

O O O O O H H H H H

H H H H H

CHESTER ZOO

WINTER 2014



Z
MAGAZINE

Features

In your Z Magazine...

The official magazine for Chester Zoo Members & Adopters

ISLANDS  Page 6-7



EXTRAORDINARY
DISCOVERIES, EVERY DAY
Islands is on its way...

ANIMAZING ACTION!!

Page 12-13

We had a fantastic response to our animazing action photograph competition. Check out a selection of the best and the **THREE** winners.



OUR ZOO

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN...

Page 14-15

Making a Difference **ACT FOR WILDLIFE**

Page 22-23

Catch up with our Act for Wildlife fieldwork at home and overseas

Mole Rat... Page 28-29
the naked truth



Don't Miss!
ADOPTER DAYS
Saturday March 7th 2015
Sunday October 4th 2015

MEMBERS' DAYS
Saturday March 21st 2015
Friday September 11th 2015
Sunday November 1st 2015



News from the Zoo

with Dr Mark Pilgrim
director general



We've had a fantastic autumn here at the zoo and with a combination of the mild weather and the success of the BBC programme *Our Zoo* we've seen a boost in visitor numbers, with the busiest September and October in our history!

I really enjoyed watching *Our Zoo* - the BBC One series depicting George Mottershead's journey to open our doors - and with viewing figures in the millions each week and the series being nominated for two National Television Awards there is no doubt that it was a success. Let's hope we see the fantastic Mottershead family on our screens once again. The series brought in a lot of new visitors to the zoo and many people booked on our behind-the-scenes-tour of Oakfield Manor to see where the zoo started some 83 years ago. Oakfield is again at the centre of our next big event, Lantern Magic. Now in its third year this year will be bigger and better and, if you've booked a place, I do hope you enjoy it.

Can you update us on the animals?

I'm very pleased to welcome Eastern black rhino Kifaru, to the zoo. Kifaru arrived from Hanover Zoo in September and we hope that he will sire a number of new calves and bring vital new blood to the European population of Eastern black rhinos. He has been introduced to two of our breeding females and I'm happy to say he is settling in very well.

We have also welcomed a new aardvark from Antwerp Zoo. Oni is a female aardvark who is just over a year old. Amongst the rest of our new arrivals is another female spectacled bear. Lima has come from Cerza Zoo from Lisieux, France, and is, nearly three years old. Once she is settled, we are hoping that she will successfully mate with Bernardo and produce cubs in the future.

September saw the birth of lots of animals including a white-faced saki monkey, several meerkats and two dwarf mongoose. I'm also very pleased to announce that a rare anoa calf - the world's smallest species of wild cattle - arrived in late October after a 282 day pregnancy for first time mum, Oana. The new arrival is named Lasolo after a Sulawesi river.

What's been happening in conservation?

Two of our keepers travelled to Argentina in September, to visit Proyecto Ibera. This is a venture which aims to conserve the Ibera Reserve by securing additional public land and restoring viable populations of a variety of species through reintroductions. The keepers observed the ongoing successful reintroduction of anteaters onto the reserve and they also got to visit one of the projects we've been supporting for many years. The project aims to create a self-sustainable population of jaguars and our staff had the opportunity to visit the facilities where jaguars will be housed whilst preparing them for release into the wild. We were also able to advise on various aspects of husbandry and enclosure design.

I'm also pleased to announce that our next staff expedition will be happening in February. This time we have 12 staff members going to Assam, India, for a community project which I'm very excited about. The project, which is being led by managing director Jamie Christon, will take the staff to the Sontipur and Goalpara Districts in Assam to work closely with communities in human-elephant conflict areas. The expedition, which includes expert staff as well as randomly selected staff, will offer these communities face to face help and advice and help villagers develop techniques to reduce conflict so that they can live harmoniously alongside the elephants.

Islands, what's the latest?

We are heading into the final straight with our *Islands* project and I have to say the pace with which the site changes from one week to the next is incredible. We were really helped with the dry weather in autumn when many of the structures were completed. If you've visited the zoo recently you've probably noticed the roof of the Monsoon Forest has now been fully fitted and now the building is watertight the inside is a hive of activity. All the walkways have been built and are full of workmen turning this building into a tropical rainforest. Once you step outside of Monsoon Forest you can really see the different spaces springing to life as our extensive planting programme has begun. Over the coming months 42,000 shrubs and trees will be planted across 15 acres transforming the building site into an Indonesian jungle. It won't be long until you get a chance to explore *Islands* for yourselves.

And finally

As this is our winter edition of the magazine I would like to close by wishing you and your families a fantastic festive season and a happy and healthy 2015 and by thanking you for your continued support. Our 80th year as a charity has been a very memorable one and with *Islands* opening in 2015, next year is going to be a monumental year for us all here at the zoo. We look forward to sharing it with you!

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

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

NEW ARRIVAL



We would like to introduce our new spectacled bear, Lima.

Two-year-old Lima has moved from a zoo in northern France after experts carefully matched her with our male bear, Bernardo. Spectacled bears are vulnerable to extinction in the wild and so staff at the zoo hope the pair will eventually go on to produce cubs, adding new blood to the insurance population living in zoos around the world.

The bears, which are found in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, are threatened by habitat loss, persecuted by local farmers for killing cattle and destroying crops and hunted for their meat, skin, bones, fat and claws. It is believed that only 20,000 now remain in the wild.

The arrival of Lima brings the number of spectacled bears living at the zoo to three.



EXTRAORDINARY DISCOVERIES, EVERY DAY

Islands is on its way...

With the build in its final phases, a team of staff are already concentrating on the finer details of turning the 15-acre site into an authentic snapshot of South East Asia.

Kim Halliday, the zoo's project management co-ordinator, reports...

Within *Islands*, the landscape, the animals and the architecture will create a strong sense of place, but in order to bring the site alive, a huge amount of additional material is needed. Our teams have been working on this over the last 12 months and it's involved mapping every scene of the journey and thinking about what evidence we need in each - evidence of the animals and plants living there and evidence of human activity whether that is fishing, farming, hunting, field research or day-to-day life.

As part of this scene-setting, we have an experienced supplier who is currently finding items from a number of different countries in South East Asia. The work will involve purchase of old boats, tools, containers, cooking implements and new items such as fabrics and the contents of market stalls. This is one way to ensure a sense of authenticity when these items are integrated into *Islands*.

A sense of atmosphere is also important and the teams delivering each of the island zones are creating a soundscape, smells and even weather conditions to evoke environments ranging from the Philippines to Bali and Papua.

Anything we source for external use has to stand up to British weather and there are a range of techniques for achieving this - choice of materials is important but also their treatment prior to installation. Some items are coated in resin, others will be waterproofed. All will be invisibly but securely anchored in place.



ISLANDS
at CHESTER
ZOO

www.chesterzoo.org



- The boardwalk where your expedition begins
- Current scimitar-horned oryx exhibit
- Manado restaurant
- Lazy River Jetty
- Entrance bridge
- Suspension bridge
- Bali starlings
- Broken bridge
- Banteng watering hole
- Tigers
- Monsoon Forest

We also theme items within *Islands*, meaning that seats, bins, wood carvings and models of fruit, flowers and even droppings must look like they belong in their setting. This is a specialist range of activities and will use the skills of the in-house team of theming experts, blacksmith and joiners as well as sculptors and model-makers from outside the zoo.

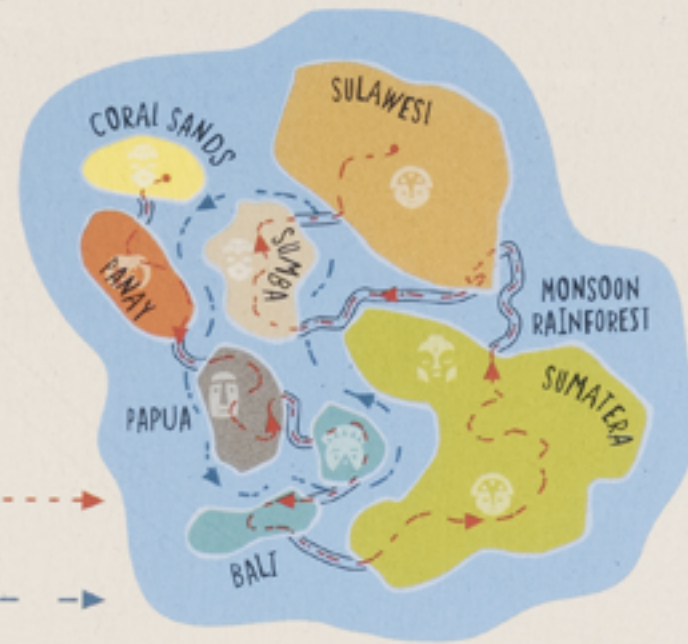
We have also been scouring salvage yards here in the UK and have procured a number of heavy metal pots, pans, petrol cans, a tack rail and other random items from local sources. In keeping with the current and highly sustainable enthusiasm for skip diving and upcycling, we are also exploring the zoo's barns and outbuildings for suitable materials and this is where we need your help.

