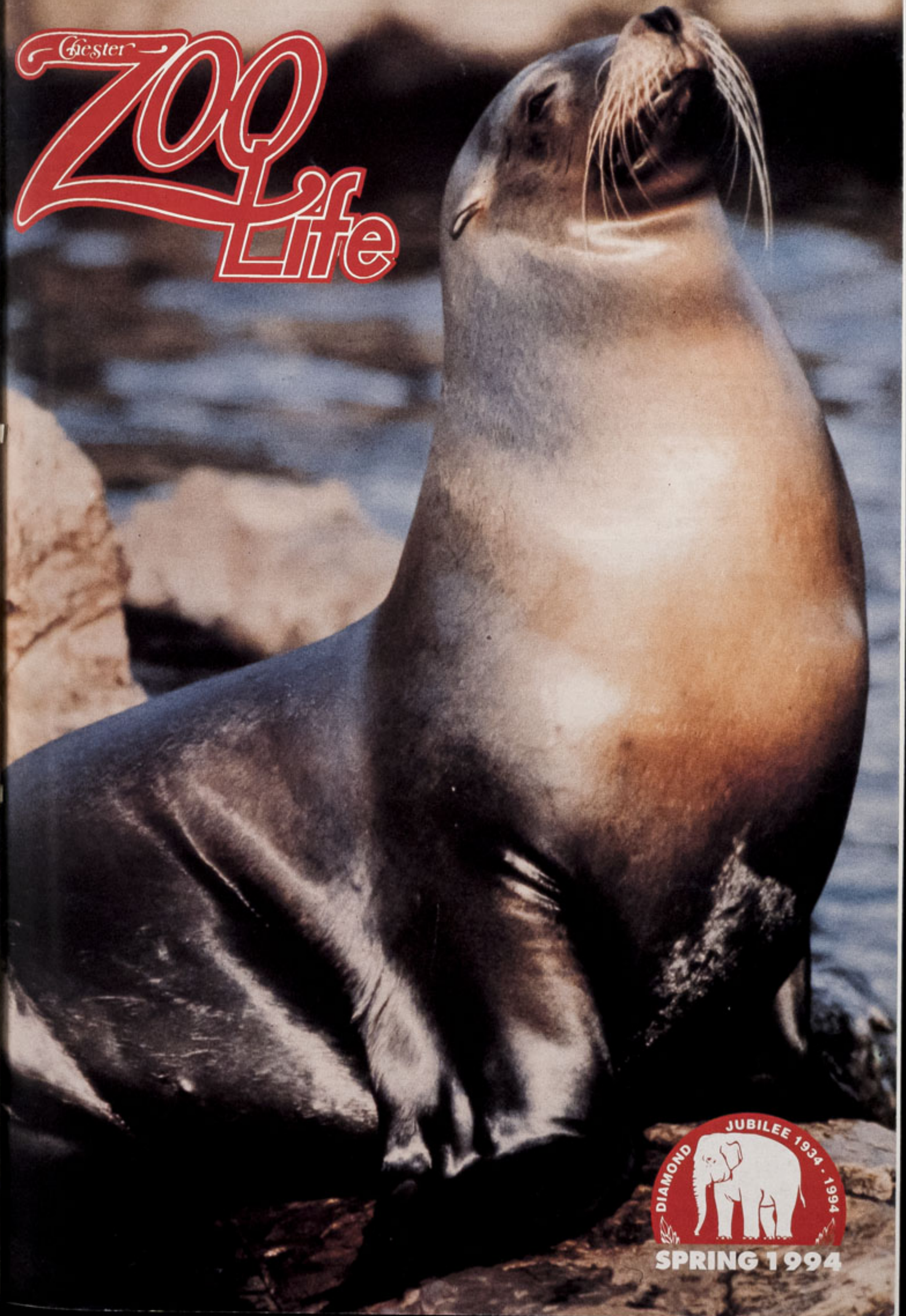


Guest

# Zoo Life



SPRING 1994

# Chez Nous



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We ended 1993 with 814,883 "ticketed" visitors. We do not charge for children under three and have not been recording them in our annual statements. Not all tourist attractions use this convention, and it is becoming confusing as to who has how many visitors. In recent years we have dropped down the "league table" but we suspect that this is because the British Tourist Authority is not demanding consistent criteria on visitor numbers.

From the opening of our new gate, we will be issuing tickets to all

visitors, whether they pay, or come in under the age of three. The estimated increase would be of the order of another 8-10% I find this all very silly; the reason we give free entry to under-three's is because they do not get as much out of their visits as older children and adults.

On this page is a drawing of our new gate, more or less as it will be going up. Coupled with this work will be the development of the Monkey House and the islands which will surround it. Together these will be a spectacular mark of our 60th Anniversary as a Society.

As part of our Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the Society is giving a gold medal to somebody it regards as having made a significant contribution to our knowledge of a species in the wild, and to the understanding of the general public to the problems facing that species. The first gold medal will be presented to Dr. Jane Goodall at Chester Zoo on 26th May, in recognition of her work with chimpanzees.

No zoo can now be sufficient unto itself; we are all affected by the troubles and triumphs of our sister zoos and there is a considerable amount of interchange of ideas, expertise and information. Indeed, in a quiet way we have been helping Indian zoos to develop their inter-zoo

organisation. In these islands I was asked by Dublin Zoo to take part in a report to the Irish Government on the potential of that zoo. In December I was asked by the Zoological Society of London to consider taking over the Chairmanship of the London Zoo Board. This was something which could only be undertaken with the approval of our own Council, which was given in January.

We feel that this is a great honour to Chester Zoo, recognising that though times have been hard and uncertain, we have been keeping our heads above water and have been able to make progress. Chester and London, though very different zoos, have much more in common with each other than they have with other zoos. I hope I will be able to help London Zoo make good its recovery from its trials over the last four years, for these can have done none of us any good.

Below: An artist's impression of the new zoo entrance.

◆ Front cover: The winning photograph in the print section of the '93 Photographic Competition, by Mike Wiltshire.





### MEMBERS' CONCESSIONARY TICKETS - PRICE REVIEW

These special tickets are still available to members who wish to purchase them. As the zoo entrance price increases at the end of March, there is also an increase in the cost of concessionary tickets.

The prices from 27 March 1994 are:

- Adult tickets - £3.25 each:
- Block of five - £16.25
- Child/OAP tickets - £2 each:
- Block of five - £10.00

These special tickets must be purchased in advance, through the Membership Office - or at the Information Kiosk. Postal applications are preferred.

