



MAGAZINE

Autumn 2009

£2.50

The official magazine for
Chester Zoo Members and **Adopters**

RED RIVER HOG PIGLETS lead baby boom

see inside . . . Chester Zoo Additions



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Members' Update

A new benefit to Members
 Chester Zoo have now opened the Fastrack gate at the main entrance to the Zoo, just swipe your membership card to gain immediate entry to the Zoo, now there's no need to queue.



Adopters Day • Saturday 3 October

Online Renewals for Members and Adopters

Good news! If you have already registered your email address and password with Chester Zoo you will be able to log in to your account and renew your membership or adoption on line at www.chesterzoo.org
 If you have already provided an email address but do not have a password you can still log on through our website. Just click 'forgot password' and we will send a new one to you, which you can then change to one of your choice.
 If you haven't already registered your details then don't worry, please just contact the membership office on **01244 650208**, we will happily add your email address to your record, enabling you to register.

New - Membership Office

A new office for Members and Adopters is opened outside the main gates of the Zoo in August. You will be able to renew your membership here next time you visit the Zoo.



director's pen



Gordon McGregor Reid Director General

It's hard to believe it is September already and with Autumn upon us, our thoughts are turning to Christmas.

It has been another productive few months for the zoo again with numerous events under our belt including the official opening of the *Tsavo Bird Aviary*. We were delighted to welcome Cllr Mike Jones, Leader of the Cheshire West and Chester unitary authority, to do the honours.

Music producer Pete Waterman also visited to launch our revamped monorail.

On longer-term matters, we held a series of public consultations aimed at seeking views from interested parties, communities and individuals on our *Natural Vision* plans. These went very well and the feedback we received was very positive and will help as we continue to develop our *Natural Vision* plans, the first phase of which will be the *Heart of Africa* development.

In the short term, however, we are finalising out plans for this year's Christmas extravaganza. The fun will begin on December 5 and this year's festive activities will be a traditional affair with new events to experience. For those of you who have been with us for some years you may remember the *Wild Winter* exhibition. This will be making a return to the Joseph Banks Room which we will be transforming into a Winter woodland complete with hidden surprises. Visitors also will be able to find out more about how animals survive the long winter months.

More details of all our Christmas plans and other events will be unveiled on our website over the next few weeks (www.chesterzoo.org). I hope to see you at one of them very soon.

In the meantime, thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon M.G. Reid".



Members' Day

The second of this year's Members Days was held on Friday 3rd July. 350 members braved the weather to attend a programme of activities and brought along over 200 half priced guests. The programme of events for the day included meet the keeper opportunities, tours of the Grow Zone and a craft workshop where children and adults alike had the opportunity to be good to bugs and the environment by making Hibernaculas.

Zoo additions



All creatures great and small brought some good news to Chester Zoo this summer.

A number of animal births and the opening of a new enclosure were welcomed at the 110-acre zoo.

A breeding pair of Asian Short-clawed otters moved into a new purpose-built enclosure which they share with a breeding pair of babirusa. The remainder of the otters moved in with the orang-utans and gibbons – the first time all three species have been put together at a zoo.

Other 'families' prompting happy smiles were the pair of Yellow Mongoose and the Red River Hogs, *Rick* and *Lulu*, who all had triplets.

The Banded Mongoose also had four young.

Other new arrivals included Bactrian camels, *Ider* and *Shanshan*, who joined the zoo's other camel, *Becky*. *Ider* and *Shanshan* were brought over from a zoo in Denmark.

Lively Californian Sealion, *Lara*, came to Chester from Nuremburg in Germany.

Continuing the welcome news was the female baby Black rhino who made her debut in May. Keepers have finally decided on a name – *Bashira* – which means 'bringer of good news.'

Kevin Buley, Head of Zoo Programmes, said:

"It's the perfect name since everyone here was thrilled by *Bashira's* arrival. Her arrival seemed to be the start of a baby boom. We are delighted to welcome so many new animals in such a short space of time."



Chester Zoo has successfully hatched the eggs of the Annam leaf turtle, a turtle like many others from South East Asia that is dangerously close to extinction.

Though unremarkable in appearance, this subtly marked turtle species is much sought after in the food and traditional medicine markets of the Far East. It is now so rare in the wild that zoo populations may prove to be the only hope for the species' survival. Chester Zoo's Curator of Lower Vertebrates and Invertebrates, Richard Gibson, believes this is the first time the species has successfully been bred in the UK.

"We are delighted these eggs have hatched to produce five healthy babies and we are hoping for more. We have further fertile eggs in incubation and there are promising signs that several may hatch."

Breeding these turtles, and the eight other similarly threatened Asian turtle species held at Chester Zoo, is so important that they are kept 'off show' – meaning they cannot be seen by visitors.

"We have to maintain them in a secure environment, with minimal disturbance so they are kept off-show in specially designed enclosures in climate-controlled facilities. Noise and activity around these animals can cause stress which will undermine both their health and their reproductive potential," said Richard.

Chester Zoo has kept the species for about three years, having acquired two female turtles from Rotterdam Zoo and a male from Barcelona Zoo.

Little is known about Annam leaf turtles as their populations have been decimated in the wild by the luxury food and traditional oriental medicines trades.

Turtles are so popular as a food item that they can even be bought in supermarkets. There is no scientific proof that products made from this or any other turtle has any medicinal properties.

The Amman leaf turtle is one of dozens of turtle and tortoise species endangered by this indiscriminate and unsustainable trade. Some species may already have been driven to extinction in the wild and now exist solely in zoo collections.

Richard said: "Ten to 20 million turtles are collected all over the world, traded internationally and eaten (mostly in Asia) each year. For several species it is now too late to save them. Only by changing people's attitudes and beliefs can we hope to ensure the survival of those species which remain. It is the millions of consumers in the world we must convince to save turtles and other wildlife."

Chester Zoo also has several other rare turtle and tortoise species and has enjoyed previous breeding successes with critically endangered Chinese three-striped box turtles and Egyptian tortoises.

Turtle picture courtesy of the Press Association

Zoo additions

Experts at Chester Zoo have reared two Socorro Doves, one of the world's rarest bird species, now extinct in the wild.

The chicks are the first of the species to be reared at Chester and are among a string of notable successes by the zoo's bird team in 2009.

Socorro Doves are native to Socorro Island, off the coast of Mexico, but can no longer be found there, as the introduction of invasive species to the island has had a serious impact on the birds and much of the vegetation which formed their natural habitat.

Chester Zoo's Curator of Birds, Andrew Owen, said the breeding achievement is a significant boost to Europe's Captive Breeding Programme which is working to conserve these highly threatened birds. The long-term aim of the programme is to re-introduce the species back into the wild.

Only a handful of Socorro Doves remain in zoos globally, making up the final frontier in the birds' battle for survival.

Andrew said: "Our new chicks will play an important part in the future of the species and, happily, there are signs that the parent pair are nesting again, so we are hopeful they will produce more young."



Fairy Bluebird chicks

This year has seen a number of breeding successes by the Chester Zoo bird team, helping advance their conservation efforts. Keepers also celebrated success with Montserrat Orioles which for the first time this year produced two chicks. This critically endangered species, native to the volcanic Caribbean Island of Montserrat, has been kept at the zoo for a number of years.

Another critically endangered species, the Ecuadorian Parrot, produced five young, three of which were hand-reared by staff.

Chester Zoo is currently the only collection in the UK breeding the Fairy Bluebird, a stunning species from the rainforests of South East Asia. Keepers are hand-rearing the chicks, which, during the early stages of development involves feeding them using tweezers every one and a half hours through the day and night.

The Zoo's bird staff use the skills learned in Chester and apply these to help rear critically endangered birds in their native habitats, most notably in Mauritius where a key conservation project is re-establishing populations of the Mauritius Fody and the Olive White-eye, two species of song birds that are unique to Mauritius.

The zoo is also involved with conservation work in China to help the Blue-Crowned Laughingthrush, a species we breed regularly in the Zoo, of which there are thought to be less than 200 in the wild.

Andrew and the team are developing breeding projects with the Sumatran Laughingthrush and also the Red Bird of Paradise, native to New Guinea. Chester Zoo has just acquired three new females of this species, which it hopes to partner with its three existing males.

Other 2009 breeding successes include Tawny Frogmouths, native to Australia. Two pairs of parent birds produced five young.

Andrew added: "We are also had a good season with the Flamingos, resulting in eight Caribbean chicks and six Chilean Flamingo chicks so far, with more eggs to hatch. We've had nine penguin chicks this year and are delighted to see breeding activity in our new Tsavo National Park Bird Safari walk-through aviary, which opened this month featuring birds native to the Tsavo region of East Africa."