We are still looking for a number of specific items to theme areas and we are hoping that you can help. Old trunks, veg crates, packing cases and old binoculars are particularly needed. If you can donate anything suitable and make your mark on this incredibly exciting project, then please contact Kim Halliday on 01244 650298 or k.halliday@chesterzoo.org



www.chesterzoo.org

Your EXPEDITION starts here



Islands will be home to many wonderful species. Over the next three pages we find out a bit more about just a few of these amazing animals.

Javan Rhinoceros Hornbill (Monsoon Forest)

(*Buceros rhinoceros silvestris*)

What makes this animal unique?

Hornbills mate for life and it's in the breeding season that their partnership is really put to the test. Before the female lays her eggs both partners build their nest together. They gradually seal up the entrance to a tree cavity with fruit pulp and droppings. This dries to rock hard clay and protects the nest from predators like monkeys and snakes. Once completed the female then boards herself in with only a thin sliver of an opening through which the male feeds mum and the chicks. This can last up to three months. During that time the male has to find sufficient food for himself, his partner and then his offspring. When the chicks are fully feathered and ready to fly, the female breaks open the seal and the family emerges.



Southern Cassowary (Zone: West Papua)

(*Casuarus casuarus*)

Why does a cassowary look the way it does?

LEGS: strong legs for running

FEATHERS: fine hairy feathers - more like fine hair so more streamlined for high speed running in dense thorny forest of rattan palms

FEET: knife-like talons - males fight with other males for females

HEAD: large bony casque for barging through dense vegetation and also for males to magnify booming territorial calls in dense forest

COLOURFUL WATTLES: can partly inflate to show-off and display to females



Visayan Warty Pig (Zone: Panay)

(*Sus cebifrons*)



So what makes a warty pig different than other pigs?

Most pig species are almost bald with a sparse covering of coarse bristles. Apart from a liberal coating of warts (scent glands) the male Visayan warty pig has a distinguishing feature. It grows the most amazing hair style during the breeding season. This consists of a spiky crest running into a thick mane across the back of the neck, resembling what used to be called a 'Mohican'. This is most likely to impress the females. This full glory does not last and the male becomes almost bald again at the end of the breeding season.

Anoa (Zone: Sulawesi)

(*Bubalus depressicornis*)



The Demon of the Forest

The anoa belongs to the wild cattle family of animals and is known as a small water buffalo. Like other forest-dwelling species the anoa is a solitary animal, secretive and silent. For all their solitary nature, they are an adaptable species and have been observed wading through deep water in mangrove forests to feed on the salt and mineral rich mangrove foliage. Their favoured habitat of lowland forest is often cleared for rice paddies. Individual animals may be familiar with this former forest territory and drift into a rice paddy out of habit and to eat the juicy, young rice grass. It is here that human wildlife conflict may occur and where farmers may experience the ferocity of a charging pair of horns. The anoa will throw its head forward and make a bluff charge. The meat is described as fiery or hot and men believe eating the fiery meat of this powerful, horned animal will give them prowess. Rumour has it that they come out of the forest at night like demons and use their horns to puncture cattle.



Bali Starling (Zone: Bali)

(*Leucopsar rothschildi*)



One of a kind

This stunning starling species was only discovered 100 years ago. It was hunted to extinction in the wild within the last 50 years and now lives in the Bali Barat National Park. This bird is famed for its beauty and they are kept (illegally) as a status symbol by extremely wealthy professionals. The black market value is equivalent to that of a prestigious make of car. The birds can live for up to 20 years.

Invertebrates for Islands

ISLANDS
at
CHESTER
ZOO



Asian giant mantis (*Hierodula membranacea*)

Average size:

Male: 7.5cm, female: 8.5cm

Average lifespan: Male:
6.5 months, female: 12 months

**Time to reach sexual maturity
from ootheca (egg sac) to
imago (adult):** 3.5-4 months

**Average number of young
from each ootheca:** 200-250



Dead leaf mantis (*Deroplatys dessicata*)

Average size:

Male: 6.5-7cm,
female: 7.5-8cm

Average lifespan:

Male: 9 months,
female: 14 months

**Time to reach sexual
maturity from
ootheca (egg sac)
to imago (adult):**

7 months

Average number of young from each ootheca: 30-60

Natural habitat: Humid tropical forests.

Captive diet: Small invertebrates e.g. fruit flies (for young nymphs); house flies, brown crickets, wax moths.

Interesting facts: There are approximately 2,500 species of praying mantis. When a prey item comes within reach a mantis can grab it with its powerful front legs at speeds up to 1/100th of a second.

Mantis are usually cannibalistic, therefore are kept in separate enclosure unless paired for mating.

Breeding is a tricky and dangerous task, especially for the male who risks being eaten head first! When pairing for breeding we ensure that our females are well fed and that there is enough space for the males to escape once they have mated.

Hercules beetle (*Dynastes hercules*)

(*Dynastes hercules
hercules*)

Average size:

Male: can reach 18cm,
Female: 5-8cm

Average lifespan:

Male: 1 year 6 months
- 2 years, 3 months.
Female: 1 year, 8 months
- 2 years, 3 months.

Life cycle breakdown:

Egg: 1 month. Larva: Male: 14 months (+/- 3 months);
Female: 12 months (+/- 2months)

Prepupa, pupa and immature adult (in pupal chamber created by the larva): 5.5-6.5 months

Adult: Male: 3-6 months; female: 6-9 months

Captive adult diet: Fruits- mainly banana

Interesting facts:

We currently have this species in its larval stage but are hoping to have adults of this, and similar species, by the time *Islands* opens.

We sexed the larvae and paired males and females, it is believed that this will synchronise pupation (the females will usually pupate first).

Larvae are kept in boxes of substrate which they also eat; it is composed of soft wood sawdust, blended dried oak leaves and vicuna dung. It is changed regularly to ensure the larvae have plenty to eat.

Voracious as adults, 2-3 individuals will eat a whole banana in a day.



DID YOU KNOW?

Insects make up the largest and most diverse group of organisms on earth, contributing to as much as 80-90% of the world's biodiversity.



EXPEDITION to Assam, 2015

In February 2015 12 members of zoo staff will be taking part in an expedition to Assam in North East India. Assam is home to one of the last remaining viable populations of Asian elephant and in 2004, together with EcoSystems-India, we initiated the Assam Haathi Project to work closely with local villages in areas of human-elephant conflict.

Elephant habitat in Assam is highly fragmented due to the growing human population coupled with unsustainable logging and expansion of agriculture. This has resulted in an increasing degree of conflict between people and elephants, the most common being crop raiding by elephants. Damage to properties and injuries to people are also relatively common and in response villagers sometimes retaliate by injuring or killing elephants. This conflict is unsustainable for both the survival of the elephants and the livelihoods of the local people.

A number of techniques to prevent elephants raiding the crops have been devised and the team will help put these in place. This includes putting up electric fencing, building watchtowers and installing spotlights.

The team will also help with training and will advise villagers on alternative livelihoods to reduce their dependence on the crops.

The team will be led by our Managing Director, Jamie Christon. Jamie will be offering help and advice to the women's self-help groups who set up and run small businesses to produce, market and sell products to increase income to their village. These items include honey, harvested for consumption and sale, so Mark Sparrow, our Curator of Horticulture and Botany, who is also an expert bee keeper, will be joining the team to offer support in this area. Many crops are grown, and our Lead Horticulturist Maile Belanger will be looking at how to increase the productivity and variety of these. Our Twilight Keeper and farm owner Vicki Small will be focusing on how villages can improve the care and productivity of domestic animals they keep. Finally our electrician Peter Davies will be attending to offer practical advice and maintenance of the electric fences that are used to protect crops, and spot lights that are used to direct elephants away from villages at night.



Our expeditions are also a way to offer life-changing opportunities to our staff members enabling them to see first-hand the conservation work that we are involved in, so the remainder of the team is made up from volunteers whose names were picked out of a hat. These volunteers will be trained up in relevant areas to support the rest of the team, and will be offering support in general maintenance and construction around the villages.