Please make cheques payable to Chester Zoo, and enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

We sometimes get requests from Junior Members for concessionary tickets. Sorry Juniors - they are only available to adult members.

### ONE HUNDRED CLUB

The monthly prize winners since the last issue of Zoo Life are:

#### November '93

- £100 Miss J. Dixon
- £100 Mr N. Hawkes
- £50 Mrs L. E. Harvey
- £50 Mrs B. Thompson

#### December '93

- £500 Mrs S. Wakefield
- £100 Mrs M. Garbutt
- £50 Mrs J. Jardine
- £50 Mrs M. Allsopp

#### January '94

- £100 Mr J. Clegg
- £50 Mrs F. Martin
- £50 Mr M. Holmes.

All winners have been notified and received their cheques. Membership of the "100 Club" is still invited. Please contact Alan Sykes, Deputy Financial Controller, for details.

## MEMBERS' MEETINGS 1994

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

Members wishing to spend time in the zoo prior to Saturday afternoon meetings, may still walk through the zoo to the Lecture Hall. The wicket gate will be manned by Groundstaff from 2.00 pm onwards.

#### Tuesday, 15 March 1994 -

President's evening. His Grace the Duke of Westminster will attend this meeting.

Time: 7.15 for 7.30 pm in the Lecture

Hall (access via the A41 only). Cost: £7.00 including a buffet supper. Prior booking is necessary - please contact Maureen in the Membership Office - (0244 380280, ext 203).

**16 April 1994** - 2.30 pm in the Lecture Hall "A Zoo Review" by the Director, Dr M R Brambell  
21 May 1994 - AGM - 2.30 pm in the Lecture Hall.

Members are reminded that a charge of 50p per meeting will be made at the door to offset expenses for bringing speakers and towards defraying the costs of maintaining the meeting rooms.

Tea and biscuits will be available at meetings at no extra cost.

## "Rolling" Membership

At the beginning of this year, the Society introduced a 12 month "rolling" membership for new members. In this way we hope to encourage and expand membership throughout the year.

However, the subscription renewal date remains unchanged for existing members - ie 1 January each year. If subscription payments are late, the renewal date will not "roll on" for 12 months, but remains the same as the month in which it was originally taken out. This will safeguard members' rights to claim complimentary Life membership status, having reached the age of 60 years and completed twenty-five years of uninterrupted annual membership.

## Elephant Experience Evenings

Last summer, many people were disappointed as our elephant experience evenings were over-subscribed. We have three more planned this year, and tickets are now available from the Party Bookings Office. The dates are Thursdays, 2 June, 7 July, and 4 August. Concession price for members and adopters is £3.50 adult, £2.50 12 - 18 year olds. (The evenings are not suitable for children under 12 years.) Non-concession prices are £6.50 adult, £3.50 12 - 18 years. The event begins at 7pm, but tickets allow entry from 4.30, allowing time for an evening's stroll around the grounds. A glass of wine or fruit juice is included.

# ZOO REVIEW

## CHERNOBYL ORPHANS

In the Autumn, the zoo hosted a group of 20 children who were orphaned in the Chernobyl disaster. The youngsters were brought to England on a holiday organised by the Southport group of the Medicine and Chernobyl Society. These four lads were impressed by the Black Rhinos!



### Fauna and Flora Preservation Society

Chester Zoo members who are also in FFPS will note that there have been recent changes in their Council (reported in the January '94 edition of *Oryx*), including the election of our own Curator in Chief, Dr Gordon McGregor Reid. Chester Zoo has always been active in support of FFPS. Gordon joined with FFPS stalwarts from the zoo including Nick Ellerton, Penny Rudd and Alan Woodward (who collectively run the Northwest group) in a celebration of the 90th anniversary of the Society. FFPS Patron Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, together with HRH Prince Philip, honoured the Society with their presence at the Anniversary Meeting held at the Royal Geographical Society, London. The FFPS was originally formed to protect the wild fauna in British possessions from "appalling destruction" It now works to protect threatened species in all parts of the world, finding practical solutions that take people into account as well as the needs of wildlife.

### Book Review

*Umbulala. Through the Eyes of a Leopard.* by Lena Godsall Bottrill - Questech Productions £16.99. The writer is a wildlife researcher, writer and author on natural history subjects, with a particular interest in big cats. Her book gives an insight into the life of the African leopard, without being heavily scientific. The animals talk to one another, but there is nothing twee about the book - it portrays the wild as a place of danger, disaster and disease. It's a fictionalised account, but based on solid

zoological research and knowledge. A compelling story for all lovers of adventure.

### Journeys from afar

The Christmas Journey last year was as popular as ever, with nearly 4,000 bookings. Some people started their "journey" from quite a distance. One grandfather and grandchild flew in from the Isle of Man especially for the experience; one family came from Chichester, and made a weekend of it - and another family made the return journey in one evening from Huddersfield! And on the Christmas theme .... The Oakfield Restaurant took its first booking for 1994 Christmas lunch in January!

### Conserving Waterlife

By Gordon McGregor Reid

I recently attended a WWF sponsored international conference on biodiversity held in Senegal, West Africa. I had been invited to chair a workshop on the conservation of fresh and brackish water fishes (a report on this will be published in *Oryx*). It struck me forcibly that waterlife - being out of sight, out of mind - does not get the positive publicity it deserves. Often threatened by over fishing, the introduction of alien species, habitat degradation and pollution, waterlife needs conserving too: whether fishes, frogs, crocodiles, seaweeds, water lilies, corals, waterbirds, marine worms or waterfleas.

Chester Zoo has been active in this much-neglected area, mainly through its involvement in the Zoo Federation Fish and Aquatic Invertebrates Taxon Advisory Group or 'TAG'. The TAG has been liaising with concerned organisations and individuals in Britain, Europe and North America. For example, over the Christmas

period at Chester Zoo, I had the opportunity of discussing the potential role of aquarium hobbyist groups with Rob Huntley, Canadian Director of the international Aquatic Conservation Network.

As chair of the TAG, I have been keen to recruit a panel of experts to initiate and support action plans for conservation, such as cooperative schemes to breed rare and endangered fishes.

Chester has invited TAG members to a Workshop on Aquatic Conservation in April this year. Practical activities have already been initiated at Chester Zoo Aquarium, including schemes to breed threatened cichlid fishes from two African lakes (Victoria and Tanganyika, the latter being a research project organised in conjunction with Liverpool John Moore's University).

Local waterlife is, of course, also a priority matter. Chester's aquarium keeper, Justin Bell, and Council Member, Margaret Parslow, have recently been involved in a meeting at Alsager College to discuss the conservation of Cheshire's many fine ponds, some of which are to be found on zoo land.

