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CHESTER ZOO

SPRING 2015



Z  
MAGAZINE

# Features

In your Z Magazine...

The official magazine for Chester Zoo Members & Adopters

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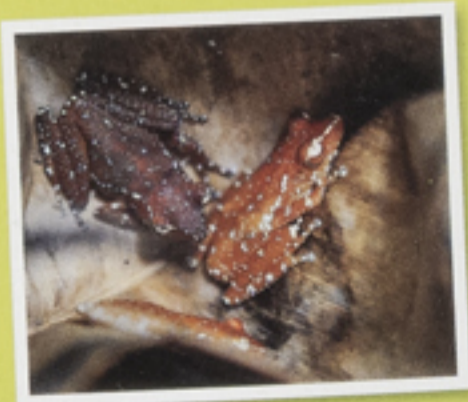
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travelled to Madagascar to  
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CHESTER ZOO

SPRING 2015



# News from the Zoo

with Dr Mark Pilgrim  
director general



We've had a brilliant start to the year with a surge in visitor numbers and an array of animal arrivals but I wanted to begin by having a quick reflective look over last year. At the end of 2014 we had two reasons to celebrate; we not only ran our third successful year of

*Lantern Magic* which was our busiest yet, we also had a record breaking year as visitor numbers reached 1,432,867, the highest in our 84 year history.

## Can you update us on the animals?

We ended 2014 with some very good news as we received an early Christmas gift, a Rothschild giraffe calf, Zahra. We were still celebrating this fantastic news when 10 days later, three Sumatran tiger cubs arrived. At the end of January we had yet another new arrival when our Eastern black rhino, Kitani, gave birth to a female calf, Fara. All three of these species are under threat in the wild and are part of well managed breeding programmes in zoos, making these arrivals even more special.

## Islands, what's the latest?

The three Sumatran tiger cubs, together with their parents, are some of the animals that will be moving over to *Islands* over the next few months. *Islands* is now on the final finishing straight, ahead of its opening in June. It's amazing how much it's changing every day. There are buildings being finished, plants being planted and a whole host of interesting items arriving from South East Asia ready to transform the site. Years of planning and preparation are coming to an end and as the opening draws nearer, I'm getting more and more excited about the next chapter for us here at the zoo and about unveiling the biggest project in UK zoo history.

## What's been happening in conservation?

Although we are all preparing for a very busy year our vitally important field conservation work continues. In February two of our bird keepers, Victoria and Steve, returned from Mauritius where they had been working with our partners, the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) on their Mauritius cuckoo-shrike project. The cuckoo-shrike is critically endangered and this is the second time Victoria and Steve have gone over to Mauritius to offer their expertise to the project. Whilst over there Steve continued his work from last year, searching for wild nests to gather valuable information on the current population. Victoria was involved in the harvesting and hand-rearing of chicks which will be re-released next year to help bolster the wild population.

## And finally

Just before I sign off I have to tell you about our next edition of Z. To coincide with the opening of *Islands* we will be having a special *Islands* edition which will come out slightly later in June than normal. Look forward to seeing you at *Islands*!

## North of England Zoological Society - Recruitment of New Trustees

The North of England Zoological Society (the 'Society') is, a charity managed and administered by a Board of Trustees ('Council') with a responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity and to ensure that it delivers its charitable objectives. Council selects individuals it believes to have expertise and experience to give it additional strength who it then recommends to the members of the Society for election.

At the Annual General Meeting in September the members will be electing new trustees to replace three existing trustees who will have completed their full terms of service.

As part of the process of identifying candidates to be nominated by the Council, we are inviting expressions of interest from current members with relevant experience who would be able to commit to the level of involvement required.

We would be particularly interested in hearing from existing members with experience in the following areas:

- Primary or secondary education
- International conservation field programmes

Initial expressions of interest, together with a brief cv covering relevant areas of expertise and experience should be sent to Marie Brookfield by March 31st 2015.

Marie can be contacted via email at:

[m.brookfield@chesterzoo.org](mailto:m.brookfield@chesterzoo.org)

or by post to: Cedar House, Caughall Road, Upton by Chester, Chester CH2 1LH.

Information about the responsibilities of being a charity trustee can be found on the Charity Commission website: [www.gov.uk/charity-trustee-whats-involved](http://www.gov.uk/charity-trustee-whats-involved)

## ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

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

NEW ARRIVALS

# Introducing our **TRIO** OF TIGER CUBS

This year started with a roar, as we welcomed three Sumatran tiger cubs.

The triplets were born to eight-year-old Sumatran tigress Kirana and seven-year-old dad Fabi. We captured some of their first moments on CCTV and then at just three weeks old they made their public debut.

There are believed to be 300-400 Sumatran tigers left in the wild as they are often targeted by poachers who use their body parts as traditional medicine and much of their jungle habitat has been destroyed.

**Curator of mammals,  
Tim Rowlands, said:**

"We're thrilled to kick off 2015 with these special arrivals. These tiny triplets who, in June, will move to a brand new home in *Islands*, are now part of a safety-net against the population in the wild becoming extinct. That to me is incredibly humbling.

"Sumatran tigers are one of the rarest big cat species in the world. That's what makes our new tiger trio so incredibly special - they're a rare boost to an animal that's critically endangered.

Sumatran tigers are found only on the Indonesian islands of Sumatra. They are the smallest of all tigers and also have the narrowest stripes.



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

NEW ARRIVAL

# Caught ON CAMERA...

Meet our new black rhino, Fara.

The amazing moment our Eastern black rhino Kitani gave birth has been captured on camera. The 50-second footage shows the 17-year old mum deliver her newborn and the tender first moments as she checks over her calf.

Curator of mammals, **Tim Rowlands**, said: "Kitani's delivery was textbook. We had a 'maternity suite' ready for her with deep sandy floors and beds of hay but ultimately she chose her own spot.

"The footage has enabled us to witness this really special moment and both mum and youngster are doing really, really well. Every birth is cause for great celebration but given that Eastern black rhino face a real threat of extinction our new arrival is even more significant. The calf is super important to the breeding programme in Europe and her arrival is another step towards sustaining a black rhino population which, in the wild, is being ravaged by poachers on an almost daily basis."



Scan here to see the remarkable footage of Fara's birth.

In the wild there are thought to be less than 650 Eastern black rhinos remaining, pushing the species perilously close to extinction. Numbers in Africa are plummeting as a result of a dramatic surge in illegal poaching, fuelled by a global increase in demand for rhino horn to supply the traditional Asian medicine market. The problem is being driven by the astonishing street value of rhino horn, which is currently worth more per gram than gold and cocaine.

**Tim added:**

"We put great effort into protecting black rhinos in the wild, supporting a number of sanctuaries across Africa. However, as the demand for rhino horn intensifies, poaching continues to become a bigger and bigger problem.

"We hope that, one day, we can put an end to this crisis once and for all. But in the meantime we need to ensure we have an insurance population and that's why this arrival is such brilliant news. This means there's a very happy team of keepers, vets and conservationists here.

"All being well, Fara will also one day play her own breeding role in a programme, which, in some cases, has already seen some black rhinos return to Africa to help boost numbers. For the time being though she is forging very important early bonds with mum."

