

ZooLife

SPRING 2004 - ISSUE 17

CHESTER ZOO'S MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS AND ADOPTERS

IN THIS ISSUE

MEET ZOO'S NEW TERRIBLE VISITORS

MEMBERS' TALKS FOR 2004

GROWING CONCERNS





Director's Pen

By Zoo Director Gordon McGregor Reid

Welcome to the first Zoo Life of 2004 and I would like to kick off by wishing all our readers a very happy and prosperous New Year.

2004 has started off in earnest here at the Zoo and work on our new projects has moved on apace since my last column. *The Bears of the Cloud Forest* project is making great headway and the *Mythical Macaws* project is almost complete. Work on the new nursery greenhouses that some of you may have seen on your recent trips to the Zoo is nearing completion and we have started to move plants in.

Work has also started on the new administration building - *Cedar House phase II* - and we look forward to its completion in late summer this year when we can draw together all the administration staff under one roof. The *Oakfield House* has been closed throughout January to enable works to go ahead - not content with a lick of paint, we have expanded the tea room, providing a bigger area for functions. These projects would

not get off the ground without the help of so many people from across the Zoo and without patience from you - our visitors!



Indeed it was our visitors who helped make 2003 a bumper year for us.

We have celebrated our best year since 1969 with more than 1,076,000 of you passing through the gates. Each and every one of you has supported our work as a charity and helped to make a real difference - so a big thank you from all of us for your continued support!

We have some interesting new arrivals across the Zoo - most notably the unusual Shingleback Skinks which can be seen in the *Tropical Realm* together with the stunning but toxic Golden Poison Dart Frogs, more of which you can read about on page 20.

Sadly, we lost our baby giraffe Stanley on Boxing Day and our Black Rhino Emma in January. Both had been unwell and despite the efforts of all our keeping staff, veterinary team and specialists, they finally succumbed to their illnesses. Emma has been born here at Chester and returned to us last year from Whipsnade. We are



Golden Poison Dart Frogs



Spectacled Bear

saddened to lose two charismatic and conservationally important animals.

The Elephant Appeal continues to make good ground and we are looking forward to the *Elephantasia Ball* to be held at Eaton Hall, the home of our President, the Duke of Westminster. If you haven't already done so, please contact the Zoo's development office for tickets. We are now over the £300,000 mark and again we would like to warmly thank you for your continued support.

2004 will bring lots of new baby animals, projects, exciting times and I hope you will continue to visit the Zoo and enjoy a day with us. We look forward to welcoming you all over the coming months!

Gordon M.J. Rait



Cover photograph: Eyeimagery

Asian Elephant Survival

Campaign Update

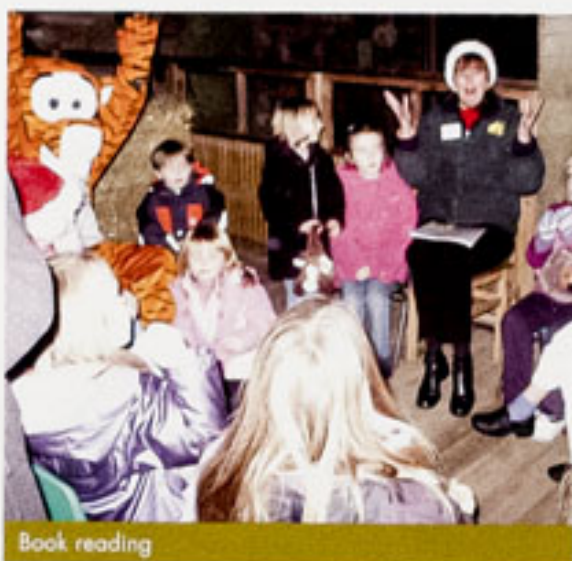
UPDATE

The Asian Elephant Survival appeal really gathered some momentum during November and December as we passed the £250,000 mark! We still have a long way to go to our £1 million target but it was great to get the first £1/4 million before Christmas.

Fundraising has been extremely wide and varied, ranging from £2,331 kindly donated by Cheshire Oaks Outlet Village, Christmas Carol singing in the town centre and an evening with Freddie Mercury. Our sincere thanks go out to all our supporters and volunteers without whom it would be impossible. Also our grateful thanks to *Incognito* of Birkenhead for kindly supplying the *Tigger* costume. If anybody else would like to help in the future then please contact us in the development office. During December book readings

our thanks to all concerned, especially Sue Lochrie who was there every night.

Asda's local supermarkets have also been extremely supportive



Book reading



Simba the lion with Rachel and Joyce

each held a special raffle for an enormous *Simba* from *The Lion King* – thank you Asda.

Rachel Shaughnessy was the winner of the Asda, Queensferry *Lion King* raffle. She is pictured with Joyce Crane Edwards of Asda and her prize.

The raffle draw will take place on Wednesday April 28, 2004 and we would like to thank all those who donated prizes especially Rybrook Jaguar, Chester and Bodysgallen Hall in Llandudno for the fantastic mini break package. Also thanks to all those who have sold and bought raffle tickets, good luck to you all. It's not too late to buy some tickets.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED RAFFLE STUBS IN GOOD TIME!



Tigger and the band

in the elephant house, as part of the magical Santa Trail, were a tremendous success and again

holding in-store raffles on behalf of the appeal raising in excess of £3000. Eight local stores

ARE YOU FIT ENOUGH?

So you think you are fit?
Volunteers wanted.

Sponsored run in the Chester Half Marathon on 23rd May (you can stop after 13 miles!).

Or for the less energetic the Wirral Sponsored Walk (you can stop after 5, 10 or 15 miles). Why not take the family?

All those interested please contact Val Hurren or Sue Lochrie on 01244 389494 or 01244 650289

SCIENCE FESTIVAL

The Wrexham Science Festival is the fastest growing event of its kind in the UK. The 2004 Festival, which takes place between 18-24 March, should be the biggest and best yet, with wide ranging and stimulating programmes for the general public, schools and the business community.

As the result of previous successes, events based on topics or issues within the natural world are likely to attract audiences from across the broad region during the next Festival. Such offerings will include

"a hundred and one uses for a puffin", a history of seabird exploitation from Tony Soper; *My life with Orca* - Erich Hoyt's highly regarded illustrated lecture; "Invasive species - from Japanese Knotweed to American Crayfish, we are under threat!" and Serpents and Saurians - the subject for Mark O'Shea's first visit to the Festival. Of course there's much, much more from cold water coral reefs to bats and local Sites of Special Scientific Interest. If you want information, please contact the Festival Office 01978 262696 or visit wrexhamsf.com

Our Appeal merchandise has been a great success and we now have the following available:

All merchandise is available either in our shops at the Zoo or through our development office.
Telephone: 01244 650229 or email: developmentoffice@chesterzoo.co.uk



Cuddly Elephant £5



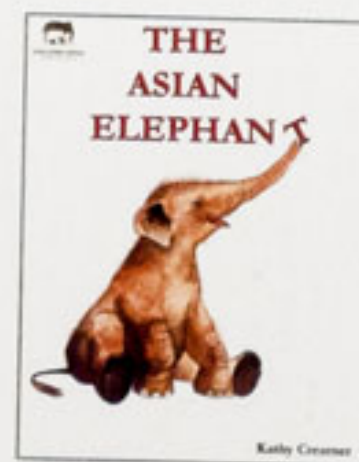
Elephant Bookmark £1



Elephant Appeal Label badge £1



Limited Edition Print *Chang and the Gang* by Anthony Wyatt £85



Limited Edition Children's Book on the Asian Elephant by Kathy Creamer £5

General News

Latest updates from the Zoo

SKETCH SAFARI

Year 6 pupils from Acresfield School took a walk on the wild side when they visited the Zoo to attend a sketching master class given by wildlife artist Jo Lynch.

Jo, (pictured below) who lives in southern France, has a wealth of experience to pass on. Her work shows a variety of techniques in charcoal, gouache and tempera.

She has a permanent exhibition in Réserve Africaine de Sigean, near Narbonne.

Her Sketch Safari to Colchester, Edinburgh, Paignton and Chester Zoo was co-ordinated by the Orangutan Foundation.

There was also a presentation of her wonderful drawings, stimulated by a visit to Borneo, at Professor Birutė Galdikas lecture at ZSL.

It was a unique and fun opportunity for the students to learn the finer arts of sketching in charcoal and our orangs proved to be interesting subjects! We were most grateful to Jo for giving up her time and helping to raise awareness of the battle to save this vulnerable species.

Jo will be returning to Chester in the autumn when she will be giving a talk to FFI and holding a practical drawing session for our Junior Members.