### The World's Biggest Conservational Map?

Talented artist Hannah Lawson has now completed her unique, huge 10 metre mural in the indoor picnic area. The map shows the principal endangered species in the zoo. You must go along and see it, for the concept is original and startling. You can also see Hannah's work in the Jubilee cafeteria and the Fountain shop, as well as on the children's play area wall, where it all began.

# DIAMOND JUBILEE UPDATE

Marketing Manager Chris Vere details the plans for our 60th birthday celebrations.

## The Gold Medal Award

The choice of Dr Jane Goodall as the first recipient of the Gold Medal of the North of England Zoological Society in our Diamond Jubilee year (see Director's Notes - page 2) is doubly appropriate. Not only has she vastly entertained and informed us on previous visits to the zoo under the aegis of the FFPS, but also her life work with chimpanzees runs parallel to our work with this endangered species.

The presentation and lecture is on THURSDAY 26th MAY, at 7.30pm in a luxurious floored (and heated) marquee on the Oakfield lawn. Tickets for the evening are being offered initially exclusively to Council, Members, Adopters, and staff plus their guests. (We are also inviting FFPS and Jane Goodall foundation members who live locally)

A booking and reply form is enclosed as an insert to the magazine. **There are two tariffs.**

## Diamond Jubilee Day

Here is a date for your diary - Monday 13th June. Until 12 noon on that day, the first 1,000 visitors to the zoo will be charged at 1934 prices - 1/- (or 5p in today's new-fangled coinage) for everyone. Until mid-day, our ice cream suppliers, Walls-Bird Eye have promised to lend us a 1930's "Stop me and Buy one" Ice cream tricycle - so look for a 30's flavour to the ice cream prices too! And who knows - we may have an extra surprise or two that morning.

## Diamond Jubilee Shopping

There are smart maroon ties, with the Diamond Jubilee logo on sale in the shops at £7.00 (Only for Members, Adopters and Staff), and the logo will be appearing on a range of elegant mugs, sweets and other giftware.

## First ever zoo stamps?

Thanks to the initiative of Localpost of Runcorn, the Society will shortly have its own postage stamps - and they are legal for use with the Post Office. Alan Jones and his staff in the Fountain will happily show the range that features conservationally endangered species. These stamps will certainly appreciate in value - so we recommend an early investment.

For those who would like to attend the presentation and lecture, followed by coffee and biscuits in the marquee, the charge will be £7.00.

If you prefer to enjoy a buffet supper afterwards in Oakfield House, the price will be £14.00, and this will include a glass of wine. Numbers will be limited to 80. There will be a pay bar facilities. Because of the demand for tickets, we do ask that you apply early using the booking form. Admission will be via the staff entrance - and full instructions will be sent with the tickets. There are no reductions for children.



◆ Dr. Jane Goodall

## Diamond Jubilee Photographic Competition 1994

*Over £2,850 of great prizes!*



◆ The Prize Camcorder

We have teamed up with our old friends at Canon and at Stena Sealink Holidays for a superb range of prizes. Canon have agreed to present the four major awards, two top video camcorders and two top compact cameras. The runners-up in the two main categories will have a choice of holidays in Ireland from the Stena Sealink Holiday Ireland brochure. The prize line up is:

### Print Photographer of the Year:-

**Canon UC 15 ultra compact "slim" 8mm camcorder. Eric Kirkland Trophy (to hold for a year.) Framed enlargement of the winning print.**

**Runner-up: "Free As You Please" touring holiday in Ireland for two people to a maximum value of £500, from the Stena Sealink Holiday Ireland brochure, 1995. This is a self-drive holiday, with a choice of accommodation.**

**Slide Photographer of the Year:- Canon UC 15 camcorder (as above), Ken Green Trophy (to hold for a year). Framed enlarged print from the winning slide.**

**Runner-Up: A short break in one the Stena-Sealink Dublin hotels for two people, to a maximum value of £350. This may be self-drive or for travel by rail.**

### Junior Photographer of the Year:- (Under 16 on 31 Oct '94)

**Canon Sureshot Zoom Max 35 mm compact camera. "Emma's Trophy" to hold for a year Framed enlargement of the winning slide or print.**

**Runner up Junior Photographer:- Canon Sureshot Zoom Max 35mm compact camera.**

### Garden Photographer of the Year:

**Bridgemere Garden World Voucher for £50 "Bridgemere Trophy" to hold for a year Framed enlargement of the winning print or slide.**

There will be Ness Photo Labs Vouchers as special merit prizes for prints and slides categories. There is a staff section for FEDS and Members of Council as well as the Zoo's full time and seasonal staff, with a gift voucher from Hargreaves Photographic. Leaflets are available in the zoo with full details.

### PRIZE PROFILE

#### Canon Easy to use creative control.

The Canon UC 15 features are controlled by a computer-style menu. It captures fast moving subjects with ease, for the top shutter speed is 1/10,000th second. With the Super Macro autofocus system, you can shoot to 10mm from the lens!

The camera is easy to operate - with only three control buttons on the camera's surface, and is easy to handle and hold.

The pair of Canon Sureshot Zoom Max 35mm cameras for the two best juniors are delightfully simple to use. The lens zooms from wide to tele setting, 38 - 76mm, so it is right for landscapes or portraits.

#### Stena Sealink

The Stena Sealink Line is part of the Swedish company Stena Line - the world's leading and largest ferry company. They have been voted the most popular ferry operator on the Irish Sea, and our prize-winners will travel in luxury on the superb passenger liners.

Last October, I was invited to participate in two Population and Habitat Viability Assessments (PHVA's). One on Lion-tailed Macaques in Madras, followed by the Asiatic Lion PHVA in Baroda. Thanks to British Airways Assisting Nature Conservation (BAANC) I was able to attend both of these meetings. BAANC must be congratulated on the very generous and often unsung sponsorship they provide to so many people who would otherwise find it impossible to attend international meetings or workshops.

I will give a full report on both the Lion-tailed Macaque and Asiatic Lion PHVAs in a future issue of Zoo Life.

Following the Asiatic Lion PHVA the Director of Sakkarbaug Zoo, P P Ravel, invited Dr Craig Packer and myself to Gir. Craig has studied the Lions in the Ngorongoro Crater since 1979 and is familiar with the problems of in-breeding within a restricted population. Gir is the last refuge of the Asiatic Lion and these lions may well face the same uncertain future as do the lions of the Ngorongoro Crater. In-breeding can be every bit as devastating to a population as habitat loss or poaching.