You can follow the team's journey on the Act For Wildlife website and there will be a full report of the expedition in the summer edition of Z.



ANIMAZING ACTION!! WINNERS

GALLERY

We had a fantastic response to our animazing action photograph competition run through our social media pages. Entrants were asked to capture any animal in the zoo in action and lots of visitors posted some fantastic shots via Facebook, Google+ Twitter and Instagram.

We want to thank everyone who entered the competition - the judges were very impressed with the standard of photography. Here is a selection of the best of the photos submitted, with the names of the entrants.

Harry Gibbins



Cedric Quillet



Steve Weaver

Tim Smith



Vicki Mather

Deb Haynes



Mark Bowden



Gemma Bowden



The contest was open to all ages and all levels. It was tough picking out the eventual winners, but our judging panel eventually decided on the first, second and third prize winners. Congratulations to all three.

FIRST PLACE

David McKeegan with his outstanding meerkat shot. David captured a completely different side to the meerkats and our judges were impressed with the composition and the lighting. He wins a Go-Pro camera, an animal adoption pack and a family ticket to the zoo.

SECOND PLACE

Mike McKeegan, who snapped a lovers' tiff between our lions. He wins an animal adoption pack and a family ticket to the zoo.

THIRD PLACE

Matt Perrins, with his 'flying' primate. He wins a family ticket to the zoo.

AN
ANIMAZING
DAY OUT!

OUR ZOO

The title 'OUR ZOO' is written in large, bold, brown letters. The letter 'O' in 'OUR' has a penguin standing inside it. The letter 'O' in 'ZOO' has a penguin standing inside it. There are also penguins standing around the letters: one to the left of the first 'O', one between the 'R' and 'Z', and one to the right of the second 'O'. A small penguin is also visible near the bottom right of the 'O' in 'ZOO'.

Our Zoo, the six-part **BBC drama** based on the inspiring story of our founder George Mottershead and his family in the 1930s, was a huge success on BBC One with viewing figures in their millions.



With the show arriving on DVD (now available in our gift shop and via our website www.chesterzoo.org), we caught up with actor Lee Ingleby to talk about his role as George Mottershead, moustaches and his thoughts on returning to the character for a second series...

DID YOU VISIT THE ZOO BEFORE YOU STARTED THE ROLE?

Honor (who played June) and I came to the zoo to meet the real June (George Mottershead's daughter) before we starting filming, it was only a brief trip. We went for tea in the Oakfield Manor with June to ask her about her and her father's relationship which was really useful for Honor and I. It was great going into the Oakfield, to see the actual house that George bought to start his dream and to see where it all began. As we didn't get chance to look around the zoo that day, I returned a few weeks later with my niece and spent the day there. I thought it was great!

I also visited the zoo when I was seven or eight - the main overriding memory for me was the polar bear.

HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE ROLE OF GEORGE MOTTERSHEAD?

I discovered there wasn't a great deal of information about George but I found what I could and read up on him. I also researched the period - the 1930s. What I really focussed on was George before you see him in the programme. I did a lot of research on where George went in the war and looked at how shellshock affected soldiers when they came back home so I could portray this in George's character.

WHAT DID YOU FIND CHALLENGING ABOUT THE ROLE?

The challenge for me was to portray the complexities of George's character. On the surface he is a doting, loving father but he's also seen extreme violence in the war. It was finding that balance - showing his post-traumatic stress but not overplaying it. It was showing George's progression through the series, starting off as this closed flower which finally comes to full bloom at the end of the last programme.

WHY DID YOU NOT GROW A MOUSTACHE FOR THE ROLE (THE REAL GEORGE MOTTERSHEAD SPORDED AN IMPRESSIVE MOUSTACHE)?

When I first took on the role we did talk about me growing a moustache and I didn't have an objection to it but we felt the moustache may be a distraction from the character. We didn't want the character to look the spitting image of George - none of the actors were cast because they looked exactly the same as the real people. We felt it was more important to portray George's spirit correctly, to get to the heart and soul of the man. I have to say I was relieved as a moustache does not look right on my face!





IF YOU COULD ASK GEORGE MOTTERSHEAD JUST ONE QUESTION WHAT WOULD IT BE?

That is a hard question! I could ask him lots of things but if I had to choose one question it would be what inspired him to give the animals their freedom. I would love to know if it was the First World War and his experiences in the trenches that planted the seed in his brain to start his zoo without bars.

WHAT DO YOU THINK GEORGE WOULD HAVE MADE OF THE SERIES?

I really hope George would have liked it. We tried to keep the story as close as we could to what really happened. Of course we omitted some bits and used artistic licence in other areas but I hope he would have thought we were truthful to his spirit and showed his passion. I know June liked it, which is great, and that is as close as we are going to get to George's approval.

YOU WORKED WITH LOTS OF DIFFERENT ANIMALS, WHICH WAS YOUR FAVOURITE?

I have to say the animals were extremely easy to work with and I have a soft spot for all of them. If I had to pick a favourite I'd say the camel. I think this is because it was the first animal I worked with on set. On the first day of filming we were on a back street in Bolton with this camel. It very unusual but I really enjoyed it.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE REACTION TO THE SERIES?

I was delighted with the response; it was great to get this fantastic story out to the public. I loved playing the role. It is a great story with fantastic characters and it really has a special place in my heart.

DO YOU KNOW IF THERE WILL BE A SECOND SERIES?

I don't know if there will be a second series but if there is I would be very happy to play the role again.



YOUR CHANCE TO WIN...

We are giving you the chance to win your own copy of *Our Zoo* on DVD, a family pass to the zoo and a portable DVD player. All you need to do is answer the following question:

WHAT IS THE NAME OF JUNE'S MONKEY IN THE SERIES OUR ZOO?

- A. MARTY B. MORTIMER C. MONTY

The competition runs from Monday 8th December to the Wednesday 31st December. You can enter at our website or you can post your answer to us with your contact details to:

Z magazine, Media Department,
Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester,
Chester. CH2 1LH

For full terms and conditions please see our website.

WWW.CHESTERZOO.ORG



www.chesterzoo.org



Welcome Kifaru...

Thirty-year-old Kifaru - an Eastern black rhino - is settling in to his new home after travelling from Hannover Zoo.

We hope he will sire a number of new calves and bring vital new blood to the European population of Eastern black rhinos – a species classed as critically endangered in the wild, largely a result of a dramatic surge in illegal poaching.

Curator of mammals, Tim Rowlands, said:

“As so few individuals exist, it is essential that we achieve successful breeding from as many of the rhinos in zoos as possible. Kifaru has only sired two calves previously. This means he has a great opportunity to add to the dwindling numbers of black rhino which makes him one of the most important rhinos around. Any offspring he may go on to produce here would bring vital genetics to the European population.

“We have one of the best records in the world when it comes to breeding rhinos, so fingers crossed we can encourage Kifaru to work his magic with our females.”

There are now thought to be less than 650 Eastern black rhinos remaining in the wild, placing the species perilously close to extinction. We have long supported conservation efforts in the wild to try and protect black rhinos and continues to pump money, and provide expertise, to numerous projects in Africa.

WINTER 2014

kids zoo



OOOOHHHHH

Prize to be won!
see our Quiz

Page 20



JUNIOR

MEMBERS'

PROGRAMME

Events 2015

DISCOVERY SESSION

SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2015

This is your opportunity to get to know your own zoo much better. We will split into groups and do different activities such as imaginative enclosure design which will be your chance to create the best living accommodation for a species we choose. Store up some questions about the animals and the way we look after them to ask your guides.

Eights and over are asked to join us, meeting outside Oakfield Manor (near the lions) at 2.00pm and parents can collect the youngsters from there at 4.00pm.

MANCHESTER NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2015

Manchester Natural History Museum is huge and fascinating! There is so much to do with loads of interactive sections, the themes range from vintage transport to up-to-date science exhibitions. Come along and have an action-packed February day.

The bus will leave from Cedar House car park (the second staff entrance on the left as you are coming up Caughall Road from the Upton traffic lights) at 10.30am and return at 4.00pm. Eights and over are welcome to come, please bring a picnic.

TRACKS & SIGNS

SATURDAY 28 MARCH 2015

This is your chance to see the zoo from the animals' point of view. We give you the opportunity to go inside some of the enclosures to search for footprints and then make them into plaster casts. Hopefully you will have a souvenir of your day to take home with you.

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

STOCKLEY FARM - NORTHWICH

SATURDAY 25 APRIL 2015

There is always a lot to do at Stockley Farm, whatever the weather! We will hop on a tractor and trailer ride, meet some farm animals, help bottle feed some baby goats and watch the birds of prey. It will be a lovely day out.