The Presenter Talks are changing for the Summer Season. From Monday April 5 until Sunday October the 31 programme will be:

- 10.40 Meerkats
- 11.00 Rhinos (at *The Tsavo Black Rhino Experience*)
- 11.30 Elephants
- 12.00 Lions
- 12.30 Condor Cliffs
- 12.50 Spectacled Bears
- 2.15 Sealions
- 2.45 Chimps
- 3.15 Penguins
- 3.30 Sealions
- 4.00 Tigers
- 4.30 Elephants

BIG BOOK

CREATIVE youngsters inspired by a trip to the Zoo put pen to paper to record their experiences.

Pupils from Cambridge Road School, Ellesmere Port, benefited from a Chester Zoo - backed project.



The Zoo teamed up with Ellesmere Port's LEAP Education Action Zone to offer 5,000 free Zoo tickets to deserving schools through a scheme called *Quantum Leap*. The project benefited youngsters who may otherwise not be able to visit the Zoo but also encouraged them

to focus on one of six key areas to boost their education. BNFL at Capenhurst donated £5,000 to the cause and LEAP administered the scheme, passing tickets to schools who had previously demonstrated how their pupils would benefit.

Some schools, including Cambridge Road, tackled literacy as part of their visits and produced Big Books to help with their task.

Pupils from the school presented the Zoo with a copy of their Big Book, Animal Alphabet, which was produced with the funding from BNFL. The school has also got a copy to keep.

CASH PRIZES GALORE!

Would you like to be in with a chance of winning prizes ranging from £50 to £1000? Then why not join Chester Zoo's own 100 Club scheme. There are monthly draws with the quantity of prizes increasing as the number of participants grow.

The monthly prizes are usually £50 or £100 but once or twice a year, again depending on how many people take part, there are larger prizes of £900 to £1000.

If you would like to be in with a one-in-three chance of winning then all you have to do is pay £5 per month by standing order, half of the money goes towards our work as a charity, the rest is used for the prize money. Regrettably the scheme isn't open to junior members.

If you would like more information or would like to become a 100 Club member, please contact Lynsey Jones on 01244 650292 or via e-mail on l.jones@chesterzoo.co.uk.

CHESTER ZOO 100 CLUB

The winners of the prize draws, held recently, were:

October 2003

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Ms Sharon Dodd | £100 |
| Miss Audrey Tillman | £50 |
| Mrs Joyce Harrison | £50 |
| Mrs S. J. Cheetham | £50 |

November 2003

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Mr Andrew R. Davies | £100 |
| Mrs Joyce Harrison | £100 |
| Mrs Katherine Lewis | £50 |
| Mr Brian Piercy | £50 |
| Mr K. J. Sims | £50 |

December 2003

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Mrs Maureen Allsopp | £900 |
| Mr M. A. Shepherd | £100 |
| Miss Susan Wilks | £50 |
| Mrs Patricia Cade | £50 |
| Mrs Sara Ruks | £50 |

All prize winners will be notified by post and will be listed in the next edition of Zoo Life.

Over the summer holidays, look out for the return of hugely popular Talking Plants! There will be more information in the next edition of Zoo Life to whet your appetite.

As always, we are keen to know what you think - do speak to the Presenter at the end of the talks or email us at:

education@chesterzoo.co.uk

General News Continued...

NOT JUST A PRETTY FASCIA!

By Rachel Farr, Chester Zoo's interpretation officer.

Interpretation is so much more than just a pretty sign, it is a way of inspiring people to investigate



their environment, interpretation plays such an important role around the Zoo, much effort is put into ensuring that it is effective as well as attractive. In order to gain inspiration for our interpretation here at Chester zoo, the education team is lucky enough to be able see what other Zoos and tourist attractions are doing whilst away on conferences and at meetings. Other zoo staff are also kind enough to look at the interpretation used on their travels and provide us with photographs and feedback.

Developing a new look for our interpretation has been a big focus during 2003 and during 2004 we hope to be putting in place some of our new designs, many of which have been inspired by other zoos. With more and more of our exhibits falling into planned 'zones', we are hoping to create a unique look for the interpretation in each area around the Zoo, with

designs reflecting different habitats around the world. The Zoo's maintenance department have been working hard to help make these designs a reality.

However it isn't just about the interpretation looking good, we need to ensure they deliver the messages we intend them to, but what tells us if a piece of interpretation is actually good?

The positive reports we receive of interpretation in other Zoos, museums and parks is usually just an impression based on appearance. When questioned as to what makes it good, the response usually comes as "well it looked good", or "people were using it"!



Yet how many of us have picked up a book or magazine and found ourselves staring at it, rather than really reading it? And, even when we do read, how much do we really recall? A piece of interpretation can look popular, people can be crowding round it, but are they learning anything? Have they discovered something new? Will they behave or feel differently afterwards?

Very few places actually evaluate their interpretation, and hence they never know what



effects they are having on their audience, and with such a powerful tool of communication, this is a great waste. I remember, during my degree attending lectures on the importance of evaluating our interpretation. One quote by James Joyce, an Irish author, always comes to mind - "A man's errors are his portals of discovery". We should not be afraid to discover what does and doesn't work, it is simply a way of improving what we will go on to do.

So, during 2003 we have been setting up a system for evaluating our existing and future interpretation. We now set ourselves very clear educational, emotional and behavioural objectives as to what we wish to achieve through the interpretation, and using these objectives we will aim to discover which methods really work.

Hence this year, we hope to reveal our new style interpretation, not only looking better than ever but inspiring more and more people on their visit.

INTERVIEW WITH THE ZOO SUPPORTER

The Asian Elephant Survival appeal is indebted to our group of dedicated volunteers, without whom we wouldn't be able to do many of the activities we are involved with. Maureen Povey is one such volunteer and gave an interview with Lynsey Jones in the development office on how she got involved with Chester Zoo.

When and how did your passion for animals start?

I was brought up in a family of animal lovers. We always had cats and dogs. My Mum would take in any stray that she came across, or that anyone brought to her sometimes to the annoyance of my Dad.

Do you remember your first visit to Chester Zoo?

Very well. My parents took my sister and I when we were very young and it was also the traditional annual outing from junior school. I always loved it and still do.

What is your favourite animal and why?

That's easy. The elephant is so very family orientated, intelligent and emotional it's almost human. The way the herd looks after its babies is so caring and loving, and I would defy anyone not to be beguiled by these wonderful creatures.

Do you have any pets and if so what are they, what are they called and how old are they?

No pets at all. We both work full

time so it would be unfair to any animal.

How do you support Chester Zoo?

I am an adopter of elephants of course and visit the Zoo often. I tell people about the Zoo, the attractions, the fact that they can adopt species for themselves or as presents for other people, and also about the *Keeper for a Day* scheme. I was a keeper for the day last June and it was one of the best and most memorable experiences I've ever had.

So you're a volunteer for the Elephant Appeal, what things have you helped with so far?

I've helped man a stall selling merchandise at the Wirral Show, Tatton Park Show, Asda store as well as selling merchandise and raffle tickets to family, friends and colleagues. I've also approached my local bakery owner and Indian Restaurant owner and they have been only too pleased to help by allowing me to place boxes on their premises selling badges and bookmarks. All I had to do was top them up from time to time and arrange to collect them once fairly full. More recently I've helped with merchandise sales during the *Magical Santa Trail* evenings at the Zoo, which was an absolute joy as the children loved it and watching their little faces was reward in itself.

What is the favourite thing you've done whilst working as a volunteer?

Never having volunteered for anything like this before I really didn't know what to expect, but

I'm really glad that I got involved. I'm never pressured to do anything, and whatever I do is appreciated. I've enjoyed everything I've done, the *Magical Santa Trails* especially, and also meeting so many like minded people who care so passionately about this appeal.

You also mentioned that you give a regular donation to the appeal by standing order. Why did you decide to do that and was it difficult to do?

Setting up this standing order was so easy. Just a matter of filling in a simple form, returning it to the Zoo and a week or so later the standing order was set up on my account. I set this up because I care very much about this appeal and wanted to donate a reasonable amount and it is easier to spread the cost over several months than to try to find a large sum in one go.

Would you like to get more involved with Chester Zoo? Would you like to ensure that our vital conservation work continues long into the future?

You can help by becoming a volunteer for the Asian Elephant Appeal, by giving a regular donation by standing order or by leaving a gift to the Zoo in your will.

For more information then please contact the development office on 01244 650229 or via e-mail on developmentoffice@chesterzoo.co.uk



A VIRTUAL ZOO AT YOUR FINGERTIPS
www.chesterzoo.org

Farewell To Concorde

Alan Woodward, Carnivores' Team Leader



Ray Packwood before embarkation

It seems a long time ago now since I used to watch Concorde from the family home overlooking the Bristol Channel. She was built at Filton near Bristol and was a familiar sight doing her trials over the channel all those years ago. Concorde inspired a sense of achievement and pride in nearly all that saw her and a sense of uniqueness in the people who were lucky enough to travel in her.