To accept the invitation, Craig and I had to drive through the night up to Gir. After a 12 hour, somewhat bumpy and sometimes alarming journey, we reached Sakkarbaug Zoo. After several cups of tea we enjoyed a tour of the zoo, and were then taken to see the latest developments.

I was last in Sakkarbaug in 1990 and had seen the plans for the forestation and development of several quarries on land directly behind the Zoo. I was staggered by the changes. Two enclosures were already completed, one for Asiatic Lions the other for Sloth Bears. Each enclosure was of approximately five hectares, both were beautifully planted and the sloth bears made full use of the quarry banks. Cattle had been excluded from the area and to counteract ill-will caused by this, as grazing is scarce, the Zoo had utilised local schools to replant the area with indigenous tree species. This positive and conservational theme involved the community and created a parkland area that all could be proud of.

Most western zoos would surely envy the success in both enclosure design and community involvement. I salute their vision and look forward to seeing the remaining quarry sites re-developed.

Following further cups of tea we set off for Gir. We were to stay at Sassan,

## CHANGING GIR

By Nick Ellerton,  
Curator of Mammals.



◆ "Maldharis with buffalo"

the headquarters of the Gujarat Forest Department, who had very generously provided Craig and myself with VIP accommodation.

Though the park was closed due to late rains, the Forest Department ensured that we had the use of a four wheel drive vehicle and several trackers-lions are not easy to see in Gir and luck and local knowledge are essential ingredients to success.

Craig was interested in the habitat of Gir having researched lions in Africa, and also the prey base available to the lions. The wild ungulate population of Gir is estimated at 43,000, Axis Deer numbering approximately 38,000 of this total (Khan et al 1990). The total area of the sanctuary covers 1412 sq. km., with a core area of 259 sq. km. It is only this core area that is not subjected to grazing by domestic cattle and human disturbance. However, cattle play an important role as they provide the lions with 35% of their diet.

It is not only the wildlife of Gir that fascinates me - it is also the people. Gir has nearly one hundred villages and a number of small towns on its boundaries. There are four large temples which attract 70-80,000 devotees annually.

Though the core area is totally protected, some 2,200 Maldharis continue to herd their buffalo and cattle within the sanctuary. These remarkable people, the Masai of Gir, live in 74 thorn enclosed villages called nesses. The Maldharis graze some 14,000 head of stock and have been doing so for at least 100 years.

When cattle are predated by lions outside the core area the State Forest Department pays the owner. These payments have eased much of the understandable animosity against the lions. Like the Masai, the Maldharis live with the lions. It is not just cattle that are attacked - in a three year period 1988-1991, lions attacked 120 people resulting in 20 deaths. There have been several more deaths since.

I know of no western country that would tolerate this degree of human/animal conflict. This conflict is likely to increase with an expanding lion population and greater human pressures.

The people of Gir are the most important factor in ensuring the long term survival of the Asiatic Lion and Gir National Park. It will be their involvement and the tangible benefits that the park and lions can bring that will encourage them to continue to act as custodians of this jewel.

In two days within the park we managed, thanks to a Maldhari herdsman, to locate a pair of lions. The lioness was in season and being mated by the male. As all who have witnessed lions mating will know, this is a very vociferous union, thus making it relatively easy to follow the sounds.

The lions were in dense woodland so we travelled on foot, eventually getting to 30 metres of the pair. Since they live in the presence of the Maldharis, the lions showed little concern at our intrusion but 30 metres was close enough! We also saw a leopard coming out of a house! No doubt looking for chickens.

During our visit, we were taken to an African village. It was inconceivable that two such villages should exist. Our guide explained that the Nawab of Junagadh had brought over some Africans some hundred years ago, to act as foresters, and it is their descendants who now live in Gir. Sadly, as I spoke no Gujarati, our conversation was limited to say the least, but what fascinating stories they must have to tell.

After less than two days we had to leave as our time had run out. If any of you visit India, do go to Gir, enjoy the park not just for the animals but the people who live with them.



# Beautiful Bongo!

*If you thought bongo were drum-sets – think again! In the opinion of the keepers caring for them, these creatures are the most attractive of all the antelope species. Senior Keeper Alan Woodward, writes about the first bongo births at Chester.*

The Eastern Bongo is restricted to the forested areas of Kenya and now only found at Mount Kenya, the Aberdare National Park and the Mau Forest. Due to the elusiveness of these animals it has been impossible to obtain a correct census on how many there are, but the reported approximation is as low as a few hundred - the depletion due mainly to habitat loss.

Both bulls and cows have lyre shaped horns, vertical white body stripes, and white markings on the head and legs. The pelage of the bull is dark brown to black at the front, blending into a burnt sienna shade, and the cows are burnt sienna all over.

Bongos are found up to 3000 metres and are very shy animals. The bulls are usually solitary, accompanying the cows only at oestrus. Cows are sometimes found in small groups.

One calf is born after a gestation of 9.5 months and mother leaves it in the undergrowth, returning periodically to feed it.

## Eastern Bongo Zoo Population

The first time bongos were seen in the UK was in 1936 at London Zoo. Both animals were females, and lived only one and two years. It was a number of years before they were maintained to a lengthy lifespan and were actually breeding. Longevity in captivity is about 20 years.

Three other collections in the UK maintain the species - Woburn Safari Park, Howletts Zoo and Marwell Zoo. Woburn and Howletts have the largest

herds, and the animals are breeding. Marwell has only just received some young stock from Howletts and Antwerp.

## Bongo at Chester Zoo

The bongos are housed in the old Wapiti enclosure, refurbished to make it acceptable for this totally different species. The three animals arrived in August '92. The male "Kunde" was born at Howletts Zoo in January '91, and arrived at Chester in August '92. Both our females had been at Marwell for over a year, but were both born at Woburn in 1987.

### Bongo's daily diet (per animal)

Every morning: 2 lettuce, 1 stick celery, 1 loaf wholemeal bread.

Every evening: 5 parsnips; 5 carrots; 4 - 6 cabbages; 4 apples; 3 pears; 3 bananas; browser breeder, bran and oats.

This diet varies from time to time. The concentrated browser diet is essential for browsing animals, as it contains the correct amounts of vitamin E and Selenium.

After a short settling-in time, the bull was introduced to the cows. There were a few short bursts of chasing, but the bull's confidence increased, and it was decided to separate him for a short period while further alterations were carried out to enable the cows to get out of his field of vision. More trees were planted, and protective fencing also acted as a visual barrier.