The bus will leave from Cedar House car park (the second staff entrance on the left as you are coming up Caughall Road from the Upton traffic lights) at 10.30am, and we will return there for 4.30pm. Eights and over are asked to join us. Bring a picnic with you.

CHESTNUT CENTRE - OTTER AND OWL SANCTUARY

SATURDAY 16 MAY 2015

This is always one of our most enjoyable days out. Hopefully we will have a guided tour and the opportunity to meet some otters, owls and other birds of prey, because as well as a wide variety of otter species from Europe and beyond, this collection is also involved in rescuing and re-habilitating many of our native species.

The bus will leave the Cedar House staff car park at 9.30am and return for 5.00pm. Over eights are invited to come along, and you should bring a picnic.

LAKE PADARN

- SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK!!

SATURDAY 20 JUNE 2015

Don't worry, we will not be traipsing the juniors up Mount Snowdon, but we will have this famous mountain in our sight at times while walking around the huge Lake Padarn, one of the water bodies at the base of the Electric Mountain. We will stroll around the lake and if we manage to be quiet enough we may see some of the wild mountain goats which live in this beautiful area.

We will leave Cedar House staff car park at 9.00am and return at 5.30pm. Bring a picnic lunch and all eights and over are invited to come along for a lovely day out.

HOW TO BE A GOOD ZOOKEEPER!

THURSDAY 23 JULY 2015

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

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

We will meet outside the Oakfield Manor at 10.30am, and the day will finish for juniors at 4.00pm. Please bring a packed lunch. Also please note that bookings for this event will not be taken before 9.00am on Thursday 9 July 2015, (01244 650215) and will be strictly on a first-come, first-served basis.



JUNIORS' SUMMER BARBEQUE THURSDAY 6 AUGUST 2015

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

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

THE JUNIOR MEMBERS SUMMER SCHOOL FROM 10 – 14 AUGUST 2015 INCLUSIVE

Please note that the two week booking rule does NOT apply to this event and EARLY BOOKING IS ADVISED (anytime from December 2014 onwards). The summer school is open to juniors aged 13 and above. Participants must be able to attend all five (full) days and the cost will be £190 for the week.

A full programme of events for this action-packed, but informal week should be issued in the March edition of this magazine, but essentially the summer school will encompass a wide variety of theoretical and practical training including a mid-week field trip, live mammal trapping, tours of the zoo, and talks from a variety of zoo staff.

SHUGBOROUGH HOME FARM SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2015

Shugborough is a beautiful stately home in Staffordshire and autumn 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-time bakery skills.

Eights and over are invited to join us for a relaxing day. We will leave the Cedar House car park at 9.30am and return home for 5.00pm. Bring a picnic.

BLACKPOOL ZOO SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER 2015

It's always great to visit other zoos and to see how they do things. We plan to have a guided walk so that we don't miss any of the highlights and juniors should have an excellent day.

Over eights are invited to come along and enjoy the day, and we will leave the Cedar House staff car park at 9.30am and return there for 5.15pm. You will need a picnic lunch and to dress up warmly.

BURTON MERE WETLANDS – THE RSPB RESERVE ON THE DEE ESTUARY SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2015

Burton Mere Wetlands is a magnificent mosaic of wetlands and beautiful woodlands and is perfect if you are new to bird watching, as the entire reserve has been designed to get you closer to nature. Many scarce migrant birds have been seen in previous years, including little stints, green, curlew and wood sandpipers. We will have a guided walk which should be excellent!

The bus will leave the Cedar House car park at 11.00am and return for 4.00pm. You will need to dress warmly and bring a picnic lunch. If you have binoculars bring them along, but we will have some you can borrow too. Juniors of eight and over are more than welcome to join us.

THE JUNIORS' CHRISTMAS PARTY FRIDAY 4 DECEMBER 2015

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

Please Note: Bookings must be made for all events. Please ring Penny Rudd at the zoo on 01244 650215, not more than two weeks before the event you would like to attend (except the junior members' summer school for which bookings are taken from December 2014 onwards). Places are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and may be limited. This list is provisional and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter dates and venues. You will be informed of any such changes in Z magazine and not by individual letter, so please keep up-to-date by reading the junior pages in each issue. A charge will be made to cover the cost of those events which involve transport, entry fees, materials or the provision of food, and you will be advised of this at the time of booking.

Wordsearch

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| O | X | R | G | M | W | S | T | R | V | O | F | F | R | S |
| Q | P | K | L | U | G | P | R | U | S | X | P | O | U | B |
| Z | E | S | F | D | W | O | L | F | T | L | V | R | V | B |
| Q | I | J | L | J | I | N | V | S | X | F | U | E | B | W |
| X | E | D | E | A | E | N | H | O | R | L | N | S | L | C |
| R | O | Z | W | R | W | J | W | M | I | Q | O | T | N | I |
| R | J | F | A | C | R | K | Z | A | E | B | O | W | D | J |
| W | A | B | E | R | O | V | I | N | R | A | C | P | N | R |
| W | L | E | A | R | B | S | B | R | X | B | C | Q | D | K |
| E | L | Q | B | M | I | A | H | V | P | U | A | E | L | G |
| B | M | U | H | T | L | F | M | A | G | F | R | W | G | K |
| F | U | L | G | E | N | S | N | B | I | Z | Q | A | L | I |
| B | W | I | U | P | M | D | C | A | O | L | K | F | G | G |
| Y | Z | A | D | K | A | G | Z | P | T | O | C | X | O | H |
| X | S | T | T | B | R | I | H | M | O | L | Y | S | K | N |

- AILURUS
- BAMBOO
- BEAR
- CARNIVORE
- FIREFOX
- FOREST
- FULGENS
- PANDA
- RACCOON
- RED
- TAIL
- THUMB
- VULNERABLE

red panda quiz

- Where do red pandas live in the wild?
 - Brazil, Chile and Peru
 - Nepal, India and China
 - Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania
- What animals are red pandas said to be closely related to?
 - Giant Pandas
 - Bears
 - Raccoons
 - All of the above
- Red Pandas are classified as carnivores: however they eat both plant and animal material. Bamboo is one of their favourite foods. How many bamboo leaves can they eat per day?
 - 200
 - 2000
 - 20,000
 - 200,000
- Red Pandas have how many thumbs on each paw to help them eat bamboo?
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
- Red Pandas are one of the cutest animals at Chester Zoo?!
 - True
 - False

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, Media Department, Chester Zoo,
 Upton-by-Chester, Chester, CH2 1LH
 by Monday January 5.

OOOOOHHHHH
 Congratulations to
 our previous winner

Benjamin Pratt
 of Warrington

JUNE MOTTERSHEAD

OUR ZOO

the real story of my life at chester zoo

June Mottershead was just four years old when her father, George, moved her family to Upton with the dream of building a zoo without bars. Now in her eighties, June is the guardian of her family's legacy and for the first time she tells the fascinating story of her unusual childhood growing up in the zoo, in her autobiography called *Our Zoo*.

From hand-rearing chimpanzees to becoming head keeper during the war aged just 13, June's unusual childhood was full of heartbreak, humour, trials and triumphs and above all fantastic characters both human and animal.

