

# Zoo Life

Autumn 2002 – Issue 11

CHESTER ZOO'S MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS AND ADOPTERS



Inside this Issue: Meet 'Sammy' • Gold Medallist – Richard Leakey

## From the Director's Desk

Professor Gordon McGregor Reid



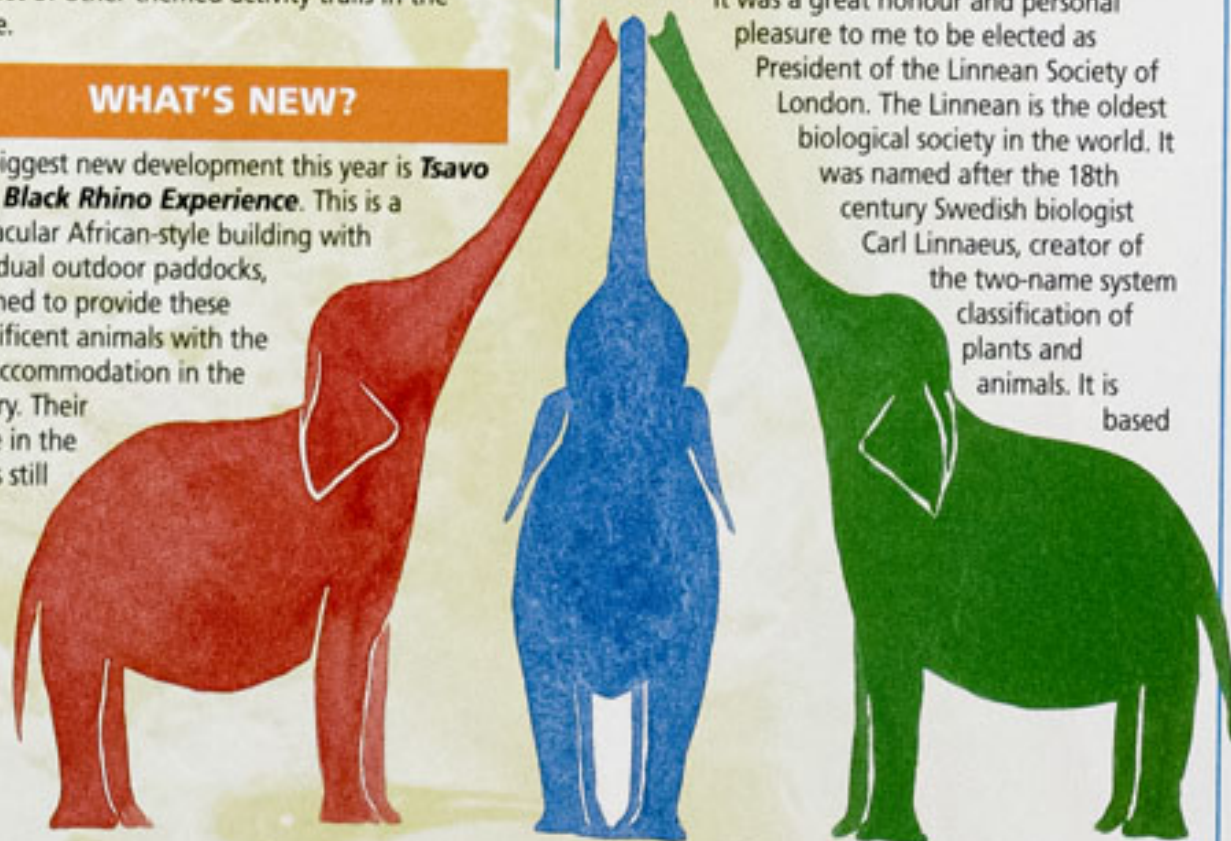
Chester Zoo Life is published by the North of England Zoological Society.  
 Upton-by-Chester, Chester CH2 1LH.  
 Telephone: (01244) 380 280  
 Director:  
**Professor Gordon McGregor Reid**  
 Editor: **Pat Cade**

**M**ANY years ago, the Zoo had an advertising slogan which proudly claimed **A New Zoo Every Day!** Zoo legend has it that someone once walked around all the public footpaths, taking in the whole Zoo, with a pedometer strapped to his ankle. At the end of the tour, several hours later, this was showing 11 miles! I cannot verify the accuracy of this, but to see that 'new zoo' every day would surely be a good keep-fit regime!

There has definitely been a 'new zoo' in the three months since I last wrote this column. For two weeks in the summer it even had a new name! With the Commonwealth Games taking place only 40 miles away in Manchester, we wanted to join in the excitement. So, from 25 July to 4 August, Chester Zoo was sold as the *Commonwealth Zoo!* The wonderful new logo of three elephants, trunks raised, reflected the official logo of three figures with arms outstretched. (see below). A Commonwealth Passport Trail was devised as part of the Games' *Spirit of Friendship Festival*, and Zoo visitors were given a free passport featuring 10 commonwealth countries. By following a trail marked by flags across the Zoo, visitors collected visa stamps at each station, noted the year each country joined the Commonwealth, and identified the animals found in that country. It was very popular, particularly with youngsters, and hopefully will be the first of other themed activity trails in the future.

### WHAT'S NEW?

Our biggest new development this year is **Tsavo – the Black Rhino Experience**. This is a spectacular African-style building with individual outdoor paddocks, designed to provide these magnificent animals with the best accommodation in the country. Their future in the wild is still very



uncertain and zoo-breeding programmes are vital. We have had a good record in breeding Black Rhinos and the new accommodation will allow that programme to expand. *Sammy*, the two year old Black Rhino from Osaka Zoo, Japan, has settled in very well and in a few years time he will be an important part of that programme.

The other important new building recently opened is the Animal Health Centre. We have long wanted to have our own treatment centre and the provision of in-house facilities will be enormously beneficial to both staff and animals. Stephanie Sanderson and her veterinary team took ownership of the centre in April, and have been busy fitting it out with all the necessary equipment – much of it purchased due to the generosity of our members and adopters. More details of this on page 21.

The new island for Buffy Headed Capuchins is proving a popular attraction – especially for passengers on the boat bus. The boats pass directly by the island and the Capuchins can be seen in the trees and shrubs. Visitors can now walk through the Tropical Realm with a new entrance by the Capuchin Island. The Capuchins marked taking possession of their new accommodation by producing a new baby!

### THE LINNEAN SOCIETY

It was a great honour and personal pleasure to me to be elected as President of the Linnean Society of London. The Linnean is the oldest biological society in the world. It was named after the 18th century Swedish biologist Carl Linnaeus, creator of the two-name system classification of plants and animals. It is based

at Burlington House, Piccadilly, the home of the Royal Academy. Its aims are to promote all aspects of biology, particularly those concerning the diversity, evolution and ecology of organisms. Today, the Society plays a central role in biodiversity conservation, recognising the urgency and magnitude of the task of investigating the world's fauna and flora.

### ELEPHANT CONSERVATION

As all our supporters are aware, Chester Zoo is raising funds for a major effort to save the Asian Elephant from extinction. I believe this is the first time that a UK zoo has been the main supporter of such an important international project. A top level meeting of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Asian Elephant Specialist Group took place in May at Phnom Penh in Cambodia. This was attended by Chief Curator Mark Pilgrim and Conservation Assistant Scott Wilson. Thanks to a number of corporate and individual supporters of the Zoo, this meeting agreed a Survival Plan for the species. The Asian Elephant is now down to a world population of between 30,000 and 50,000, split over 14 countries throughout Asia. There are scientific predictions that within as little as 50 years all hope for its future may be lost if the present rate of decline continues. A lot of good work is already being done in the wild by various organisations and we hope to play a vital role in pulling together a strategic, long term and international approach to this magnificent animal's survival.

### EDITORIAL FAREWELL!

Chester Zoo Life has been edited by Pat Cade for the last 15 years. Now that Pat has retired as Public Relations Manager, this is the last issue under her editorship. Over those years it has developed from a 12 page black and white magazine into this full colour, 28 page issue. I want to warmly thank Pat for all the hard work she has put into producing what I believe is one of the best UK zoo magazines.

Front Cover: Meet *Sammy* – the two year old Black Rhino who arrived from Osaka Zoo in May. More information and photographs on *Sammy* can be found on the centre pages.  
 Picture by Pat Cade.

## MAGICAL SANTA TRAIL

Apologies for raising Christmas festivities so early! The next issue of Zoo Life is not due until December, and we want to give readers the opportunity to book tickets as soon as possible, *before they are advertised to the general public.*

Following the huge success of last year's *Magical Santa Trail* we will again be staging this popular Christmas event, but this year we have added extra time slots and even more entertainment for children and adults.

As last year, passengers will embark on the illuminated monorail and take an exciting trip across the fairy-lit Zoo to Santa's grotto and the elves' workshop. Animation and lights will guide guests to the *Twilight Zone*, *Monkey Islands* and Elephant House, which will all remain open on 'Trail' evenings. Seasonal refreshments will be provided in the Ark Restaurant.

The grotto will be open only in the evenings, leaving the daylight hours for Santa and his crew to get some well deserved rest!

Further details are included on the enclosed flyer and you can also find out more on our website - [www.chesterzoo.org](http://www.chesterzoo.org).

We look forward to welcoming you and your family on our very special *Magical Santa Trail!*

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The annual Members' Christmas lunch will be held immediately before the meeting on 7 December, at 12 noon in the Oakfield Restaurant. Booking is essential, as this is always a very popular event. Please send the enclosed booking slip with your payment and a stamped addressed envelope for ticket return, to Maureen in the Membership Office. Price is £17.95

## MISSING RING

Many of our members and adopters make regular donations of used stamps for the Elephant Appeal fund. Some time ago a ring was found amongst a pile of used stamps, and we would like to return it to its owner. If you think it may belong to you, please ring Maureen Allsopp on 01244 650203 and give her a brief description.

## NEW MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Several members of Council retired at the AGM in May: Kath Edwards, Brian Gardiner, Chris Mahon and Keith Maybury. Four new members were elected, including Tony Williams who has previously served on Council. The three 'new' faces are: Mr Neville Chamberlain,

CBE, (below, left) Chairman of the NEZS Development Board; Dr Jeremy Playfer, (below, centre) a Consultant Physician at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and Dr Judith Skerritt, (below, right) Manager of a veterinary practice on the Wirral.