Fara, born on January 31st, is the latest in a long-line of black rhino arrivals at the zoo in the last two years, following Chanua, Dakima and Embu. She brings the total number of Eastern black rhinos at the zoo to 11. Footage of the birth can be seen on our website

[www.chesterzoo.org/rhinobirth](http://www.chesterzoo.org/rhinobirth)

NEW ARRIVAL

# NOT-SO-LITTLE Zahra

We would like to introduce our new Rothschild's giraffe calf.

Six foot Zahra which means 'flower' in Swahili, was born to mum Aoife and dad Meru.

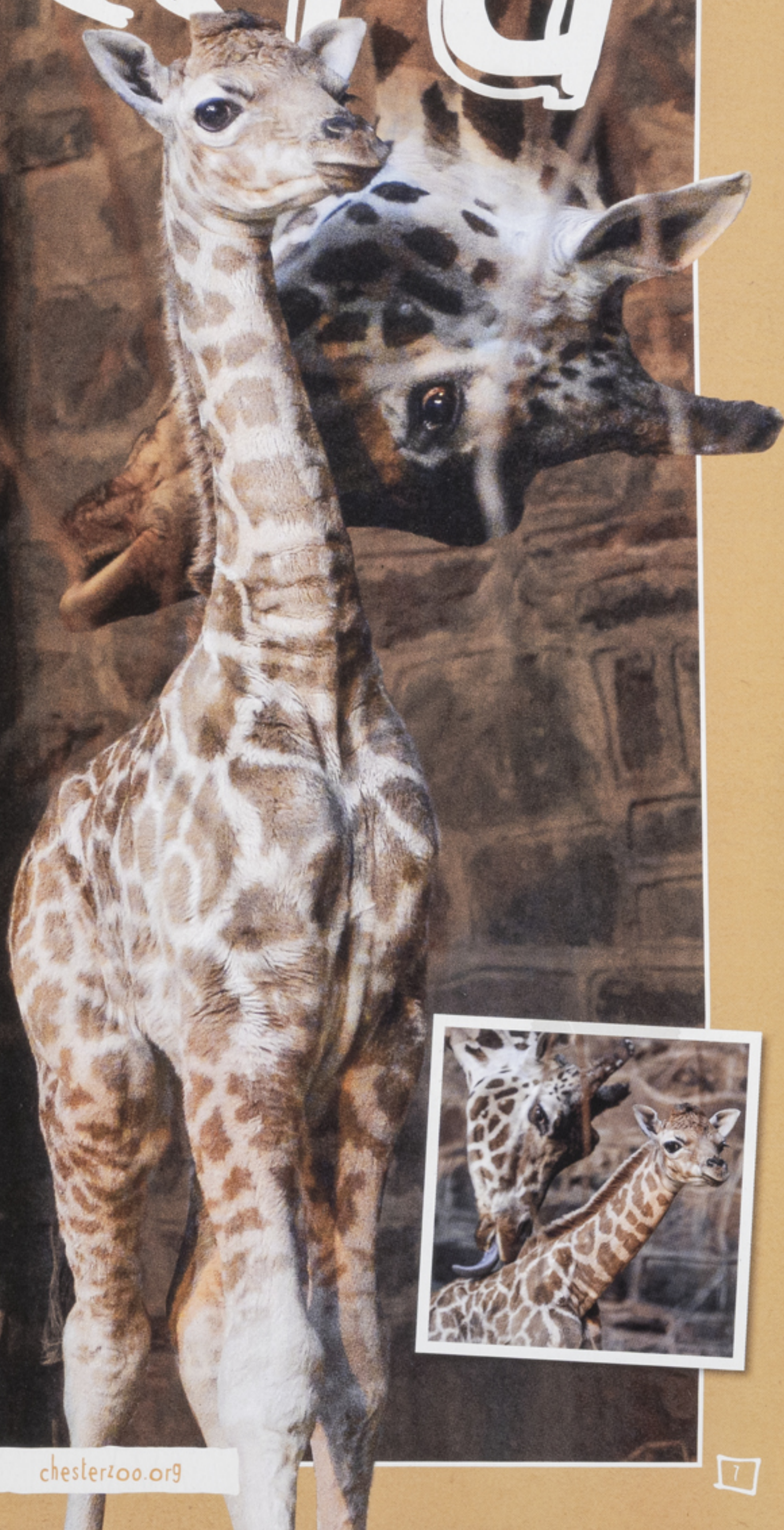
Rothschild's are one of the world's most endangered subspecies of giraffe, with recent estimates suggesting less than 1,100 are left in the wild.

**Curator of mammals, Tim Rowlands, said:** "Giraffes give birth standing up and the calves fall about 6ft - so they really do come down to Earth with a bump. But we're happy to report that our new, not-so-little, youngster is doing well and is already confident on her long legs.

"Whilst it's great that we have a nice herd here, in the wild this species really is under threat. Numbers are declining at a worrying rate due to a massive upsurge in poaching for their meat.

"So when people come here and see the likes of Zahra and see what magnificent animals Rothschild's giraffes are, we really want them to stop and think about the plight of the species in the wild. Rothschild's giraffes are of high conservation priority and the need for a concerted conservation effort has never been more urgent."

On top of its successful breeding record, we have supported important projects in the wild, including the first ever scientific review of the Rothschild's giraffe. Its aim is to develop a long-term conservation strategy for the species in Africa.



# All hands on deck for ISLANDS

## SCENE-SETTING GETS UNDERWAY!

at CHESTER ZOO

With only a few months to go and the vast majority of building work complete, *Islands* is entering its final stage; the transformation from a vast building site to an archipelago of authentic South East Asian landscapes, all with the help of some clever theming.

In our last edition we mentioned that our experienced supplier had been searching in South East Asia for thematic items, and we are pleased to report he's made great progress. Buying from local markets and suppliers to commissioning items to be built from scratch, he's bought a whole host of items from bird cages to entire shop fronts to ensure that what we see in *Islands* not only looks the part but is authentic to South East Asia. All these items were packed into containers and we eagerly tracked them through the Indian Ocean and up the Suez Canal in Egypt, en-route to the zoo.

Once the items arrived, we catalogued each one and referenced its eventual location in *Islands* before loading them back into storage. The items will now stay locked-up in storage for a few more months before they make their final move to *Islands*. Once in place these important items will help form part of the backbone of the *Islands* experience, setting the scenes for Panay, Papua, Bali, Sumatra, Sumba and Sulawesi.

We've also continued our hunt for items closer to home and we've had a great response to our request for help. Each donated item that we receive gets recorded and added to our growing collection. We then prepare them for their final use by ensuring that they are safe and appropriate for the public prior to their installation. The quality has been great and they will fit seamlessly into *Islands*, the majority looking like they've been pulled from a 1930's Hollywood jungle classic.

We've received several beautiful pairs of binoculars, heavy duty steamer trunks and fantastic travel suitcases from across the country, from Chester, Crewe, County Durham and even London, from members eager to see their old items put to new use.