Now over 30 years since those trials Concorde's time was nearing its end and British Airways ran a national competition to find 325 people

to enjoy a final flight.

I had never won anything having entered competitions before. I was a bit apprehensive about entering another to hear nothing again.

About two months later, the answering machine was flashing and a message from British Airways asked me to ring them as soon as possible. My name and telephone number were confirmed but it was only when the tickets arrived that I felt that all was well with the world. I had two tickets, so Ray Packwood from the Aquarium

also had the chance to realise a lifetime ambition.

October 22 arrived and after doing three radio interviews and appearing on a few news shots we were on our way.

There were over 20,000 people at Manchester Airport to see Concorde off on her final flight from Manchester. Check in was at 1pm and security was very strict. The crew who, understandably, were very emotional spoke us to and we boarded at 3.30pm from the ground to enable us to get some good photos. The ground crew



The crowds on departure

had formed two lines for us to walk down and there were people everywhere making us feel very special.

The inside was very spacious contrary to belief and at 6ft 2" I still had plenty of legroom. Take off was 4.10pm and we taxied to the end of the runway passing seas of faces waving flags and cheering.

Take off was more akin to being in a rocket than an airliner, twice the speed of other aircraft and a steeper incline, the G-force was fantastic.

We flew South over Bristol down the channel and over the Atlantic reaching mach2 at 62,000 feet - faster than a bullet and only feeling a slight surge.

Below the curvature of the earth could be seen on a clear day and we were on the edge of space seeing only what astronauts and Concorde passengers see - it was an

incredible sight. We were served a meal on board on china plates and real glasses.

Luckily the adrenalin had counteracted the effects of so much champagne and the flight

was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. After 1 hour and 40 minutes we landed at Heathrow - the same time as the flight from New York which landed with us on a parallel runway.

Then it was departure time with a few souvenirs and back to the executive lounge for more food and drink ready for the 9pm. Airbus back to Manchester. This was really a day to remember for the rest of my life.

Goodbye Concorde and thanks for the memories.



The meal on Concorde



Looking Back

A Radio Interview with George Mottershead

George Mottershead, the Zoo's founder was adept at sharing the latest happenings from Chester with youngsters on *BBC's Children's Hour*. We have been back through the tapes to find out what was making the news in 1951.

BBC Presenter:

Hello children! Well, we start Children's Hour this week, with a talk, followed by some more young artists. But first of all the talk - and here is George Mottershead with news from Chester Zoo.

GS Mottershead:

Hello Girls and Boys! It's very nice to be talking to you once again and to have an opportunity of telling you about some of our new friends at Chester Zoo.

To begin with then, perhaps the largest animal, apart from the elephants, ever to join our collection is Barker, a Dromedary, the first of its kind we have had at the Zoo. For the time being, Barker is living in the Zebra House but we are hoping to transfer him shortly to his own special quarters. Although this camel is the largest specimen actually in the Zoo at the present time, with the exception of the elephants, our giraffes are, of course, still larger.



One in particular is a very recent arrival in this country, but she has had to go to London for a twelve month quarantine. Last year we purchased

three reticulated giraffes and although these have now completed their quarantine period, unfortunately the new Giraffe House is not ready for them. As soon as it is, these three will be coming up to Chester and they will be followed in September 1952 by Dinah. Dinah, our newest arrival in the giraffe family, is beautifully marked and is rather different from the other three - they being the reticulated variety are marked with a neck pattern but Dinah is perfectly marked with a maple leaf and she looks very lovely.

Another very interesting pair of animals in quarantine for the Zoo are two gnu, more often known as wildebeest. They come from Africa and this particular pair are extremely nice specimens. They are strange looking animals and do not generally have very pleasant natures. However, at the moment they both seem quite docile. In this same recent consignment of animals, having to do quarantine in London, is another type of animal we have never had at the Zoo before, namely an African Water Buffalo. We shall now have to get busy preparing suitable homes for all these new animals.

Now to tell you about some of the specimens that have actually arrived at the Zoo and although in some cases

they are confined to quarantine quarters in the Zoo, they are nevertheless being exhibited to the public at the same time. First of all, there is a magnificent Sumatran Tiger - he is a really beautiful specimen, which was caught wild in the



Sumatran jungle. He is settling down well and we hope that when he has completed his six months of isolation, we shall be able to introduce him to Sheika, our tigress, who has been so much admired by the public this summer.

We have also been able to put on show in the last few weeks, a pair of very fine leopards who were sent to us over twelve months ago. Both these leopards are extremely ferocious, which of course adds to their natural beauty. As they have had to be shut away from the public for so long a time, they are now very shy. But they are gradually becoming less so and by next spring they will, I hope, be quite used to people and will remain on show for more or less the whole of the day. In addition to this pair of leopards, we have a beautiful pair of leopardesses, who also came here twelve months ago and are extremely tame. It would be possible in fact to go into their cage and play with them. However, they are both terribly jealous in case one should get a little more attention than the other and if their keeper is not careful, they are inclined to get quarrelsome and fight each other.

Another recent arrival and also of the cat family, is a Serval from Africa. Although this particular cat is not nearly as large as a leopard, it is much larger than the ordinary domestic cat. The Serval has attractive markings and will be a very welcome addition to our cat collection. A Caracal or Lynx is also an interesting cat and we are just beginning to get well acquainted with a member of this species who arrived here about a month ago.

Now let's have a look at what is new in the *Monkey House*. By far the most outstanding additions have been the arrival of three de Brazza Monkeys. These lovely animals have peach markings on the crown of their heads and a white beard - the male being particularly distinguished looking. As we have one male and two females, we are hoping that in time, we shall be fortunate enough to breed some more de Brazza Monkeys, which are by no means common.

Our chimps, eight in number, are growing and thriving so well, that before very long, we shall have to prepare a proper chimp house for them. The chimpanzees, apart from being most entertaining with their antics, can also be very destructive.



One event that took place at the beginning of the summer and pleased us very much was the birth of an Axis Deer.

We have had a very nice pair of Axis Deer in the Zoo for some years now and each year they have bred a fawn, but unfortunately, for one reason or another, they have always lost their baby. But this year I am delighted to say that they have succeeded in rearing their offspring and it now seems to be well established.

We have introduced once again to Chester Zoo the American Bison. The pair we acquired this summer are only quite young - they were born in 1950 and we hope that when they are old enough, they will breed too and we shall be able, in time, to establish a small herd of these attractive animals. In addition to this pair, we have also

purchased one male European Bison. These are now becoming very rare and can only be found in Zoological collections throughout the world. It is believed that all wild specimens have become extinct. The European variety grows taller than his American cousin and my personal opinion is that he is not nearly so handsome. However,



when you come to the Zoo, you will be able to compare them to see which you like best.

Let's leave the animals now and see what birds have been added to the collection. Outstanding perhaps by virtue of size is the Ostrich. Originally a pair set off to make the journey from Africa to Chester Zoo. Unfortunately, they met with an accident - one of them was killed and the other - a young male - injured his leg, but I am very pleased to say that this wound is healing rapidly and will before long, we hope, be perfectly well again.

Two more fairly large birds to arrive have been Secretary Birds. They stand about three foot six to four feet in height. In appearance, by virtue of a most peculiar feather formation on their heads, they resemble a man with a quill behind the ear - hence their name. These birds are without any fear of snakes and can kill them by a process of kicking and stamping that is most remarkable. Another rather attractive bird to arrive is the Brown-cheeked Hornbill. This bird also comes from Africa and derives its name from its large horn like bill.

Our parrot family have been fairly busy this year and quite a number of youngsters have been hatched, but the very cold weather at the beginning of

the season has had a marked effect on the success of this year's breeding. After planning to do so for several years, we have finally succeeded in transferring our vultures into a new flight in a freshly opened part of the Zoo and here can also be found the Golden Eagle. We now hope that when these birds have settled down, we shall be able to repeat our record of breeding vultures once again. Quite a few new reptiles have gone into the Reptile House this season. Outstanding exhibits among these are the Queensland frilled lizards. These are lovely specimens and when the huge frill around their neck is fully extended, they have a most grotesque appearance. There are some very interesting snakes as well. To mention only two - there is a beautiful boa constrictor and the Reticulated Python. Both of these serpents are still a long way from being full grown. At the present time, the boa measures about eight feet and the Reticulated Python just over six feet, but when fully grown, they will attain the length of - in the case of the Python - up to over thirty feet.