## CHESTER ZOO 100 CLUB

The winners of the prize draws held recently were:

### APRIL 2002

£100 Mr M Bird, Wrexham  
 £100 Mrs E A Roberts, Chester  
 £50 Mrs K Oakes, Atherton  
 £50 Mr B Dingle, Burnley  
 £50 Miss L Summerhill, Sheffield

### JUNE 2002

£1000 Mrs K Oakes, Atherton  
 £100 Miss A Nolan, Liverpool  
 £50 Rev R Berry, Oldham  
 £50 Miss B. Lee, Bootle  
 £50 Mr W Beavan, Buckley

### MAY 2002

£100 Mrs D Allen, Ellesmere Port  
 £50 Miss L Summerhill, Sheffield  
 £50 Mrs S Welsh, Halifax  
 £50 Mr B Dingle, Burnley

All prize winners will be notified by post and will be listed in the next edition of Chester Zoo Life. Membership of the 100 Club is still invited. Please contact Lynsey Jones or Maureen Allsopp, Membership and Adoptions Secretary, if you wish to participate.

CUT ALONG THIS LINE 

## Special Offer for Readers

PORTRAIT EXPERIENCE WORTH £125!

Venture Portraits is a new portraiture brand backed by Kodak. Their specialist photographers have created a range of image-based products that are modern, original and highly personal, a million miles away from most people's idea of a traditional family portrait.

Gary Oakes at Venture Portraits in Chester is donating family portrait vouchers valued at £125 to the Zoo. The vouchers cover the cost of a portrait session together with a framed portrait. These vouchers are available to Zoo Life readers in exchange for a modest donation to the Zoo of just £25, which will help us in our conservation work.

For your voucher worth £125, simply complete the form below and send with your payment to:

Venture Portraits, FREEPOST, NWW8587A, Chester, CH1 4ZR

The studio will forward an information pack including your voucher and how to arrange details of your session. If you wish payment can be made by contacting the studio on 01244 394870.

I enclose a cheque for £25.00 made payable to Chester Zoo.

Please debit £25.00 from my: Visa / Mastercard / Switch

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Expiry \_\_\_/\_\_\_ Issue Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Voucher includes portrait session valued at £50 and a framed desk portrait (approx size 7"x5") valued at £75. 2. If preferred voucher may be used (excluding the £50 session value) towards the cost of larger portraits. 3. Voucher valid for 2 months from date of issue. 4. This voucher cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or voucher and is not redeemable for cash or any other goods that may only be used as described. 5. Offer subject to availability. 6. Offer not transferable. 7. This offer is for a full family portrait session. All family members i.e. parent(s) and children, must attend the session for the offer to be valid. 8. Voucher cannot be used to purchase portraits from a previous portrait session. 9. Only one voucher per year per family may be used.

# Zoo Review



**ACTRESS** Stefanie Powers has become a close friend and supporter of the Zoo, since she opened the *Spirit of the Jaguar* last year. Stefanie has been appearing as Anna in the musical *The King and I* at Manchester's Palace Theatre, and was thrilled to have the opportunity to make the close acquaintance of the elephants. The theatre made a generous contribution to the *Asian Elephant in Crisis* campaign, by donating £5.00 from each ticket sold on one evening during the run of the show and allowing collections. In July, Stefanie came back on another visit, bringing the children from the show for a day out.

## FLOWERS AND FEATHERS

A local supermarket has been generously sending bunches of flowers to the Zoo. But these are not for decorating the restaurant tables – they are being used for enrichment for the exotic birds in *Islands in Danger!* The St Lucia Parrots have a preference for roses

and carnations, but the Red Birds of Paradise are less fussy and have a go at any colourful flowers they are offered! Gardening staff welcome the bouquets, because they distract the birds from destroying the plants in their exhibit.

## DETECTING BATS

FROM May to November this year, a

survey of British Bats has been taking place in the Zoo's greater estate. The survey has been co-ordinated by Dr Elizabeth Barratt and the Cheshire Bat Group, and is showing some very interesting results.

On the first evening many noctules with a UK conservation status of 'vulnerable' were spotted, along with two species of Pipistrelles. The survey group say that the sight of Daubenton's bats feeding inches above the water by the Giraffe Island was the highlight of the exercise!

## RAISING FUNDS

THE response to the 'Legacy Pledge' leaflet sent with a recent magazine has been very positive – indeed the number of 'Legacy Pledge Club' members has almost doubled which is very encouraging! There are some leaflets still available – please contact Hazel Russell in the Development Office on 01244 650229 or by email at [h.russell@chesterzoo.co.uk](mailto:h.russell@chesterzoo.co.uk)

Sometimes people find it difficult to think about making a will, never mind making a charitable bequest. We realise that it perhaps strikes you as a little melancholy having an item reminding you about it in each magazine. It is interesting however to note that one third of income to all British charities (and remember Chester Zoo is a registered charity) comes in the form of legacies, and a legacy is after all the only 'donation' that a person can make without it costing them anything at all!

Very many thanks to our faithful team of 'bucket rattlers' Millie Parsons, Tim McHale, Lorna Dean, Carol Karim, Dorothy Jones and Marc Boardman. This team stood outside Chester Racecourse on the first day of the May meeting and collected just over £1,000 for the *Asian Elephant in Crisis* campaign from the racegoers.

The Racecourse is a committed supporter of the campaign and we were very grateful that they nominated us to be their 'charity for the day' for the first day of the new season and gave us – free of charge – a full page advertisement in the race card.

## FESTIVE FARE IN THE OAKFIELD RESTAURANT

THE restaurant is already taking bookings for Christmas lunches, dinners and discos. So why not suggest that your company or office colleagues have their annual get-together in the Zoo?

Lunches will be served every day from Sunday 1 December, up to and including Boxing Day, but excluding Christmas Day itself. The menu will include the traditional turkey and pudding, and there will also be some less traditional suggestions for those who suffer a turkey surfeit during December. Price is £17.50 adults and £10.95 for the under 11s. Boxing Day lunch is £26.50 adults and £16.45 children. Bookings for Boxing Day always go very quickly, so you are advised to book early.

Evening dinner and disco will be available on 7, 13, 14, 20, and 21 December. Price is £24.95.

## A CORNET OF MONKEY POO!

**Monkey Poo** is just one of the amazing new range of themed ice creams, specially made for Chester Zoo by Cheshire Farm Ice Creams of Tattenhall. It is a muddle of rich chocolate cream and finely chopped hazelnuts with a thick chocolate ripple. **Jaguar** is a luxury banana ice cream with chocolate chunks to give you the 'Spirit of the Jaguar.'

## A VERY 'GREEN' AWARD

OVER the years the Zoo has received an impressive collection of awards for animal conservation and welfare. This Summer the society's work in other areas of conservation was recognised, when the Cheshire Branch of the Council for Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) presented the Hedgerow and Tree Award to the Zoo.

Robert Flannery of the CPRE said: 'This is a fitting recognition of the magnificent endeavours made by the Zoo over recent years to maintain

and enhance the hedgerows on their property. Despite all the Foot and Mouth disease difficulties of last year, they have the time and resources to improve the hedgerows still further. We all benefit from their commitment as it encourages many of our local wildlife species, showing that the Zoo cares not only for the exotic but the local creatures too.'

Photograph shows Director Gordon McGregor Reid accepting the certificate from Robert Flannery.



**Giraffe** is extra rich toffee ice cream with chunks of cinder toffee. Orang utan has a sharp taste of the juiciest oranges, giving this bright ice cream a cheeky taste to hang around for. **Tiger** combines vanilla and tangy orange flavour with chocolate ripple stripes and

**Grass Snake** is green peppermint ice cream with chocolate chips!

All the delicious flavours are made from real dairy ice cream using fresh whole milk from the farm's herd of Holstein Friesian cows. You will find them for sale at the Ark Restaurant.

## STAFF NEWS

In June, **Chris Vere** retired after 15 years as the Zoo's Head of Marketing. Chris's interpretation of the marketing role was a very wide one. It included putting on the Father Christmas costume each December; towing the Noah's Ark float to all the major summer shows and spending most summer weekends with his car loaded with zoo leaflets, making distributions to every Tourist Information Centre, library, hotel and anyone else who would take them!

Chris's successor is **Amanda Wright**, who started on 5 June. Amanda has worked for McArthur Glen Outlet Villages and with Edinburgh Woollen

Mills tourist division as UK Tourism Manager.

Congratulations to Amanda on the appointment – and a reassurance that you won't be expected to follow your predecessor by putting on the whiskers in December!

### Farewell To:

**Chris Bridges**, who left in May after 22 years working in many areas of the zoo. **Steve Rowland** also left in May, after five years service.

### Congratulations To:

**Ray Newy**, who has completed 25 years horticulture service at the Zoo.

**Wesley Evans**, on passing his RHS



▲ **Amanda Wright**

General Diploma in Horticulture, following two years part time study at Reaseheath College.

Dr Richard Erskine Leakey  
Gold Medallist of the North of England Zoological Society

Let it be known that Dr Richard Leakey has been awarded by the President and Council with the Gold Medal of the North of England Zoological Society. This is recognition of his outstanding achievements in wildlife conservation. The Society naturally also acclaim Dr Leakey's seminal contribution to the study of human origins and the public understanding of science.

Born in Kenya in 1944 to the celebrated paleoanthropologists Louis and Mary Leakey, Richard at the age of 20 followed in the family tradition of impassioned fossil hunting. In 1968, aged 24, he was appointed as Director of the National Museums in Kenya. Dr Leakey became the discoverer of a succession of hominid and other fossils that have entirely revolutionised our understanding of the origin of our own species. Most importantly, he is credited with fossil ER 1470, a *Homo habilis* skull discovered in 1972, and ER 3733 a *Homo erectus* skull discovered in 1975. During the 1970s he battled against and overcame a potentially fatal kidney disease, going on to discover WT 15000 or 'Turkana boy', in 1984 (a near complete juvenile *Homo erectus*), and WT 17000, the first find of an *Australopithecus aethiopicus* skull in 1985. Dr Leakey's focus of interest then moved from paleoanthropology to wildlife conservation.

In 1979 he was appointed Director of the Kenyan Wildlife Service by President Daniel Arap Moi. He remained in post until 1994 and was especially successful in addressing the issues of Elephant and Rhino poaching and other conservation and organisational problems besetting Kenya's National Parks. After a plane crash in 1993 in which he lost both legs below the knee, he was obliged to resign from the Kenyan Wildlife Service. He nonetheless made a remarkable recovery and courageously went on to found the opposition party Safina Kenya and became a Kenyan MP in 1998. However, due to the ever more threatened state of the country's wildlife and the associated negative impact on Kenya's tourism and international reputation, Dr Leakey was reinstated as Director of the Kenyan Wildlife Service in 1998.

Dr Leakey has received numerous awards and medals, including the Hubbard Medal from the National Geographic Society, and the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society and of the Scottish Geographical Society. He has also been awarded with the Companion of the Golden Ark and Order of the Burning Spear from Kenya. He has received honorary doctorates from a number of universities including the State University of New York, the University of Bristol, and the University of Aberdeen. He is also the author of nine books, including his biography "One Life" (1981), and his latest book "Wildlife Wars" published in 2001. In 1981 the BBC released a seven part television documentary "The Making of Mankind" presented and narrated by Dr Leakey. Other popular documentaries include "Earth Journal" (1992) and "Bones of Contention" (1995).