After travelling thousands of miles Tricia decided *Islands* would be a great final destination for her grandmother's trunk



The trunk belonged to my grandmother; her name was Anna and she was born in 1888. She was Lithuanian and was known locally as Annie. She came to England when she was 18 years old - in 1906 - and she used the trunk to bring her belongings with her.

Once in England she met somebody, got married and lived in the Collyhurst area of Manchester. The trunk was then used to keep clothes in and I always remember it in my grandmother's bedroom whenever I used to visit as a little girl.

When my grandmother became elderly she moved in with us, bringing her trunk with her. It's been with us ever since and I kept thinking I must do something with it. I thought donating to the zoo would be perfect as it has created fond memories for me over the years. Now it can help make memories for others.

A passion for wildlife and an affinity with the zoo led Agnes to donate her aunt's binoculars



The binoculars that I've donated to *Islands* belonged to my father's sister, Miss Mary Henderson - my Aunty Moll. She was born in 1899. She was a passionate supporter of the zoo in the early days and knew George Mottershead personally. She was a keen ornithologist and very active member of the RSPB.



I had a very special relationship with her as she lived just four doors away from my parents. I used to spend all of Saturday and Sunday afternoons with her. She took me out into the countryside, with the binoculars and taught me about the things she loved, the birds and animals and plants on the Wirral and in North Wales.

I inherited all of her binoculars, as she had many, and the pair I've donated to the zoo have been in my cupboard for so many years because I couldn't bear to throw them away but couldn't find a use for them. I can think of nothing better than that they should be used and enjoyed - and probably worn out - at Chester Zoo!

We are still looking for a number of specific items and would gladly accept donations of old first aid kits (used, worn, battered and beaten is fine, with or without contents!), old portable fire extinguishers, camping pots and pans, worn rucksacks and old walkie talkie radio equipment. These items are some of the many that we hope will make *Islands* unique, offering the chance for you to put your own stamp on the project. To donate items, please contact [f.howat@chesterzoo.org](mailto:f.howat@chesterzoo.org)





*Islands*, the biggest project in UK zoo history, is opening in June. With the build nearly complete here's the latest look at the site.

The outside of the flagship indoor building Monsoon Forest is nearly finished and the enormity of the building is slowly being revealed as the scaffolding comes down. The grand entrance which protrudes from the ground is now prominent on the site and it's elevated position will give excellent views back across the bridges and various islands, as well as acting as a gateway into Monsoon Forest.

Inside Monsoon Forest there are teams of people busily putting the finishing touches to this huge space. Theming continues throughout the building with the biggest job, transforming two huge floor-to-ceiling ducts into large trees, well underway.

Huge panes of glass, which will be viewing windows for the Sunda gharial crocodiles, macaques and orangutans are being installed, once fitted the team will start transforming these areas into the Sunda Gharial pool, Tangkoko Reserve and the Hutan Jungle Reserve.

Outside, the boat channel that runs through the space is now complete and is ready to be filled. The 14 boats that will make up the fleet of river trip vessels are arriving shortly from Europe, ready to be themed before ending their journey at the zoo. Many of the buildings and bridges are now finished and are being surrounded with an array of tropical plants as the horticultural team carry on their intensive planting.



# The hunt for medals, not lions...



While we were wrapping up warm during the winter the heat was most definitely rising on the other side of the world - and it wasn't just down to the weather. The competition between the Maasai warriors in Kenya was beginning to hot up in preparation for the Maasai Olympics.

The event, in which we were the main sponsor, was set up to replace wildlife hunting with sport.

For hundreds of years in East Africa hunting and killing animals - mainly lions - has been a traditional rite of passage to manhood. It is customary warrior activity and is carried out to show strength, impress women and identify future leaders.

But this activity was forcing certain species towards the edge of extinction. Something needed to change. So conservation experts worked together with spiritual leaders, village elders and leading Maasai figures to develop these games and stop the killing of animals.

It provides Maasai warriors with other ways of displaying bravery. Now the competition is to see who can win more medals than the other, rather than who can kill the most lions.



The first Maasai Olympics were held in 2012 and with it came a completely new approach to animal conservation. Taking place at the base of Mount Kilimanjaro in the Kimana Wildlife Sanctuary were a number of athletic events including the high jump, spear throw, 200m sprint, 800m sprint and a 5k run, all based on traditional warrior skills. And, for the very first time, women also competed in two events - the 100 and 1500 metres.

There was a lot at stake, too, as the top three winners for each event received a medal and cash prize, and the overall winning village received a trophy and a premier breeding bull.

Dr Maggie Esson - our education programmes manager - attended the games to present the Chester Zoo Conservation Prize in recognition of the Maasai village (known as a manyatta) that has done the most for wildlife conservation.

Maggie said: "It's difficult to pick out a highlight. It was all so wonderful! The men's 5000m was run around noon and a real test of warrior strength and endurance. Despite the heat there was a sprint finish, with the crowds ecstatic as the two leading runners headed for the line.

"The prize for this event, apart for the status within the warrior groups, is entry to the New York marathon - which will be a very different experience!"

The winner of this strenuous event was David Kirisia from the Imbirikani manyatta. The Chester Zoo Conservation Prize went to the Ogulului manyatta.



# New discoveries

## from a decade of dormouse diaries



It's hard to believe but our hazel dormouse research study is now 10 years old! Over the decade we have spent 80 days in the field, looked into 18,400 dormouse nest boxes, seen dormice 2,701 times and microchipped over 1,100 of them.

The unique study has unearthed fascinating new traits in this tiny charismatic mammal species, including the fact that females have a promiscuous side. It is the longest-running large study using capture, mark and recapture techniques on small mammals in the UK. The project team includes conservationists from the zoo, staff from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the local Wildlife Trusts, Denbighshire County Council and many volunteers.

Dormice at the study sites in Cheshire and North Wales have been marked with microchips and had DNA extracted from hair samples. These techniques enable us to follow individual dormice throughout their lives, and to work out family relationships. Key findings include the unexpected discovery that females can have offspring sired by multiple fathers in one litter! We have also found that female dormice sometimes breed twice in the same year and that females very occasionally breed before they are a year old.