The bull was re-introduced - and again the females took off, with him in pursuit. To avoid injury to the females, it was decided to put the male in with them, to test their reactions. After a while, the close management of the bongo seemed to be working, with "Aberdare" actually approaching the

bull with head outstretched and the bull the same. Then they both circled each other before mating. Oestrus lasts three days and occurs every three to four weeks. A few weeks later "Mzima" was also in oestrus, and the same procedure was carried out.

After seven months, both cows looked noticeably larger at the abdomen region and movement could be seen at just over nine months. In the early hours of 1st December, the first bongo to be born at Chester arrived. "Aberdare's" calf was a female, and she proved to be an excellent mother. The calf was named "Kitalee" and is growing rapidly.

"Mzima" gave birth three weeks later to a male calf, "Nakuru." She was watched closely, as she had rejected here first calf born at Woburn. Several bongos have been hand-reared due to lack of maternal behaviour. But all was well, and "Mzima" is an excellent mother to her calf.

After a few weeks, mothers and calves were introduced into the enclosure. Once "Aberdare" had established her dominance over "Mzima" all was well. The calves have become almost inseparable, with Mzima acting as calf-sitter from time to time!

The calves have met the bull and are getting on well - which is more than can be said for the cows, who are obviously not in season! The bull has been separated, and the procedure starts again, with bated breath and nervous exhaustion, which will be well worth it for two more of these beautiful antelope at the end of the year!

# PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION WINNERS 1993

**O**ur annual photographic competition continues to attract hundreds of superb pictures taken in the zoo over the last year. Last year, the three main prizes were Kodak CD photo players, representing a quite new way of enjoying your photographs, by showing them on your television screen.

The first prize in the print section went to Mike Wiltshire L.R.P.S. of Birkenhead. His stunning portrait of a sealion is our front cover picture.

The slide section winner was Maxwell Knowles, of Walton-le-Dale, Preston for his shot of a rhino enjoying a mud bath.

Mrs Kathleen Harper, who won the garden section, lives just a few moments from the zoo gate. Her favourite spot in the zoo is the sunken garden with its statue of Noah and the Four Winds.

Our Junior winner, Maria Morris, was just 5 years old when she took her winning shot of a group of giraffes - and this is her second major photography prize! She won her camera as first prize in a photography competition with Granada Television when she was only three years old and that winning shot was also taken in the zoo, at the elephant house.

Entry forms for the 1994 competition will be available soon.





- ◆ Left: Great Indian Rhino, by Maxwell Knowles.
- ◆ Above: Giraffes, by Maria Morris.
- ◆ Below: Gardens Winner, by Kathleen Harper.





few weeks and under his and Darren Langford's expert care it not only recovered but thrived.

### Waterfowl

Waterfowl bred over the two years included Black-necked Swans, White-faced Whistling Ducks, Fulvous Whistling Ducks, Emperor Geese, Hawaiian Geese (eight reared in 1993), Cereopsis Geese, Ruddy-headed Geese, Common Shelduck, Baikal Teal, Laysan Teal, Ringed Teal, Marbled Teal, Tufted Ducks, Rosy-billed and Red-crested Pochards, Mandarin Ducks, Carolina Wood Ducks, White-winged Wood Ducks, Hooded Mergansers and Ruddy Ducks. In autumn 1993 our Ruddy-headed Geese (which are rather aggressive and need a pen of their own which is soon to be lost to the Monkey House re-development) were exchanged with Banham Zoo for a pair of Ashy-headed Geese. Also new to the collection were White-headed Ducks. It is expected the latter may soon be transferred to the Europe on the Edge aviary - if we can catch them! Also newly received, and presently held with the main Waldrapp breeding colony are European Stone Curlews and Ruff. Again these should be transferred to the European aviary this Spring.

The waterfowl section and the new Europe on the Edge aviary are cared for by Paul Morris and Steve Williams with artificial incubation and rearing of waterfowl and pheasants being the responsibility of Nick Manning. Over 1992 and 1993 nineteen Temminck's Tragopans, four Satyr Tragopans, twenty-one Himalayan Monals, four Brown Eared-pheasant, one White Eared-pheasant, ten Golden Pheasant, five Grey Peacock Pheasants, one Palawan Peacock Pheasant and twenty Edward's Pheasants were reared. The latter are now believed to be extinct in the wild and we were especially pleased in rearing them. Three Bare-faced Curassows were reared in 1992 and another in 1993; Variable Chachalacas bred in both years. Californian Quail in the free-flight of the Tropical House were rather too prolific with seven chicks reared in 1992 and nineteen in 1993.

### Condors

Our pair of Andean Condors are presently the only pair breeding in the U.K. Chicks reared in 1992 and 1993 brought the total now produced



◆ Fledgling Lilacine Amazon

from this pair to ten. Condors have been sent abroad to Rotterdam, Antwerp and most recently Moscow as well as being loaned to Zoo Federation collections at home. Apart from the condors, our Birds of Prey collection has been totally turned around. The Wedge-tailed Eagles were sent on loan to Arnhem Zoo in Holland and having lost our male Bateleur Eagle in 1992 the female has been loaned to Regent's Park.

New to Chester are the magnificent European Black Vultures (now in Europe on the Edge), a pair of attractive Secretary Birds and a pair of the highly endangered and enchanting Mauritius Kestrels. The construction of a spacious new aviary for the Mauritius Kestrels was funded by our zoo members appeal and built by the Employment Action team of the Cheshire County Council. We are also grateful to the Employment Action Team for building the lofty new owl aviaries. White-faced Scops Owls were bred at Chester for the first time in 1992 when two chicks were reared and these delighted us with four chicks in 1993. Snowy Owls and Barn Owls also bred but the Spectacled Owls disappointed us in laying eggs but not hatching chicks.

### Tawnys from Taronga

Our two Tawny Frogmouth males have been living a bachelor's life for the last twelve years. We recently received two young females from Taronga Zoo, Sydney, to join these males. After an initial quarantine and settling in period we introduced these girls to the men. However, after their years together our males appear to prefer their own company to that of the females.

Two pairs of kookaburras reared six chicks in 1992. In 1993 because of doubling the size of their aviaries, we reduced our holding to one pair, which reared a chick in 1993.

### Hornbills

Our African Grey Hornbills fledged six chicks in 1992 and seven in 1993, reaching a grand total of twenty-three chicks reared since their first U.K. breeding in 1988. The Trumpeter Hornbills were also successful with a further two chicks in 1992 and three in 1993 - this pair now having produced eleven chicks since 1989. Unfortunately, the conservationally more important Asian Hornbills were not successful. The Great Indian Hornbills nested both years but failed to produce any young. The Wrinkled Hornbills hatched chicks but despite considerable attention from Roger Merry and Karen Davis, lost these at 6-7 weeks old in both years. New arrivals to the collection in late 1993 were a pair of Tropic Hornbills bred at Linton Zoo and four Hoopoes bred at Harewood Bird Gardens.