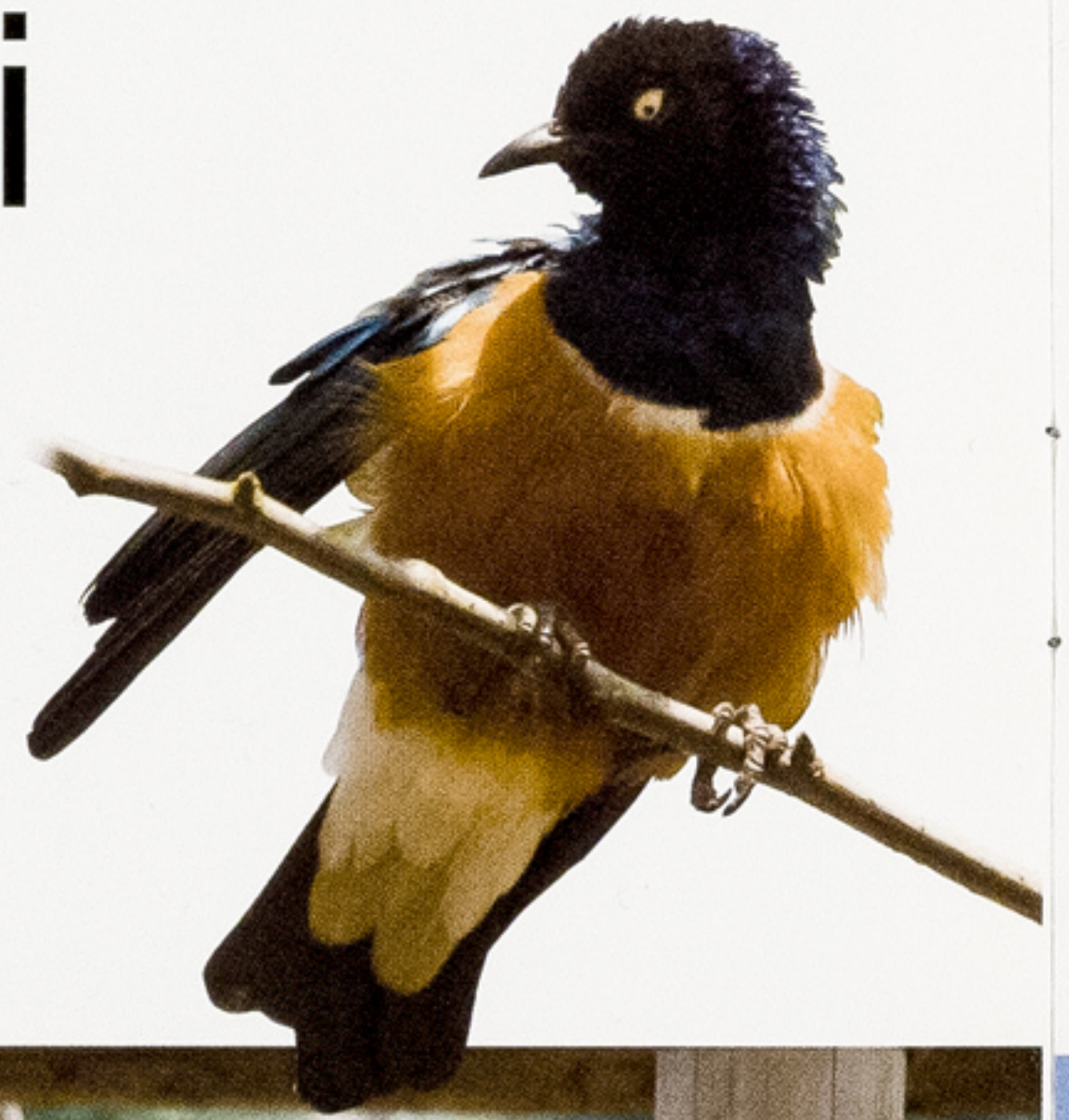


Tawny Frog Mouths



Along with all the new faces was the return of an old favourite. *Dicky*, a male Okapi, is now back in Chester following a two year 'secondment' to London Zoo. Keepers hope to partner him with female, *Stuma*.

Chester zoo's new tropical bird safari is officially opened by council leader



There was the chance for some close encounters of a rare kind when a wildlife safari with a difference was officially launched.

Councillor Mike Jones, the leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council, opened the Zoo's latest exciting exhibit, the Tsavo National Park Bird Safari, offering a chance to walk freely among some of the most exotic birds in the world.

The aviary is the second walk-through enclosure to open at the Zoo in six months, following on from the successful Butterfly Journey, the largest free-flight zoo-based butterfly house in Britain.

The aviary has been supported by Airbus and has been created to help increase public awareness of valuable bird species which inhabit Tsavo National Park, Kenya, where Chester Zoo supports key conservation projects.

The unusual design of the aviary reflects the terrain of the Tsavo region and incorporates specially built termite mounds, trees, scrubland shrubs, with a natural floor created from red sand interspersed with tropical grasses, and fences made from forestry materials. It is as similar as possible to the natural habitat of the birds featured, their dazzling plumage providing eye-catching flashes of red hot colour set against the lush backdrop of the trees.

Chester Zoo's Curator of Birds, Andrew Owen, said people who have explored the aviary so far have been impressed by the unusual experience of walking through an enclosure where the birds can fly so close to them.

"It is a truly immersive experience which gives people a real sense of the natural environment of these exotic species. The birds have settled well, and some have already started to nest and breed. Visitors will have a chance not just to glimpse the birds but to get a true insight into how they behave in the wild."

Councillor Jones officially opened the exhibit and unveiled a specially designed and inscribed rustic bench, where zoo visitors are able to sit and enjoy the amazing sight of the birds around them.

Cllr Jones then joined specially invited guests on a tour of the aviary and had a chance to talk to the Zoo's tropical bird experts.

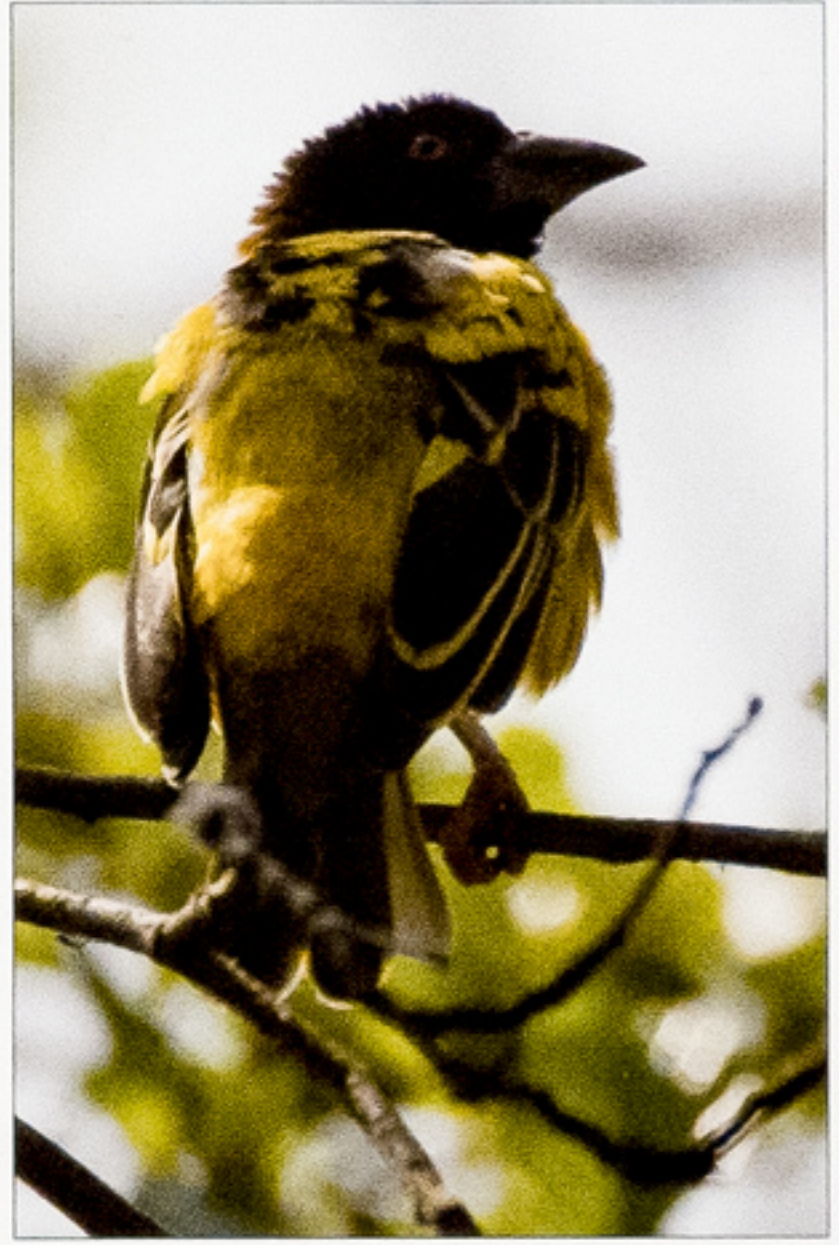
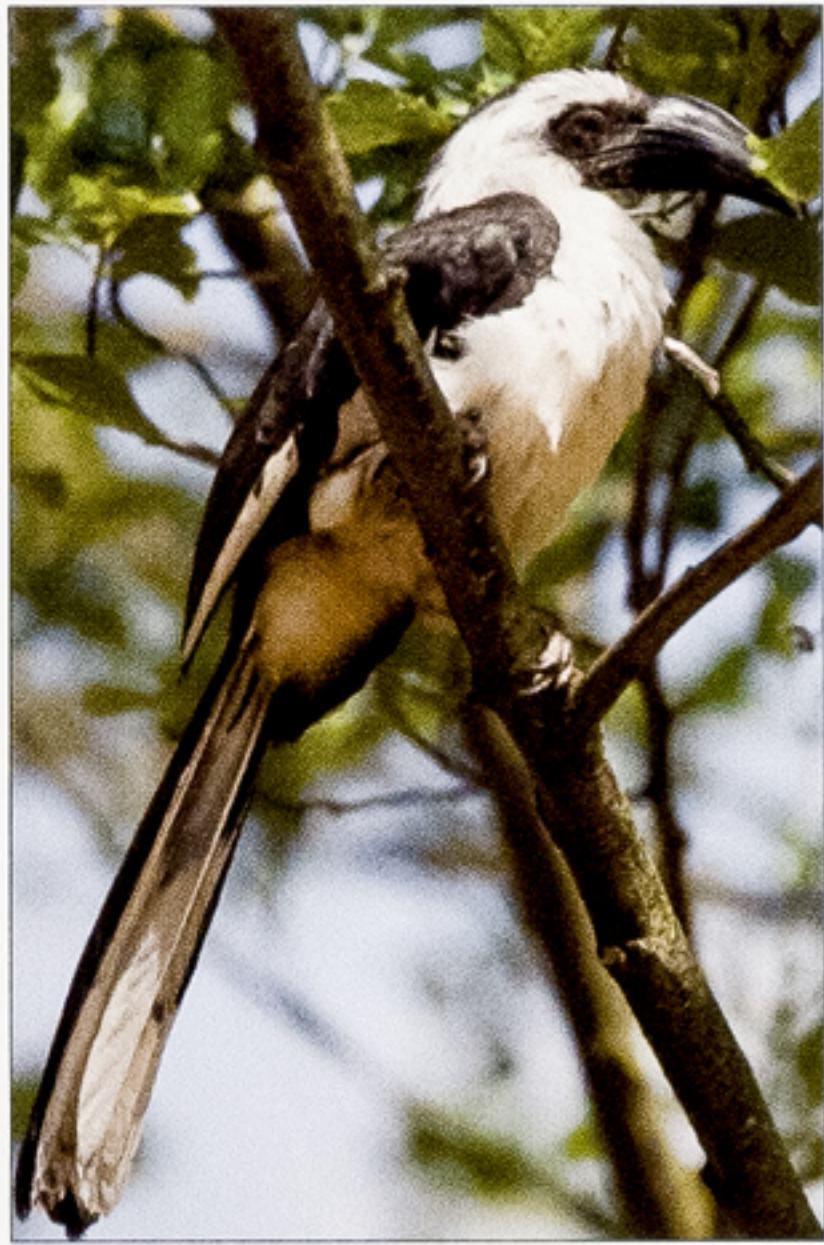
Councillor Jones said: "This is a truly fantastic new facility at one of the best and most respected zoos in Europe. Chester Zoo is well known for its innovative conservation work and this aviary set in such naturalistic surroundings will become a 'must see' part of anyone's visit to the most popular attraction in the North West."