Well children - just before I close, I would like to tell you about our baby raccoons. Earlier this year, a new pair of raccoons arrived at the Zoo and until we had been able to make some alterations in the raccoon wood, we decided to keep these animals temporarily housed in a cage. Whilst there, they had some young and we thought it better to separate the father from the mother. However, father evidently didn't agree with this arrangement at all and after a very short time, he decided he could stand the separation no longer and he proceeded to burrow his way to join the little family and they are now all living together very happily. Shortly, we will be ready to turn all these raccoons into the raccoon wood, where they will once more feel that they are at home in the wild.

Goodnight, children.

BBC Presenter:

That was George Mottershead bringing you news from Chester Zoo.

Chimpanzees at Chester Zoo Part 2 1969 - 2003

By Clare Caws, Niall Ormerod and Jane Woodward

Chester Zoo became well known for the way that the chimpanzees were housed on spacious islands in social groups.

In 1969 Hester Mundis in the USA chose Chester Zoo as a new home for Boris her 3-year-old chimpanzee, who had been raised in a New York apartment. Boris was successfully integrated with other chimpanzees and still lives with the group that he led for 15 years.

Lack of experience with other chimpanzees meant that females often rejected their infants, never having learned how to care for them. Many infants were hand-reared, but living in a complex group reduced the need for human rearing. All chimpanzees in the group today born after 1982 have been reared in the group by their mothers.

Although chimps were no longer being donated to the Zoo, they were still sometimes moved between Zoos. It is important to

avoid inbreeding and young females are sometimes moved. Two young females came to Chester from the Welsh Mountain Zoo in 1984, and another in 1990. Two other females also joined the group from other Zoos during the 1980s. An infant went to the same zoo in Wales to be raised. Most have produced and raised families in their new groups. More recently 3 females were moved to Dublin Zoo to help form a new group.



1984 - Boris (centre) with members of his group



2000 - Chimpanzee Forest

Over the years the island was extended and structures were added to keep the chimps active. After living in the same house for over 30 years, in the late 1980s a new house was built.

In April 1989 Princess Diana opened the present chimpanzee house, while Boris was kept away due to his enjoyment at aiming missiles at important visitors! In 2000 tree trunks, ropes, nets and shrubs were



Meg

added to the enclosure to make the island even more like their natural habitat. The chimps now spend much of their time high above their island and the shyer ones are able to hide amongst the plants.

Meg, who had arrived as an infant in January 1950, lived to see the many changes and died of extreme old age in December 2000. She was probably the oldest chimpanzee in Europe and saw her great granddaughter reach maturity.

The group is now the largest in the UK, and births are frequent.

Some females are now on contraception to reduce the breeding rate. The Zoo has successfully bred four generations and youngsters now grow up in a complex group under the care of their mothers and siblings.



Rosie with the first 4th generation infant born at Chester



Boris, newly arrived in 1969

Chester Zoo: Always something new!

What is happening in 2004 by Nick Davis, Animal and Plant Conservation Division

The continual process of building new and ground-breaking exhibits at Chester Zoo goes on into 2004 with this year promising to be one of the most exciting in the Zoo's 70 year history.

MYTHICAL MACAWS

This will be the home for our Blue Throated Macaws and some other parrot species

relocated from the Parrot Conservation Centre. It is called the Mythical macaws as for many years these beautiful creatures were known only from the parrot traders of South America. The natural distribution of these birds remained a mystery until 1992 when they were discovered in a tiny area of Northeast Bolivia. They are one of the world's rarest parrots and it is thought there are only around 100 of these birds left in the wild.

Mythical Macaws can be found in the Forest Zone near to the Capuchin Monkeys.

The estates team and the animal and plant conservation department have been busy designing a number of significant and exciting new exhibits which will allow the visitors to see some of the world's most endangered animals being kept to the highest standards of animal welfare. They include the welcome return of bears to the zoo with the exciting *Bears of the Cloud Forest* project, a new primate exhibit *Miniature Monkeys*, the *Mythical Macaw* exhibit and an excellent enclosure for our new family of Red River Hogs.

BEARS OF THE CLOUD FOREST

This exhibit will be the home for our Spectacled Bears and will mean the welcome return of bears to Chester Zoo after an absence of 12 years.

This species comes from South America where they live in a wide range of habitats, including the Cloud Forests of Peru and Ecuador. Great care has been given to design the enclosure so that we can keep these intelligent and inquisitive animals active and stimulated. At around 5000m² it will also



Spectacled Bear

be one of the largest bear enclosures in Europe, and will include waterfalls, pools, hills and trees for the animals to use.

You will find the *Bears of the Cloud Forest* near to the



Red River Hog

Twilight Zone, alongside the Tapirs and Capybara.

MINIATURE MONKEYS

This will be a new complex to house some of the world's rarest and smallest primates. Pied tamarins, Lion tamarins and Geoffroy's marmoset come from the rain forests of Brazil and Zoo's world wide have made a significant role in securing their survival through captive breeding and a release programme. This exhibit has been designed to give these animals a spacious indoor and outdoor enclosure with lots of opportunities to behave naturally within the trees and shrubs. *Miniature Monkeys* is made up of two separate enclosures with



Miniature Monkeys Complex

the Pied Tamarins in one and the Lion Tamarins and Geoffroy's Marmosets sharing another. The scheme covers an area of 1700m² and can be found on the old cat house lawn, opposite the *Monkey Islands*.

RED RIVER HOGS

After living in temporary accommodation since their arrival in 2002 these wonderful animals, including two youngsters will move into their new purpose built home in the spring. This 820m² exhibit can be found adjacent to the *Tropical Realm* and the *Chimpanzee Breeding Centre*, and will include a large rooting area, pond, mud wallow and a view into their underground burrow.

As well as the show exhibits we are also building new off-show enclosures. This will enable the Zoo to expand its facilities so we can continue in international breeding programmes for some of the world's rarest animals. This includes the *Rare Parrot Breeding Centre*, which will relocate many of the important parrot

species from the current house into a purpose built facility. A new enclosure for Philippine spotted deer; new Crane and duck rearing pens and Phase II *Tsavo - the Black Rhino Experience* are also planned.

We are also in the advanced planning stage for two of the most exciting projects ever undertaken at Chester Zoo.

The *Elephants of the Asian Forest* will transform the existing house so as to improve the husbandry and management of our animals, while also immersing the visitor into the natural habitat of the Asian Elephant.

The *Realm of the Red Ape* is the long-awaited new facility for our important Orang-utan collection. This will involve a new exhibit near to the existing house that has been specifically designed to house our highly intelligent and arboreal cousins. Again we will be recreating a part of the Asian forest so visitors can appreciate their natural habitat. With plans to start both projects towards the end of the year it will ensure that there is plenty to look forward to in 2005 and beyond!



General News

Latest updates from the Zoo



SAVE UP TO 25% ON YOUR EARLY SUMMER HOLIDAY

Nothing can compare to the feeling you get from a Eurocamp holiday. The sights, the smells, the sounds - all so refreshingly different from anything you'll have experienced on holiday before.

Why not enhance your early summer holiday with a fantastic selection of free activities from Eurocamp's Breakaway programme. Experience the culture and scenery and unwind with our relaxing therapies in some of the most beautiful parcs in Europe. Perhaps you'd like to choose from our range of 'Breakaway Culture' parcs. Each has been selected to offer you a cultural insight into the local traditions, historical highlights, festivals and gastronomic specialities of each region.

Or why not combine a relaxing break with an improved sense of well being, at La Grande Mètairie in Brittany, a well-known region for marine therapies and treatments.

Open your mind and set your senses free on this year's holiday. Simply call Eurocamp on **08703 338 338** & quote **ZLIFE** to access your exclusive Zoo Life savings.

*Offer terms and conditions: 25% discount applies to holidays taken to any of the Eurocamp Breakaway parcs detailed in the 2004 brochure between the dates of 7th June - 4th July 2004. A 20% discount will apply to all other holidays taken to any of the holiday parcs featured by Eurocamp in the 2004 brochure between the dates of 3rd April and 15th July 2004 (excluding Whit week) or started after 1st September 2004 and completed by 31st October 2004. Holidays must be booked by 30th June 2004. These offers are subject to availability and cannot be used in conjunction either with each other or any other Eurocamp discount promotion.



A French Market Stall

DREAMNIGHT AT THE ZOO

The first *Dreamnight at the Zoo* was held at Rotterdam Zoo in 1996 and was especially for children with cancer. Since then many other zoos have participated and in 2003 over 10,000 families visited *Dreamnight* at zoos throughout Europe and Canada. It is the dream that all zoos in the world will call the first Friday of June the *Dreamnight at the Zoo*. There are 7 new participants this year and the event is indeed becoming worldwide.

We would like Chester Zoo to be part of this movement.