◆ Hoopoe





◆ Blue-eyed Cockatoo chick

### Toucans

The Channel-billed Toucans may now be getting on in years - the female came as an adult bird ten years ago. She first bred in 1989 and has bred every year since, rearing a total to date of 14 chicks.

One of her first female chicks was paired with an unrelated male in 1991 but they have so far shown no signs of breeding. Similarly we still await nesting activities from the pair of Tocos received in 1990.

Over the last two years three White-cheeked Touracos and seven Schalow's Touracos were reared. Despite our breeding of Violet Plantain Eaters and Red-crested Touracos in 1991 we have since been unsuccessful with both species.

### Doves and Pigeons

Mountain Witch Doves, Celebes Quail

Doves and Luzon Bleeding Hearts were bred in 1992 and 1993 and Superb Fruit Doves and Common Bronzewings (both for the first time at Chester) in 1993. New arrivals to the collection are the fabulous Nicobar Pigeons received on loan from Frankfurt and Rotterdam Zoos.

### Softbills

Smaller softbills present a different challenge. Our best breedings in 1992 were with the African Pied Starlings (a U.K. first), White-rumped Shammas, Silver-beaked Tanagers and Fairy Bluebirds. Superb Spree Starlings and Emerald Starlings both hatched chicks but failed to rear them in 1992 but were successful in rearing chicks in 1993.

Rothschilds Mynahs hatched chicks in 1993 of which one was successfully hand-reared. By

removing chicks from the nest to finish off by hand-rearing, our staff were also then successful with Red-billed Magpies and Azure-winged Magpies. Softbills bred in both years in the Tropical House free-flight included Fairy Bluebirds, Red-eyed Bulbuls, Silver-beaked Tanagers and Silver-eared Mesias.

Chinese Yellow-throated Laughing Thrushes are known only from three museum skins and their wild status remains uncertain. Five were received in 1993 and we look forward to working with these amongst many other conservationally important birds in 1994.

Finally it remains to thank all our staff for their hard work and extend special thanks to our volunteer keepers: Jackie Forsythe, Julie Whitear, Laura Durnford and especially Chantelle Velkamp.



◆ Superb Fruit Dove



◆ Emerald Starling

Zoo curators are regularly called upon to talk about their work to outside groups such as scientific societies, townswoman guilds, luncheon clubs and schools. Giving talks represents a welcome break from routine and it is always worthwhile and rewarding to spread the good news about Chester Zoo. Nevertheless, no matter how well-organised the speaker (which I cannot, in truth, always claim to be!) things do not always go according to plan.

I once gave a talk at a senior citizens club in a high rise building and was interrupted in full flow by vigorous tapping on the window, accompanied by unrepeatable swearing. It transpired that the chairman - a charming, snowy-haired gent who was a bit hard of hearing - had inadvertently closed the window and drawn the curtains on a painter working outside on scaffolding. My amiable host had added insult to injury by disconnecting the painters' hot air gun and plugging in my slide projector instead.

### FRED'S FAUX PAS

More recently, I was asked to give a zoo talk in the evening to a local natural history society and things went wrong. In fact, they went so horribly wrong that I will change the names of those involved to protect the innocent and, indeed, the guilty! I will, for safety, call them the 'Littleford Naturalists'. Now, as you may know, Littleford is some considerable distance from Chester Zoo.

I had not realised this until I looked up the road map, some two hours before I was due to appear. I hastily threw slide pack and carousel into the back of my car and set off briskly for Littleford. Fortunately, Fred, Secretary to the Littleford Naturalists, had provided me with an excellent map and all of the necessary details on a neatly typed sheet.

### TURNING TABLES

I screeched to a halt outside Littleford Village Hall, where a gaggle of anxious ladies peered into the gloom. 'Thank goodness you've arrived!' they exclaimed. I looked down at my information sheet which said '7.00 pm start' and at my watch which read 6.55 and then apologised for cutting things a bit fine. 'A bit fine' they chorused 'we expected you to be

# ZOO TALK

Or the perils of public speaking.  
by Gordon McGregor Reid



◆ Sometimes even Boris doesn't meet expectation!

here over one hour ago.' Contrite, but slightly bemused, I proffered further apologies and then asked where the projector and screen were.

There was a curious silence. 'Well ... I suppose it *might* be nice to have some slides first.' volunteered a lady called Dorothy, after a thoughtful pause. We set to and found the necessary equipment buried in a box room. Pushing aside several large tables that had been inconveniently laid out in the hall (and muttering under my breath in the process) I was soon ready for action. I looked around for Fred to introduce me, but he was nowhere to be seen and none of the members knew where he was. Everything seemed rather confused.

### ICY RESPONSE

Time was pressing. I resolved to proceed minus Fred and flashed up a slide of Boris our dominant male chimp, much beloved by zoo visitors. The customary warm, enthusiastic audience reaction was strangely missing. Glancing around for reassurance, I noted that the composition of the audience was somewhat imbalanced for a naturalists society - there being not one man or child among the sea of blank faces. 'I

think there has been a dreadful mistake' piped up Dorothy from the front row; and a wave of embarrassed, nodding agreement rippled through the crowd. I asked cautiously why this might be so and soon had my reply: 'We were looking forward to a demonstration of cake icing!' said Dorothy, obviously flustered.

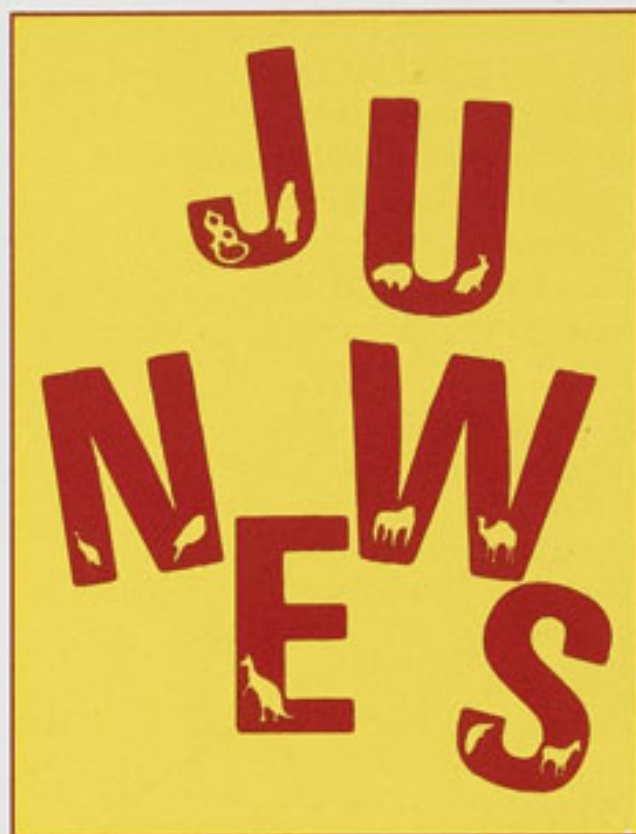
I quickly explained that, much as I would like to oblige, this was not quite in my line and gently enquired who it was that I had the pleasure of addressing. 'Why, the Littleford branch of the Womans Royal Voluntary Service' came the response.