It is hoped to include up to 15 different species in the aviary, including, Hamerkop, Lilac breasted rollers, Von der Decken's Hornbills, Hottentot teals, and Weaver birds.



Cllr Mike Jones and Mark Pilgrim, the zoo's Director of Conservation and Education.

Chester Zoo has a strong partnership with both Save the Rhino International and the Kenya Wildlife Service, particularly in Tsavo East National Park, Kenya. Here Chester Zoo has supported the translocation of 20 Black Rhino and continues to support their protection. Chester Zoo also supports conservation initiatives for Black Rhino in Mkomazi Rhino Reserve, Tanzania, Chyulu Hills NP, Kenya, and a community education.





Chester Zoo's help 'vital' in tracking big cats across Africa

Chester Zoo is helping develop a pioneering new method of identifying cheetahs in the wild by archiving their paw prints on an international database, similar to the way fingerprints can be stored for humans.

The footprint identification technique (FIT) for endangered species has already been a boon in monitoring other big cats including Bengal tigers and African lions, and is being developed for other endangered and elusive species ranging from Polar bears in the Arctic to the dormouse in the UK!

FIT is a non-invasive and cost-effective method of identifying, and therefore monitoring these species and, because it does not involve any handling or disturbance to the animal, it is free of the potentially harmful side-effects of more invasive techniques.

Now zoologist Sky Alibhai and vet Zoe Jewell of Portugal based WildTrack (www.wildtrack.org), the independent research organisation developing FIT, believe it could help monitor cheetahs, one of the world's threatened species.

The technology works on a similar basis to human fingerprinting; no two cheetah footprints are the same.

The research team say Chester Zoo's input is vital and would benefit the cheetah conservation community across Africa.

They are supported by Namibia's N/a'an ku sê Wildlife Sanctuary which protects cheetahs in the wild.

Florian Weise, co-ordinator with N/a'an ku sê Research Programme, said: "Chester Zoo's support is crucial in getting enough footprints from known reference cheetah for us to be able to construct a soft-

ware system that can then be tested with wild cheetah footprints."

Chester Zoo keepers are currently photographing and recording footprints of its four cheetahs, three males – *Burba*, *Singa*, and *Matrah* – and a female called *Kinky Tail*. The footprints will be logged to help build up a reference base against which further prints can be compared.

Florian said: "The overall aim is to test whether free-roaming cheetah can be identified from their footprints. If this is the case we can build a non-invasive monitoring technique for cheetah populations. It is extremely important because you can never catch and collar all cheetah to find out about their population size and structure, their interactions and how the population changes over time."

By photographing footprints in the wild researchers can monitor an animal's movements even without having caught sight of it.

Many Namibian cheetahs are in danger of being killed as they stray out of conservation zones and onto commercial land where they risk persecution by farmers who fear they will attack livestock.

If proven viable, it is hoped these improved tracking methods, along with better communication and education of farmers, and relocation of any problem animals, will be a huge aid to international conservation efforts. Chester Zoo is also paying for two special collars for cheetahs in the wild to allow their movements to be tracked electronically.

The initial work is also being supported by Chester Zoo's conservation department and Roger Wilkinson, Head of Field Programmes and Research, said: "We are involved in outreach conservation activities that complement our conservation work in the zoo; this is work which helps many different species.

"The cheetah project further strengthens our support for Cheetah conservation at home and abroad. This is a very worthwhile project looking at long term strategies to reduce conflict between cheetahs and land owners."

Chester Zoo helps save rare bird species from extinction



Chester Zoo has helped save one of the world's rare birds from extinction.

Just a few years ago it was feared the Mauritius Fody could die out, but today conservation experts at the Zoo are celebrating the news that it has been 'downgraded' on the international 'Red List' of species considered to be in most danger.

After years of dedicated work they have helped establish Mauritius Fodies on a tiny island where there were previously none, in the Indian Ocean.

While its population is still fragile, the Fody's capacity to survive has been strengthened by specialist work on the tropical island of Ile aux Aigrettes, off Mauritius.

Zoo keepers and other staff from Chester have been deeply involved in the project, visiting the island, developing rescue techniques and setting up a support network crucial for the bird's ongoing survival.

Head of Field Programmes and Research at Chester Zoo, Roger Wilkinson, said his team was delighted at the latest good news.

"We are passionate about this important project and have worked hard helping to ensure the future of this species. The fact that it has just been downgraded from the category of birds listed as being at the highest risk is a real cause for celebration, not only for us but for conservationists world-wide."

The Zoo team is now extremely hopeful the Fody population will continue to flourish on Ile aux Aigrettes.

Its achievement follows on from a similar success two years ago with another bird species native to Mauritius, the Echo Parakeet, of which there was once only a handful left in the world. Chester Zoo's wealth of knowledge was vital in helping re-establish the population so that by 2005 there were 300 birds and, in 2007, it was also downgraded by international monitoring authorities.

Chester Zoo has financed nine keeper visits to Mauritius over four seasons. They have used specialist knowledge and their experience of hand-rearing exotic birds at the Zoo to hand-rear Fody chicks rescued from nests which were in serious danger of failing in the wild. Once strong enough young birds were released on the Ile aux Aigrettes where a network of feeding stations has been established to help them thrive.

The team also successfully developed techniques for artificial incubation of Mauritius Fody eggs for the first time over 2004 and 2005.

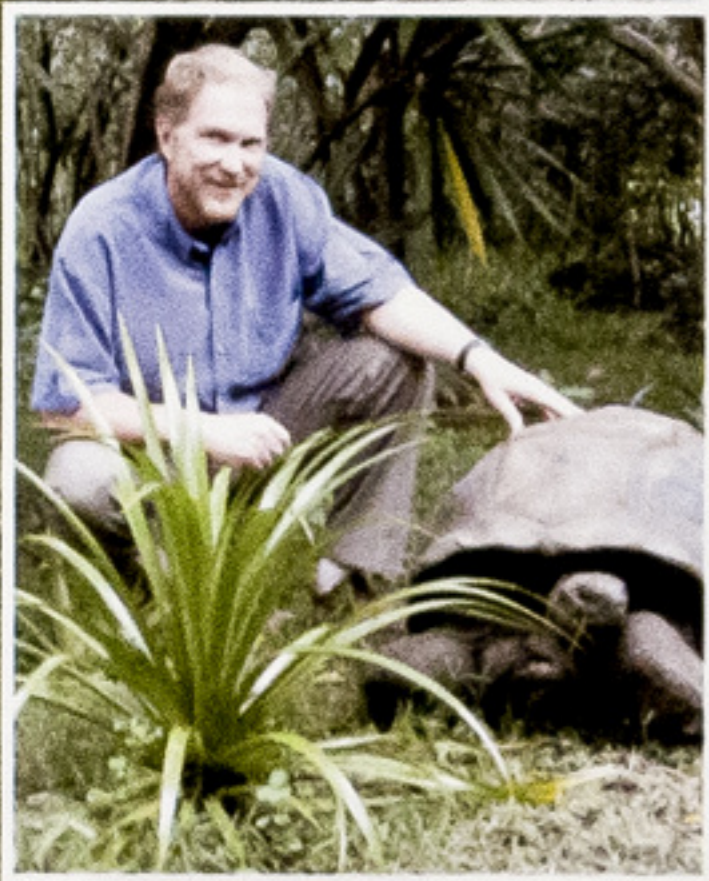
As a result of the work there are now 150 of the birds on Ile aux Aigrettes, an island of huge importance, as conservationists have cleared it of predators, thereby significantly enhancing the chances of threatened bird-life surviving.

This proved difficult to do on the Mauritius mainland, just a short journey away, due to its growing human population and influx of non-indigenous species.

The Zoo is continuing to assist with the conservation project and will be sending more bird staff to Mauritius this year and in coming years.

CONSERVATION

Mauritius President thanks Chester Zoo for vital work helping protect rare and endemic species



The President of Mauritius has praised Chester Zoo for its work protecting critically endangered species native to this Indian Ocean island, once home to the now extinct Dodo.

Zoo field researchers have been actively involved with conservation work in Mauritius for 15 years, helping initiate and develop projects to secure the future survival of threatened birds and plants.

President Aneerood Jugnauth paid tribute to this vital work when he met Chester Zoo's Director General Gordon McGregor Reid.

Professor Reid was in Mauritius to launch 'Learning with Nature', a new education programme developed in partnership with the Zoo's Education staff. He also signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing the zoo to continued conservation work in the Mascarenes.

It follows successes which have included important boosts to the population of two endemic birds – the Echo Parakeet and the Mauritius Fody. Numbers of both species have now grown sufficiently to prompt international authorities to down-grade them from the highest level on the Red List of species threatened with extinction.

Work is ongoing to re-establish other birds including the Pink Pigeon and the Olive White-eye, along with the endangered mammal, the Rodrigues Fruit Bat.

Mauritius was famously once home to the Dodo, which died out after exotic species were introduced onto the island in the 1700s, de-stabilising its natural ecology. The growth of the human population and introduction of yet more alien species in following centuries rendered many native species extinct or critically endangered. But in recent decades conservationists have worked determinedly to turn back the tide.

Key to their success has been the establishment of a protected habitat for endemic plants and animals on a tiny island just off Mauritius – Ile aux Aigrettes. Chester Zoo experts helped clear it of predators which could threaten the survival of vulnerable species.