As the first Friday in June in the UK falls in a bank holiday week so we have moved our *Dreamnight* to Friday 25th of June.

The vision for *Dreamnight* at Chester Zoo is based on giving these children a VIP tour as we would any other VIP. The evening of the June 25 will start at 6pm, and stay open until 10pm. A network of medical advisers will be consulted and their advice taken as to which children would most benefit from the evening. Only the medical team can select the children and

invitations will be issued accordingly to these children and their families.

We are aiming to restrict the number of children to under 100 with life-limiting illnesses.

We are looking for staff who are prepared to give an evening of their time without pay and have over 70 volunteers so far. The more staff we have, the more intimate the experience for the children. Please contact Lara Thick, Paul Howse or Richard Barnett at the Zoo you require any further information or feel that you can help in any way to make this evening special.



NRAC QUALIFICATION

Mike Elkerton, Chester Zoo's Volunteer Disability Advisor has recently qualified as an Auditor for the National Register of Access Consultants.

Mike started at Chester Zoo in 1997, and has given help and advice to the Zoo on all aspects of disability issues.

With Mike's guidance Chester Zoo received an 'EASE' award from the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for its Ease of Access and Employment awareness in 1998.

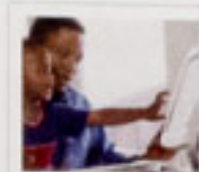
Mike then decided it might be a good idea to pass on his knowledge on disability issues to other Zoos throughout the UK, to date Mike has conducted Access Audits at 47 Zoos and all 9 Wetlands Trusts, plus numerous other visitor attractions throughout England.

It is vital that Zoos and other visitor attractions are fully aware

of the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act when it comes into force in October this year. Chester Zoo is without doubt the most accessible Zoo in the country, and has an excellent attitude towards disabled people and access issues.

Mike is also Chairman of the Cheshire Tourism for All Consortium, Development Manager for the Chester Access Group, serves on the Executive Committee for Chester International Links Association and has been recently appointed to the newly formed Tourism Alliance for Cheshire and Warrington, which will take over from the North West Tourist Board in March.

The accreditation from NRAC will be a useful tool to qualified guidance on all aspects of Disability and Access issues, and to maintain Chester Zoo's policy towards the Disabled Community.



A VIRTUAL ZOO AT YOUR FINGERTIPS
www.chesterzoo.org

BARNARDO'S TODDLE AT CHESTER ZOO - '04

Hundreds of toddling tots will be animal crackers when they descend on Chester Zoo for the annual Foresters Big Toddle for Barnardo's this year.

It is expected that up to 2,000 under 5's will take part in the 2004 Forester's Big Toddle for Barnardo's sponsored walk being held at Chester Zoo over four days - June 15, 17, 22 and 24.

Accompanied by parents and carers, the teeny tots will walk a half mile 'toddle track', and after the walk be treated to free admission to the zoo. During their walk they will be entertained by a variety of circus performers.

Fundraiser Nancy Hart said: "The Toddle is a great day out for both little and big people and it's a great way of raising money for a brilliant cause. Thousands of toddlers have responded to the 'call of the wild' over the years we have been holding the toddle at the zoo, and we're hoping the response to this year's event will be just as good and we can raise a record amount of money for disadvantaged children and families."

Now in its eighth year, the Toddle - which aims to raise up to a million pounds nationally and attracts 110,000 toddlers - will take place at venues all over the country during June and July. Last year, toddlers across the North West raised £134,000 for Barnardo's and their local communities.

For more information about the toddle, and how to get involved call 08457 697967 or log on to www.barnardos.org.uk/big toddle



General News Continued...



Golden Poison Dart Frogs

ZOO'S 'TERRIBLE' VISITORS

THEY may be just over an inch long, but in the wild these tiny newcomers pack enough poison to kill 100 people.

The Golden Poison Dart Frogs or Terrible Poison Dart Frogs *Phylllobates terribilis* — are the most toxic land vertebrates known to science.

The little creatures secrete deadly nerve toxins through their skin which acts as protection against potential predators. Their bright yellow colouration warns of the danger of trying to eat them. The toxin is so foul tasting that an unwary predator will spit the animal straight out. In the mouth, the toxin is relatively harmless but it can kill within seconds if it enters the blood.

The Zoo's curator of lower vertebrates and invertebrates,

Kevin Buley, bred the frogs at Jersey Zoo and they have now followed him to his new post in Chester.

And although they may be deadly the frogs are also helping medical science in the development of new heart drugs and pain killers.

Kevin said: "These golden jewels are proving to be valuable to medical science when it comes to human ailments as the toxin contains similar properties to morphine. What is sad is that whilst they are playing a part in helping the human population live longer, humans are threatening their survival through deforestation of their habitat.

"The Golden Poison Dart Frogs are most famous for their use by the Choco

Indians of Columbia who use the toxin to tip their arrow heads when they go hunting. Here at the Zoo though, the frogs are perfectly safe.



The Zoo's Kevin Buley with the tiny but deadly Golden Poison Dart Frogs



"Fortunately there is no risk to the keeping staff at the Zoo as the frogs' toxin is produced as a result of its unique variety of invertebrate diet in the wild.

"Our keepers feed the frogs a diet of fruit flies and crickets which means they are unable to

produce the skin toxins they can in the wild. They are spectacular little animals and I am delighted they are now part of our animal collection," added Kevin.

For the latest from the Zoo visit our website: www.chesterzoo.org

CHESTER TWINNING

Chester Zoo has, in the past, hosted twinning celebrations on behalf of the City of Chester. At a packed ceremony at Chester Town Hall in October, Lord Mayor Barry Cowper signed a twinning partnership with the German city of Lörrach.

Lörrach, on the Swiss border close to Basel, now joins Sens in Burgundy, France and Senigallia on Italy's Adriatic coast as Chester's twin towns. Each of the towns is now twinned with each other and together form a very rare four way co-operation partnership in Europe.

The ceremony came at the end of the Annual Twinning Commission meetings, which it was Chester's turn to host. 90 delegates attended the meetings, run in conjunction with an Economic Development Conference and designed to explore ways in which the four cities can work together on issues, such as European Union partnerships that can develop local economies.

Delegates from the Hungarian town of Pecs also attended the conferences and laid the ground for future co-operation with Chester and its partners.

A slight diversion to the serious business was a joint football tournament. Lörrach and Senigallia took up the invitation and brought their amateur

football teams with them, at their own expense. Together with a team from the City Council they played a mini tournament at Westminster Park.

After a close fought number of games, the team from Senigallia scored the golden goal in the final and were crowned champions and were awarded the special trophy which it is planned will be played for on an annual basis.

On Sunday morning, the delegates who were not busy networking with their opposite numbers, were taken on a tour of Chester Zoo where the Mayors of Sens and Lörrach were able to present a cheque for £250 on behalf of the Chester International Links Association, to the Zoo's Asian Elephant Appeal.

President of the Association, Lord Mayor Councillor Barry Cowper said.

"I am delighted with the successful weekend of talks we have just had with our partners, There are a great number of further potential benefits and opportunities for the people in Chester coming out of our twinning partnerships and we will be working hard to make those benefits a reality."

Next year's Twinning Commission meeting will be held in Sens between the 8th and 10th October.

If you want to know more about Chester's Twinning partnerships and the work of the Chester International Links Association, call Chris Lines on

01244 402332 or e mail to c.lines@chestercc.gov.uk or you can write to Chester International Links Association at the Town Hall, Chester.

ZOO FOOTBALL TEAM

If you fancy being on the ball then the Zoo football team could be the thing for you! The Chester Zoo team plays in the Monday night Carlsberg League, currently lying 4th in a league of 20.