### PIECE OF CAKE

I reached with nervous, clammy hands for my typed sheet to check the arrangements that I had agreed with Fred. Clearly, I had the right place, the right day, the right time and even the right room ... but, somehow, the wrong audience! It transpired that Fred had sent me a booking form relating to previous years and that the Littleford Naturalists had, without informing me, since changed the venue. Dorothy and the other disappointed icers were suddenly very understanding and comforting. They supplied me with a nice cup of tea, a cake beautifully decorated with silver balls, the telephone number for Fred's house (he was well known to several ladies there), and some coins for the pay phone in a cupboard with no light bulb. My new friends even went to the trouble of shouting out the number to me as I fumbled around in the dark trying to operate the telephone dial. A weary voice on the line (could it have been Fred's wife?) informed me that the daft man was always doing this sort of thing and she was *thoroughly* fed-up with it.

Had I tried the local Baptist Church Hall, she wondered? Escorted by excited and chattering cake icers (still no sign of their speaker) I made my way in the rain to the Baptist Hall. Bingo! There at the door stood a wet and bedraggled welcoming committee of worried naturalists ... but still no Fred.

I never did find out what happened to him. I only know that, after I had finished my zoo talk to resounding applause, a highly apologetic chairman said between gritted teeth 'We will *deal* with Fred later!'



#### TRACKS & SIGNS –

**Saturday 26th March 1994**

Another of our very popular events each year, when Juniors hunt through enclosures to find footprints from which to make plaster casts.

We will meet outside the Oakfield at 11.00 am, and meet back there at the end of the day at 4.00 pm. Over eights are invited to join in and everyone should bring a packed lunch.

#### CHOLMONDELEY CASTLE HOME FARM, CHESHIRE –

**Sunday 24th April 1994**

##### ■ Please note change of date

A new visit for Juniors this year when we head off into the Cheshire countryside to discover the delights of Cholmondeley Castle estate.

We will be visiting the Home Farm then picnicking in the magnificent gardens before setting off on a nature ramble. The bus will leave the Staff Car Park at 11.30 am, returning around 4.00 pm. Over eights are invited along, and you will need a picnic lunch.

#### THE CHESTNUT CENTRE, DERBYSHIRE –

**Saturday 21st May 1994**

Popular demand has ensured that we again visit this most lovely of locations in the Derbyshire hills. May is a particularly spectacular time of year at the Chestnut Centre which specialises in keeping otters, badgers, owls and other birds of prey. We have been promised a conducted tour of the collection.

The bus will leave the Staff Car Park at 9.30 am, returning around 5.00 pm. Over eights should come equipped for being outdoors in May, and bring a picnic.

## JUNIOR MEMBER'S FIELD TRIPS AND MEETINGS

#### ANGLESEY SEA ZOO AND BUTTERFLY PALACE –

**Saturday 25th June 1994**

This should be a lovely way to spend a summer's day in Wales. The Anglesey Sea Zoo is well worth a visit and after that we will picnic outside before going on to the Butterfly Palace. The bus will set-off from the staff car park at 9.00 am, returning at around 6.00 pm. Over eights with picnics invited.

#### DAY WITH A KEEPER –

**Wednesday 27th July 1994**

Juniors of over twelve years of age are invited to spend a day working alongside Keepers, learning about their job and some of the animals they look after. We will meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30am, and the day will finish at 4.00 pm when Juniors will return to the Oakfield for collection.

#### JUNIOR MEMBERS' BARBEQUE AND MOTH TRAPPING –

**Friday 19th August 1994**

It has been a few years since the Juniors last surveyed the moth population in the Zoo and Jon Delf, Senior Member and 'entomologist extraordinaire' will be bringing several moth traps for us to catch the moths in and then will help us to identify them before they are released. This will be a late night as the moths do not appear in numbers before darkness falls, so we will set up the moth traps then have our barbeque supper, after which we will inspect the traps to see what we have found.

Over eights (who can stay awake!) are invited along at 7.45 pm, and you should be warmly clothed. Parents can walk Juniors over to the Jubilee lawn from the staff entrance and should arrange to collect youngsters at 10.45 pm.

#### AINSDALE NATURE RESERVE AND SOUTHPORT ZOO –

**Saturday 17th September 1994**

This will be the Juniors first visit to Southport Zoo, after which the lovely sand dunes of the Ainsdale Nature Reserve near Southport beckon us. The nature trails and wooded areas will reveal their treasures under the observant eye of the Reserve's warden. September may be breezy by the sea, so come equipped for cool weather. Over eights invited.

The bus will leave the Staff Car Park at 10.00 am, returning at 4.00 pm.

#### THE RED DEER RUT AND

**HOME FARM AT TATTON PARK –**

**Saturday 22nd October 1994**

After a visit to the rare breeds at Tatton's Home Farm during the morning, we will meet up with the Park Rangers who will take us into the Deer Park to observe the Red Deer Rut and then take us to look at the Deer Farm. Picnic and wellies please. The bus will leave the staff car park at 10.00 am returning to the Zoo for 4.00 pm. Over tens invited.

Details of the Winter trips for 1994/1995 will follow in future magazines.