We salute Dr Leakey's life long commitment to the conservation of endangered wild animals. We also recognise his passionate concern for human rights and sustainable economic development. Furthermore by uncovering ever greater layers of detail in the evolution of the human species, we acknowledge that he has firmly placed *Homo sapiens* in context as an integral part of the natural world.

It is the Society's great pleasure to recognise these distinguished achievements and I, Gordon McGregor Reid, Director, request on behalf of the President and Council, that you, Dr Richard Erskine Leakey now accept from our Chairman, Mr John Makinson, the Gold Medal of the North of England Zoological Society.

Presented this day Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2002 by:

Mr John Makinson  
Chairman of Council

His Grace the Duke of Westminster OBE, TD, DL  
President of the North of England Zoological Society

## New Gold Medallist

DR RICHARD Leakey, author, conservationist and past Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service, is the sixth recipient of the Gold Medal of the North of England Zoological Society, awarded to people who have made an outstanding contribution to conservation.

The Chairman of the Society, John Makinson, made the presentation on 29 April, referring to Dr Leakey as a *giant in the field of conservation*. A citation detailing the extent of the achievements of Dr Leakey, was read by Zoo Director Gordon McGregor Reid. (see opposite page).

After hearing of this varied and deeply impressive career, the audience was amused at Dr Leakey's opening remarks. He said he had recently discovered his school leaving report, in which the Headmaster had disparagingly written – *This boy may make into the British Army as a private!*

Speaking of his tour of the Zoo before

the ceremony, Dr Leakey said: *'I was particularly impressed by the prudence in the number of species and the attention given to family groups and interactive exhibits. I find the success you have in breeding endangered species is very positive. Most wildlife will breed only when it is happy – it is only humans who will breed when unhappy!*

*'This success is a testimony to the philosophy of management in this Zoo and I congratulate you. The whole debate about wildlife exhibits must rely to a large extent on the degree to which the exhibit contributes to building a constituency for conservation. I think seeking others to join in advocacy for conservation is probably the single most important thing you can do. I would like*



▲ From left: Mr John Makinson; Dr Richard Leakey; Professor Gordon McGregor Reid.

*to see equal effort being put into the enormously complex business of re-introducing species to the wild.'*

Dr Leakey went on to talk about his deep commitment to the work of the National Park in Kenya and the difficulties of funding wildlife programmes in a country where there is so much poverty.

## Book Reviews

### TALKING WITH ANIMALS

Charlotte Uhlenbroek  
Hodder & Stoughton. £18.99  
**Reviewed by Pat Cade**

How do animals send messages to each other? This book was published in July to tie-in with the BBC's four part series of the same name. Charlotte Uhlenbroek, the 'new face' of the BBC's Natural History Unit, takes a perceptive and intelligent journey into methods of communication between all areas of the animal kingdom around the world.

Charlotte has drawn on her own wealth of experience and research to explore the variety of signals that are used in interactions between and within species. She explains how understanding some of the universal rules of communication has enabled humans to interact closely with animals throughout history. The book is beautifully illustrated with specially created graphics,

photographs and line drawings. Why do wolf spiders tap-dance? Do elephants use telepathy? Do leaf-cutter ants speak more than one language? How do stink bugs converse?

Put this outstanding book on your Christmas present list, and find the answers!

### BEATING ABOUT THE BUSH, TALES FROM TANGANYIKA

by David Read  
Published by David Read. £10.99  
Available from Crime in Store, 32 Store Street, London WC2 2HE. Tel: 020 7436 7736. (Add £1.19 for postage.)  
**Reviewed by Mark Pilgrim.**

This is the sequel to *Barefoot Over the Serengeti* in which David tells with incredible detail his life as a boy growing up with the Masai and learning and understanding their values and customs. In *'Beating about the Bush, Tales from*

Tanganyika' he recalls the shocking contrast between his life running free with the Masai to a strict boarding school regime. The book covers his early working life and how events took over with the Second World War and how he lead troops of Masai and Samburu warriors into Madagascar and the jungles of Burma. After the war he married and whilst working as a veterinary officer, he again spent time in the East African bush. The story is extremely readable and is an interesting and detailed account of East Africa at that time, when game was very plentiful and conservation a thing of the future. Along with historical and natural history interest, David also explains some of Africa's dark secrets, the 'Lion Boys' ritual murder and the little known Ndorobo people. The privileged insight and understanding shown later in his life to these topics, comes from his understanding and great respect of the peoples of East Africa moulded by his unusual childhood. *Beating about the Bush* is a fascinatingly honest insight into the life of a very interesting man.



Photograph courtesy Viewfinder Pictures

# The ENCHANTING RED PANDAS!

*The Carnivore Team write about two beautiful young sisters who have become great favourites with both staff and visitors*

**L**ushui and Lushan arrived at Chester Zoo just before Easter, from Cotswold Wildlife Park where they were born.

Much smaller than its more famous 'Giant' cousin, the Red or lesser Panda is found in Nepal, Northern Burma, and the provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan in southern and central China. For over 50 years this was the only Panda known to man. Their long

tails are non prehensile, their feet have hairy soles and their claws are semi retractile. Like the Giant Panda, the Red Panda has an extra thumb, although it is less developed. This can be seen to best advantage when they are sitting eating bamboo, a staple part of their diet in the wild and in zoo collections.

The Red Panda prefers colder climes to that of the Giant Panda and can be

**DAILY PANDA DIET**

**MORNING**

- 2 Apples
- 2 Bananas
- 2 Pears
- 1 slice wholemeal Bread
- Handful of grapes
- Brewers Yeast

**NOON**

- 200 grams Bamboo each

**AFTERNOON**

- 2 Apples
- 2 Bananas
- 2 Pears
- Panda cake
- 2 hard-boiled eggs
- Leaf eater pellets
- 4-day-old chicks

found in Bamboo thickets at 1,800 and 4,000 metres. These animals are nocturnal and crepuscular (active at dawn and dusk) by nature but can be seen awake during the day for short periods.

The new enclosure at Chester Zoo

was purpose built to suit all their needs after consultation with other collections that keep this species. Their indoor accommodation is camouflaged by an impressive artificial tree trunk, which houses four sleeping areas and is well favoured by both of them.

To give the area a more oriental look, Bamboo was used for the boundary fence and planting was carried out using plants from Asian areas for a more authentic look.

All this has been a vast improvement from when we last had

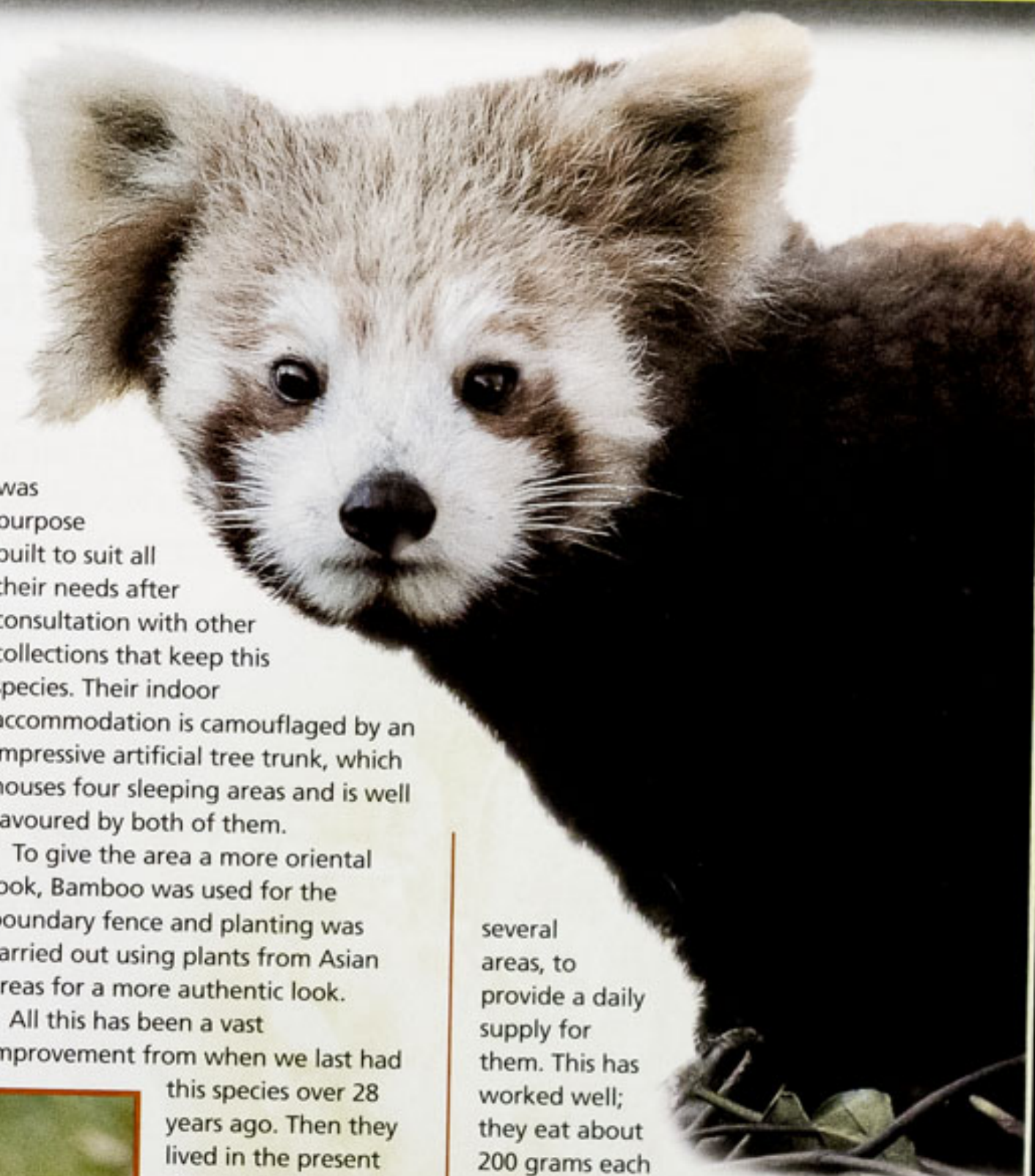
this species over 28 years ago. Then they lived in the present otter enclosure and had some pear trees and an old box to live in. Happily times do change and our knowledge of animal needs improves all the time. The Pandas in their new habitat have the appearance of being 'free range,' being able to climb to dizzy heights and be seen from a number of areas inside and outside the Zoo.

About a year before their arrival, we planted different species of Bamboo in

several areas, to provide a daily supply for them. This has worked well; they eat about 200 grams each daily, giving the plants time to recover before using them again.

It was decided to give them vitamin-supplemented food in the afternoon when both Pandas were more active and descending from the trees. A lot of the day they can be seen curled up in one of their three mature trees. They both usually come down, head first, two or three times a day. Fresh water is supplied for them daily.