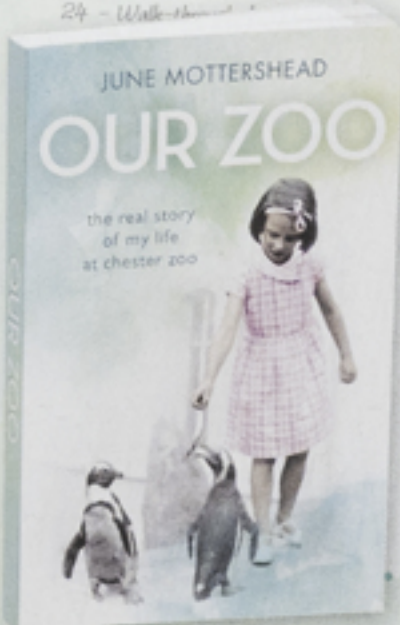
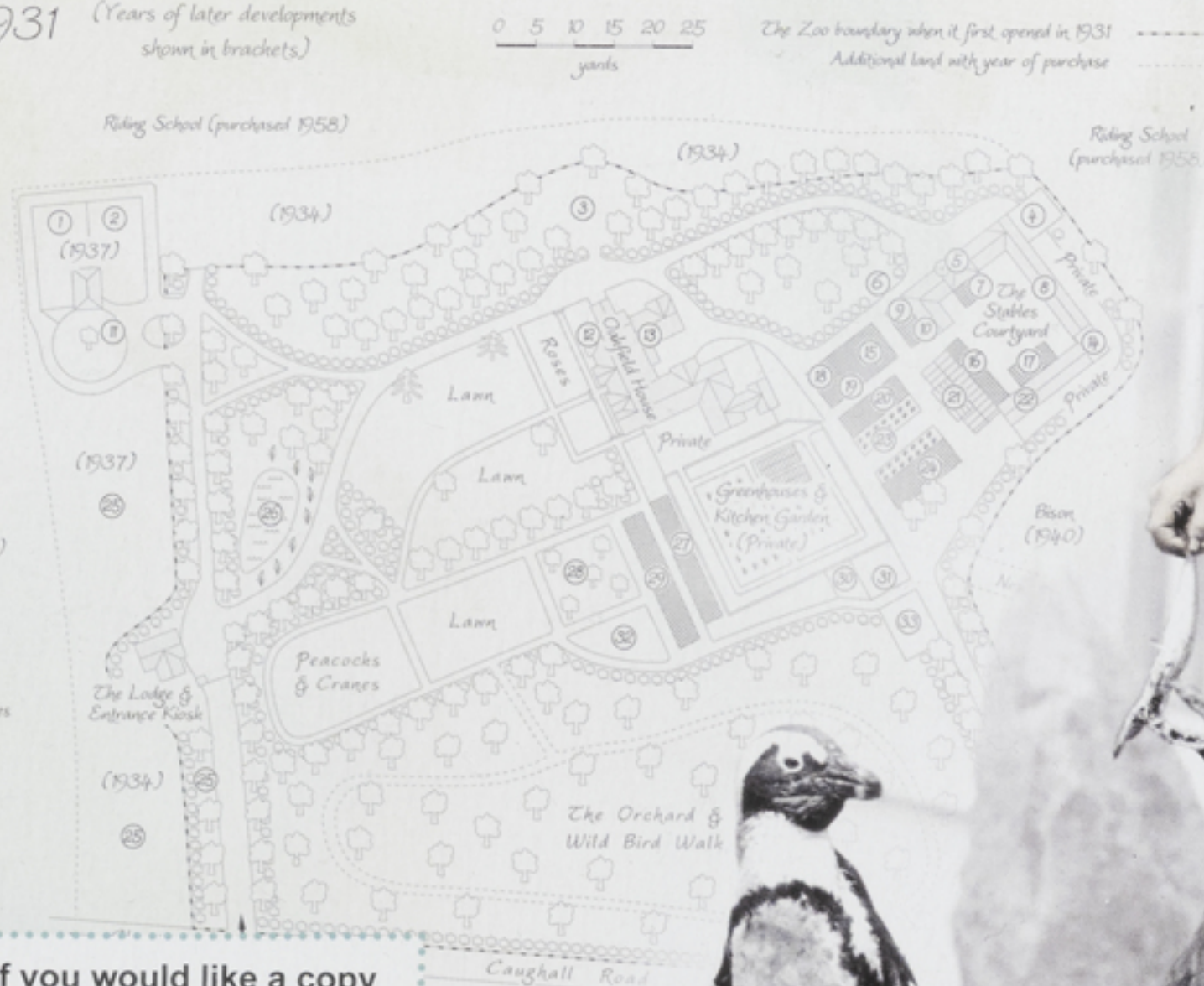
The book also contains some of June's personal collection of photographs from the 1930s and 40s. These include photographs of Oakfield Manor, animals that first lived in the zoo and some lovely pictures from the Mottershead family album. It also includes a map of the original zoo (pictured) drawn by her son George.



"Until I brought friends back from school I hadn't realised that most people didn't have baby lions in their bedrooms when they were sick, or bring parrots into the house so they wouldn't catch cold"

Chester Zoo in 1931 (Years of later developments shown in brackets.)

- 1 - Llamas (1937)
- 2 - Peter & Lion (1942)
- 3 - Children's Play Area (1937)
- 4 - Indoor Lion Pen (1937)
- 5 - Original Lion Pen Archway
- 6 - Site for Outdoor Lion Enclosure (foundation stone laid 1937, building delayed until 1947)
- 7 - Griffin Vultures
- 8 - Mandrills & Leopards
- 9 - Penguins
- 10 - Tapir (1932)
- 11 - Malayan Bear (1937)
- 12 - Cafe
- 13 - Aquarium
- 14 - Elephants (1941)
- 15 - Bird Aviary
- 16 - Canadian Black Bears (Adam & Eve)
- 17 - Rhesus Monkeys
- 18 - Taurico Aviary
- 19 - Pelicans
- 20 - Pheasant Aviary
- 21 - Conservatory (Crocodiles, Snakes, & Tropical Fishes)
- 22 - Chimps, Monkeys & Lemurs
- 23 - Herbaceous Borders
- 24 - Walk-through



If you would like a copy of June's book then we are selling copies in the shop here at the zoo or via our website, costing £20 (includes free P&P).

www.chesterzoo.org



Places we have acted for wildlife within the last three months:

- Philippines
- Indonesia
- Cameroon
- Peru
- Costa Rica
- India
- Brazil

ACT FOR WILDLIFE



Meet... Sarah

Sarah Bird is our Biodiversity Officer. She is responsible for developing the zoo's involvement with UK conservation projects and protecting local wildlife living on the zoo estate. One of Sarah's main areas of interest is the conservation of hazel dormice. Sarah has been instrumental in the development of the North West Dormouse Partnership which has been studying dormice in the North West for 10 years. In September she presented some research at the International Dormouse Conference in Denmark.

News from Java

Bird keeping is deeply embedded in Indonesian culture and it is believed that millions of birds are kept in captivity across the country.

This demand for captive birds is driving many species to the brink of extinction. The Cikananga Conservation Breeding Centre in Java aims to increase wild bird populations through conservation breeding and reintroductions. We have recently renewed our support for two projects focussing on the black-winged starling and the Javan green magpie. Both species are critically endangered and under continued threat from the pet trade.



The Cikananga Conservation Breeding Centre aims to increase ex-situ populations of these species in order to create viable populations for reintroduction. This includes the confiscation of illegally kept birds. The projects also continue to survey and monitor wild bird populations and implement education and awareness programmes.

Making a Difference

around the world

News from around the world

Good:

A new study suggests that the demand for rhino horn in Vietnam has dropped by 33% over the last year. It is thought that this reduction is the result of a national education campaign. The campaign addresses the myth that rhino horn has medicinal properties, aiming to drive down demand for rhino horn.

Bad:

The most recent 'Status of UK Birds' survey has revealed that nearly half of the country's summer migrants are showing long-term population declines. Species such as the nightingale, cuckoo and spotted flycatcher are suffering as a result of habitat loss and increased hunting pressures.



William Oliver (far left) with Roger Wilkinson (Conservation Project Manager) at Chester Zoo, along with Gordon McGregor Reid (former Chester Zoo Director General), Mark Pilgrim (Chester Zoo Director General), and members of the Philippine conservation team.

PHILIPPINES PROGRAMME UPDATE WILLIAM OLIVER OBITUARY

In September we received the very sad news that William Oliver, our longest partner in conservation, had passed away. We worked with William for over 20 years and it was the programmes and projects that William initiated which formed the basis of our Philippines Programme. William has been hugely important to conservation in the Philippines. Amongst other locally empowered conservation NGOs that Chester Zoo has supported William spearheaded the founding of the Cebu Biodiversity Conservation Foundation and the Polillo Biodiversity Conservation Foundation. Both organisations have been very successful in engaging community support for habitat conservation that has protected an array of threatened species. More recently, he created the Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation as the umbrella organisation to support the field conservation NGOs and conservation breeding centres he had created or nurtured. William will be greatly missed. He was without doubt one of the strongest voices for conservation in zoos and linking them to field programmes, but also a larger than life character who was never a shrinking violet and one of a kind.



Philippine cockatoos

PHILIPPINE COCKATOO UPDATE

As part of our Philippines Programme we've been supporting the Katala Foundation and their work with the critically endangered Philippine cockatoo for many years. We have recently funded a unique project which will help conserve populations of the Philippine cockatoo found on the Iwahig Prison and Penal Farm. Located on the Island of Palawan, the Iwahig Prison and Penal farm is home to a number of roost sites. Our support will facilitate the ongoing monitoring of these populations and research into their foraging activities as well as implementation of conservation education campaigns for inmates and prison personnel.