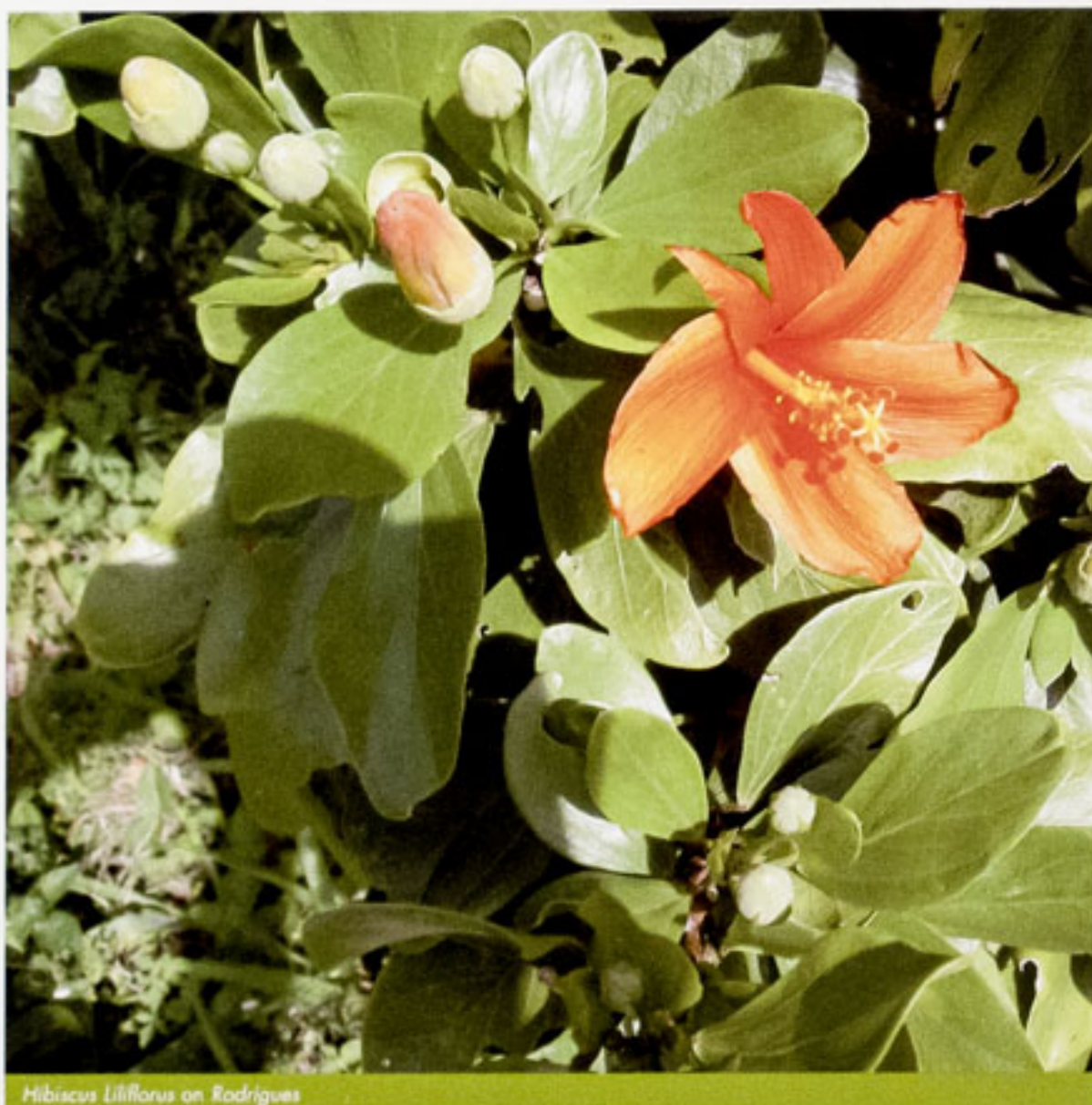


The team has been together for the past six years - new players are needed, so if anyone is interested please come along to training at the County Offices, Upton, Chester, on a Thursday night at 7.45pm.

Back row from left: Richard Jobson, Darren Paech, Jason Boyer, Brian Nichols.
Front from left: Paul Campion, Lee Barclay, Marc Boardman.

Chester Zoo's Wildlife Support in Mauritius & Rodrigues Islands

By Roger Wilkinson, Head of Conservation & Science



Hibiscus Liliflorus on Rodrigues

The islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues lie in the Indian Ocean to the east of Madagascar and are home to many species of threatened plants and animals. Mauritius is perhaps best known as former home of the extinct Dodo.

Chester Zoo has worked together with Jersey Zoo on ex-situ breeding programmes for Mauritian birds and for the Rodrigues Fruit Bat. We first received Rodrigues Fruit Bats in

1983 and have held Mauritius Pink Pigeons since 1985 and Mauritian Kestrels since 1993. Chester is increasingly also supporting some of these species in the wild.

Since 1998 former *Twilight Zone* keeper Vicki Powell has been researching the conservation biology of Rodrigues Fruit Bats. Vicki has been supported financially and through the close supervision of Dr Stephanie Wehnelt who

visited Rodrigues in 2003 to assist Vicki with her field work. The Mauritius Echo Parakeet Programme has received significant support from Chester Zoo over the last four years. The species had been down to eight individuals and increasing numbers by hand-raising is an essential component of their recovery plan. In 2000 our parrot keeper Anne Morris, who has many years of experience of hand-rearing parrots, was seconded to the Black River Aviaries on Mauritius and assisted with the release of the Echo Parakeets she had raised.

Chester Zoo's contacts with Mauritius and Rodrigues led to additional requests for support for in-situ conservation programmes. In order to better explore and evaluate opportunities for potential further



Pink Pigeon on Mauritius

co-operation I visited Mauritius and Rodrigues in November 2003. I stayed with their Director of Research Dr Carl Jones and was able to meet staff working on a range of conservation programmes.



Echo Parakeet on Mauritius

The Mauritius Kestrels represent a major conservation success. From just four wild birds in 1974 there are now over 500. The Pink Pigeons have similarly increased in number from ten to several hundred but remain dependent on continued management. A particular problem relates to the contagious disease *Trichomoniasis* which is normally fatal to chicks and has resulted in very low recruitment over the last year. Chester Zoo has agreed to support essential veterinary research into this problem.

Chester is also again supporting the Echo Parakeet Programme through the assistance of two of

our bird keepers, Paul Morris and Claire Daniel, in the release of Echo Parakeets on Mauritius. Some of these parakeets have been aviary bred and others hand-raised after rescue from wild nests. The wild nests

are checked daily and chicks weighed and monitored. Any chicks that are not thriving and without assistance would most likely die are then removed for hand-raising.

I also visited Ile aux Aigrettes where habitat recovery work has involved removing alien introduced species and replanting with native and often threatened Mascarene plants. This island also supports an introduced population of Pink Pigeons and is the site for the new recovery programme for Mauritius Fodies. Mauritius Fody nests suffer significant predation and in 2003 a number of chicks were taken from wild nests to be hand-reared then released on Ile aux Aigrettes.

Habitat recovery work has also been very important on Rodrigues and in addition to the conservation focus on the endemic Rodrigues Fruit Bat, Rodrigues Fody and Rodrigues Warbler there are some very important threatened plant recovery programmes. This is an area where we are exploring possibilities for future support and involvement. A plant nursery on site and support from Kew Gardens has assisted propagation of many threatened endemic plants including the beautiful *Hibiscus liliflorus* and the Café marron *Ramosmania rodriguensis*. The latter's future depended on one single plant!

Finally I must mention the marine conservation organisation Shoals Rodrigues. I spent time with the Director Tom Hooper and his staff and was impressed by how much they have achieved with limited resources in promoting coral reef conservation and sustainable fishing. Chester has agreed to assist this initiative and looks forward to further co-operation and programme development supporting and working in partnership with both The Mauritius Wildlife Foundation and Shoals Rodrigues.

Growing Concerns

Mark Sparrow, General Curator of Botany and Horticulture



Pitcher Plant - *Nepenthes*

If you come into the *Grow Zone* this spring you will see a display of plants which have gripped the imagination of people ever since they were discovered. They are the carnivorous or 'flesh eating' plants. The definition of a carnivorous plant is one that attracts, captures, kills, digests and absorbs animal life forms. Carnivorous plants have already been the feature of one of our summer and winter plant presenter talks, and have proved to be very popular with our visitors.

Carnivorous plants come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and use a number of different methods to capture their prey. Some have sticky hairs on their leaves or roots; some have traps that the animals fall into, while one has a snapping trap. The method of capture may vary but the end result is always the same, the

death of the insect, resulting in extra food for the plants. Carnivorous plants grow in areas that have extremely poor soil with little or no nutrients. They therefore have to supplement their diet with a little additional protein from time to time, in the shape of the insects they can capture. Over 600 species of carnivorous plants have been discovered and some of these have proved suitable for growing as houseplants. Perhaps the most famous of these is the Venus Fly Trap. The trap is triggered when an insect touches two or more hairs on the inside of the trap causing it to shut tight around it. The trap does not re-open until the insect is dead and has started to be absorbed by the plant. Species with sticky leaves include the Sundews and Butterworts, while those with pitchers include *Sarracenia*, *Darlingtonia*, and one of my



Sundew - *Drosera*

favourites *Nepenthes*. *Nepenthes* are the biggest of the carnivorous plants and can have pitchers that reach over 30cms in length. In the wild of Borneo and Sumatra where they grow, animals as large as mice and frogs have been found inside the pitchers of some plants.