Both Pandas are just under a year old and are nearly fully-grown. On a fine day the sun really makes their rich chestnut coats stand out. Some days they both can be seen grazing in the enclosure – but if they are not there don't forget to look up!



Photographs by Roger Wilkinson

# MICE BACK IN THE MEADOWS

By Penny Rudd

*Tiny Harvest Mice have been a major part of Penny Rudd's life for the past 17 years! All the efforts to build up a sufficient number for a viable release programme were rewarded at the end of May this year.*

IT WAS with great excitement and anticipation, that Chester Zoo was able to release 129 Harvest Mice *Micromys minutus* into the 'wild' on the 29 May. This was a high point after many years of preparation and we hope to obtain ground breaking and significant scientific research from this project.

This exquisite, tiny animal, which vies with the Pygmy Shrew for the title of smallest British mammal, weighs in at between 4.5 and 6 grams and is only around 5 cm long. It has a vibrant chestnut-coloured back, cream underneath and a long prehensile tail, about the same length as its body, which is used to assist climbing and balancing in tall grasses.

Although this species can be found in some abundance in the South of England, their numbers are thought to be dwindling alarmingly fast elsewhere, and there is now concern over their survival in some areas of Britain. They are considered rare in Cheshire. Extensive surveys carried out by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust over the past three years, have established that there are just a few isolated pockets, mainly in wetland areas, where only very small numbers remain. Having said that, these tiny mice are remarkably difficult to 'find' in the wild, and it is thought possible that they may exist more widely but have simply never been seen or recorded. However, active searches over many sites in Cheshire, prior to the release, found some evidence of their existence in the form of disused nests,



Ready, steady - GO!

but only one live Harvest Mouse was ever seen!

Many theories have been suggested to explain the dramatic decline in Harvest Mice numbers. It is likely to be due to a combination of factors, including habitat destruction and changing farming methods, especially the increasing use of chemical pesticides.

Chester Zoo has been working with Harvest Mice for several years. The interest originated in the early eighties when the first Harvest Mice arrived in my office at Oakfield House. Anyone who visited my office in the subsequent 15 years found they lingered far longer than planned as they became as absorbed as I was with this fascinating animal! The species had proved challenging to keep as a self-sustaining

population in many collections and we received just a few remaining mice from London Zoo and Glasgow University. From this small founder stock of five animals, which has since been supplemented with new genes every so often, we developed the highly successful captive breeding programme we now run, and which has provided the 600 or so mice we currently hold.

The breeding has been co-ordinated by the Zoo but has been a real 'community affair' involving many volunteers from the local area. These include Zoo Members, Cheshire Wildlife Trust Members and keen local naturalists who have successfully bred the mice for the release project in their own homes. Initially, these 'satellite' breeders were given husbandry guidelines and training and they have put a huge amount of work into the project. Breeding Harvest mice can be a tricky business, as they need close observation, keen record keeping and are very fast moving when handled! As mice were bred, the young were returned to the Zoo for re-pairing into new groups or sending on to other collections. The gatehouse staff became familiar with waving in people carrying hay-filled fish-tanks and pointing them in the direction of the Animal Division offices! As numbers soared, it became apparent that a special unit was needed to house the animals being prepared for release, and this was set

up at Demage Farm on the outskirts of the Zoo during 2001.

In preparation for the release, we have followed closely the protocols issued by the International Union of Conservation and Nature (IUCN) which govern all mammal re-introductions. In fact the same process has to be carried out whether the plan is to release a tiny mouse or a large oryx! Several pre-release surveys have been carried out on our selected site to establish habitat suitability and existing populations of other indigenous mammal species, together with predator and disturbance analyses. In addition, each of the 64 male and 65 female Harvest Mice we released were individually fitted with the smallest microchip available on the market (just 8 mm long). This was developed by Pet-ID in West Sussex, who donated 100 microchips to the project. This form of permanent marking will give us much more accurate post-release monitoring of the mice, as we hope to gain detailed information not only about the survival and breeding, but also the dispersal patterns of the mice released.

Each of the mice involved was carefully selected to be within the age range of 3 to 12 months, and in perfect physical condition. Every individual underwent a veterinary assessment and the whole group was screened to ensure that they were not carrying any nasty diseases or parasites which might affect the animals already living on the release site. Indeed *vice versa*, as faecal samples were collected during the pre-release monitoring sessions to establish the health status of wild small mammals on the site. These included Bank Voles, Short-tailed Field Voles, Common Shrew, Pygmy Shrew, Water Shrew and Wood Mice.

The 'experimental' part of the project was set up to test whether or not there was any long-term benefit to the mice of having some protection at the time of release. This took the form of a 'soft' versus 'hard' release. The soft-release provides familiar bedding and a supply of food and shelter for a 48 hour period post-release. The hard-release involved simply placing the animals in

suitable habitat and cover, and wishing them well! Thanks to the individual identification possible with the microchips, we know exactly where and how each mouse was released, so will be able to obtain data on the effects of hard and soft release techniques. Post-release monitoring commenced 10 days after the release and several Harvest Mice were re-captured, identified, weighed, measured and re-released. We were delighted to find that all of them looked in magnificent condition and were obviously doing well. All had travelled some considerable distance from their release point. Further monitoring is planned every five to six weeks over the next year.

This is being presented as a well thought-out, scientifically-based project, which we hope will provide us with the information we need to establish a formal 'Harvest Mouse Re-introduction\Release Protocol' document to be circulated world wide. As far as we know it is the first such project tried with this fragile species, and we have had interest from as far away as Japan. A Japanese film crew visited our project last Autumn to learn about the captive breeding protocol and planning process we have used. This was with a view to following up our work with the re-introduction of this tiny, but remarkably widespread species into areas of Japan where it was previously abundant and is now extinct.

There was a big team of volunteers working with us during the preparatory stages and on the day of the release, including several of those who had bred the mice in their own homes. Also helping were representatives from the Cheshire Mammal Group who have helped us with monitoring, together with the dedicated Zoo staff of keepers, researchers and botanists who have worked so hard to make this happen.

This project demonstrates Chester Zoo's commitment to British species, and desire to work in partnership with other interested organisations and individuals; this is real *conservation in action* and Harvest Mice are sure to remain an on-going interest at the Zoo.



▲ 'It looks a bit scary out there!'



▲ Penny carefully notes the microchip number before 'letting go.'



▲ A final check, then it's out into the big wide world.



# Members IN MAURITIUS

*Senior Keeper James Andrewes led this year's Members' trip to Mauritius*

**M**AURITIUS, in the Indian Ocean, is a popular holiday destination and when featured in brochures, the words *tropical island paradise* usually crop up. (I'm not sure we didn't use the phrase ourselves when publicising this trip). Well I could not argue with tropical or island, but paradise...? In May this year I accompanied a group of Chester Zoo Members to Mauritius; we were going to see for ourselves.

As we arrived at Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam International Airport, the island certainly looked green, although most of the vegetation we passed was sugar cane plantations. After checking in, the itinerary suggested an afternoon of leisure. But as we were all keen to get going, a trip to do an undersea walk was arranged and soon we were walking with fishes!

That evening we were given a fascinating and thought-provoking presentation by Dr Carl Jones of the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation (MWF) and learnt of the challenges facing conservationists here and some of the solutions being developed (including 'analogue species' – more on that later). Tapping into Carl's deep knowledge and broad experience of these topics was to prove of immense value in understanding what we were to see on the island.

We were taken to see some of MWF's sites, starting with its captive breeding



▲ James Andrewes, far left, with the Zoo members 'on safari'.

centre at Black River where we encountered our first truly endangered creatures. The MWF have bred back from the brink of extinction (yes, a cliché, I know, but wholly applicable in this case) three species of bird: Pink Pigeon, Echo Parakeet and, of course, Mauritius Kestrel. Each of these was in evidence on our visit, and one of the local free-living Kestrels even put in an appearance, flying in to its nest box above our heads! However, there is little to be gained from breeding endangered species if there is nowhere to put them. This was one of the deciding factors that led to the establishment of the Black River Gorge National Park.

## RARE BIRDS

We visited a number of areas within the Park to try and see some of the remaining native wildlife – easier said than done! At Bel Ombre in the south there were some very distant roosting Mauritius Fruit Bats and some remarkably close Pink Pigeons – it was most bizarre to see such mythically rare birds decorating the trees around the research station! Another site visited, further north, was Macchabe where some of the last remaining Mauritius Rain Forest is found. Much of this has been fenced off, to keep out Deer and Wild Boar, and all non-native flora has been removed. The approach to this

area has some deceptively beautiful views of deep wooded gorges and tall, thin waterfalls, but much of the vegetation is Guava, an exotic species that spreads like the weed it is, smothering native plants and providing little of use to native animals. The field station at Macchabe is surrounded by yet more Pink Pigeons, joined here by Echo Parakeets, one of which was caught up and fitted with a radio transmitter while we were there.

The rainforest was truly beautiful and a poignant reminder of what the island would once have looked like. The other MWF site we saw was Ile Aux Aigrettes, a coral Island within the lagoon off the south east coast of Mauritius. Here again exotic plants are being removed and native ones planted. Here we encountered analogue species in the flesh. Giant Tortoises, like those found in Galapagos and Seychelles, were once found on Mauritius and so most of the indigenous plants have evolved anti-tortoise defences. These often consist of thorny or unpalatable leaves with warning colours and patterns on the young plants. As the plants grow and the leaves become out of reach of stretching tortoise necks, the leaves lose their defences, no longer needing them. Exotic, introduced plants don't have this trick up their sleeves, so in any plot returned to native flora, the introduction of Giant Tortoises should,

in theory, keep unwanted plants in check and allow the native ones to flourish. Neat, eh? This is the idea behind analogue species. You can't bring extinct species back, but sometimes you can fill the ecological vacuum they leave behind. If the tortoises are successful on Ile Aux Aigrettes, then a case could be made for using them as natural (if slow!) gardeners elsewhere. The other reptilian delight on the island was the pretty little Day Geckoes, scuttling around the Pandanus palms.

One of the highlights of our stay took place near Black River where Carl took us to see some of 'his' Kestrels. Having called them in, he then produced half a dove from his pocket (lovely!) and flicked it up into the air, where it was neatly intercepted. A few minutes later the other dove-half was dispatched the same way. Magic!

### FRUIT BATS

During the second week of the trip, we struck out east to the island of Rodrigues – the ancestral home of our Twilight Zone Fruit Bats. Rodrigues seemed altogether more relaxed than Mauritius – slow in the morning, not so fast in the afternoon we were told. It would have been very easy to spend the three days loafing by the hotel pool, overlooking the tropical lagoon. But having come this far there were things we didn't want to miss! On the first evening we were given a presentation by Richard Payendee of MWF, and learnt of the efforts to rebuild Rodrigues' native forest.