### Biodiversity officer Sarah Bird said:

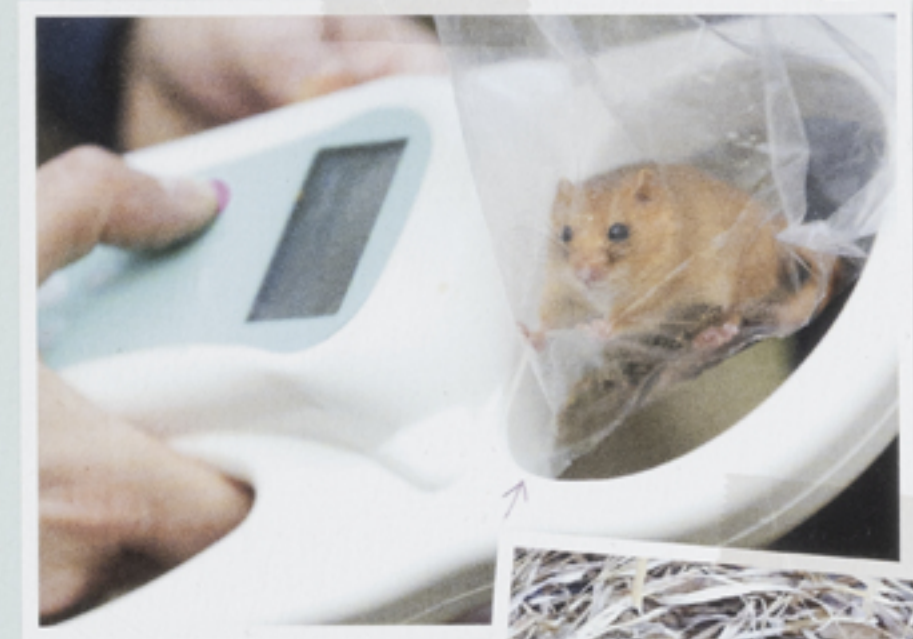
"Analysis of all the data will take time, but results are already shedding new light on dormouse ecology, highlighting factors which are important for the species' survival in the UK. Promiscuity in females had never been recorded before and is likely to aid population survival by increasing genetic diversity within litters. At the International Dormouse Conference I attended in Denmark last year we discussed the importance of various breeding behaviors. It seems that years when females breed twice, and young of the year also breed, is when populations really increase. These behaviours are likely to be critical for healthy sustainable dormouse populations in the UK."



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

### Sarah added:

"Our survey site in North Wales is on the very north western edge of their European range and, from the start, we've been surprised how many hazel dormice are there. We now know a huge amount about these animals – including how long they live for, how their weight fluctuates through the year and how many survive winter hibernation. It is clear that habitat management at the site by Natural Resources Wales is making a big difference for the dormice and other wildlife there."



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

# ME, YOU & THE ZOO

We've been overwhelmed by the number of special stories that have been submitted to us since we launched the new 'memories' section of our website. It's great to hear that our visitors feel that the zoo is so special to them.

Here is just a selection of some of the wonderful stories we've been sent.



## 1946

**Family elephant ride** by Sonja Walsh

This is my first elephant ride at the zoo aged three years old. I'm sat next to my mother and on my other side are my cousins David and Marjorie. I thought we were sliding off his back, very scary!



## 1969

**How Boris came to the zoo** by Hester Mundis

I rescued Boris from a pet shop when he was a baby and raised him for two years in our New York apartment along with my son and our German Shepherd dog. When I became pregnant with my second child, I realised that three year old Boris was getting too large and strong to stay with us. Heartbreaking as it was to part with him, I was determined to ensure him the best life possible and from all the zoos around the world, I chose Chester. Every time I've visited, I'm reminded how grateful I am to everyone at the zoo for all they've done and continue to do for my "son." And I will always be indebted to Mr. Mottershead for his vision and providing Boris with such a wonderful world in which to live his life.

## 1980

**School trip bites yer bum!!!** by Jude Harrison-Smith

Myself, my brother and our two friends posed for a photo whilst on a school trip back in 1980. We all sat patiently on the wall while our mums got their cameras ready but while we were waiting, the cheeky ostrich seen in the background came up behind us and bit our friends bottom!



We decided then it was best if he got off the wall for the photo to be taken (seen ducking down at the front). It tickles us all to this day and we have never let him live it down.

1930 | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980

## 1930

**Our grandparents lived in Oakfield House** by John Millard & Josephine Butler

Our grandparents Souter and Adela Clayton lived in Oakfield from 1925 until 1930 – they sold the house to George Mottershead.

Our grandfather was a cotton broker and had an office based in Liverpool. He and our grandmother had five children (our mother, Harriot, was their eldest child), and they used to host lovely parties at Oakfield. Unfortunately, our grandfather became very sick which may, or may not, be the reason why he lost all his money and had to sell the Oakfield.

We think our grandfather would like the fact that Mr Mottershead turned the grounds into a zoo, and we think he'd be happy to see the large trees outside the house still here. It is lovely to see the zoo bringing so much joy to so many people's lives.

Sadly, he lost a huge amount of money and the bailiffs came knocking on the door, taking the furniture. So he had no alternative but to sell the house and the person he sold the house to for £3,500 was Mr Mottershead and his family.



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



## 1950s

**My mum worked at the zoo** by Margaret Parkinson (nee Jackson)

My mum worked at the zoo as part of the catering team in the Oakfield, or as we called it the 'big house'.

This picture was taken in the 1950s – my mum (the lady on the bottom right) was very fond of Mr Mottershead (left) and she absolutely loved working here.

## 1963

**Opening of the tropical realm** by Florence Bland

Our family have been involved in the zoo since its beginnings. We've been life members for many years. At the opening of the new Tropical House my daughter, Christina, was in a pushchair and my son William, now 52 years, wanted to be in the action so this press photo was taken of him.



The photographer actually put him on the back of the giant tortoise and took a photo. The security man objected and the photographer was made to remove him and place him behind the barrier. William at the time was very disappointed as he just loved all the animals.



## 1976

**Family day out** by Julie Thompson

This was a family day out with my cousin, brother and sister from 1976. Just a happy day... although my brother doesn't look very happy!

We're sharing our stories from the zoo and want to hear yours too...

**DIG OUT** your family photos and recreate them on your next visit to the zoo.

Just get your family and friends together, find the same spot in the zoo and see how the photo looks now. We'd love to see your 'then and now' shots so share them on social media, #ZOOMEMORIES

If you haven't already sent us your memories of your time at Chester Zoo then go to [www.chesterzoo.org/memories](http://www.chesterzoo.org/memories) or send your story by post to Memories, Chester Zoo, Chester, CH2 1LH

We LOVE your happy memories of Chester Zoo. Come back soon and make some more.

CHESTER ZOO



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

# Biodiversity is



## We are all connected

The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) is the unifying organisation for the world zoo and aquarium community and we are members. The goal of WAZA is to guide, encourage and support the zoos, aquariums and like-minded organisations of the world in animal care and welfare, environmental education and global conservation.

Zoos and aquariums have decided to take the lead in getting people to act to preserve biodiversity, which is shrinking at an alarming rate. WAZA have launched a "Biodiversity is Us" project and this is timed to support the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011–2020, by helping to raise public awareness about biodiversity.

See the WAZA website [www.waza.org](http://www.waza.org) for details of the 'Biodiversity is Us' app which is available for iOS and Android users at no cost. Through use of the app, you can learn about 400 animal species, take part in games and quizzes, build your own animal checklists and share your favourite animal pictures and actions with friends via Facebook. There are also colorful posters and films of various lengths. Our zoo rangers will be showing some of these films in various locations around the zoo, including Spirit of the Jaguar and the Tropical Realm.



World Association of  
Zoos and Aquariums  
**WAZA** | *United for  
Conservation*<sup>®</sup>



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

SPRING 2015

# kidszoo



OOOOOHHHHH

Prize to be won!  
see our quiz

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## **TRACKS & SIGNS**

**SATURDAY MARCH 28TH**

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 House at 11.00am, returning there for collection at 4.00pm. You will need a picnic lunch, and it is important that you wear clean, very old clothes and absolutely clean wellies please.