Mauritius harbours too many introduced species, such as dogs, cats and rats for the project to work successfully on the mainland, as they may kill rare birds and reptiles.

Professor Reid explained: "That is why Ile aux Aigrettes was chosen as a 'safe haven'. We had to eradicate plants and animals with the potential to harm the survival of those species we are trying to conserve. Then, from that base, we re-introduced and helped to build up the populations of species most at risk of being lost to the world."

Chester Zoo's Education Programmes Manager, Maggie Esson, has been one of the zoo's most frequent visitors to Mauritius.

She said: "The work we have done there has proved extremely fruitful so far, but there is still much more to be done if we are to secure the long term future of these fragile animal populations. That is why Professor Reid's visit and his meeting with the Mauritius President is such good news for us."

Maggie has helped set up an education centre at Ile aux Aigrettes, an island which is inaccessible to most people. Visits are limited to conservationists and a controlled number of tour groups, now including Mauritian school children, who are guided around the island by rangers.

Such 'eco-tourism' is encouraged by wildlife experts as it helps generate income to develop further conservation projects. But it is important they are strictly managed so as not to setback achievements already made.

Professor Reid said:

"With increased awareness around the world about the plight of wildlife, we are at a stage where eco-tourism and education can actually help protect species, providing it is carried out in consultation with and co-operation with the hard-working conservation teams on the ground."



Former Chester Zoo volunteer sends ripples of excitement across conservation world after discovering new species of Arabian fish

A student who learned many of her unique skills while doing volunteer work at Chester Zoo has gone on to achieve worldwide acclaim after discovering a new species of fish.

Emma Smart's find has sent ripples of excitement through the fish conservation world.

The new species - given the name *Garra smarti*, after Emma - is native to Southern Oman. Emma discovered it while based in the United Arab Emirates monitoring Arabian freshwater fish for her PhD studies.

Chester Zoo's Director General, Gordon McGregor Reid, himself an internationally recognised expert on tropical fish biology and one of Emma's university professors, is delighted at her remarkable find. It is considered especially important as there are only 16 other recorded species of primary freshwater fish throughout the Arabian peninsula.

Emma's research involves collecting and studying *Garra* specimens in the Arabian wadis - riverbeds which can often dry up as desert temperatures soar.

Garra are specially adapted to survive the unique conditions where human pressure on water systems is such that much underwater life is squeezed out.

Professor McGregor Reid said: "It is unusual to find a new species anywhere, but to discover one in a region where conditions are so difficult for freshwater fish is a real coup. We are thrilled for Emma who has personally put in so much work on this project; and for the scientific and conservation world as a whole, this is a valuable find."

Emma has had an active interest in freshwater fish conservation for more than 10 years, spending part of that time working voluntarily at Chester Zoo Aquarium

where she was involved in the breeding of endangered species. She still has close links with the zoo.

Emma, now a Conservation Officer with Emirates Wildlife Society, backed by the World Wildlife Fund, is overjoyed after discovering *Garra smarti*.

She said: "This is an exciting discovery, I'm thrilled my project and research has led to the revelation of a unique species. It proves how little we know about the region and how much potential wildlife remains to be discovered."

Emma studied for a BSc degree in Marine Biology at Liverpool University, going on to do post graduate conservation research at St Andrews University. She is currently studying for her PhD via Plymouth University, partly under Gordon's supervision.

She has also worked in Dubai as a scientific advisor and production manager on Arabian television's first wildlife documentary series, 'The Cycle of Life'.

Garra look similar to carp but are much smaller. They feed off rocks on algal slime. Their specialised sucker-mouths have evolved to aid survival by clinging on to stones in torrents.

Staff go Wild!

Philippines and Mexico

The IUCN Red List is a catalogue of threatened species which have been globally evaluated to determine their risk of extinction. Each species is given a conservation status, for example the Black Rhino is listed as Critically Endangered, and the Asian Elephant is listed as Endangered. In order to determine the status of a particular species, assessments are carried out by IUCN Specialist Groups or by Global Biodiversity Assessment Workshops. Recently, Chester Zoo staff have been involved in this process.

Claudine Gibson, Programme Officer IUCN/Wetlands International Freshwater Fish Specialist Group travelled to the Philippines to train fish biologists in the IUCN Red-listing process in preparation for the Global Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment turning its attention to the Philippines. **Colin Grist**, Aquarium Projects Co-ordinator, also attended the second Fresh Water Fish Identification and Conservation workshops in the Philippines and gave lectures on field survey techniques, photography and the conservation breeding of threatened species.



In April **Paul Shipsides**, Chester Zoo's Botany and Horticulture Team Leader, travelled to Tehuacan, Mexico to attend the IUCN Global Cactus Assessment Red Listing workshop. The workshop, made up of a group of experts from Mexico and South America, brought together their local knowledge to assess over 200 species of cacti. At Chester Zoo, we hold three national collections of cacti, one of which is a Mexican genus. The visit to Mexico gave Paul an insight into the process of Red List assessment and knowledge of the threats facing cactus.



Mascarenes

Chester Zoo has worked alongside the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) for many years on one of our largest Field Programmes, the Mascarenes Programme. The Discovery and Learning Division at Chester Zoo has been working closely with the MWF to develop and implement an education programme which was launched in May. **Prof. Gordon McGregor Reid**, Director General, and **Maggie Esson**, Education Programmes Manager, travelled out to Mauritius to attend a series of events to launch the programme. **Mark Roberts**, Joiner/Exhibit Themer, also visited the project to aid with the construction of educational displays.

As part of a different component of the MWF's work, **Richard Hewitt**, Senior Horticulturalist, travelled to Mauritius and Rodrigues to provide training in plant propagation.



Autumn 2009

Animal Fun!

Kidz

ZOO!



**Quiz
to enjoy**

**See Inside...
KIDS
PROGRAMME
OF EVENTS**

Junior Members

Can you fill in the missing letters from the letters below, to find the names of seven animals?

To be in with a chance of winning a £10 voucher to spend in the zoo shops, send your entry together with contact details to Z magazine Marketing Department, Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, CH2 1LH by Monday October 12.

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A Great ape

A very tall herbivore

He has an unusual nose

Carries his home around with him

An unusual colour

Difficult to spot in the jungle

A very good swimmer

Congratulations to June's winners
Rebecca McGrath from Chester
and Christine Sharpe and Adam Sharpe from Liverpool.





kidz ZOO!

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2009

THE FORMBY RED SQUIRRELS SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2009

The National Trust reserve at Freshfield, Formby, is one of the best places in Great Britain to see and to get really close to Red Squirrels. The reserve offers visitors an opportunity to explore the beach, sand dunes and coastal pine woodlands as well. The Squirrels will frequently approach within a few feet of visitors. However, there have been a series of devastating disease outbreaks amongst the squirrel populations both here and elsewhere in the UK, so numbers are rapidly decreasing, so take this chance to see them while you still can.

Eights and over are invited to attend and we will leave the Staff Car Park at 9.30am and return at 4.30pm. Bring a picnic.

Please Note: Bookings must be made for all of the regular monthly Junior 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 Z Magazine and not by individual letter, so please keep up-to-date by reading the Junior Pages in each issue. A charge will be made to cover the cost of those events which involve transport, entry fees, materials or the provision of food, and you will be advised of this at the time of booking.

THE RED DEER RUT AT TATTON PARK SATURDAY 17 OCTOBER 2009

Once again, it is several years since we visited Tatton Park near Knutsford at the time of the Red Deer 'rut'. This is a fascinating time to watch the behaviour of these animals and we hope to have a Ranger with us to explain what is going on. We will also visit the Home Farm at Tatton to see what is happening there.

We will leave the Zoo's Staff Car Park at 10.30am and return for 4.30pm. Juniors of eight and over should bring a picnic with them.

LIVERPOOL MUSEUM SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2009

Liverpool Museum is now called the World Museum and we will look forward to noting the recent changes made in the major refurbishment which has been undertaken over the past few years. There will be so much to see and do that we will have an action-packed November day.

The bus will leave the Staff Entrance at 10.30am and return at 4.00pm. Eights and over are welcome to come. Bring a picnic.

THE JUNIORS' CHRISTMAS PARTY FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2009

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

The venue will be the Zoo's Ark Cafe and access can be gained through the Cedar House Staff Entrance on Caughall Road, which is the second staff entrance on the left going from the Upton lights. You should arrive at 7.00pm, with a cushion and a torch, and parents should arrange to collect you from the Ark Cafe at 9.45pm.



Junior Members

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2010

DISCOVERY SESSION SATURDAY 23 JANUARY 2010

This is a regular day in the Junior's calendar when you have the opportunity to discover more about your own zoo – with guided walks and the opportunity to catch-up with any new developments – maybe even the chance to have a go at designing an enclosure.

Over eights are asked to meet outside the Oakfield at 1.30pm and be collected from there again at 4.00pm.

THE WELSH MOUNTAIN ZOO SATURDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2010

Our Juniors love to visit other zoos, and the Welsh Mountain Zoo in Colwyn Bay is one of our neighbours. You will need to dress very warmly for this one as the Zoo is also on the top of a hill!

Over eights are invited to come along and enjoy the day and we will leave the staff car park at 10.30am and return there for 4.00pm. You will need a picnic lunch.

TRACKS & SIGNS SATURDAY 20 MARCH 2010

This is undoubtedly one of our most popular events in the Juniors' calendar. This is your chance to experience the animals' view of Zoo visitors, as you will be going inside some of the enclosures in search of footprints from which to make plaster casts. March is the best time of year for this as it is normally wet and muddy (!) but please bear this in mind when you dress in the morning. Hopefully you will have a souvenir of your day to take home with you.

Eights and over can come along and enjoy the mess, when we meet outside Oakfield House at 11.00am, returning there at 4.00pm. You will need a picnic lunch, and it is important that you wear clean, very old clothes and squeaky clean wellies please.

SHUGBOROUGH HOME FARM SATURDAY 24 APRIL 2010

You will love this visit to a beautiful stately home in Staffordshire and will find that the Spring is a perfect time to visit their Home Farm to see the rare breeds and shire horses. Home Farm also has wonderful displays of cheese making and old-times bakery skills.