GRANT SUPPORT

INDONESIA

Over the last few months we've supported a number of new projects helping to conserve a variety of species in Indonesia. In Sulawesi, we supported a project which will examine how human activities impact on wild populations of Sulawesi macaques. The research will assess how tourism contributes to stress experienced by the macaques, helping tourism in the region to be managed more effectively through an understanding of its impacts on local wildlife.

We have also supported a Human Orangutan Conflict Response Unit (HOCRU) in Sumatra. The HOCRU responds to local incidents of human-orangutan conflict, including the illegal capture of wild orangutans, and translocate these orangutans to viable habitat where possible. The project also involves regular field monitoring of released animals.



© Lowland Tapir Conservation Initiative

Tapir

CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

We've recently increased our support through the spectacled bear conservation education project Forest Guardians. This project aims to improve environmental awareness of both adults and children and encourages schools to become actively involved in forest restoration.

We have also renewed our support for the Lowland Tapir Conservation Initiative, a project we've been supporting for many years which continues to monitor tapir populations in Brazil through radio-collaring as well as implementing an environmental education programme.

Staff

in Argentina...

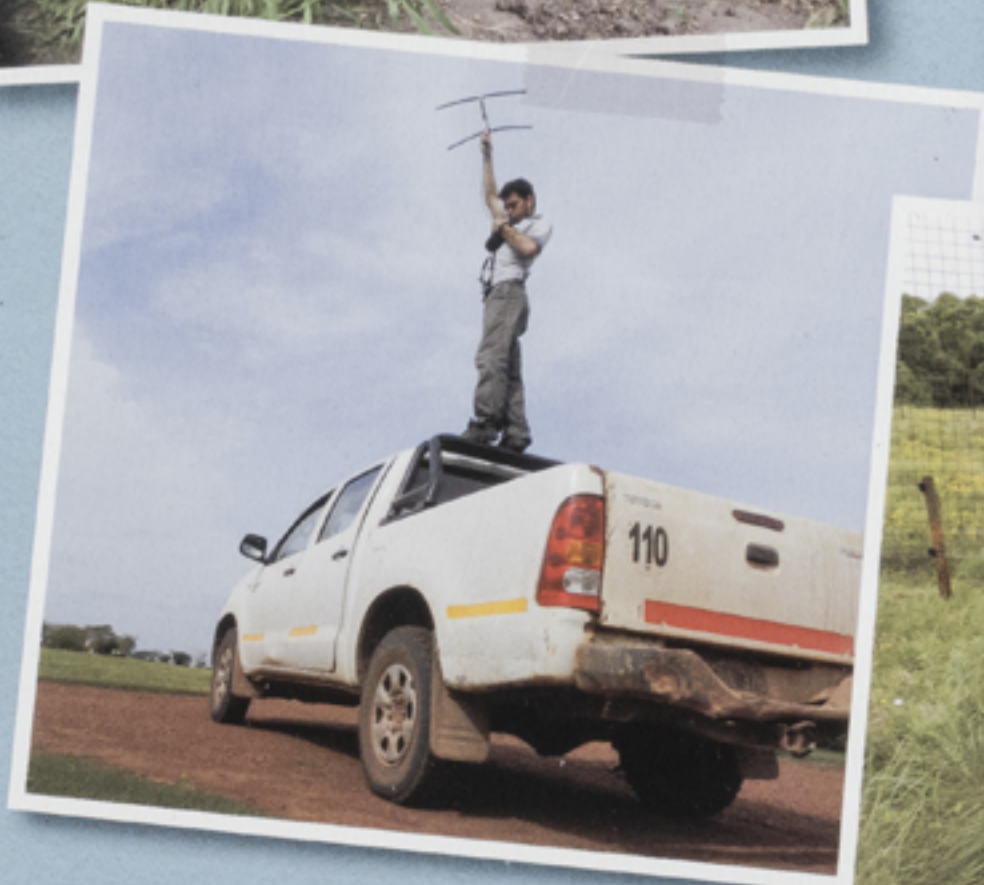
Go Wild



In September, two of our keepers, Rachael Bodenham (Carnivore Team) & James Andrewes (Twilight Team), travelled to Argentina to visit Proyecto Ibera.

Proyecto Ibera is a project run by The Conservation Land Trust in the Ibera Reserve in northern Argentina.

It aims to conserve the Ibera Reserve by securing additional public land and restoring viable populations of a variety of species through reintroductions. One of their most ambitious aims is to create a self-sustainable population of jaguars, a project which we have been supporting for a number of years.



Rachael and James had the opportunity to visit the facilities where jaguars will be housed whilst preparing them for release into the wild. The huge breeding facilities are set on a large island in the wetlands of the reserve. Rachael was able to discuss and advise on various aspects of husbandry and enclosure design as the project prepares for the imminent arrival of the first jaguar!

They were also able to observe the operation of the on-going and successful giant anteater project. Both of these reintroductions are part of the much bigger enterprise to revitalise the area's biodiversity and ultimately ensure its long term protection, with the support of local communities.

Rachael and James' visit also took in giant anteater release sites, as well as the quarantine centre near the city of Corrientes which currently houses several orphaned young anteaters being prepared for release. This quarantine centre soon plans to receive its first jaguars and a group of collared peccary.

Both keepers were greatly impressed by the scope of the project, the passion, knowledge and warm hospitality of its staff, and the beauty and natural richness of the Ibera Reserve.

Staff

around the zoo...

GO Wild



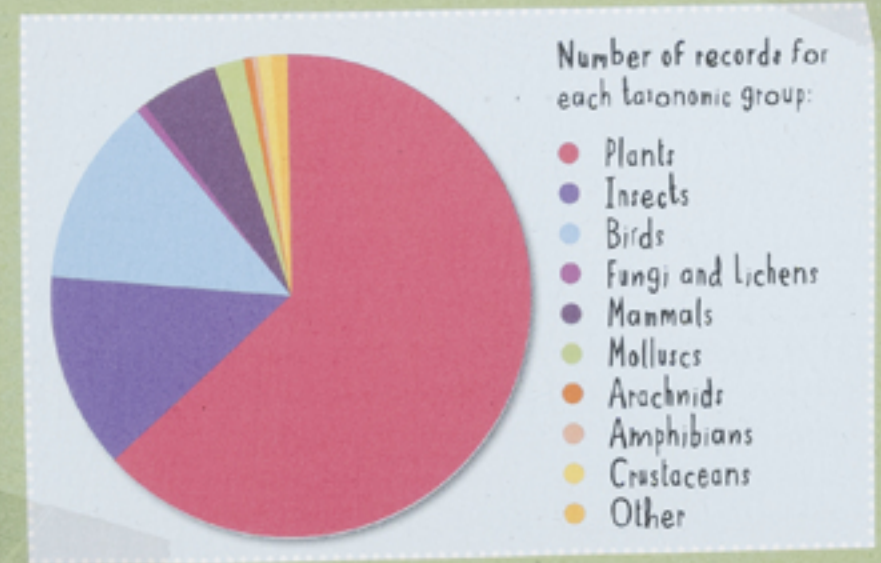
Our staff went wild and took part in the BIAZA Bioblitz – an intensive 24 hour wildlife recording marathon. We were assisted by 12 local experts and 55 volunteers to find as much wildlife as possible in and around the zoo.

BIAZA started to encourage zoos to BioBlitz back in 2012, and this year 32 zoos took part. Recording wildlife is essential for effective conservation, providing information on species presence to guide management decisions, but that's not all a BioBlitz is about... Getting lots of people involved in looking at nature inspires interest in the wild creatures and plants around us, and highlights the importance of zoo sites for local wildlife.

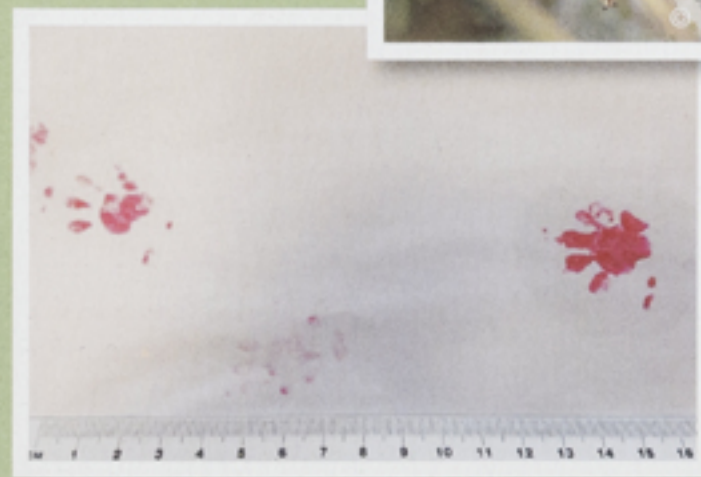
We held our BioBlitz from midday on the 6th September to midday on the 7th. Over two days we looked for everything! From aquatic invertebrates in our ponds and moats, to plants and beetles living on our elephant dung pile! We did an early morning bird walk, boat safaris, small mammal trapping, and moth trapping. We tried particularly hard to record elusive species, using footprint tunnels, bat recording equipment, and even setting camera traps to film nocturnal zoo visitors.