## A TOUCHING TIME

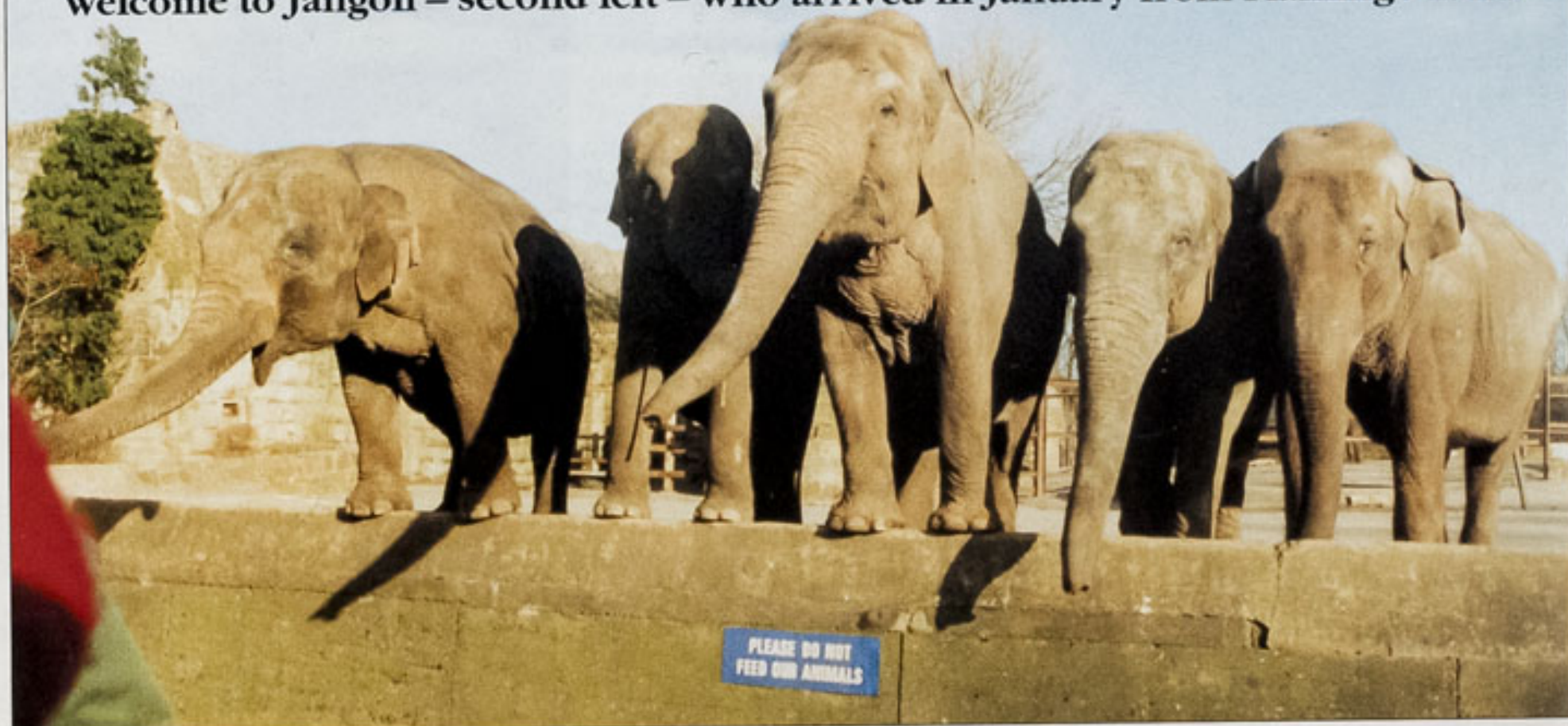
The annual "contact session" meeting is always one of the most popular events on the Junior calendar. The indoor picnic area proved the perfect venue for Juniors and animals to get together - as this selection of photographs shows!



# Arrivals Births and Hatchings

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 1993 AND JANUARY 1994

Welcome to Jangoli – second left – who arrived in January from Flamingo Land



## MAMMALS

Rodrigues Fruit Bat	<i>Pteropus rodricensis</i>	0.0.1	born
Black Spider Monkey	<i>Ateles fusciceps robustus</i>	1.1	born
Margay	<i>Felis wiedii</i>	0.0.1	born
Scottish Wildcat	<i>Felis silvestris grampia</i>	1.0	received
Californian Sealion	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	0.1	received
Asian Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	0.1	received
Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	1.0	received
Guanaco	<i>Lama glama guanicoe</i>	1.1	born
Blackbuck	<i>Antelope cervicapra</i>	1.0.2	born
Arabian Gazelle	<i>Gazella gazella arabica</i>	1.0	born
Bongo	<i>Tragelaphus erycerus</i>	1.1	born
Congo Buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer nanus</i>	0.1	born
Scimitar-horned Oryx	<i>Oryx dammah</i>	2.0	born
Axis Deer	<i>Cervus axis</i>	0.1	born

## BIRDS

Humboldt's Penguin	<i>Spheniscus humboldti</i>	0.0.12	received
Smew	<i>Mergus albellus</i>	0.1	received
Mauritius Kestrel	<i>Falco punctatus</i>	1.1	received
Red-masked Conure	<i>Aratinga erythrogenys</i>	2.1	received
Blue-throated Conure	<i>Pyrrhura cruentata</i>	2.2	received
Slender-billed Conure	<i>Enicognathus leptorhynchus</i>	0.1	received
Blue Streaked Lory	<i>Eos reticulata</i>	1.1	received
Blue Throated Macaw	<i>Ara glaucogularis</i>	0.1	received
Illiger's Macaw	<i>Ara maracana</i>	1.1	received
Thick-billed Parrot	<i>Rhynchopsitta p. pachyrhyncha</i>	0.1	received
Blue-eyed Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua ophthalmica</i>	0.0.1	hatched

Lilacine Amazon	<i>Amazona autumnalis lilacina</i>	0.1	received
Tarctic Hornbill	<i>Penelopides panini</i>	1.1	received
Java Sparrow	<i>Padda oryzivora</i>	0.0.1	hatched
Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	2.2	received
Yellow-throated Laughing Thrush	<i>Garrulax galbanus</i>	0.0.3	received
Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>	1.1	received

## REPTILES

Brown Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus basiliscus</i>	0.0.2	hatched
Plumed Basilisk	<i>Basiliscus plumifrons</i>	0.0.5	hatched
Prehensile-tailed Skink	<i>Corucia zebrata</i>	6.3	received

## AMPHIBIANS

Tree Frog	<i>Phyllomedusa hypochondrialis</i>	0.0.10	received
Congo Dwarf Frogs	<i>Hymenochirus bottgeri</i>	30	received
Axolotl	<i>Amblystoma mexicanum</i>	100	bred

## FISH

Freshwater Stingray	<i>Potamotrygon sp.</i>	5	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis xenognathus</i>	39	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis velvet-black</i>	35	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis argens</i>	159	bred
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis pyrrhocephalus</i>	10	received
Altum Angel	<i>Pterophyllum scalare altum</i>	6	received
Emperor Peckoltia	<i>Peckoltia sp.</i>	5	received

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

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