If you are interested in growing carnivorous plants they are not too difficult as long as you follow some basic principles. Most come from bogs so must be kept moist for most of the year. They should be watered with rainwater only, not tap water. Most require bright light, they like a peaty/acidic soil, and do not require fertiliser (hopefully they should capture the nutrients they need).

The temperature they are kept at varies with each species but as a general rule they should be grown between 15-25C. Some require a dormant period during the winter when they will stop growing for a few months. If you are tempted to have a go at growing them the best thing to do is get a good book on the subject, I can recommend *The Savage Garden* by Peter D'Amato. Alternatively find one of the numerous web sites on the subject; the International Carnivorous Plant Society pages are full of information.

Conservation Corner

By Sarah Bird, Biodiversity officer

The winter and early spring have been particularly busy for me this year. November to March is tree planting time, as trees are dormant so less affected by lifting and transplanting. I have organised the transplanting of more than 300 young Black Poplar trees from the BTCV nursery at Norley to suitable sites



Freshwater Pearl Mussels [Scottish Natural Heritage]

in Cheshire and a few into North Wales, some more have been planted at the Zoo too. I have prepared an information and identification sheet for Black Poplars which is available now - please contact me at the Zoo if you would like a copy.

In the nursery our Isle of Man Cabbage seed, collected from the Wirral, has germinated and is growing well, though cuttings of the rare Mackay's Horsetail, also from Wirral, have not rooted. We will try again with this species later in the year with some root cuttings. The plan is to grow both these plants in the Sand Lizard enclosure.

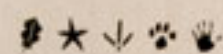
Through contacts at Countryside Commission for Wales Chester Zoo has become involved in a project to save endangered Freshwater Pearl Mussels found in the River Dee near Llangollen. The mussels in the Dee have not been producing young for many years now and the surviving mussels are estimated to be around 80 years old!

The project, which is currently sourcing funds, will involve removal of mussels from the river to be held at Chester Zoo as an insurance population. Additional research work will investigate why the species is not breeding and has become threatened, and what can be done to improve conditions in the Dee to enable the mussels to be returned there.

WALES BIODIVERSITY WEEK 19TH-27 JUNE '04

Biodiversity does not recognise country and county boundaries, so, as Chester Zoo is very close to the border with Wales, we are getting involved in Wales Biodiversity Week this year. The aim of the week is to raise awareness of local biodiversity, including local action and ideas for what we can all do to make a

Bioamrywiaeth Cymru



Biodiversity Wales

difference. A wide variety of activities are being planned in NE Wales including the regional 'flagship' event: Big Bee Day on the 27th June at Loggerheads Country Park near Mold. Other events already on the

calendar are:

- Black Poplar leaf identification on the 23rd June at Roe Park, St Asaph
- Wildflowers on Gronant Dunes on the 19th June
- Wrexham Green Fair on 19th June
- Organic Allotment visit in Wrexham on 24th June
- Biodiversity Fair at RSPB Conwy

For more information please contact the Local Biodiversity Officers:

Conwy: Becky Groves 01492 575200, Denbighshire: Mike Whitley 01824 708234, Flintshire: Laura Whyte 01352 703262, Wrexham: Emily Meilieur 01978 292514

At Chester Zoo we are holding a special bilingual Wales Biodiversity Evening on the 22nd of June.

The event is still at the planning stage but will include a bat walk and displays and informal talks about wildlife that occurs in North Wales and Cheshire. There will be a buffet supper, and tickets will allow entry to the Zoo from 4pm. Welsh and English speaking wildlife experts will be available throughout the evening. For more information on this event please contact me at the Zoo.

Sarah Bird, Biodiversity Officer.

Bats

What would South Asian Bats do – without Chester Zoo! Sally Walker

Part two. The first part of this article appeared in *Zoo Life* - December 2003.

In July this year I had the enviable opportunity to travel to Southern India to see at first hand (and indeed take part in) the work being carried out by CCINSA at its 2nd Chiroptera Field Techniques Training workshop, at Kerala Agricultural University. Prof. Paul Racey of Aberdeen University provided the bulk of the training over the five days; my contribution being a short session on husbandry of captive Fruit Bats. Over 50 people took part, from as far afield as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Andamans, as well as a strong contingent from India itself.

The itinerary encompassed many topics. Catching bats, examining and identifying them, studying their role as pollinators and seed-dispersers, as well as their foraging techniques. Also covered was the important subject of education about bats, both school-based and a raising of awareness amongst general public, and those making decisions affecting bats and their habitats. As the talks progressed there were many question and answer sessions, discussions and illuminating digressions





The Seba's Short-tailed bats from Central America are fruit eaters

As well as these lectures there were numerous practical sessions, where mist nets were set, bats captured, examined and released.

Kerala Agricultural University provide a particularly good venue for this last activity, with its orchards and woodlands. Whilst during the day these habitats were home to Parakeets, Bee-eaters, Babblers and Sunbirds, at night the Bats came out to feed. Huge Indian Fruit Bats passed high overhead, while the small *Cynopterus sphinx* Fruit Bats fluttered around between the fruiting trees in the orchards, and obligingly into our mist-nets. At one site, as the light faded and the Peacocks wailed, a host of bats of differing sizes, flight patterns and feeding techniques emerged, a far greater variety than one could encounter in one place in the UK. They swooped, fluttered soared and zigzagged. We had seven nets erected, and high hopes. We caught just one bat - a gorgeous yellow *Scotophilus heathii*. A sobering example of the challenges facing anyone trying to study these animals!

One of the important features of these workshops is the opportunity for people working on related areas to get together and make contact and build

relationships with each other, making the breaks for lunch and dinner every bit as productive as the training sessions! The whole workshop was a very encouraging insight into work being carried out in-situ to conserve bats in this part of the world, and excellent first hand experience of the hard work and dedication of the CCINSA team.

Winter Holiday? CHESTER Zoo has provided a get-away-from-it-all winter's holiday for a rather unusual group!

34 water voles from Essex spent the winter months at the zoo before release into a new home in the May this year. The voles were living in a wild part of an industrial site in South Essex, which is being redeveloped in 2004. As water voles are a protected species in the UK action had to be taken to move them to a safe site before development could go ahead. Since water voles suffer a high mortality over winter in the wild, it was decided that they should be held in captivity over winter, and released again in spring, when they would have a better chance of surviving in a new

habitat. Environmental consultancy Tamdown Regeneration, based in Essex, asked the zoo to help with providing temporary shelter for voles, which arrived at Chester over a 2-week period in late November 2003.

During their stay at the zoo, the water voles have had a veterinary check and been fitted with a microchip so that they can be monitored after release. They are fed on a diet of rabbit food, apple and carrot.

The Environment Agency and English Nature have identified a suitable release site, just 10 miles from the original site. Once released the voles will be monitored for 18 months, by Tamdown Regeneration and the new owners of the release site, to assess the success of the project and to provide further information if similar situations arise in the future.

This is a really good way in which the skills of our keepers in care of wild animals in captivity can make a valuable contribution to conservation of British wildlife. Many thanks to all those involved, especially the Twilight Team!



Members and Adopters Talks

Talks for 2004

We anticipate that these speakers will attract a wide audience so, as we cannot guarantee availability at the door, we advise you to send for your free tickets in advance. Applications to the Membership Office, Chester Zoo, Upton by Chester, CH2 1LH, stating which talks you would like to attend and number of tickets required for each. Please enclose a SAE for return of your tickets. We ask those attending to make a donation of £1 each to cover refreshments, payable on the door.

Thursday, 25 March 2004
7pm for 7.30pm

FFI evening

"My Life with Orca"

World renowned expert Erich Hoyt will relate his experiences with killer whales with the help of sound recordings and images. For details contact Penny Rudd on 01244 380280. Tickets cost £6.50 for FFI members. £7.00 non FFI members.

Sat, 11 Sept 2004 @ 2.30p.m

Cyril Rosen
Monkey
Missionaries

Wildlife sanctuaries play an essential role in enabling Governments to enforce anti-poaching laws and in providing a haven for orphans of the bushmeat trade. The International Primate Protection League (IPPL) has concentrated upon aiding new and established sanctuaries to share their experience and to expand their expertise. Cyril Rosen, Secretary of IPPL brings news from the front line and an introduction to the Monkey Missionaries who happily commit their lives to the rescue and rehabilitation of our primate friends.



Thurs, 6 May 2004

VIP special visit by Lord Robert Winston

For details please visit the website www.chesterzoo.co.uk

Sat, 22 May 2004 @ 2.30p.m

AGM Annual General Meeting followed by Zoo Review - The Director and Division Heads review recent and future developments.