Attendees take a boat trip around the zoo to see what they can find.



We are very pleased with the total so far of 1998 records and 432 species, with a few more yet to be confirmed.



Can you guess who made these foot prints? (Answer upside down at the bottom of the page)



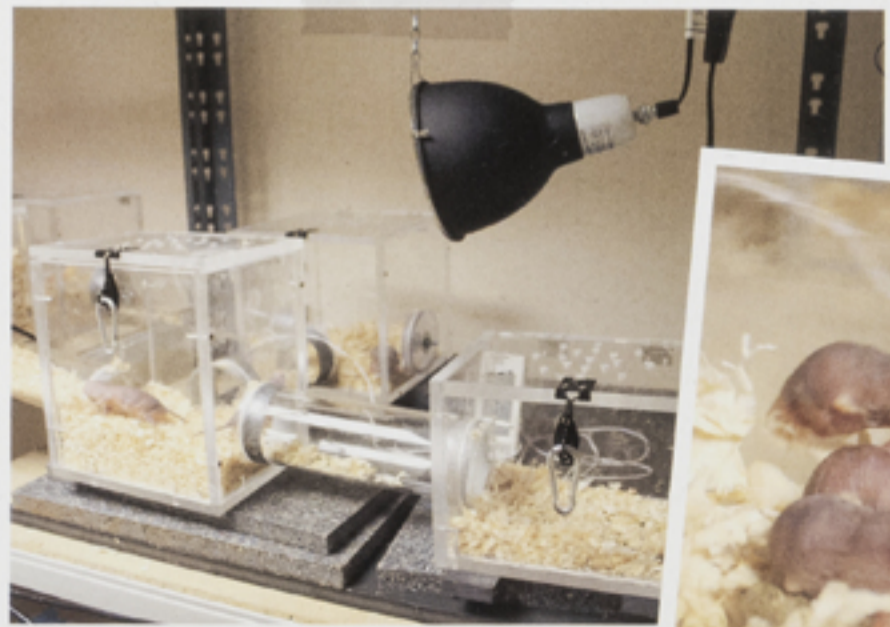
As you can see from the results in the pie chart plants were the most recorded, followed by insects and birds. We are especially pleased with the final total of 18 mammal species – though that does include a neighbour's cat which isn't really wild is it?!

Mole Rat... the naked truth

A colony of unusual looking creatures has taken up residence at the zoo. Despite its name, the naked mole rat *Heterocephalus glaber* is neither a mole nor a rat, but a burrowing rodent from east Africa more closely related to porcupines, guinea pigs and chinchillas.

Do not let their appearance deceive you either as these critters holds some amazing and unique secrets. The first thing that draws your attention is the large front teeth. These are used for digging through the dry soil to make and maintain their burrows but are also needed for chewing through the roots and tubers that they feed on.

This species is one of only two mammalian species to live in a eusocial society, meaning that they live in a colony made up of generations of related individuals with only certain individuals able to reproduce. This is similar to termites, bees and ant colonies. A colony is led by a queen, whose role is to solely reproduce and feed the pups and she can have up to an incredible 27 pups. There are also workers, who search for food, care for the pups and create tunnels and 'soldiers' who help protect the colony.



Living in a subterranean environment the naked mole rats lack the fur needed for protection from the sun that other mammals have, although they are not totally naked. They have tiny hairs covering their body which helps pick up vibrations aiding them to get around the darkness of their burrows.

The burrow system has a number of chambers - there is a nursery and nesting chamber as well as food storage and another for a toilet! The exhibit set up for the mole rats replicates their subterranean environment with a number of boxes all connected by perspex tubes. The temperature is maintained at around 30 degrees Celsius using heat lamps.

Naked mole rat set up

Roots and tubers are a favoured food source for the mole rats but they also have another delicacy poo! This gives them a second chance to digest the fibrous material that they have eaten, and they will even share it with other colony members. They will also roll in poo. This is so all colony members smell the same and can be recognised by smell in the darkness of their burrows.

Our 27-strong colony arrived from Dresden and already the queen has given birth to 12 pups.

Naked mole rat pups born at Chester zoo

The naked mole rat has also proven to be an important species to science. It appears that this rodent is resistant to cancer and could hold the answer in preventing or treating malignant tumours. Although they are currently being kept behind the scenes to allow the keepers to develop the required husbandry skills to keep this fantastic species, in the future the plan will be to build a new enclosure specifically for them so everyone can see these weird and wonderful animals.

Meet Oni our new Aardvark



Our new 18-month-old aardvark, Oni, enjoys some shut eye after moving to the zoo from Antwerp. Oni, who was born in May last year, is settling in well.

Fundraising News

Helping conservation... with every purchase!

ACT FOR WILDLIFE You can raise donations this Christmas through easyfundraising. If you're buying a gift online then you could help raise money for Act For Wildlife and it won't cost you a penny.

Here's how easy it is to do:

Just visit a retailer via the easyfundraising website and any purchases you make will raise a free donation for us. It's that simple!

easyfundraising has already helped raise over £7million for charities and good causes across the UK. They work with the leading retailers including Amazon, John Lewis, Argos and Marks and Spencer to name but a few.

It takes just a couple of minutes to register for free and no payment details are needed. Please visit our page to find out more:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/afw



GET ACTIVE AND ACT FOR WILDLIFE

Be a hero and do something amazing for wildlife.

Team Act for Wildlife is looking for people to take part in challenge events and raise vital funds to help save species both in the UK and around the globe.

We have four charity places up for grabs in Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 cycle event. This iconic event gives riders the chance to ride on the famous course route that crosses the finish line on The Mall.

In 2014 Team Act for Wildlife raised over £6,000 for our vital field programmes and with your help we can do even more next year. To find out more visit www.actforwildlife.org.uk/challenge or get in touch with the fundraising team development@chesterzoo.org

Welcome

to our newest Corporate Adopters

Aaron & Partners have adopted our orangutans
 American Golf have adopted our spectacled bears
 Rhino Products have adopted our eastern black rhinos
 Waters corporation have renewed their adoption of our Livingstone's fruit bats



CHESTER ZOO "100 CLUB"

THE WINNERS OF THE PRIZE DRAWS, HELD RECENTLY, WERE:

JULY 2014

£100 Mr Alan Matear, Workington
 £100 Mr Andrew R Davies, Wem
 £50 Mr David L Lloyd, Leamington Spa
 £50 Mr Jeremy Elton, Altrincham
 £50 Mr R Callaghan, Stoke-on-Trent
 £50 Mr Ray Morrison, Great Sutton

AUGUST 2014

£100 Mrs L A Parsons, Woolton
 £100 Mr Alan Varty, West Kirby
 £50 Miss Angela Nolan, Liverpool
 £50 Mr D M Lloyd, Middlewich
 £50 Mrs Jennifer Dow, Ellesmere Port

SEPTEMBER 2014

£100 Mrs Irene Alexander, Buckley
 £100 Ms Fiona Matthews, Neston
 £50 Mr David Harris, Knutsford
 £50 Miss Sheila Hartley, Oldham
 £50 Mrs Patricia Cade, Ellesmere Port
 £50 Mr Graeme Errington, Malvern

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

GO



range

for Orangutans

a swinging success!

Now in its second year **Go Orange for Orangutans** has again captured the imagination and generosity of our supporters beating our target and raising over **£16,000** for orangutan conservation.

This fun campaign with a serious message has seen over 150 schools, businesses, groups and individuals come together with one aim - to Go Orange for Orangutans and raise the funds needed to plant 1500 new trees in the forests of Borneo with our conservation partners Hutan.

Staff took part by dressing in orange adding a splash of colour across the zoo. Many rose to the occasion by entering the staff Great Zoo Bake Off - with not a soggy bottom in sight. However this year's highlight was the 'totally orange 10' - ten plucky zoo staff including Mark Pilgrim, director general, who pledged to 'go totally orange' and get a spray tan if enough money was raised. And luckily it was, raising over £1,000 in a matter of days!