## **STOCKLEY FARM - NORTHWICH**

**SATURDAY APRIL 25TH**

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 the 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 MAY 16TH**

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 JUNE 20TH**

Don't worry, we will not be traipsing the juniors up Mount Snowdon, but we will have this famous mountain in our sight at all 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 the 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 JULY 23RD**

This is a unique opportunity offered to junior members to spend a day working alongside a zookeeper. 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 House 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 AUGUST 6TH**

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 AUGUST 10TH-14TH INCLUSIVE

Please note that the two week booking rule does NOT apply to this event and EARLY BOOKING IS ADVISED. 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, informal week will be issued nearer the time, 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 SEPTEMBER 26TH

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 OCTOBER 24TH

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 NOVEMBER 21ST

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 DECEMBER 4TH

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

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

Work out the collective names of the following animals, then find the names in the word search.

Zebra HERD

Lion -----

Chimpanzees -----

Giraffes -----

Painted dog -----

Meerkat ---

Rhinos -----



## meerkat quiz

- Meerkats live in which desert?  
 Sahara    Gobi    Kalahari
- Meerkats are...?  
 Carnivores    Herbivores    Omnivores
- Meerkats take turns to go on lookout duty, watching out for predators. Who are their main predators?  
 Lions    Tigers    Hyenas    Eagles

### Meerkat fast facts: Did you know...

Meerkats have different alarm calls for different predators?  
 Meerkats are not cats?  
 A baby meerkat is called a pup?



OOOOOHHHHH

To be in with a chance of winning a £10 voucher to spend in the zoo's shops, send your entry together with contact details to:

Z magazine, Media Department, Chester Zoo,  
 Upton-by-Chester, Chester, CH2 1LH  
 by Monday April 6.

Congratulations to our previous winner

Amelia Weaver  
 from Chester

# The Elephant WHO?



In November, three female round eared elephant shrews (*Macroscelides proboscideus*) arrived here from Stuttgart. This species is another first for us and another addition to the unusual and fascinating species which makes up the Twilight section.

With its unmistakable appearance, the most distinguishing being its long trunk like nose, you can clearly see how they got their name. These days the name more frequently used by biologists is sengi so as not to confuse them from the true shrews.

They are one of 19 known species of the *Macroscelides* family, all are found throughout the continent of Africa with the exception of the west and the Saharan desert. They inhabit a range of habitats including desert, forest, scrubland and montane forests. They are mainly insectivores but will supplement their diet with fruits, seeds and green plant matter. They also belong to a group of animals called Afrotheria, which means these tiny animals are actually related to manatees, elephants, armadillos and hyrax; the latter three can also be seen here.

The round eared sengi are currently housed within the off show small mammal room. The exhibits include a sand substrate which needs to be sieved daily, rocks which they rest under, and a heat source maintained around 25°C for basking under. They are fed daily on a variety of finely chopped fruits and vegetables, millet seed and insects such as locust and crickets. We hope that a male will arrive soon to join our females so that we can breed. Like the mole rats the Twilight team will be working with this species to learn more about the captive management of this charismatic and intriguing species.

## ACT FOR WILDLIFE

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

- Kenya
- Mauritius
- United Kingdom
- Indonesia
- India
- Peru
- Brazil
- Costa Rica
- Guinea-Bissau
- Cameroon
- Madagascar
- Argentina
- Chile
- Mexico
- Ecuador
- Zimbabwe
- South Africa
- Nigeria
- Uganda



# Making a Difference

around the world

## Meet... Stuart

**Stuart Nixon** joined the field programmes team in November as our field programmes coordinator. Stuart's main role will involve managing and coordinating the zoo's Nigeria Programme, which protects Nigeria's biodiversity hot spot. Stuart has recently

returned from the Democratic Republic of Congo where he spent 10 years working for a number of conservation organisations, primarily involved with gorilla conservation.



## Did you know... Palm oil labelling laws have changed?

Palm oil is an edible vegetable oil that comes from the fruit of the oil palm tree.



It is widely used in our food, cosmetics and household products. The growing demand for palm oil has seen plantations replace natural forests destroying the homes of animals such as orangutans, tigers, elephants and many more across the globe. Palm oil has the potential to be a sustainable oil as it can produce more litres per area than any other oil, but in order for this to happen it must be grown sustainably!

Until recently, palm oil in our food products could easily go unrecognised hidden under the generic term 'vegetable oil'. However in December 2014, a new EU law was enforced meaning food companies are now required to label exactly which vegetable oils are present in their products. This is fantastic news for consumers, making it much easier to detect palm oil in the products we use.

## News from around the world

### Good:

UK supermarket Sainsbury's recently announced that 95% of the palm oil used in their own-brand products is certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO). It now has over 380 products made with segregated CSPO, meaning that sustainability has been guaranteed throughout the supply chain.

### Bad:

Due to increased global demand and limited capacity for expansion in Indonesia and Malaysia, palm oil plantations are rapidly beginning to spread across the globe. Large plantations are popping up across Africa and there are plans to convert eight million hectares of land on Palawan Island in the Philippines for palm oil production.



## NEWS FROM NIGERIA

We recently teamed up with Everton Football Club's charity 'Everton in the Community' to raise funds for the Gashaka Biodiversity Project, a major component of our Nigeria Programme, which aims to protect Nigeria's largest National Park, Gashaka Gumti. Exclusive scratchcards were sold at the zoo by a team of fundraisers from Everton in the Community, generating funds to hold two football tournaments out in Serti, a city in Taraba State, Nigeria. The idea behind the football tournaments was to bring people together and engage with the local community promoting conservation, health and wellbeing.

The first of our football tournaments took place in December and we are pleased to report it was a resounding success! Our idea to engage the local community through football worked really well, with around 300 spectators, a much higher number than expected.

We held both men's and women's matches, with the participating teams training regularly in the weeks running up to the day, helping to create interest and anticipation. The day started with a rally up and down the main streets of Serti, which definitely helped attract people to the tournament! Whilst attendees enjoyed the football, our health and conservation messages were reinforced throughout the event. A group of students from nearby Taraba State University were supporting the venture and helped to engage attendees by carrying banners promoting messages designed to generate pride and protection for the Nigerian chimpanzee, the forests of Gashaka Gumti and also to highlight the importance of malaria nets in the fight against malaria.

After the success of the launch event, we're now raring to get started on our second! We'll also be making trips to local communities to give out free vaccinations, malaria nets and a health care handbook written for African communities.





## CAUGHT ON CAMERA

Our field programmes team were followed by a film crew from BBC's Countryfile whilst out monitoring and surveying hazel dormice in Bontuchel, North Wales.



# Mascarenes

## PROGRAMME UPDATE

We've been supporting the work of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) in the Mascarenes for almost 20 years.

As well as providing technical support we have recently continued our long-term financial support for eight projects. MWF have been instrumental in increasing populations of critically endangered birds through captive breeding and reintroductions. We provide ongoing support for the conservation of Mauritius fody's, olive white-eyes, pink pigeons and echo parakeets. We've also recently funded a new project which focuses on the Mauritius cuckoo-shrike and the Mauritius paradise flycatcher - you can catch up with news from our staff out in Mauritius on our Act for Wildlife blog [www.actforwildlife.org.uk](http://www.actforwildlife.org.uk)

Conserving plants is vital for maintaining healthy habitats for these species so we also support the propagation and conservation of critically endangered plants, as well as the restoration and reforestation of the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve to recreate the upland forest community.