Fri, 4 June 2004
Eve Meeting @ 7.30pm

Susan Snell & Polly Tucker
Life through a Lens

From the humble flea to a stuffed elephant brought back from India, *Life through a Lens* records the little and large of the Natural History Museum. The authors, Susan Snell and Polly Tucker are senior archivists at the museum and well placed to share their knowledge of the stories that lie behind the silver-nitrate surface of the old photographic prints which adorn the walls of the museum.



Sat, 11 Sept 2004 @ 2.30p.m

Daniel Hahn
Tower Menagerie

Six hundred years in Britain's first zoo. The talk will look at the establishment of the first English zoo, the Royal Menagerie at the Tower of London, and how it grew to become one of the country's most popular public visitor attractions. Through the stories of some of its visitors, characters like Samuel Pepys and John Wesley, James I and the Duke of Wellington, Elizabeth I and Christopher Wren - it will examine how the story of the development of the Zoo can be used to examine wider issues of sensibility and the relationship between man and animals, as well as developments in science, the arts and even theology.



Tues, 5th October 2004

Chester Zoo Lecture
Theatre
Spirit Dancer

Back by popular demand, the world class champion Navajo dancer Dennis Lee Rogers. Further information and details on how to get tickets in the next issue of Zoo Life.

Junior Puzzle Page

By Sara Ruks, Education Division



THIS MYTHICAL CREATURE IS MADE UP OF 10 DIFFERENT ANIMALS -
CAN YOU NAME THEM ALL?



Congratulations

Congratulations to Matthew Spencer from Warrington who won December's competition, the answer to which was Spectacled Bears.

Write by the side of all the body parts which animal you think it belongs to.

Hind legs, Base of tail, Head and Bill, Front Legs, Spines, Casque, Tip of tail, Horns, Body, Tusks.

Please send your answers on a postcard to **Chester Zoo, Marketing Department, Upton-by-Chester, Chester, CH2 1LH**, by **Monday May 10** and you could be in with a chance of winning a **£10** voucher to spend in the Zoo shops.

Junior Members

Programme of Events 2004

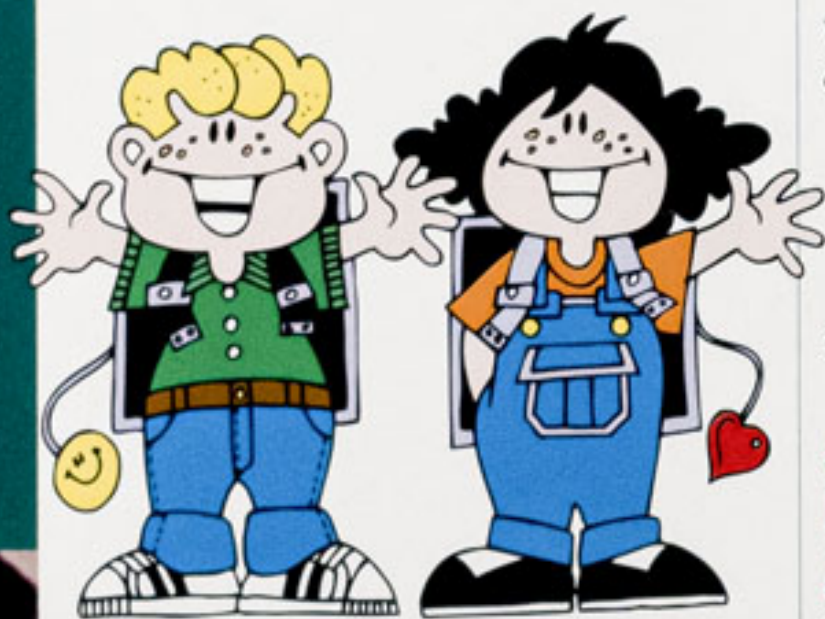


TRACKS & SIGNS

Saturday 20 March 2004

This is one of our most popular events and returns again this year by popular demand! This is your chance to see the Zoo from inside some of the enclosures, when you go in to find footprints from which to make plaster casts.

Over eights can come along when we meet outside Oakfield House at 11am, returning there for collection at 4pm. You will need a picnic lunch, and it is important that you wear clean, very old clothes and clean wellies.



SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK

Saturday 24 April 2004

Another new event for this year's programme as we set off into the Snowdonia National Park to do some exploring. We will do some walking and look at some of the

unusual habitats we come across. Over eights are invited to join us and the bus will leave the staff car park at 9.30am, returning at 5.30pm. Please arrive appropriately dressed for walking in the outdoors and don't forget to bring a picnic.

THE CHESTNUT CENTRE CONSERVATION PARK

Saturday 22 May 2004

May, the bluebell season, is a great time of year to visit this lovely park in Derbyshire, famous for the only Giant Otters in the UK. There are other types of otters to see there, as well as owls, deer and much more.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 9.30am, returning at 5pm, and eights upwards are welcome to join us. Bring your own picnic!

ANGLESEY - THE PILI PALACE AND FOSSIL MUSEUM

Saturday 26 June 2004

We plan to spend a full day on Anglesey, visiting the butterfly farm called the Pili Palace and also going to see the fossils at the big collection over there. We are likely to be outside for quite a lot of the time, so please bring sunscreen.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 9.30am and return at 5.30pm. Please bring a picnic and over eights are included.

HOW TO BE A GOOD ZOO KEEPER

Wednesday 21 July 2004

This is a slightly altered event from those we have run in previous years, but Juniors will still get the opportunity to work alongside a keeper for part of the day. The work can be tough so we have to strictly limit this event to over 12s. We try to match Juniors to their favourite section, but places are very limited, so this cannot be guaranteed.

Please come prepared to work hard, with clean wellies and an additional completely clean set of clothes to work in. Owing to the Zoo's bio-security 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 the Oakfield at 10.30am and the day will finish for Juniors at 4pm Please bring a picnic.

Please note that bookings for this event will not be taken before Wednesday 7 July 2004 from 8.30 am, and will be strictly on a first come, first served basis.



SUMMER BARBEQUE

Friday 14 August 2004

The Zoo at night is a fascinating place. The animals watch you and their noises are much more obvious when there are not many people around as all the visitors will have left. Over eights are invited to join in, starting at 7pm when you should arrive at the Ark Restaurant via the Zoo's Staff Entrance on Caughall Road. Parents are asked to collect Juniors from the Ark Restaurant at 9.45pm.

KNOWSLEY SAFARI PARK

Saturday 18 September 2004

We will be spending the day at Knowsley, seeing a different concept about keeping wild animals. Hopefully we will have a guided tour of the exhibits with Knowsley's Curator who usually jumps onto the bus with us to highlight the special happenings in the park for that year.

Our bus will leave the staff car park at 10am, returning at 4.30pm. Over eights are invited and should bring a picnic.

HOME FARM AND THE DEER RUT AT TATTON PARK

Saturday 16 October 2004

The day will start with our visit to the Home Farm at Tatton Park where there is plenty of opportunity to learn about how the farm used to work many years ago when Tatton Hall was a family residence. We will then go out into the park and will identify the different deer.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 10am, returning at 4.30pm. Bring a picnic and warm clothes. Over eights are invited to join us.

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. 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 *Zoo Life* - not by individual letter - so please keep up-to-date by reading the Junior page in each issue.

A small 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 informed of this at the time of booking.



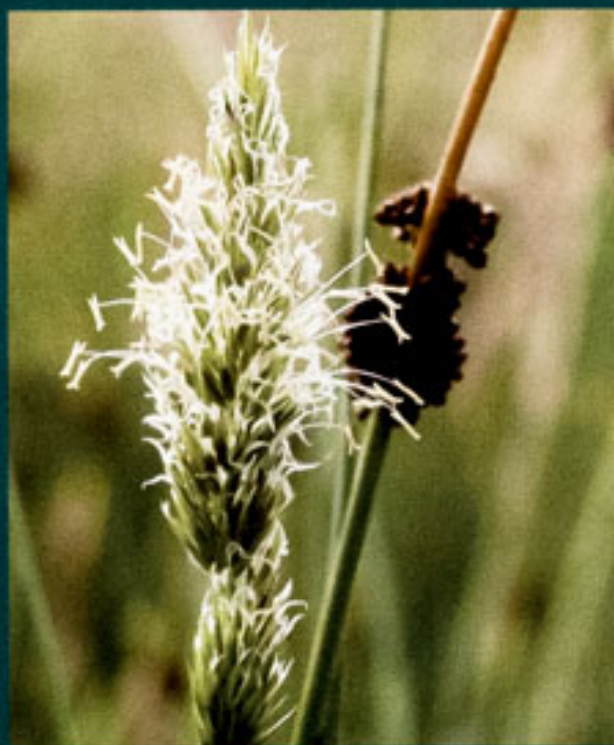
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www.chesterzoo.org



Zoo Life

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and Conservation of
our animals and other
Endangered Species
across the World.



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