The following day we saw some of the fruits of their efforts, firstly at the nursery at Solitude. It is here where seedlings and cuttings of some of the world's rarest plants are grown – some of them known only from one or two wild specimens. Occasionally new discoveries are made, often after a cyclone. This is because any plant which has evolved on Rodrigues, will have adapted to survive in strong winds, whereas the invasive exotic species which

cover most of the island are ill prepared. After a cyclone has hit a valley or hillside particularly hard most of the introduced shrubs and trees will be uprooted or flattened, making the still-intact but much scarcer native plants easier to find. Once the plants are established at the Nursery they can be taken to the forest regeneration plot at Grande Montagne and planted out. In this way, Richard and his team of 15 are creating native forest from scratch – an enormous task, and one for which they deserve much credit. Other highlights on Rodrigues were a trip to Cascade Victoire, a wooded gorge where Tropicbirds can be seen flying to and from their nest sites in the valley, and a boat trip to Ile de Cocos. This is a sandy island in the lagoon – somewhere to relax, snorkel or photograph the ridiculously tame seabirds, Common and Lesser Noddies and the exquisite Fairy Tern.

And then of course, there were the bats. Whether they were idly flapping around their daytime roosts or heading out over the village of Malabar to feed in the evenings it was thrilling to see them. (277 of them on the first evening – thanks for counting Tony!)

So...paradise? Well it looks nice, from a distance, until you look closer and realise how much wildlife has been lost over the past three centuries or so. But all is not yet lost and the important thing to focus on is the work and effort being put into saving and increasing the remaining habitat and species.

*Finally, I would like to thank Diplomatic Travel for arranging the trip and the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation for their time and generosity in showing us their work – long may it meet with success.*



▲ Fairy Tern, seen on Ile de Cocos, off Rodrigues.



▲ Giant Tortoises.

# SAMMY from OSAKA!



*For Sammy, the cover boy of this magazine, coming to Chester Zoo from his home in Japan was a huge adventure. He was accompanied on the journey by the Zoo's Veterinary Manager, Stephanie Sederson. Here he makes his introductions – with a bit of help from Stephanie!*

'Hello everybody, As I am the new boy here I thought that it was probably time that I made my introductions and told you a little about myself. My name is Sammy and I am a Black Rhino. I was born in Osaka, Japan on 11th November 2000 and lived there with my mother very happily until January this year when my life changed dramatically! The first surprise was being separated from my mother. She was due to give birth to my little sister Sally and I was told that I was a big boy now and needed to leave her. Luckily my keepers were very kind and fed me all my favourite foods to comfort me. Another change in my life was

◀ English carrots are tasty.  
Photo by Pat Cade

being fed in a big box rather than in my house. Every day the keepers would move my food a little bit further into the box so that eventually I had to walk all the way inside. I was not sure at the time why they wanted me to do this but hey, it was a small price to pay for my favourite treats of rice crackers and bananas!

One morning whilst I was eating my breakfast in the box, the keepers shut the door behind me. I got very worried. This had never happened before. I struggled to get out and then

suddenly, to add insult to injury, I felt a sting in my bottom. After that I started feeling very woozy and stopped caring that I couldn't get out of the box any more. I was aware of people around me and flying through the air and landing on a truck, then a long drive to the airport. I slept a lot for the next day. Every few hours I would wake up and start worrying about what was happening to me. I could hear voices and engine noise. Then I would fall asleep again.

I have since learnt that I was on what you humans call an aeroplane and that I travelled first to Tokyo, then to Anchorage in Alaska and finally to London Heathrow. After another 5 hours journey I arrived at my new home here at Chester Zoo. The whole journey took almost 2 days!

My new home is very exciting. It is very different from Japan. The keepers speak in a funny language but are very kind. The food is different too. I am fed carrots, acacia pellets, bread and pony food and lots of leafy branches. The branches taste different from the ones I was used to back home but they are still very tasty. Sometimes the keepers also give me my favourite treat, bananas. Yummy! The strangest thing about my new home however was the green stuff on my paddock. They tell me

Photo by  
Stephen  
McKeown



▲ Sammy's mother and sister in the enclosure where he lived in Osaka.

it is called grass! I had never seen it in Osaka and at first was not sure if it was safe to step on! Now I know it won't hurt me I don't mind it any more.

There are five other rhinos here. The adult bull Katakata and the two adult cows Rosie and Pangani seem friendly but as they live on the other side of the path from me I haven't been able to get close enough to get to know them yet. But let me tell you about the girls next door! They seem very nice. One is called Manyara, aged 3 years, and the other is four year old Kitani. They were both born here and are inseparable. They sleep together, eat together and run around their paddock having lots of fun. I haven't had much of a chance to speak to them yet as I have been in quarantine until recently, but I can hear them on the other side of the door and I can see them over the fence. I cannot wait to get to know them better and my keepers tell me that if they like me I can live together with them the whole time. Wish me luck!

Well that's all for now. I hope you will all come and visit me. I stayed in the small rhino house near the elephant paddock for the first few months, but now I am in the wonderful, brand new, Tsavo Experience. I hope to see you soon.  
Sammy.

P.S. Since writing this, I have moved in with the neighbours!



# BELLE VUE ZOO

## George Mottershead's Moment of Destiny!

**By Tim Brown,  
Founder of the Independent Zoo  
Enthusiasts Society.**

RAY Morrison's article on the old Eastham Zoo not only brings to my mind some forgotten zoological collections in the region, but also gives me the chance to lay to rest a slight upsurge of opinion. Part of the legend of Chester Zoo is that the young George Mottershead was so upset at seeing an elephant behind bars at an unnamed zoo, that he decided he would have a 'zoo without bars' when he grew up. For the most part it was always supposed that Belle Vue in Manchester was the place that so stirred the young Mottershead's emotions. But in recent years a theory has emerged that it could have been Eastham Zoo. Last summer I met a man who knew George Mottershead very well and was a great friend to the emergent Chester Zoo. His name is Gerald Iles and he was Director of Belle Vue from 1933 to 1957. Now aged 92 he is domiciled in Montreal, Canada. He confirmed to me that the original story is correct – it was Belle Vue Zoo where George saw that life-changing elephant!

George's experience, however important for the future Chester Zoo, was somewhat unfair on the Manchester collection. Belle Vue Zoo closed 25 years ago, some 141 years after it opened. The first zoos in Britain were those in London's Regent's Park, Dublin, Bristol and the long forgotten Surrey Zoo. Belle Vue was

next in 1836, started by John Jennison with a decidedly populist policy. It included an inn, a racetrack and amusements as well as animals. The zoo always maintained this broad appeal through its history and in some ways it reflected detrimentally on the animal collection.

For a brief period at the very beginning of its life, Belle Vue had serious competition in the shape of the Manchester Zoological Garden at Higher Broughton. This was a zoo established under the wings of a zoological society and ran from 1838 to 1842. It was a substantial place, occupying a 15 acre site off the Bury New Road, now covered by a school and a block of flats. Big cats, monkeys, elephants, bears and many others were kept there; it may even have owned a Javan Rhinoceros, of which only a handful have ever been kept in zoos. In truth, the 'serious' zoos of the 19th century needed the patronage of the middle classes to survive and ultimately these people were lacking in their support of the Manchester Zoo. After four years it closed under financial constraints.

John Jennison at Belle Vue bought many of the animals (even the bear cage) from the closing down auction at Higher Broughton, thus cementing the

growing appeal of his establishment. In time, Belle Vue was to become the playground of the North of England and an Easter Monday attendance of 187,000 in 1946 is almost certainly a record for any zoo!

Despite substantial redevelopment in the 1960s, ultimately Belle Vue Zoo was the victim of corporate ownership, which could view animals only in terms of profit. As a result, it was the first thing to go in the late 70s, when times got hard for the whole of the amusement park. When Jennison opened his zoo in Gorton in 1836, the area was largely open agricultural fields and it was unfortunate for the zoo that a tough industrial urban area grew up all around it. Gerald Iles informed me that, unknown to the public, German prisoners of war were even kept there in World War Two – in one of the many exhibition halls, I hasten to add. One of the prisoners even expressed a desire to visit the new zoo at Chester and was smuggled there by car!

The truth is that Belle Vue had a very good relationship with Chester Zoo and I'm sure that George



Caracell Lyns



Cherry-crowned Mangabey

Above and left: Two Belle Vue postcards from Chester Zoo's Archive Library.

Mottershead would have agreed that the Manchester collection deserves a better retrospective than the imagery conjured up by one small childhood experience.

Tim Brown is in the process of assembling a permanent exhibition devoted to Belle Vue and its zoo. If any readers have any memorabilia or pictures of the zoo, please contact him c/o Independent Zoo Enthusiasts Society, PO Box 4, Todmorden, Lancashire, OL14 6DA.





Picture by Mark Pilgrim

▲ Bathtime at Phnom Tamao Zoo and Wild Life Rescue Centre

### PHNOM PENH TRAFFIC

Road chaos in developing cities is the norm, but it still never ceases to amaze me. In Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the main mode of transport is the 'Moto' - a small motorbike that slaloms in and out of the decaying cars and lorries, not to mention the few brave souls on push bikes. They may be small motorbikes, but they can still fit on all the family, plus luggage and pets! I came to believe that vehicles have switches to turn horns off; white lines on the road have magical invisible properties and traffic lights are mere figments of the imagination. The traffic police, of which there are many, watch the chaos as they doze on road side hammocks. I am sure this reminds you of a number of cities you have visited! Despite this, if you want to get from A to B, you get a Moto and once on you feel surprisingly safe - or perhaps I was numbed by terror. The horn beeping is not as random as you think, there is a code...and it seems to work.

### REBUILDING

This was the first trip to Asia for either of us and I must admit that whenever I

## Elephants & Motos

*By Scott Wilson, Conservation Assistant. Scott accompanied Mark Pilgrim, Chief Curator on a visit to Cambodia to attend a meeting of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group.*

had heard Cambodia mentioned, it was in connection with atrocious genocide. So as we travelled through Phnom Penh on the back of our notorious motos, I was unsure what to expect. During the Khmer Rouge rule, one estimate is that over a third of the population was murdered; this was only a couple of decades ago. It is astounding that with all they have been through, I found the Cambodians to be some of the friendliest people I have met. It is also clear that great efforts are being made to rebuild the country. Although a great deal of poverty still exists, improvements in recent years are said to have been substantial; I hope it continues. The city

is dotted with huge ornate temples (90% of Cambodians are Buddhist) and there seems to be an obsession with bright yellow colours. The majestic Mekong River dominates the East side of the city and a few tourists already visit. Hopefully this can grow. Unfortunately we did not get to visit the famous temples of Angkor Wat further north, the main draw for most tourists. If you do decide to visit, plan your time carefully; April and May are hot ...very hot. We were reliably informed the temperature was 38°C with a humidity of 80%! When the sun wasn't beating down there were brief respites of torrential rainfall. Cambodia's climate

is composed of two monsoon seasons – we arrived at the start of the wettest one. Ironically we spent most of our time in Cambodia feeling cold due to the over-efficient air conditioning of the conference rooms of the Sunway Hotel.

## ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION

The reason we were in Cambodia, and enduring the arctic winds of the Sunway Hotel was to represent Chester Zoo at the IUCN AsESG meeting or, for those new to the world of biological acronyms, the World Conservation Union meeting for the Asian Elephant Specialist Group. One of the group's main functions is to produce an action plan for the conservation of Asian Elephants. The current action plan was produced over 10 years ago. This meeting was made possible with funding support from Chester Zoo, raised in our Asian Elephant in Crisis campaign. Many of the Asian Elephant experts attending the meeting were only able to do so because of this funding.

The Asian Elephant is listed as endangered on the IUCN red list for threatened species. It is estimated that only 30-50,000 Asian Elephants are left in the wild, approximately 10% of the numbers of its African cousin. Cambodia is thought to support approximately

2000 of these remaining Elephants, mainly in the Western Cardamom Mountains. The Asian Elephant is a forest dweller and deforestation is the primary cause of its decline. As agriculture and urban development spreads, the forests have become further fragmented and Elephants increasingly come into conflict with humans as they travel across traditional migration routes. Elephants, unsurprisingly, take advantage of the large fields of lush crops which have replaced forests and resulting human/Elephant conflicts have led to both human and Elephant deaths. Poaching for the ivory trade, bush meat and capture for domestication are also continuing problems in many countries.

The AsESG group meeting was very successful; the population status, main threats and conservation and research aims for each range state were assessed. Additionally the meeting gave a unique opportunity for experts to compare ideas, discuss strategies and formulate co-operative studies. This is particularly important for Elephant populations that frequently migrate across country borders and need inter country conservation strategies. The fate of Asian Elephants is in the balance and swift action is needed to protect the remaining Asian Elephant habitats before they are lost completely. The outcome of this meeting and the

updated action plan will improve the focus and effectiveness of future conservation efforts.

## CO-EXISTENCE

I arrived back from Cambodia with conflicting thoughts. People have every right to try to better themselves and you cannot help but admire the Cambodian spirit and feel an empathy with the people after all their troubles. The Asian Elephant, on the other hand, a majestic, intelligent, gentle creature, also has every right to exist in its forest habitat, together with the multitude of associated animals and plants. Yet can these two aims co-exist? People will always put people first; you feed your family before you care for the forest. It is easy for us, with our fridges full of food, to forget this. Increasingly I believe that a major role of conservationists is to promote the economic value of nature. It sounds very callous. Maybe it is. But the best way to promote the protection of something is to give it practical worth. If a forest can support sustainable harvesting to feed a village or provide income through tourism, it will survive and be protected. Countries need to be educated in the long term value of their natural resources. If people keep exploiting nature for a quick gain very soon there will be nothing left!



*Training for the next World Cup!*

Picture by Mark Pilgrim

## NATURAL RESOURCES ENCOURAGING NATURAL BEHAVIOUR

**GLYN HAYES FROM  
THE GIRAFFE TEAM  
EXPLAINS THE  
BENEFITS TO OUR  
ANIMALS OF SIMPLE  
BUT EFFECTIVE  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ENRICHMENT**

**T**HE Giraffe Team has the responsibility and pleasure of being in charge of 13 of the 53 mammal species kept at the Zoo. In total, there are 81 individual animals in our care.

Each species on the section is unique and therefore receives attention paid to its own specific needs. Identifying these needs is a continuous and necessary process in order to stimulate the animals both physically and mentally.

As keepers, we are constantly on the lookout for new enrichment to enhance the animals' lives from day to day. Books, internet, articles, meetings in which keepers from all sections can exchange ideas, – these are all excellent means of going about this task. However, sometimes all you have to do is take some advice from the experts themselves ... the animals. By taking time to observe them, their unique skills and requirements become suddenly apparent. It is then down to our

imagination and our own skills to create an environment that stimulates and challenges the animals.

In order to achieve this, we can once again turn to nature for a helping hand. Starting by just allowing the plant life in an enclosure to become fully established is an attractive method. For example, on first impressions, the Maned Wolf enclosure may appear overgrown and unkempt, but it is in here that the wolves' incredible senses are put to use, whilst searching out their scattering of fruit and chicks throughout the day. Also, whilst you are peering through the thick foliage and waist high grass, waiting, and then swiftly catch a glimpse of russet red fur breezing past silently, it is then you start to appreciate the elusiveness and stealth of this stunning species.

Moving on to one of our most charismatic animals, *Pumbaa*. Until we receive a mate for our new female Red River Hog, it is imperative to keep her

occupied. This has proven to be most enjoyable not only for *Pumbaa*, but for the keepers too! Long grass and clover patches to roll in; mud wallow to paddle in; numerous logs to play around with – and that's not only for the animals! *Pumbaa* enthusiastically joins in with any activity happening in her space. Visit her any time and you will more than likely be treated to a scene of rolling, rooting, running and quite possibly even witness her playing vigorously with her 'pig feeder ball' (which she relishes even if it is empty!).

Recent advanced enrichment for the Giraffes are the new 'bamboo feeders' – lengths of thick bamboo with holes drilled large enough for the giraffe's long, prehensile tongue. They delve inside the holes to obtain the choice pickings of fruit and herbs hidden inside. The suspended bamboo feeder is the most challenging. Watch as it swings to and fro as a result of all the herd concentrating at the same time on different holes!

*Question:* How much fulfilment can you get from one rotten tree trunk?

*Answer:* An incredible amount for a whole range of species!

A pile of rotting logs for the Coatis provides a bounty of insects that can only be reached by a flurry of rigorous clawing and snuffling at the soft woody centre, thus encouraging weeks of activity. Place such logs in with the Lowland Anoa and you can be sure they will keep returning to gouge away at them with their horns.

These are all simple and yet very effective methods of stimulating natural behaviour and keeping the animals healthy. By continuing to develop new enrichment activities, everybody involved, no matter what species, will undoubtedly reap the rewards. After all, the benefits of environmental enrichment are for us as well as the animals we keep.



▲ Pig in Clover! *Pumbaa* enjoys her natural environment.

# The Animal Health Centre

– a Student's Perspective by Mark Lowrie

*Cambridge University Veterinary Student Mark Lowrie spent a couple of weeks working in the Zoo in the Summer. He knows the Zoo well, as he lives in Frodsham, and has had student work experience here in the past.*

As a fourth year veterinary student I have been fortunate enough to spend some time working alongside the veterinary team in the newly opened *Animal Health Centre*. Although the building has been open only a short time, it is remarkable to see the impact it is already having on the health and welfare of the many different species living at the Zoo.

Phase one of the *Animal Health Centre* sits proudly next to the *Spirit of the Jaguar*. It has a treatment room, laboratory, quarantine facilities and x-ray room as well as an intensive care ward. The hospital allows for careful management and care of the animals during both routine and emergency procedures. Although many of the larger animals are treated within their enclosures, the centre provides a safe storage area for all the equipment and drugs required throughout such operations. Phase 2 – due to be built in 2003 – will contain animal holding and quarantine facilities and a new post mortem room.

As well as the wonderful facilities there is a friendly and experienced team of workers consisting of two vets, a vet nurse, zoo nutritionist and research assistant. With such expertise close at hand, it is now possible to familiarise some of the animals to the vets, allowing for more detailed clinical examinations at times of need. For example, the elephants receive a weekly visit from the vets, when they are trained to offer their feet or ears for examination, on command. This ensures that whenever a



▲ The Animal Health Centre.



▲ Mark Lowrie helps with treatment for a Griffon Vulture.

problem does arise, the animals are not startled by the appearance of two or three strangers carrying medical equipment. Equally it allows the vet to take blood samples on a regular basis for analysis.

My first day of experience at the Zoo started with the annual vaccinations of two of the Zoo's fiercer creatures, the Jaguars. Despite the security of the bars, it didn't stop me jumping in surprise each time *Salvador* pounced up at us and it certainly didn't help the vet when trying to take aim! Meanwhile, one of the Zoo's much loved Orang-utans, *Sibu*, was due for a move abroad to the sunny delights of Barcelona. Inevitably *Sibu* wasn't going to be moved easily but some slight persuasion from a dart gun and he was ready and packed to start a new life in Spain.

One of the longer projects during my stay at the Zoo involved the capturing of some of the Marmots. The purpose of this exercise was to run blood and faecal tests before their emigration to Switzerland. The facilities within the centre allowed us to anaesthetise the animals and collect blood samples before taking them to nearby Liverpool Vet School for testing.

Chester now stands out as being one of the few UK zoos with a resident animal health care team backed-up by a superb new facility. Having seen the rewards of such a system I am sure it won't be long before other zoos endeavour to follow in the footsteps of Chester.



## GROWING CONCERNS

**Mark Sparrow, General Curator of Botany and Horticulture and his Deputy, Sarah Bird, report on what's growing on in the Zoo's Gardens!**

**W**HEN autumn comes, many people think that the garden has little to offer, but this is not the case. A number of plants have colourful autumn foliage which can last for many weeks if conditions are favourable. In the Zoo we grow a wide range of these, including Maples (*Acer*), Maidenhair Tree (*Ginkgo biloba*), Sweet

Gum (*Liquidamber styraciflua*), Stag's Horn Sumach (*Rhus typhina*) and Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*).

