  
Email: [info@chesterzoo.org](mailto:info@chesterzoo.org)  
[www.chesterzoo.org](http://www.chesterzoo.org)

Founded in 1934, the North of England Zoological Society is a registered charity. We need your help and support to raise funds for the care and conservation of rare and endangered animals both in the zoo and across the world.

Registered charity no. 306077

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## ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

As part of our commitment to the environment, we're giving you the chance to receive Z electronically. Swapping over is really easy. Simply contact the membership office on 01244 650208 or email [membership@chesterzoo.org](mailto:membership@chesterzoo.org) with the email address you would like the link sending to – BUT DON'T FORGET to include your membership number or postcode so we can find you. *You'll still receive the magazine by post if you don't wish to receive it electronically.*