# GRANT SUPPORT

Each year we support a range of conservation projects through our Conservation and Research Grant Scheme. These projects range from species monitoring and habitat protection to training and education. Here are some of the projects we've supported over the last few months:



## MAMMALS

We recently supported a project looking into the behaviour, distribution and density of Sumatran orangutans in a reforestation area in North Sumatra.



© Spectacled Bear Conservation

The project uses drones (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) to count orangutan nests in tree canopies. The drones fly on pre-set routes for up to half an hour and a built in GPS means that the location of the nests can be recorded. With this information the density and distribution of the orangutans can be estimated.

We've also continued our support for Spectacled Bear Conservation (SBC). Our support will fund new camera traps which will be used to investigate the presence and habitat use of spectacled bears in the endangered tropical dry forest of north west Peru.



## REPTILES

We've renewed our support for vital Komodo dragon conservation in Indonesia. Our support will help fund an assessment of the status and distribution of Komodo dragon populations on the island of Flores through the use of camera traps.

We've also funded a new project looking into human-crocodile conflict around the Nilwala river in Sri Lanka. The project aims to assess the population of saltwater crocodiles living in the Nilwala river, monitor how water quality effects this, and raise awareness amongst the local community.



© Mabula Ground Hornbill Project

## BIRDS

The Mabula Ground Hornbill Project in South Africa is a project we've been funding for many years. The project helps conserve this iconic species through captive breeding and reintroduction as well as threat mitigation. Chicks with a low chance of survival are harvested and hand-reared. Once these chicks are ready to fledge they are released into free-roaming groups. The project monitors release groups which provides important information for ensuring the success of future releases.



## PLANTS

The Nigerian Montane Forest Project is a major component of our Nigeria Programme. The project aims to restore the Ngel Nyaki forest reserve through a forest restoration program. Our ongoing support contributes to their fantastic work including extensive research into the diversity and ecology of the forest as well as involving the community in the management of the forest ecosystem.

# In CHINA



# Staff Go Wild

We have been supporting the Sichuan Forest Biodiversity Project in China since 2001 working in partnership with Simon Dowell (Oxford Brookes University), and staff from a number of forest reserves in China and Dai Bo (Leshan University) who coordinates the project in China.

Head of field programmes Scott Wilson, zoo ranger Laura Myers and Simon Dowell travelled to the Sichuan Province in China to meet with the partners and field staff, to see how various components of the project are progressing and make plans for 2015.

The forests of Sichuan are extremely important biodiversity sites and our work with reserve officials and local communities has led to the protection of several key areas which are home to endemic birds such as the Sichuan partridge, and also many other species such as the high profile giant panda and red panda.

Scott travelled to the Laojunshan reserve where we have previously funded capacity building, community projects and provided support for infrastructure. We recently gave training and support for equipment to enable the monitoring of key species in the reserves. This monitoring helps identify the health of the ecosystem and shows us how well we are protecting the forests. Camera traps are a great way to capture this.

This year camera trap monitoring has provided visual proof of giant pandas in the Mamize Nature Reserve – further south than the species has previously been recorded. The traps have also shown evidence of a range extension for the blue-fronted robin in the same reserve.

The Sichuan Forest Biodiversity Project also works closely with the Chengdu Giant Panda Research Base on a number of education activities including summer camps in rural communities, red panda workshops in urban schools and a wildlife trade exhibition. These education activities help raise awareness about the importance of the environment, wildlife and how the children can help protect it, they are also aimed at encouraging behaviour changes. Whilst in China, Scott and Laura met up with Xu Ping, who coordinates many of the educational activities at Chengdu, and attended one of the red panda workshops. Laura worked alongside the education team and delivered a lesson to the children about Great Britain.



# In MADAGASCAR



## Staff Go Wild

OUR curator of lower vertebrates and invertebrates Dr Gerardo Garcia travelled to Madagascar to take part in vital research to help preserve the diverse range of amphibians on the island. His trip began in eastern Madagascar focussing on the critically endangered golden mantella frog...

The golden mantella (*Mantella aurantica*) is in severe decline in Madagascar and is exported for the pet trade due to its striking orange colour. This iconic, brightly coloured frog needs both healthy rainforests and clean freshwater ponds to thrive but sadly these habitats are threatened by logging, mining and slash and burn agriculture. However one particular forest, Mangabe, has more golden mantella ponds than any other site and is pivotal to the survival of this species. In 2008 a protected area in Mangabe forest was created by our local partner Madagasikara Voakajy (MaVoa), the local communities, authorities and the Malagasy government to ensure the protection of the golden mantella's key habitats. When I last travelled to Madagascar I ran a workshop with MaVoa on individual marking techniques for amphibians, a technique which we developed here at the zoo. The process involves implanting silicone markers beneath the skin of the frogs so that they can be identified if they are recaptured. Using a well-known technique known as Capture-Mark-Recapture we can build up a better picture of population size of the species by calculating the percentage of marked frogs caught in a second capture and using this to estimate the total population.

So, less than 12 months after delivering my workshop, I returned to help the Mavoa team apply this technique to wild populations. We set up camp on the edge of the protected area, within walking distance to four different breeding ponds where we would focus our work. Ninety four ponds have been identified in Managabe, representing 68% of all known breeding ponds for this species.

As well as marking the frogs we also recorded their measurements. Golden mantellas generally weigh less than 1gram. We marked and measured hundreds of frogs and relied heavily on good team work to get the job done as quickly as possible. We had to work quickly because holding the frogs can increase their body temperatures which can be critical as they are unable to control their own body temperatures.

We couldn't have asked for a better place to conduct the study, against the stunning backdrop of the Madagascar rain forest. This magical place is full of wildlife. Personal highlights for me were the leaf chameleons, one of the smallest reptiles on the planet, and listening to the call of the largest living lemur, the indri, who no matter how early you planned to get up, would always start calling beforehand!

The final leg of my trip took me to the central highlands of Madagascar. This is the last refuge for the critically endangered harlequin mantella (*Mantella cowani*) a small toxic frog associated with forest edges, streams and savannahs. In collaboration with the University of Manchester lead by Prof. Richard Griffiths, DICE Kent University, and MaVoa, we are supporting a UK PHD student and two MSC Malagasy students directly involved with the wild harlequin

mantella populations. These students will be essential to collect vital information for the conservation of the species. The aim of my trip was to visit the study site and understand the logistical difficulties surrounding it. The harlequin mantella is a very secretive creature; it is active very early in the morning and then it doesn't appear again until it's almost dark so collecting data can be difficult. We managed to see some frogs but not as many as we had hoped. A study into the activity patterns of the species was planned for just after I left and this information will help refine the techniques for larger scale surveys.

Since my return to the UK another member of my team, Ben Baker, team manager of lower vertebrates and invertebrates, has also been out to Madagascar to carry on this vital research with these wonderful amphibians.