Out in the zoo we asked visitors to join in the fun by posting orangutan selfies on Twitter which many did throughout October. With a more serious message the Zoo Ranger team were in Realm of the Red Ape every day highlighting the issues around unsustainable palm oil and showing visitors how they can help by checking their shopping baskets for the RSPO label.

So many people joined in this year's campaign but here are a few of the highlights...

- Bradley Driver, a zoo member, aged just four, gave up his pocket money to the appeal to help save orangutans as well as selling wristbands raising £60 in total.
- Local band Junebug offered up the proceeds from downloads of their songs and played at the zoo to raise awareness with visitors.
- Ferndale Primary School from Dudley in the West Midlands had a Go Orange day at school then travelled up to Chester Zoo for a visit to learn about the rainforest.

A massive thank you to everyone who supported Go Orange for Orangutans! For the latest fundraising total and updates from the frontline of orangutan conservation visit the Act for Wildlife website www.actforwildlife.org.uk/orange



2015

SPRING

PROGRAMME

Let's Talk...

Welcome to the 2015 series of members' talks! We had so much to celebrate in 2014! The zoo turned 83 and we also marked 80 years as a wildlife charity – in 1934 the North of England Zoological Society, the charitable arm of the zoo, was set up. This year we've also seen great interest in George Mottershead and his battle to open the zoo following the successful BBC series *Our Zoo*. So, with that in mind, we thought you'd like to hear a little bit from a few of our 'old timers'! We're kicking off the 2015 talks' programme with some fascinating anecdotes from memory lane which we know you'll enjoy.

The following talks will be just as interesting and enjoyable and are planned to bring you up to date with the work your membership supports so we hope you can join us. And don't forget, if there's something you want to hear about, let us know. We try to schedule in talks that we know complements your interests and are always looking for new topics. Just drop Kate a line with your ideas and take a look at the programme below to see if you're interested in joining us in 2015. If so, give Kate a ring to reserve your place.



Did you hear the one about ...?

THURSDAY 22ND JANUARY 7.30PM

In 2014 we celebrated 80 years as a wildlife charity. This evening will bring together a number of our old timers - staff with plenty of years at the zoo between them - and we'll recall old times. There'll be lots of anecdotes and laughs as we look at how things have changed! We want to hear from you too, so come along and share your memories with us as we reminisce.

A Foot in Most Camps!

WEDNESDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 7.30PM

Our Zoo Ranger Team gets around! You know their faces and you know they need to move quickly because not only are they giving public talks but they are our quick response team so that, for example if a baby animal is born, they're there to tell our visitors and members all about it. It means they have to know what's happening in all our animal and plant sections. And they have to be able to share that knowledge to all our visitors from 2 year olds to 102 year olds! To be fair, they do have some amazing artefacts to help them answer some of the weird and wonderful questions they're sometimes asked.

Come and hear about those questions at this talk, as our Rangers come armed with some fascinating biofacts to tell you all about their role, what it's like to know almost everyone in the zoo and to have their feet in most zoo camps!



The Greening of Islands

TUESDAY 28TH APRIL 7.30PM

Islands will be one of the most extensively themed exhibits in the zoo and a huge part of the theming to make *Islands* look and feel really authentic will be the planting. How are the plants sourced and how are they maintained to keep them healthy and looking stunning and outstanding in a climate which often isn't their own?

Mark Sparrow, Curator of Horticulture and Botany, will explain to you just how the greening of *Islands* has been achieved.

An Elephant Evening!

THURSDAY 19TH MARCH 7.30PM

There have been many ups and downs over the last two years in the elephant department. Come and learn about how we are developing the elephants' habitat and how staff are furthering healthcare and welfare for our magnificent elephants as well as reports on staff visits to our conservation project in Assam, India.

Argentinian Adventure

THURSDAY 14TH MAY 7.30PM

In October 2014, Carnivore Keeper Rachael Bodenham and Twilight Assistant Team Manager James Andrewes returned from a visit to see Proyecto Ibera, the work being carried out by The Conservation Land Trust in the Ibera Marshes of Corrientes Province in northern Argentina. Chester Zoo has provided funding for their potential jaguar reintroduction project and Rachael discussed various aspects of jaguar husbandry and enclosure design in preparation for the imminent arrival of the first jaguars. James was able to observe the complex operation of their ongoing and successful giant anteater reintroduction project. Both of these reintroduction efforts are part of a much bigger enterprise being undertaken to revitalise the area's biodiversity and ultimately to ensure its long term protection, with the support of local communities.

Join our keepers as they attempt to share with you the scope and elegance of this remarkable conservation project.



Interested in attending?

Please call Kate in Education on 01244 389444 or email k.brarkin@chesterzoo.org to book.

Members' Talks, held in the Geraldine Russell Lecture Theatre (near main entrance off the A41), start at 7:30 pm and:

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

FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL (NORTH WEST GROUP)

Friday 20 February 2015 with Lianne Concannon. Pink pigeons: in the pink?

A Conservation Success Story from Mauritius.

Dr Lianne Concannon is conservation scientist at Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, who has extensively researched the endangered pink pigeon, endemic to Mauritius, in partnership with the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, the National Parks and Conservation Service of Mauritius, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Chester Zoo.

Her talk will focus on the conservation success story of Ile aux Aigrettes, a predator-free island off the south eastern coast of Mauritius, which is managed as a nature reserve by the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation. Lianne will give a broad overview of conservation efforts in Mauritius, moving on to focus on the species reintroduced to Ile aux Aigrettes, before outlining some of the key findings of her research on the pink pigeon which revealing some potential unexpected conflicts, which will inform the future management of the island. To reserve tickets email Penny Rudd p.rudd@chesterzoo.org or call 01244 650215.



Thirty very special Baer pochard ducklings have been successfully hand-reared. This rare species of Asian duck is on the brink of extinction and keepers believe as many Baer's pochard ducklings have hatched here this year as are now left in the wild.

The species is listed by the International Union for the Conservation Nature (IUCN) as critically endangered as a result of hunting and loss of their habitat in Siberia and eastern Asia where they were once commonly found in their tens of thousands. Experts fear just a few individuals are now left and the species could soon vanish altogether.

Curator of Birds Andrew Owen said:

"We're perilously close to losing this species in the wild and that's why our recent hatchlings are very, very important indeed. They're without doubt some of the rarest ducks in the world.

"Thirty Baer's pochards have been bred here this breeding season and whilst it's good news in the sense that it's a record for us, rather frighteningly, there may only be similar numbers left in the wild."

We are just one of a handful of institutions in the world that is working with the highly threatened species and hopes to play a vital role in their long-term survival.

Mr Owen added:

"Our very talented bird team have given all our ducklings a helping hand, rearing them under close watch to make sure they make it through to adulthood. With a species that's so rare, it's imperative that we get as many through to that stage as possible.

"Hopefully these little ducklings will start to rear their own young next year and, beyond that, a European-wide breeding programme in zoos and bird parks could be what saves the species from extinction."

The Baer's pochard is a diving duck found in eastern Asia. They are threatened due to habitat loss, illegal poisoning and trapping.



Double trouble...



Meet our two new dwarf mongoose pups. The little youngsters, the smallest of all the African carnivores, spent a month in their nest box with keepers just hearing their occasional squeaks until they eventually made an appearance in October.

Team manager Dave White, who looks after the dwarf mongoose at the zoo, said:

"Now that our new duo has started exploring they're going to keep mum, dad and the rest of the dwarf mongoose group very much on their tiny toes."

"Dwarf mongoose are highly sociable animals, living in groups where each mongoose has a job to do. When a litter of young is born then the whole group helps to care for them, with females other than their mum even producing milk for them."

"They may be small but they're a fascinating species and what they lack in size they certainly make up for in likeability."

The arrival of the pups brings the number of dwarf mongoose at the zoo to six but it's too early for keepers to be able to tell if the pups are male or female.



Saki Monkey

Welcome to our new white-faced saki monkey as she hitches a ride with her mum Tabiti.

Keepers say the wide-eyed youngster is doing well and describe Tabiti as a 'great mum' and dad Kwinti as a 'protective dad.'

White-faced saki monkeys are found in tropical rainforests in parts of South America. They have been recorded jumping up to 10m. For this reason, local people sometimes refer to them as 'flying monkeys'



Heads Up

for your
NEXT ISSUE

CAN'T WAIT - visit our website or just POP in!

Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester,
Chester, CH2 1LH
Tel: 01244 380280
Email: info@chesterzoo.org
www.chesterzoo.org

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

Registered charity No. 306077