Eights and over are invited to join us for a relaxing day. We will leave the Staff Entrance at 9.30am and return home for 5.00pm.

Bring a picnic.



kidz ZOO!

That's not a birdie on the golf course, it's a black rhino!



A new nine hole golf course at Chester Zoo is populated by black rhinos and Indian elephants as well as birdies!

The mini-putting course has just opened as a new family fun feature and is already proving a big attraction. It offers young and old the chance to enjoy a round of golf on one of the most colourful courses in the North West.

Holes are themed around different conservation projects supported by the Zoo, with eye-catching large wooden animal sculptures marking the start of each exciting challenge.

Projects represented include the Assam Haathi elephants' conservation programme, field-work in the Mascarenes to protect endangered wildlife, Black Rhinoceros and Orang-utan conservation schemes, and valuable research in the Philippines, China, and Nigeria.

As well as being a fun activity, the all weather course has a key educational element, driving home important messages about the need to protect the world's fragile animal and plant species from the threat of extinction. It is an eco attraction, too, created entirely out of sustainable materials.

The creatively landscaped course features a twisting, turning pathway, adding a sense of intrigue to the whole adventure. There are gravel gardens, a bridge with a babbling stream underneath, shrubs, rock plants and imaginatively crafted log fences.

A refreshment kiosk located nearby provides a re-fuelling stop for families to treat themselves to coffee and ice cream before or after the course.

The cost of a round of golf is £2.50 per person or £8 for a family of two adults and two children, with proceeds helping fund Chester Zoo's ongoing conservation projects around the world.





Making a difference

© NASA



China Programme

The broadleaf forests of the Sichuan Province in China are recognised areas of high biodiversity. Back in March this year, we provided ongoing support for the 'Sichuan Forest Biodiversity Project'. In addition, in June, we also funded a new programme component to develop a 'Wildlife Conservation Strategy for the Liangshan Region'. This strategy will highlight the unique importance of the biodiversity of the area and ensure that local development plans are consistent with protecting species such as the Giant Panda, Red Panda and Sichuan Partridge.

FAST FACT: 99% of the Giant Panda's diet is made up of bamboo.

Realm of the Red Ape Programme

Saving Critically Endangered species from extinction is not an easy task and often requires a number of different project components to ensure success. In the case of the Sumatran Rhino, a project in Way Kambas National Park, is both protecting wild Sumatran Rhinos and developing a captive breeding programme, with the eventual aim of releasing rhinos back into the wild. We supported the **Sumatran Rhino Conservation and Propagation project** in 2008 and provided support again this year.

FAST FACT

The Sumatran Rhino is also known as the Hairy Rhino.

News on Conservation from around the World

We take a look at the conservation news from two opposite sides of the World...



Bad

Rhino horns are believed by many to have medicinal value and illegal poaching is one of the main threats to rhinos in Africa and Asia. New research however has found that illegal poaching to meet rhino horn demand booms in Asia has hit a 15 year high. Around 12 rhinos are lost each month in South Africa and Zimbabwe and 10 have been lost in India since January – these losses are a huge blow to conservationists who have been working tirelessly to save these threatened species.

Good

Lonesome George is one of the most famous tortoises in the World, at around 90-100 years old, he is the last Pinta Island Tortoise remaining. Conservationists on the Galapagos Islands have been trying to breed Lonesome George since 1993 with another subspecies of Giant Galapagos Tortoise. The good news came recently that five eggs have been laid by one of the females kept with George. However, Scientists will now have to wait for 120 days to find out whether the eggs are fertile.



Native Species Programme

The Common or Hazel Dormouse is unfortunately no longer a common species in the UK, and is listed as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species. Chester Zoo collaborates on dormouse research at two sites, in Cheshire and North Wales. We recently supported the 'Dormice Forever' project, which links to the research carried out at the North Wales site. The project is using a variety of approaches to conserve the dormouse population, including monitoring populations, improving dormouse habitat and connectivity between sites and raising awareness.

FAST FACT

Dormice hibernate for up to 7 months of the year – their name is thought to come from the French word 'dormir' meaning 'to sleep'.

Picture © Save The Rhino



Black Rhino Programme

The work carried out in Chyulu Hills National Park on the Black Rhino population is an important part of the conservation of the species in Kenya. Earlier this year, we funded an anti-poaching and monitoring project in Chyulu which we have supported for many years previously. Research carried out as part of this project utilising molecular tracking of Black Rhino has produced some interesting results. A workshop, funded by Chester Zoo, will be taking place in Kenya in July to present the results of this research and assess the role of the Chyulu Hills rhino population in the wider national Black Rhino management strategy.

How would you attempt to move an animal which can weigh up to 1400kg from its zoo home to the wilds of Tanzania? This isn't an easy task, but is one which was carried out with perfect precision in May. Three Black Rhinos were donated from the European Breeding Programme (EEP) by Dvur Kralove Zoo in Czech Republic to Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary in Tanzania. The aim of the sanctuary is to play a greater role in the conservation of Black Rhinos, and to do this, they needed to increase the breeding potential of their nine rhinos by moving in new animals. Chester Zoo aided this vital translocation by donating funds to support the move. We are pleased to report that all three Black Rhino arrived safely in Mkomazi, increasing the population to 12 individuals.

FAST FACT

Black Rhinos can run as fast as 35 miles an hour – making the smooth running of translocations even more vital.



Nigeria Programme

Ngel Nyake Forest in Nigeria is close to the Cameroon Highlands Ecoregion, which is known to be rich in endemic species. However, in comparison little is known about the biodiversity of the Nigerian mountains. We are providing ongoing support to the 'Nigerian Montane Forest Project', which is carrying out research in Ngel Nyake on its diversity and ecology. The project is also involved in the restoration of the reserve through a forest nursery program.

Grant Support

Other projects which we've supported during the last quarter have included:

- Richard Hughes Scholarship - Learning to live with elephants: A novel education programme for local people who live in and around HEC areas in Karnataka, South India - Mamatha Sathyanarayana
- The ecology of the Maroon Langur in the Sabangau peat swamp catchment, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia
- Sun Bears in human-dominated landscapes: Distribution, population trends and conflicts, Indonesia
- Research and Actions for the community-based management of the Tanoé forest, Côte d'Ivoire: primate conservation and poverty alleviation
- Establishing the genetic architecture of the northern Botswana giraffe populations and the evolutionary relationships of these populations to other African, and in particular Southern African, (sub)specific populations
- N/a'an ku sê Carnivore Research Project - Human Wildlife Conflict, Namibia
- Natural food habitat analysis of Red Panda and conservation threats in Langtang National Park, Central Nepal
- Humboldt Penguin: Conservation through responsible tourism in Pisco, Peru
- Conflict, Communities and Conservation: African Wild Dogs in Namibia
- Captive elephant health care, Assam, India
- In situ conservation of the Philippine Forest Turtle through information education
- Okapi EEP supporting the Okapi Wildlife Reserve

Mascarenes Programme

The Mascarenes is a biodiversity rich area of the World with a high proportion of endemic species. Chester Zoo works alongside the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) on a wide variety of projects. Chester Zoo keeping staff are heavily involved in the fieldwork out in Mauritius and bird keeping staff along with horticultural staff visit the projects every year to provide vital advice, training and hands on help to these projects. Recently, the highly successful work of the Mauritius Fody project which we have been supporting for a number of years, resulted in the downgrading of the Mauritius Fody on the IUCN Red List from Critically Endangered to Endangered. We have just provided our annual ongoing support for the Mascarenes programme this year, funding projects on the Rodrigues Fruit Bat; Mauritius Olive White-eye; Mauritius Echo Parakeet; Critically Endangered plant species; and Restoration of the Grande Montagne Reserve.

FAST FACT Only around 2% of Mauritius' native forest remains.

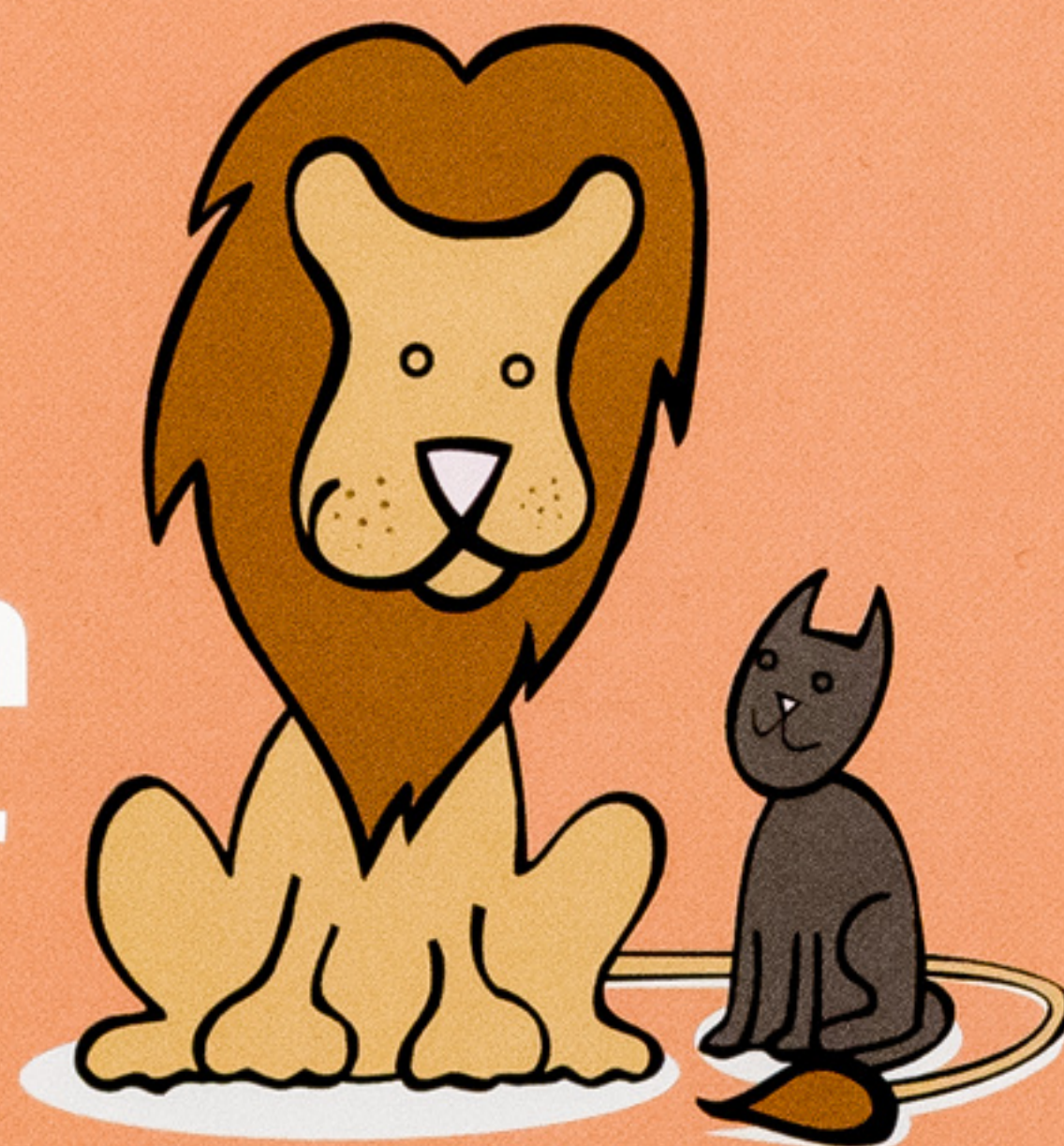
Join the campaign to protect our seas, shores and wildlife

The Marine Conservation Society is lobbying hard to raise support for the Marine Reserves Bill, currently on its second reading in parliament. At present less than 1% of UK seas are fully protected.