There are also many plants that have colourful fruits and berries. These fruits are not produced purely for our pleasure, but as a valuable source of food for birds, insects and animals. Such

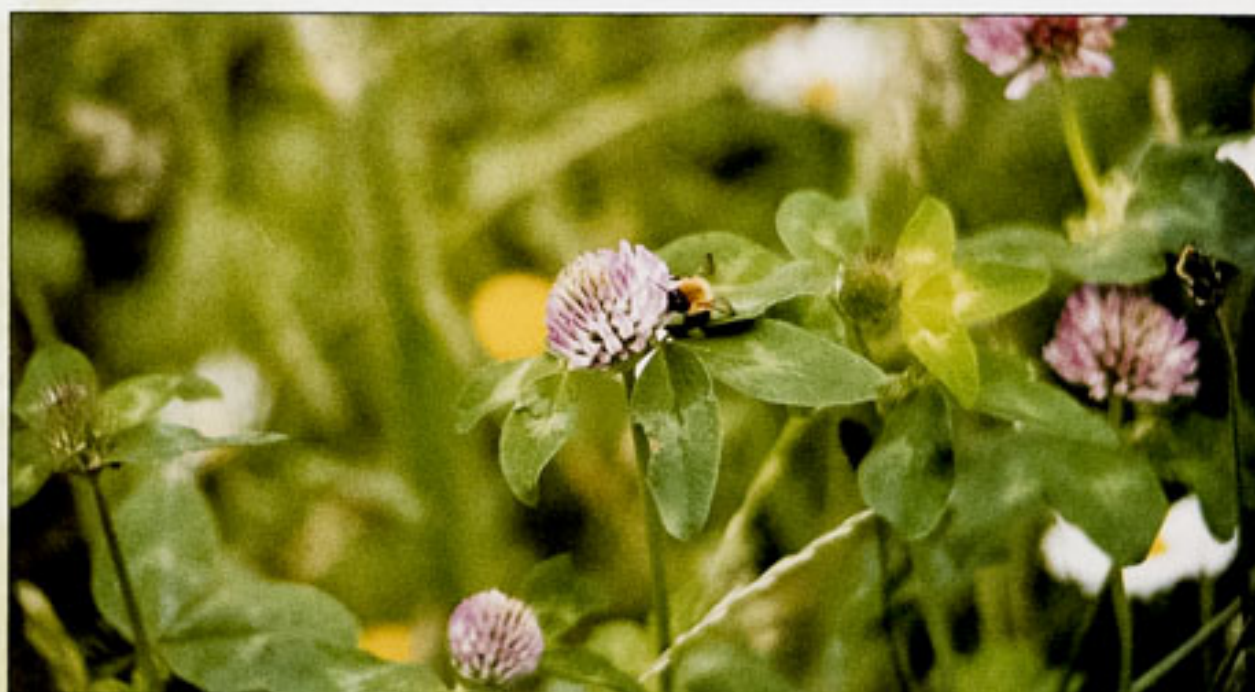
plants as Hawthorn, Holly, Hazel, Yew, Elder and Cotoneaster produce beautiful fruits and berries that make colourful displays in the garden. But, don't forget, this bright display is also a bountiful supply of food for Blackbirds, Thrushes, Robins and many other birds and animals through the autumn and winter.

CONSERVATION  
CORNER

### LOCAL PLANTS - WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Growing wildflowers and other native plants has been very popular for some time now. I'm sure many people will be aware of the debate over where plants used for 'natural' plantings should come from. Obviously, plants chosen for a wild garden in Britain should be species that are native to this country... but is that enough?

Botanists have always been fascinated by variation within single species, and noticed that the same species can look very different when growing in different situations. It's a bit like people having different accents and customs in different regions, and the races in orang-utans or tigers. Research into genetic variation of native species growing in the UK has found that plants of the same species, growing at different locations, look, grow, and behave differently. These variations have evolved over long periods and are adaptations to local conditions, such as climate, soil and water. The truly wild



▲ A bee feeds on Red Clover. Large 'fodder' varieties contain less nectar than wild types.

plants of any area are the essence of regional identity, and preserve the character of our countryside.

Plants suited to local conditions can be a big advantage to gardeners as they will have low maintenance requirements and, once established, will usually withstand dry weather. Many will grow in difficult areas of the garden with little or no fertiliser. The problem is that apparently 'native' plants and wildflower seed mixtures can include cultivated varieties or plant material from other countries. These may not survive so well, and, more importantly, they can have a negative effect on local plants and wildlife. For example, some cultivated varieties produce less nectar

than wild types, and introducing plants from a very different area may affect the characteristic genetic variation in the plants of a particular region.

**So, what can we do?**... Well, next time you buy native plants or seeds check where they come from. Try to avoid cultivated varieties, and seed or plants produced from non-British stock.

Regional plant variation is an important part of Britain's biodiversity; it is vital that we protect our precious and irreplaceable resource of natural genetic variation.

**For more information:**

Plantlife – the wild plant conservation charity – leaflets available in the *Grow Zone*

Flora Locale at [www.floralocale.org](http://www.floralocale.org)

# ZOOM

In On Plants

**IN THIS NEW FEATURE, WE PLAN TO FOCUS IN ON PARTICULAR PLANTS AND GARDEN TOPICS AND LOOK AT THEM IN GREATER DETAIL.**

## CHUSAN PALM, CHINESE WINDMILL PALM

### TRACHYCARPUS FORTUNEI

This palm is native to China where it grows in cold, mountainous regions. It is considered to be the most cold-hardy palm in the world and is well suited to the British climate. It is readily recognised by the fan-shaped leaves and slender trunk covered with persistent but loosely arranged dark brown fibre. This fibrous material is the remains of old leaf stalks and is used to make fine

waterproof cloaks, brooms, brushes and doormats in China.

The Chusan palm grows up to 10m tall and when mature produces large drooping yellow panicles of flowers that hang down amongst the leaves.

In the Zoo, you will see them planted in a number of locations, including *Sealion Beach*, *Spirit of the Jaguar*, at the end of *Islands in Danger* and by the Elephant enclosure close to the main entrance. They certainly help to create a tropical feel to some of our animal exhibits.



▲ Chusan Palm and flowers.

## The NEW ANDES GARDEN

At the beginning of this year we set out to create a new garden feature which would show the terrain and the range of plants from the mountains of the Southern Andes. In short, we wanted to create a mountainside in miniature. The site chosen for the *Andes Garden* was a previously uninspiring area of tarmac situated between *Condor Cliffs*, the Coatis and the Maned Wolves, appropriate animal neighbours for an Andean garden.

The garden is built on a slope rising up to approximately 2.5m at the rear. In order to achieve this, we had to build a retaining wall against which the rocks and soil could be arranged. To give the impression of a mountainside, over 200 tonnes of locally quarried limestone were used. Two streams run through this rocky landscape before plunging under a wooden bridge into a pool. All the plants used are those native to Chile and Argentina. We have tried to group them as they would be found in the

wild. The plants from higher altitudes are planted at the top of the garden, and those from lower altitudes are found around the pool. Of the 52 species used, some are not considered to be entirely hardy this far north in the UK, so we will have to see how they fare through the winter.

All the planting and landscaping work, including construction of the bridge, was carried out by our own horticultural staff, led by Mark Hargreaves. A tremendous effort from the whole team! We hope you will enjoy viewing a small slice of the Andes Mountains on your next visit.



▲ Strolling over the bridge in the Andes Garden.

# RESEARCH ROLE

*Zoology graduate Carys Hudson writes about the year she has just completed as the Zoo's first Research Assistant.*

**T**HE Research Assistant position is a new, one year work placement scheme that allows graduates to gain valuable experience in a unique research and conservation environment. Dr Stephanie Wehnelt, the Research Officer, runs a very busy department and it was my job to act as her assistant.

The first assignment was to help to develop an Environmental Enrichment video for use during presentations and for reference. This gave me an ideal opportunity to meet keepers in different sections. I also assisted the production company as they completed the video footage at their studios.

During the following weeks I shadowed the vets on their daily clinical rounds and was extremely lucky to observe and assist with a Black Rhino operation. These amazing creatures are my favourites and as a conditional part of my work placement, I am conducting a research project on the behavioural indicators of oestrus in the Black Rhino. As most methods of detecting oestrus in rhinos involves expensive hormone analysis or invasive procedures, my project investigates the non-clinical signs, which are less expensive but, as yet, generally inconclusive. This project will hopefully identify the behavioural signs of oestrus in order to assist with the conservation breeding programme. Another task was to learn about the medical database system *MedArks* and to input clinical data for the medical records.

*Zootrition* is a database system widely used in zoos to establish the correct diet for specific species. Whilst assisting Mark Pilgrim (Chief Curator) on his Ecuadorian Amazon Parrot studbook, I was able to use the database to research the

recommended nutritionally balanced diets for certain species.

Around 150 students come to Chester Zoo every year to undertake BSc, MSc and PhD research projects. They often need guidance and advice during their data collection period, which is provided by the Research Officer. Having undertaken my own BSc research project at Marwell Zoo, I've been able to offer some help through my own experiences.

Along with the daily task of answering queries from students via email, I also produced information sheets on subjects such as *re-introduction of Chester Zoo animals* and *Chimpanzee Forest* for other zoos and interested parties. One of my first major projects was to produce the proceedings for the 3rd Annual Symposium on Zoo Research that was organised by Stephanie and held at Chester Zoo in July last year. I very much enjoyed taking part in this year's Zoo Research Symposium at Bristol Zoo in July. It was a great opportunity to meet other people in similar jobs and exchange ideas and experiences.

There are many 'in-house' projects taking place, co-ordinated by the Research Officer. I assisted the keepers by observing the animals for set periods during the day and recording their behaviour. Other projects have included Orang utan saliva sample collection for cortisol level analysis. However being spat at at 8am is not a very sociable wake up call!

I attended the Rhino May Day Symposium in London to listen to representatives from Uganda and Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, despite many conservation efforts, the Rhino population is still under serious threat



▲ Getting hands-on experience during a rhino operation.

from poaching. The charity *Save The Rhino International* has organised a sponsored Rhino Cycle ride from Greenwich to Port Lympne in Kent. The 70 mile distance has to be completed in one day – and I think I must be mad to have agreed to take part! It's for a very good cause and all the money raised goes directly to the ground.