# Fundraising News

## IT'S OFFICIAL

We're happy to announce that **Sykes Cottages** are now an official commercial supporter of the zoo.

Sykes Cottages are a Chester-based company with over 5000 holiday cottages. The founder of the company, Clive Sykes, has been a member of the zoo for many years.

Clive said: "We are a local company employing over 200 people, Chester Zoo is very important to many members of our staff and to their families. Last year we raised £180 for the 'Go Orange for Orangutans' event and we very much look forward to supporting all of the zoo's events throughout the year."

To find out more about Sykes Cottages and how they can help you find your next holiday home, you can visit [www.sykescottages.co.uk](http://www.sykescottages.co.uk) or call 01244 35225

 **SYKES**  
cottages

## A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION!

Over five years ago we embarked on a mission to train future conservationists in a range of diverse skills to preserve UK wildlife. In 2010 our Biodiversity Trainees project, in partnership with RECORD and Cheshire Wildlife Trust, was launched thanks to generous funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Since then we have trained 12 people in a huge range of topics from wildlife recording to fundraising, public engagement to habitat management and everything in between! This year this fantastic project draws to an end, so we thought it only fitting to celebrate our success with an event to bring together those who have been involved in the delivery.



Current and previous trainees joined the partners and project team, as well as local training providers, and, of course the funder that made it all happen. Our celebration took place at Oakfield House and we were thrilled that TV wildlife presenter and conservation campaigner Iolo Williams was able to attend. Iolo shared with us some inspiring stories about his own career and had some words of advice for our trainees.

The project team had the opportunity to catch up with previous trainees who are now spread all over the country in various roles and to hear about the impacts they are having in UK conservation.

Wildlife conservation in the UK, and around the world, continues to be a huge challenge, but we are all very proud of this project, our biodiversity trainees and the legacy they will have providing conservation skills for the future.

## YOUR CHANCE to be involved in an **EXCITING NEW PROJECT** at **CHESTER ZOO**

- Are you interested in volunteering with Chester Zoo?
- Do you enjoy talking and engaging with people?
- Are you enthusiastic about Wildlife Conservation?

Would you like to gain training and experience in a customer-focused environment?

If you are over 18 years old and this sounds like it could be the volunteering opportunity for you, please come along to one of our information events to find out more.

Events take place on:  
Saturday March 28th @ 10am  
Monday March 23rd @ 2pm

To book a place please contact:  
[l.carrier@chesterzoo.org](mailto:l.carrier@chesterzoo.org) 01244 389405

We look forward to meeting you...

# TOP 5 REASONS

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

We are looking for four keen cyclists to take part in the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 on Sunday August 2nd 2015. Here are five of the many reasons why getting on your bike for wildlife could be the best thing you do in 2015.



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

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

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

180,000 spectators to cheer you on, over 20,000 cyclists to ride along with you and 150 of the world's top professional cyclists to inspire you.

### 3. Find your motivation to get fit

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

### 4. Join Team Act for Wildlife

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

### 5. Experience cycling history

Taste victory on The Mall, crossing the finish line of the London 2012 Olympics and 2014's Stage 3 Tour de France.

## FIND OUT MORE ONLINE

[www.actforwildlife.org.uk/cycle/ride-london](http://www.actforwildlife.org.uk/cycle/ride-london)

Email [development@chesterzoo.org](mailto:development@chesterzoo.org)

or call 01244 650229

## CHESTER ZOO "100 CLUB"

WINNERS OF THE RECENT PRIZE DRAWS WERE:

### OCTOBER 2014

£100 Miss Margaret Harris, Birkenhead  
£100 Mrs Jane Henshall, Chester  
£100 Mr Jason Spencer, Saltney  
£50 Mr James Williams, Congleton  
£50 Mrs Christen Herbert, Liverpool  
£50 Mrs Ann Walmsley, Prenton

### NOVEMBER 2014

£100 Mrs Suzanne Cheetham, Chester  
£100 Mr Mark Lunt, Weaverham  
£50 Mrs Diana Armstrong, Wilmslow  
£50 Miss Jenny Saxty, Sale  
£50 Mr Nigel Jones, Wrexham  
£50 Capt. M. Ramsbottom, Bolton

### DECEMBER 2014

£1,000 Mr Tony Williams, Winsford  
£100 Mr Gerard Milan, Rhyl  
£50 Mr Barry Barnes, Brierfield  
£50 Mr John Knott, Stockport  
£50 Mrs Diana Armstrong, Wilmslow

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.

2015 SPRING

PROGRAMME

MARCH TO JULY

# Let's Talk!



We hope you'll find the following talks interesting and enjoyable. They're planned to bring you up to date with the work your membership supports.

## The Greening of Islands

TUESDAY APRIL 28TH

*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. Mark Sparrow, curator of horticulture and botany, will explain to you just how the greening of *Islands* has been achieved.



## An Elephant Evening!

THURSDAY MARCH 19TH

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.

## Jaguar and Giant Anteater Reintroduction in Argentina

THURSDAY MAY 14TH

In October 2014, carnivore keeper Rachael Bodenham and Twilight team manager James Andrewes returned from a visit to see the work being carried out by The Conservation Land Trust in the Ibera Marshes of Corrientes Province in northern Argentina. Join them as they share the scope and elegance of this remarkable conservation project.



## Biodiversity is Us!

TUESDAY JUNE 23RD

The zoo's ex-director general, Professor Gordon McGregor Reid, makes a welcome return to give this exciting talk... because biodiversity is exciting! Gordon will be talking about some of the world's amazing creatures and that includes us! Out of sight, out of mind? Come and find out all about conserving biodiversity.

## Assam Adventure!

THURSDAY JULY 16TH

In February a team of staff took part in an expedition visiting our Assam Haathi Project which is run in partnership with EcoSystems-India to work closely with local villages in areas of human-elephant conflict in India. Over two weeks, the group delivered a range of workshops in the villages on topics ranging from 'bee keeping' to 'basic electrics'. Come along to hear first hand how they got on!

**Members' Talks**, held in the Geraldine Russell Lecture Theatre (near main entrance off the A41), start at 7.30pm 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

Interested  
in attending?

Please call Kate in Education  
on 01244 389444 or email  
[k.branks@chesterzoo.org](mailto:k.branks@chesterzoo.org)  
booking essential.



# It's a Stocktake

Keepers welcomed in the New Year armed with clipboards and pens as they make a note of every single animal in their care as part of the our annual stock take.

Thousands of animals, many of them endangered, are part of the compulsory count which is required by law as part of the zoo's licence.

The vital details of each and every individual are noted down so that the zoo can help worldwide breeding programmes. As we prepare to unveil *Islands*, staff had their work cut out with a whole host of exotic new arrivals to add to the records. Thousands of animals - including bizarre species like dead leaf mantids, Javan humphead lizards and tentacled snakes - have already arrived at the zoo ahead of its opening in June.



Herpetology keeper Heather Prince said: "Tallying up our new super-sized Asian forest turtles doesn't provide us with too much of a headache but trying to count the hundreds of stick insects or dozens of mantids was a bit more of challenge!"