You can play your part by sending a letter of support to your MP. Simply log on to www.marinereservesnow.org.uk A letter will automatically be sent to your MP when you enter your postcode. It's as easy as that!

You can also nominate places you think need protection by logging on to www.yourseasyourvoice.com

Big Cats Feast on Cheshire's Junior Savers Account



Did you know that it costs a whopping £865 every month to feed all of the Zoo's big cats? That's why Chester Zoo has teamed up with Cheshire Building Society to launch a savings account to help support its work.

Melanie Cowieson, Development Manager for Chester Zoo, said: "Big cats have big appetites and with two tigers, two lions, five jaguars, four cheetahs and four servals there are a lot of mouths to feed. Cheshire's Big Cat Junior Savers Account really helps us to make sure our cats get the nutrition they need to stay healthy and strong."

Since its launch in October 2008, the Big Cat Junior Saver Account has contributed £25,000 to help fund conservation projects both at Chester Zoo and in the natural habitat. It also helps to make the Zoo's cat enclosures look as natural as possible by adding plants, rocks and sand and from time to time, the team enhance their habitats with balls, herbs in sacks and ropes to keep them happy and active.

The instant access account works by donating 1% of the average total balances at the end of December each year. It is available to savers up to the age of 18 and can be opened at any of the Cheshire's branches. Paying 1% gross/AER* (0.80% net), just £1 will open an account and you can invest a maximum of £15,000. Anyone opening an account with £100 will receive a voucher for one free child admission to the Zoo when accompanied by two full paying adults.

The Zoo is home to several species of Big Cats. The Sumatran tigers, *Kirana* and *Fabi* are an endangered species, as are the rare northern race cheetahs, *Kinky Tail*, *Burba*, *Singa* and *Matrah* who came from the United Arab Emirates. Born in Paignton Zoo, *Asha* the lion arrived at Chester Zoo in 2006 from Rome. Her mate, *Asoka*, will be 11 in October and has been a resident of Chester Zoo all his life. The Servals, which are medium sized African wildcats, are all brothers who came from Africa Alive in Suffolk.

Contrary to popular belief, jaguars are America's only big cat. They inhabit the south of the country as well as central and southern America, in particular the Amazon basin. At 18, *Salvador* is Chester Zoo's oldest jaguar while *Sofia*, aged just eight years old, is the youngest. Our other three jaguars came from Marwell Zoo, *Bonita*, *Pele* and *Coro*, their nine year old son.

Alistair Whelham, Head of products and marketing at the Cheshire, said: "This is a great way for youngsters to save while helping a really worthwhile cause. Money raised from the Big Cat Junior Saver Account will help Chester Zoo provide food and care for the big cats while helping to educate the public about wildlife and the environment. The more people save with the Cheshire, the more money we can donate to the Zoo."

But it's not just bank accounts that the Cheshire has been involved with. In June, Cheshire Building Society joined children's charity Barnardo's for its Big Toddle, the UK's largest charity event for children under the age of five. Hundreds of children joined the sponsored walk around the Zoo to raise money for projects to help children around the UK learn and play.



*The 'Gross' rate is the contractual rate of interest payable before the deduction of income tax at the rate specified by law. The 'AER' stands for Annual Equivalent Rate and illustrates what the interest rate would be if it was paid and compounded once each year.

Cheshire Building Society is a trading division of Nationwide Building Society,
Head Office: Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon SN38 1NW.

CHESHIRE
BUILDING SOCIETY



Visit **The Eden Project**

The Eden Project will be delighted to welcome Members of Chester Zoo with one free entry per Member before the end of 2009.

If you've never been before, you may be wondering what Eden is all about. Opened in 2001 Eden is located in an old clay pit, which was transformed into the breathtakingly beautiful garden we have now by the incredible Eden team and 83,000 tonnes of soil made from recycled waste! Most people have heard of our amazing, giant greenhouses (the Rainforest biome is 50 metres high – which is about 11 double-decker buses stacked on top of each other!) which are home to plants from around the world. You can trek through the steamy rainforests of Malaysia, West Africa and South America and learn about trade in cocoa and chocolate, compare a Malaysian back garden with your own at home, look out for the huge trading ship and learn how even though these places are miles away we are all connected - all part of nature not apart from it.

But as you'll see if you visit, there's even more to discover at Eden! Our Global Garden Harvest with its amazing displays of seasonal food grown on-site and delicious seasonal food served in our restaurants will run through October ending with Halloween celebrations including our Little Monsters' Ball! As part of Eden's winter festival the magical ice rink will be back nestling in a sparkling winter wonderland of skating, fire, a Christmas market, music and storytelling taking Eden from sub tropical to sub zero!

As well as all these activities, the outdoor landscape at Eden is quickly becoming as popular with visitors as the Rainforest and Mediterranean Biomes – outside areas include Wild Cornwall, The Spiral Garden and the Global Gardeners garden. Come and find the crops that grow in our climate to provide our food, our fuel, medicines and materials, see how they have shaped our world and how they could shape our future.

We hope you will take advantage of this special offer for Members of Chester Zoo and The Eden Project and come enjoy all Eden has to offer!

Terms and conditions: One free entry for each Chester Zoo Member on production of a valid Chester Zoo membership card and letter. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Applies to one single entry per member and excludes special events. Offer valid until 31st December 2009.

Before setting off to see us, please check opening times by visiting www.edenproject.com or calling 01726 811900.

Car parking is free. Restaurants, shops, and landtrain transport. Facilities for disabled visitors

Eden Project Registered Charity number 1093070
Bodelva • St Austell • Cornwall • PL2425G
Email: friendsdesk@edenproject.com
Website www.edenproject.com

eden project

Dreams come true at Chester Zoo!

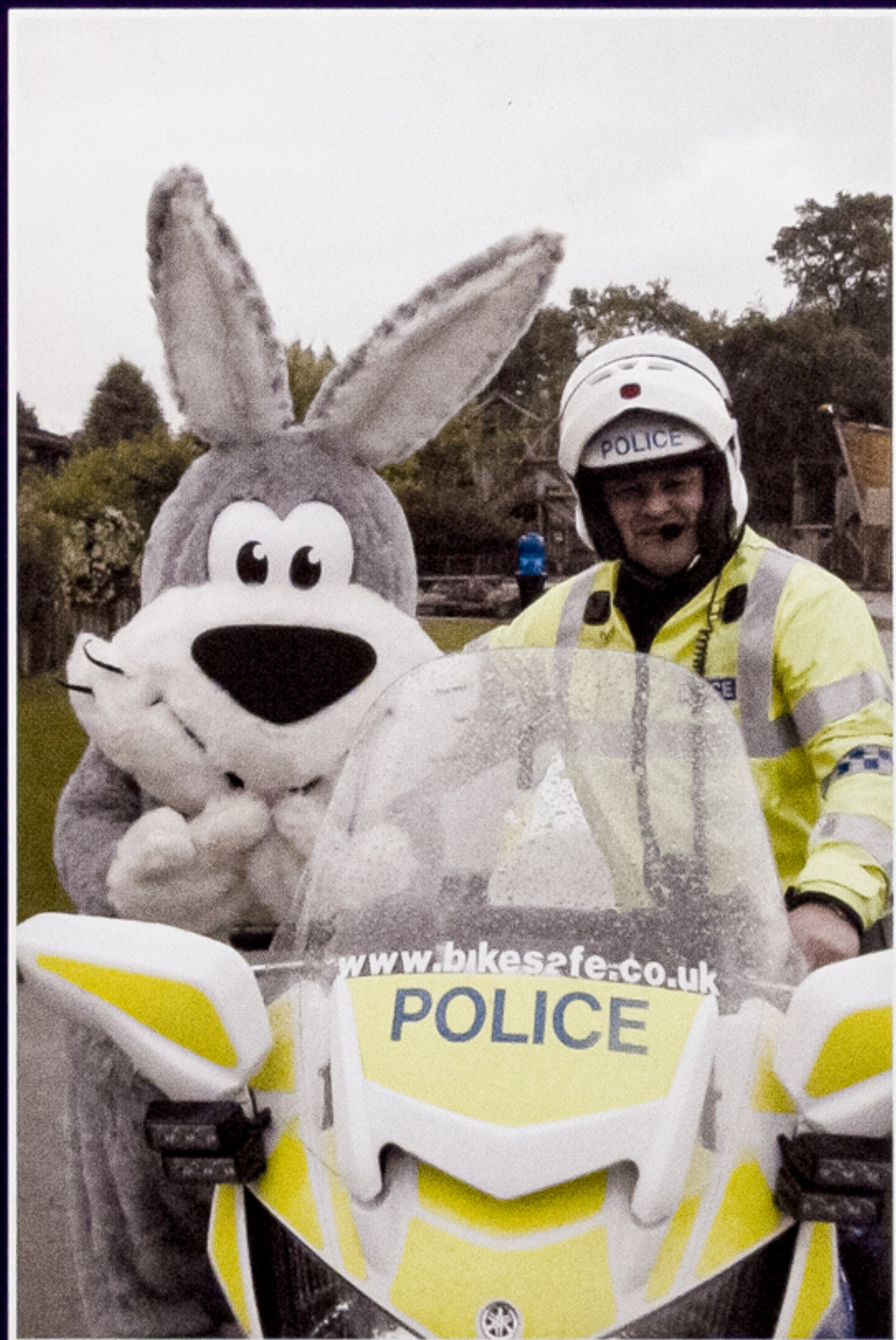
Chester Zoo's sixth Dreamnight event has been held and despite the torrential rain on the evening, it proved to be a huge success. Over 90 families were welcomed on the evening from all over the North West of England.

Dreamnight started in the Netherlands and has since become a global phenomenon, with nearly 200 zoos and aquaria in 36 countries around the world taking part this year.

It is a special annual event whereby the zoo opens its gates free-of-charge for chronically ill children and their families. Over 100 Chester Zoo staff and volunteers gave their time to make the evening special.

This year's event was sponsored by locally-based Marks & Spencer Money, who provided the funds to pay for the packed lunches and goodie bags for the families. We were also joined again by the local fire service, police and army who provided "hands on" demonstrations for the families.

Lots of positive feedback has been received by our VIP guests on what a truly 'dream night' it was!





Star-maker Pete Waterman gets VIP ticket to ride sky-train at Chester Zoo

Music-maker Pete Waterman got a bird's eye view of Chester Zoo when he takes a VIP ride on its monorail.

The music world's millionaire entrepreneur is one of Britain's most famous railway enthusiasts and leapt at the chance of a ticket to ride on the much-loved Zoofari Railway.

It's a favourite zoo attraction, from which thousands of visitors a year enjoy panoramic views of the animal enclosures.

Pete, who once owned Britain's largest private rail maintenance business, based in Crewe, was invited to take a VIP ride on the monorail by zoo trustee Neville Chamberlain, who heard about the celebrity impresario's lifelong passion for railways.

Former Pop Idol judge Pete was a teenage train spotter and his enthusiasm for life on the rails continues today. He has an extensive collection of model railways, he founded the Just Like the Real Thing model railway business and, in 1988, he revived the name of London and North Western Railway Company for his rail maintenance business, eventually sold to Arriva last year.

Looking forward to his journey on Chester Zoo's single-track 'sky train' Pete, who also has a fondness for owls, said: "I have been an avid fan of trains for as long as I can remember. This was a trip with a difference for me – seeing the country's biggest zoo and its amazing animals from this perspective was something I was looking forward to."

Pete was also given a zoo tour, including a chance to feed the lemurs on Lemur Island.

Chester Zoo's Head of Visitor Services, Lynne Walker, said: "We were thrilled Pete was able to board the Zoofari Railway. As well as being a novel, fun visitor attraction, it's a fascinating, fully recognised railway, subject to the same regulations as other UK passenger services. For a dedicated train buff like Pete it was a great trip."

A 15 minute round trip on the monorail, which has two stations – near the monkey and lion enclosures – is a popular way for visitors to get an overview of the Zoo, home to more than 7,000 animals of 400 different species, plus award-winning botanic gardens.

fund RAISING

Chance to learn more about leaving a legacy to Chester Zoo

Anyone thinking of leaving a donation to Chester Zoo in their will is being offered a chance to find out more about the many valuable projects which their legacies could help to fund.

The Legacy Information Event, supported and being attended by Hill Dickinson, will be held in the Zoo's historic Oakfield Building, and is an opportunity for supporters of the Zoo to find out how donations can be made in their memory.

Chester Zoo Development Manager Melanie Cowieson, said: "We are often approached by people asking for more information about how they can include the zoo in their wills. That is why we decided to hold this special event."

Talks will be given by a member of the Chester Zoo curatorial team, Development Director Simon Mann, and there will be a chance to see how the zoo will be expanded in the coming years through its acclaimed 'Natural Vision' plan.

Melanie added:

"There will be no obligation for people to agree to make a legacy, this is a purely informative event so they will be equipped with as much information as possible should they consider doing so in the future.

"It will be particularly useful for any of our members or adopters who are in the process of changing their will and who are keen to help ensure the zoo remains an enjoyable, first-class facility for future generations."

It will take place on the morning of Wednesday, October 14. Spaces are limited so anyone wishing to attend should book in advance by calling us on 01244 650229 or emailing development@chesterzoo.co.uk by Friday 2nd October.



Make your vote count

We are delighted to announce the launch of our latest fundraising initiative, where you get to say where your donation is spent.

We have introduced a high-tech machine by the *Realm of the Red Ape* exhibit which allows you to choose from five options. These options contribute towards our orang-utan conservation work both here and internationally. In exchange for showing your support for our work, you will receive a badge as a thank you.

Why not try out the machine next time you are in the Zoo and check out which are the most popular options!



Donation thanks!

We are very grateful to **Impact Leisure International Ltd** who have kindly donated a bench to Chester Zoo. The company have worked as a contractor on a number of building projects in recent years. The bench is unique in that it was designed to meet the needs of wheel-chair users. This is part of the Zoo's ongoing commitment to accessibility for all.

Our picture above shows the bench by the entrance to Realm of the Red Ape

Successful Salsa Summer Ball!

Gaynor & Bill Jones held a fantastic fundraising Salsa Summer Ball on 27th June, to raise funds for the Zoo and Durrell Conservation Trust.

The event raised over £800 for Chester Zoo! Our thanks go out to everyone who organised and supported this event. The money will help towards supporting the care and conservation of the animals at the Zoo and many other endangered species across the globe.

Chester Zoo is a registered charity (no.306077) and we are involved in some 150 field projects for conservation and education in over 50 countries worldwide.

If you would like to fundraise for Chester Zoo please contact our dedicated fundraising team on 01244 650229 or email: development@chesterzoo.org

CHESTER ZOO 100 Club

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

April 2009

Frank Griffies, Malpas	£100
B. Waight, Mold	£100
Andrew Palmer, Chester	£50
Sue Tonelli, Irby	£50
Wendy Channon, Chester	£50

May 2009

J. Colclough, Cheadle	£100
Darren Keay, Blacon	£100
S. Hamlett, Heswall	£50
Steve Evans, Llangefni	£50
Sandra Gregg, Chester	£50
Hilary Goudge, Wallasey	£50

June 2009

Debra Stott, Bebington	£1000
D. Duffy, Liverpool	£100
W. Beavan, Buckley	£50
M. Sheppard, Sale	£50
Elanor Fern, Chester	£50

Membership of the 100 Club is still invited. All prize winners will be notified by post and will be listed in the next edition of Z. Please inform us as soon as possible if you change address. If you wish to participate, please contact the Development Office on 01244 650 292.

Talking Conservation!

Autumn Programme 2009

Thursday 10th September 2009 at 7.30pm
**Cheetahs for Chester:
 The De Wildt Ambassador Project**
 Nicky Bolton

The Cheetah is on the endangered list. This international project, run by the De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust, is designed to raise local and ultimately global awareness of the Cheetah's plight, contributing to safeguarding its environment in the future. De Wildt works with scientists and communities to produce a mix of solutions to the challenge of saving the Cheetah. A key aspect of its work is with schools and communities, raising awareness and making conservation possible through educational outreach work. The Ambassador scheme is an essential element of their educational work. Nicky Bolton will describe how the project is run in local communities in South Africa, using live Ambassador Cheetahs in the classroom. She will also share some of the new resources that are being developed as a consequence of the educational links between Chester schools, Chester University and the De Wildt Trust.

Ann van Dyck who founded the De Wildt Trust 30 years ago, still works tirelessly for wildlife. She is extremely enthusiastic about the Chester link: "... responsibility for supporting the Cheetah in its race for survival must pass from old people like me to the next generation of children and young people - not just in South Africa but across the world."

Nicky Bolton is a teacher at Overleigh St. Mary's Primary School, Chester. She is an ardent conservationist and has recently had the privilege of working as part of a teaching exchange with the De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust near Pretoria, South Africa.



Saturday 28th November 2009 at 2.00pm
History of Chester Zoo
 Stephen McKeown,
 Head of Discovery and Learning

Throughout the year we've been celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the North of England Zoological Society and in doing so have uncovered photographs and film footage going back to the earliest days of our existence that have not seen the light of day for decades.

This afternoon takes us on a multimedia journey through eight decades of the Zoo's history with an emphasis on those early years when George Mottershead and his family overcame so many obstacles to establish the organisation that Forbes magazine lists as one of the world's top 15 zoos.

Stephen McKeown is Chester Zoo's Head of Discovery and Learning and the current President of IZE (International Zoo Educators).

After each talk, you are invited to join us for light refreshments where you will have an informal opportunity to ask questions and to chat to staff and guest speakers.

Our Lecture Theatre seats up to 170, so why not encourage your fellow members to join us and learn more about the important conservation work Chester Zoo is involved in, which your membership supports? Friends are welcome too at the small charge of £3.50, payable in cash on the night of the talk.

All of our Members' Talks are held in the Geraldine Russell Lecture Theatre (near the Zoo's Main Entrance off the A41) at the times stated above and are provided to keep you abreast of Chester Zoo's conservation work which your membership supports.

Interested in attending?

Please call Kate in Education on 01244 389 444 or e-mail k.branksin@chesterzoo.org to book.

Members are required to bring along their membership card and welcome letter for access.



Wednesday 11th November 2009 at 7.30pm

Mauritius Evening

Professor Gordon McGregor Reid • Richard Hewitt • Maggie Esson

Dodos, giant tortoises, hibiscus, echo parakeets and fruit bats: conserving and interpreting the wonderful ecology of Mauritius and the other Mascarene islands.