The zoo's records coordinator Liz Ball, responsible for compiling the data, added: "Records at the zoo are regularly updated to allow for any births, deaths, departures and arrivals - with every animal having a 'passport' detailing exactly who it is, where it was born and who its ancestors are - ensuring the best possible management of vital worldwide conservation-breeding programmes.

"With so many new animals coming in to take up residence in our new Islands development, we had an even bigger challenge than usual. Dozens of new species arrived well in advance of *Islands* opening and they're already breeding well. It means there was a heck of a lot of new heads to count - with the hundreds of weird and wonderful bugs being the trickiest!"



# 12,518 animals

## ANNUAL TOTAL 2014

Mammals:	879
Birds:	1338
Reptiles:	481
Amphibians:	489
Fish:	7053
Insects:	2278

(Ants are counted as colonies - we have 2 ant colonies)

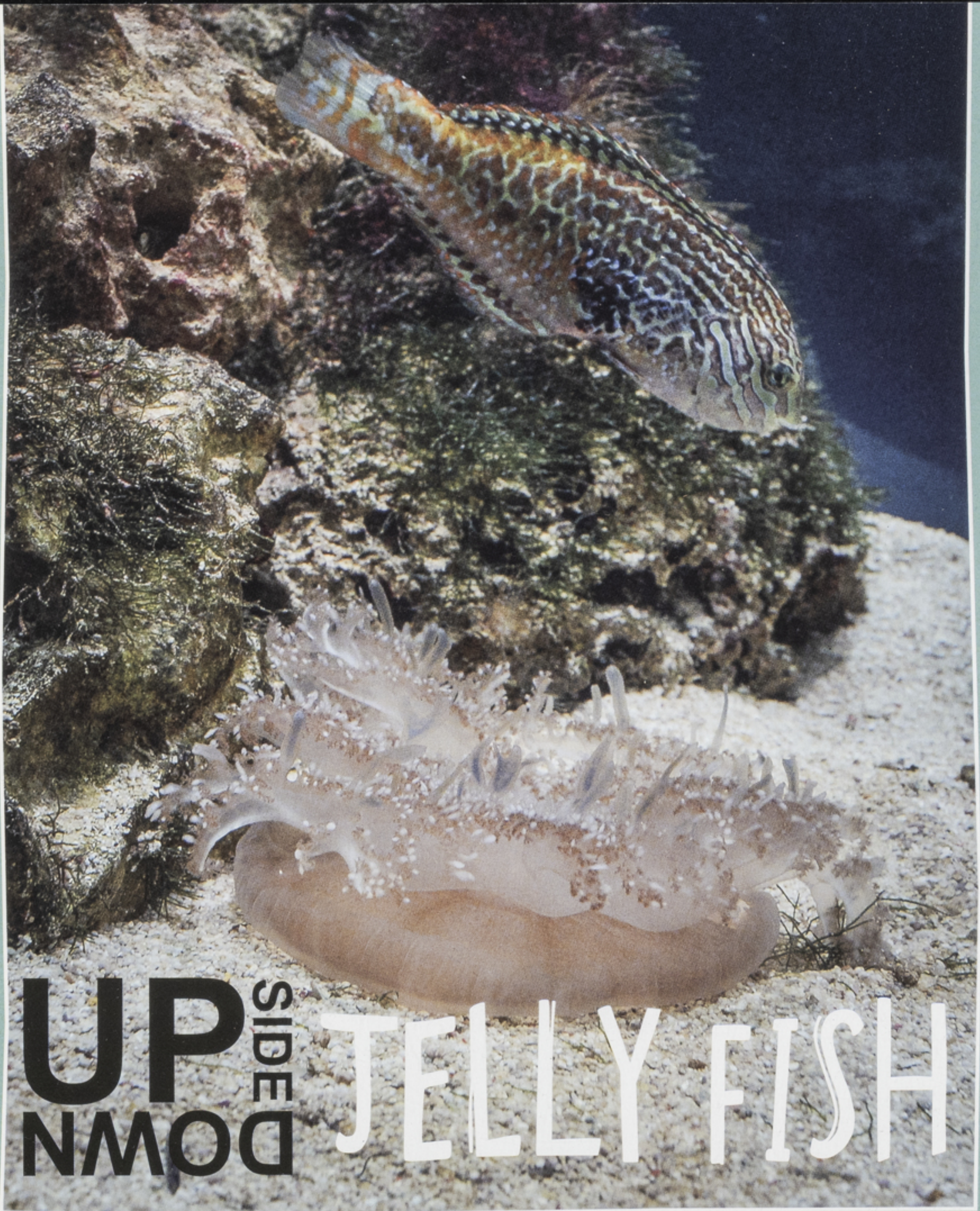
**TOTAL** 12,518

## Species End of year Throughout year

Mammals:	81	87*
Birds:	137	140*
Reptiles:	52	58*
Amphibians:	22	29*
Fish:	104	-
Insects:	67	-

\*new species have come in and others gone out of the collection

**TOTAL** 463 485\*



# UPSIDE DOWN JELLY FISH

Meet one of our 10 upside-down jellyfish!

Unlike a typical jellyfish these have their tentacles in the air and spend their time inverted on the sea floor. The upside-down jellyfish, (*Cassiopea*), is so named because it's flattened head rests on the bottom of the sea floor. The jellyfish lives in shallow coastal regions, including mangroves, mudflats, canals and estuaries.



# 43 Cinnamon FROGS

A very rare species of amphibian native to the forests of South East Asia has bred at the zoo - 43 cinnamon frogs.

Team manager of lower vertebrates and invertebrates, Ben Baker, said: "Cinnamon frogs are a secretive species and live in a very, very specialised environment. Their ideal habitat is incredibly limited and so, as with many frog species around the world, they are extremely fragile. Currently they are listed as near threatened by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) but with population sizes decreasing due to widespread habitat loss, the species is likely to become threatened in the near future.

"Relatively little is actually known about the cinnamon frog and so we now hope to learn a lot from our new arrivals. The delicate work the team has put in to getting these beautiful but complex animals to breed and all of the intensive care we're now giving them will help us to build up our knowledge base. This kind of information can be invaluable for the long-term protection of the species."

To encourage the frogs to breed, keepers recreated conditions to mimic the tropical forests of Borneo and Sumatra, where the species come from.

"Water-filled cavities and rotting logs are really important to help the cinnamon frogs to breed. The ponds they are found in tend to be sat amongst trees and so, with lots of bark and fallen leaves in the water, the PH is low due to build-up of acid," said Mr Baker.

"We designed our enclosure to mirror this as closely as possible and we're thrilled that it has resulted in baby frogs."

The zoo's group of cinnamon frogs will move to *Islands*, when it opens in June. Ben added: "The islands of South East Asia are real treasure troves of unique but fragile plants and animals and that's why they're a big focus for our conservation work.

"When *Islands* opens we hope it will really put the spotlight on species such as the cinnamon frog and bring about more awareness of the threats that they face."



# Calling ALL

## explorers!

### ISLANDS

at **CHESTER  
ZOO**

opens June

# Watch Out

for our *Islands* special in late June.

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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.

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