Professor Gordon McGregor Reid

Saving the wildlife of the Mascarenes is a race against time. For some fifteen years Chester Zoo has worked closely with the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation (MWF) on several projects to rescue critically endangered endemic plants and animals and, more recently, to engage in the complete ecological restoration of habitats. In May 2009, Gordon visited Mauritius as a guest of the MWF to view these projects and to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on our renewed collaborative partnership. Gordon met with members of the dedicated Mauritian conservation team, which includes Chester Zoo staff. He also carried out a number of high profile engagements including trips to field stations, photo calls, media interviews and conservation stakeholder meetings. This presentation will review his trip and celebrate the very substantial progress in developing Chester Zoo's vital collaboration with the MWF and the Mauritian Government.

Professor Gordon McGregor Reid is Chester Zoo's Director General. Gordon joined the Zoo in 1992 as Curator-in-Chief, becoming CEO in 1995. An experienced tropical field biologist, Gordon has held senior positions in both the university and museum sector (University of London; University of Sokoto, Nigeria; British Museum of Natural History; Horniman Museum, London; National Museums, Liverpool). He is a Past-President of the Linnean Society of London and the current President of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA).

Plant Propagation Training

Richard Hewitt, Senior Horticulturist

Richard will tell us about the plant propagation training he gave to MWF staff on Rodrigues and Mauritius. The technique of air layering which he demonstrated is a type of propagation used where plant numbers are small. He will also look at propagation facilities and critically endangered plants on Rodrigues and Mauritius.

Richard Hewitt is a Senior Horticulturist, working in Chester Zoo's Horticulture and Botany Department. Based in the nursery, Richard has worked at Chester Zoo for seven years and is responsible for the propagation and growing on of hardy plants including British native plants Juniper and Black Poplar.

A dream come true!

Maggie Esson, Education Programmes Manager

Being given a coral island to develop for education is probably every educator's dream. Ile aux Aigrettes is such an island; a 29ha Nature Reserve 800m off the coast of Mauritius and leased by the government to the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation. Ile aux Aigrettes is an important vehicle to showcase the conservation work of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation and Chester Zoo and both NGOs work in partnership across a range of conservation initiatives, now including schools' education.

The boat trip may be short but in terms of time travel the journey winds back the calendar 400 years and this vision of a once-pristine Mauritius is what we hoped to convey to local school groups visiting the island. The 'Learning with Nature' project and the resourcing and training required to deliver the project was conducted as a partnership between the Discovery and Learning at Chester Zoo and MWF.

Maggie Esson has been involved with this process since the beginning acting as education advisor and in May this year the official launch of 'Learning with Nature' took place. This launch was the culmination of three years of planning starting with a stakeholder consultation conducted by Maggie, followed by a MWF senior staff workshop jointly-facilitated by Maggie and Prof. Carl Jones. This resulted in an agreed and time bound development plan for the island. The island looked at its best for the launch and MWF and Chester Zoo staff put in a huge effort to achieve this.

Panda postcard delivers good news to Chester Zoo conservationists



A picture postcard from China has delivered good news to conservationists at Chester Zoo about the success of a project they are supporting to protect Giant Pandas in the wild.

The extraordinary image (left) shows an adult panda leisurely crossing a river in China's mountainous Sichuan province. It has delighted the conservation team because it is an important sign that their work is paying off.

Chester Zoo, in conjunction with researchers from Liverpool's John Moores University and the Sichuan Forest Department, is helping Chinese authorities protect the highly endangered panda population and ensure key wildlife sanctuaries exist in harmony with local communities.

The remarkable photograph was taken by a local person after the panda wandered into a village near one of the Sichuan Forest nature reserves supported by the Zoo.

It is extremely rare to see a panda in the open so residents were taken aback on encountering the unusual visitor and at first feared it may be injured or sick. They called reserve rangers to check on the animal.

The experts determined it was perfectly healthy and was simply moving from one side of a valley to the other, but had stopped off near the settlement for a short rest before making its way across the river back into the reserve.

Delighted by the report, Head of Field Programmes and Research at Chester Zoo, Roger Wilkinson, said: "This is great news, not only for ourselves, but for field workers on the ground who are working so hard to protect Giant Pandas. This is a wonderful image which demonstrates, more than any amount of words, the majesty of these animals and why it is vital for us to continue our work to bring them back from the brink of extinction."

Chester Zoo's Sichuan Forest Biodiversity Project has helped fund the protection of natural habitats and educate local communities about ensuring the future survival of the Giant Panda species.

Project Co-ordinator Dr Simon Dowell, of John Moores University and Chester Zoo council member, said: "The fact that the local people phoned Reserve staff to tell them about this panda is evidence that an extensive Chester Zoo-supported publicity campaign is working and encouraging more positive attitudes to wildlife."

Chester Zoo supports three nature reserves in southern Sichuan, two of which are home to pandas. The Zoo supports an area of around 650 square kms, home to 4 per cent of the world's population of giant pandas. A variety of other threatened species can also be found in the lush forests.

The image of the Giant Panda is now being widely reproduced and included in a pack of postcards depicting local wildlife, for distribution to schools.

FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL
(NORTH WEST GROUP)
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS ASSOCIATION
WITH CHESTER ZOO



AUTUMN PROGRAMME 2009

Please note that FFI evenings are a unique mix of 'entertainment' and learning focussed on conservation. They are informal, informative and fun, and are open to everyone, so please do feel free to come along.

Friday 25 September 2009

'Free-living Wild Boar in the UK' with **Dr Martin Goulding**
Martin Goulding describes himself as 'a chap who has been following the resurgent free-living Wild Boar population in Britain for several years now'. With no natural predators, the British Wild Boar are expanding in range and numbers. Most of them originated as escapees from Wild Boar farms and the Forest of Dean provides an interesting example of the conflicts that arise between people and these animals. What issues might arise for Cheshire if this happens here? Why not come to discuss this with Martin.

Friday 23 October 2009

'Tales of the Red Queen' with **Professor Greg Hurst**
The Red Queen in Lewis Carroll's *Alice through the Looking Glass*, noted, 'In this place it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place'. Greg Hurst, who is the Professor of Zoology at Liverpool University, is an absolutely fantastic communicator whose research on butterflies is world class. This talk will detail how and why parasites can be particularly important drivers of evolution, mainly centred on the rather lovely Pacific Butterfly called *Hypolimnys bolina*. Intrigued? Come along to find out more!

Friday 27 November 2009

'Wildlife Conservation in a Former War Zone' with **Lise Hanssen**

This is a welcome return to FFI by Lise Hanssen, who co-founded the Africat Foundation in Namibia, although she is now working with the Large Carnivore Management Association of Namibia. Lise's current research on the Spotted Hyena involves working in the Caprivi Strip, an area where wildlife was decimated by the war with Angola and her talk will centre on the process of setting up a research/conservation project from scratch. This promises to be an excellent evening as Lise is a terrific speaker with such a passion for the conservation work she has dedicated her life to.

Tickets: A huge 'thank-you' to the many Zoo Members who have supported FFI (NW) over the years, and for those of you who have not yet 'tasted' one of our evenings, please come along and share a bit of the hope and magic that is hearing about conservation in action!

Tickets may be available on the door, but advanced booking helps us to keep costs down and guarantees a seat so please ring **Penny Rudd on 01244 650215** to reserve tickets. Lectures are held in the Russell Allen Lecture Hall, and doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Members and non-Members of FFI are welcome to attend. A buffet and wine are served, and tickets cost £8.50 for FFI Members and £9.50 for non-Members of FFI, with a concession of £5 for students.



Events at Chester Zoo

Thursday 20th August

Afternoon Tea and Garden Tour

Admission into the Zoo is from 4.00pm with afternoon tea served on the terrace at Oakfield Manor at 5.00pm. A garden tour follows with the evening concluding at 7.30pm.

£16.95 per person

Thursday 3rd September

Carnivore Evening and Buffet

In the company of our keepers learn more about the Red pandas, sealions and some of our big cats. A delicious buffet is included in the price.

£34.95 per person

Friday 30th October

Ghost Talks in Oakfield Manor

Enjoy a supper and ghostly tales within Oakfield Manor.

£14.95 per person

Sunday 8th November

Members' Lunch

Enjoy a two course lunch in the Oakfield.

£15.95 per adult and £11.95 per child

Saturday 14th November

Bats by Torchlight

Admission into the Zoo from 2.30pm. Hot pot supper served in the manor followed by an evening on-foot tour to the *Twilight Zone* to meet and chat to one of our keepers.

£15.95 per adult or child

December

Christmas lunches in Oakfield Manor

Served throughout December up to, and including, Christmas Eve

A delicious three course Christmas lunch enjoyed within Oakfield Manor.

Price includes admission into Chester Zoo.

£25.95 per adult £17.25 per child (under 11 years)

Friday 18th December

Oakfield Manor Christmas dinner and disco

Dining & Dancing in the Manor House until midnight.

£36.50 per person

Friday 1st, Saturday 2nd & Sunday 3rd January, 2010

Two course New Year lunch

£22.95 per adult & £16.95 per child (3 - 11 years)

Price includes admission

Saturday 3rd October 2009

DARWIN DAY

On October 3rd the Count Me In! team invites you to join them in a celebration of the anniversary of Charles Darwin's birth and publication of his most famous book *The Origin of Species*. The event also celebrates the first year of the highly successful Count Me In! Project.

For one day only, Chester Zoo and RECORD join forces with prestigious museums from the Cheshire and Merseyside regions to display some of the plants and animals that inspired Darwin, and trace the history of wildlife recording. Highlights of the day will include fascinating specimens, wildlife recording archives, a wildlife artist, talks by 'Darwins of today' and exciting activities for children.

The event will be attended by a number of important local conservation organisations, and a panel of local experts will help with wildlife identification from your photographs.

Free of charge! Booking required for talks.

Location: Chester Guildhall and Bishop Lloyd's Palace, Watergate Street, Chester.

For more information contact Karen Lawson - Count Me In! Project coordinator on 01244 383749 or email countmein@RECORD-LRC.co.uk.



Pre-booking and pre-payment essential

For further details please contact the Events Office on 01244 650209 or email: events@chesterzoo.org



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

Tel. 01244 380280 Fax. 01244 371273 Email: info@chesterzoo.co.uk Web: www.chesterzoo.org

Founded in 1934, the North of England Zoological Society is a registered charity and receives no Government funding. We need your help and support to raise funds for the care and conservation of rare and endangered animals both in the Zoo and across the world.

Registered charity No. 306077