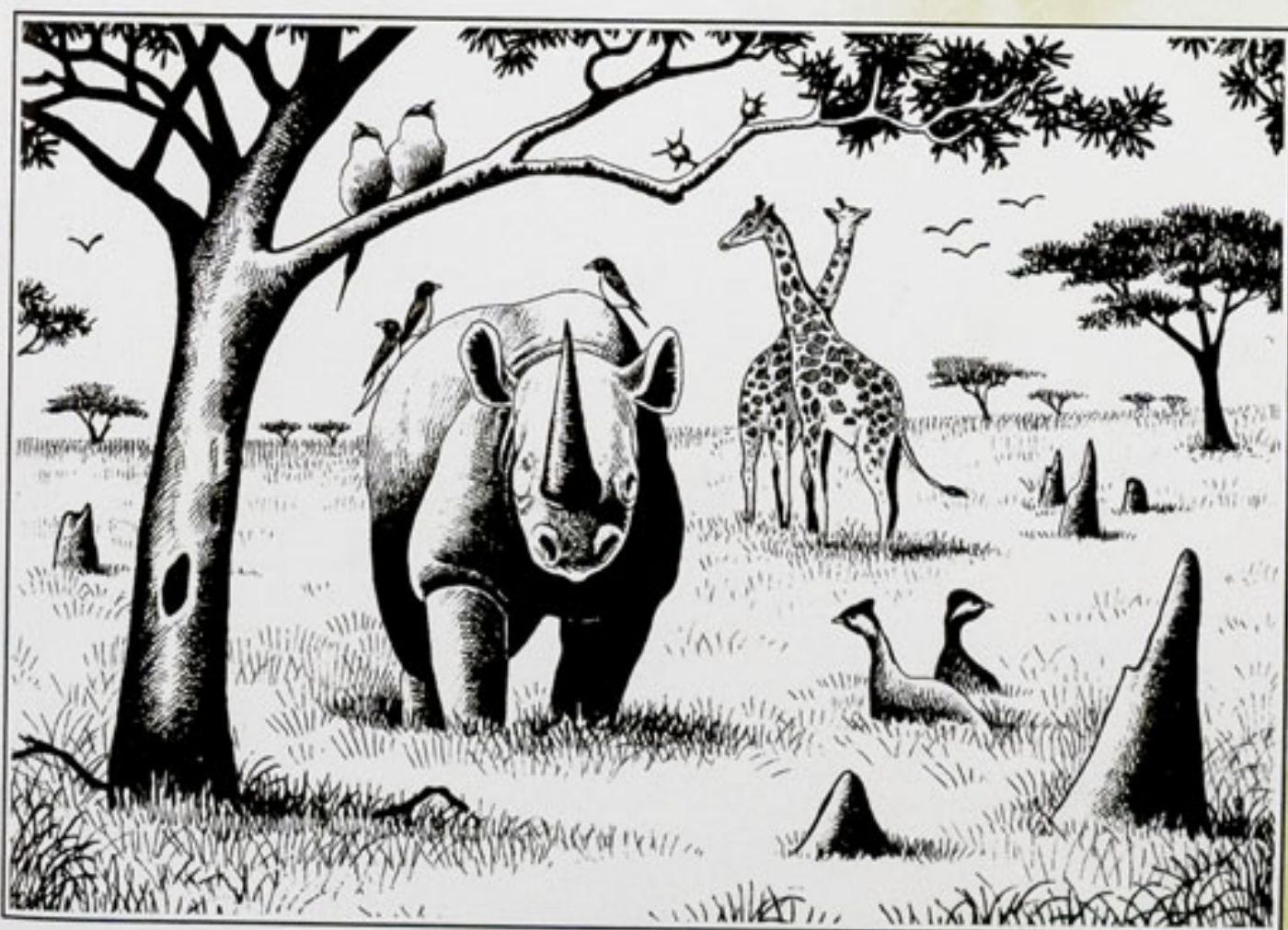
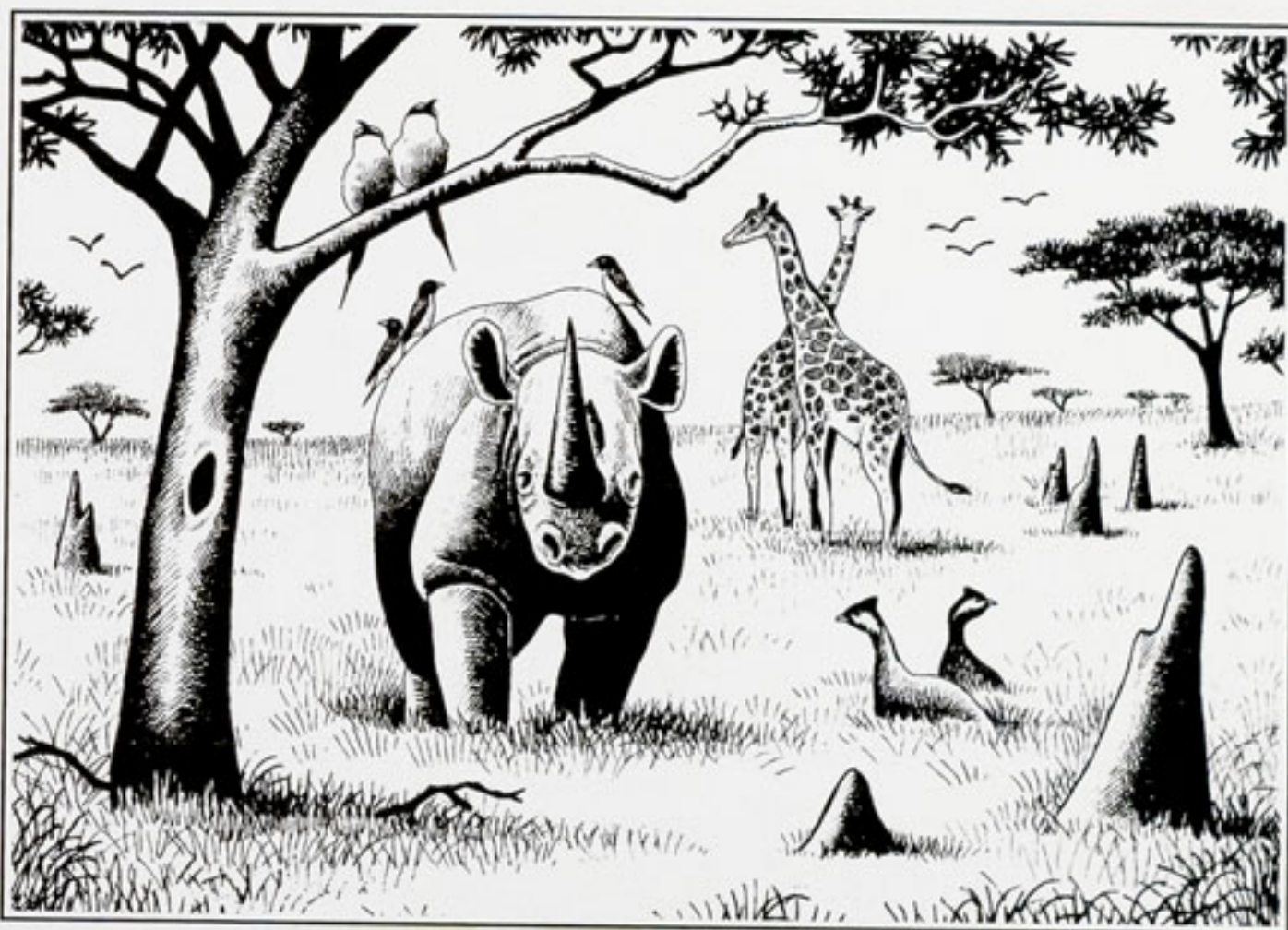
Research involves conveying information in an analytical and concise manner and one way to share this information is by giving talks and presentations. Stephanie and I were invited to give a presentation on 'Environmental Enrichment – Theories and Practices' at Cambridge University's Anthropology department. I've also been able to give Power Point presentations to students from Manchester Metropolitan University and Chester College.

It's incredible to think the year is now over. It has been a very enjoyable experience and hopefully will lead on to a job in a similar field. I'm very grateful to Chester Zoo for giving me this unique and varied experience.

# Junior Puzzle Page?



These two pictures look identical – but take a closer look. There are **20** differences! How many can you find? As usual, there is a prize of a £10.00 voucher to spend in the Zoo shops for the first all correct entry opened on the closing date, 10 October 2002.



### THE ANSWERS TO LAST EDITION OF ZOO LIFE QUIZ ARE:

Red-tailed Amazon Parot; Jaguar; Coati; Buffy-headed Capuchin; Red-billed Curassow; Spectacled Owl; Tapir; Capybara; Green Iguana; Bush Dog; Anaconda.

No totally correct answers were received – but the nearest was from Kelly Gaskin of Hook.

SEND YOUR ENTRY TO:

## JUNIOR COMPETITION

Zoo Life,  
Marketing Department,  
Chester Zoo,  
Upton-by-Chester,  
CH2 1LH.



Zoo Life

# JUNIOR MEMBERS



Meetings and Field Trips



**Saturday 28 September 2002 –  
Twycross Zoo**

*(Please note that this is a re-arranged date since our last magazine)*

This is likely to be a fascinating day visiting Twycross Zoo, which houses one of the finest primate collections in England and will be an excellent opportunity to learn a lot about another zoo and how they do things. It will also be a long day, so please come well prepared with a good picnic.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 9.00 am, returning at 6.00 pm. Over 8s are invited to join us.

**Saturday 19 October 2002 –  
Risley Moss Nature Reserve**

Risley is not far from Warrington and this visit will be an excellent opportunity to visit a real 'moss' and learn about some of the animals and plants that live in these wetland areas, when we are shown around by one of the Moss Wardens.

Over 8s are invited to join us for the trip and should meet at the staff car park at 10.30 am. We will return to the Zoo at 4.30 pm. Bring a picnic.

**Saturday 16 November 2002 –  
Liverpool Museum**

We have been promising a trip to the Liverpool Museum, which houses a superb Natural History unit, for some time now. But major refurbishment has been underway there, so this will be our first opportunity to visit the new exhibit. Always a popular trip during the cool Autumn time of year.

Over 8s are welcome to come along, and the bus will leave the staff car park at 11.00 am and return at 4.00 pm.

You will need a picnic lunch.

**Friday 6 December 2002 –  
Juniors' Christmas Party**

Always a hugely popular event in the Junior calendar, the Christmas Party is a chance for everyone to get together and enjoy the festivities. Games, disco and a great hot dog and burger supper are on offer. You will need to bring a cushion to sit on and a torch to find your way through the Zoo in the dark to the *Arara Lodge*, near the *Spirit of the Jaguar* where the party will be held. Access to the Zoo that night will be through the old main entrance, off Caughall Road, where the

new offices in Cedar House can be found.

Over 7s should arrive at *Arara Lodge* soon after 7.00 pm and can be collected from there at 9.45 pm.

**Saturday 25 January 2003 –  
Discovery Session**

This is your chance to spend an afternoon discovering more about your own Zoo! We will split into three groups for three activities and everyone will do all of them. One group will spend some time being shown around the zoo and hearing about some of the 'behind the scenes' activities. Another will be involved in a discovery session, learning about some animals in more detail and finding out how to handle a few too! Finally, you will get a chance to design an enclosure, using all your imagination to create the best living accommodation for a species of your choice. All the groups will do all three activities, so no-one will miss-out.

Over 8s are asked to join us by meeting outside *Oakfield House* at 2.00 pm. Parents can collect their children from there at 4.00 pm.

**Saturday 22 February 2003 –  
Farm World Visit**

This is a good time of year to visit Farm World near Wrexham, as they often have lambs to feed and several other animals to see and interact with. We will have a tour around the farm on the tractor and trailer and enjoy learning about how they look after their animals, as well as finding out more about trees and hedgerows.

Over 8s are welcome to join us and we will leave the staff car park at 11.00 am, returning at 4.00 pm.

**Saturday 22 March 2003 –  
Tracks and Signs**

One of our most popular events is Tracks & Signs. This is your chance to see the zoo from inside some of the enclosures, when we go in to find footprints from which to make plaster casts. March is the best time of year for this as it is usually muddy, but this should not put Juniors off! After this unusual day, most of you will have a souvenir to take home.

Over 8s can come along when we meet outside *Oakfield House* at 11.00 am, returning there for collection at 4.00 pm. You will need a picnic lunch, and it is important that you wear very old clothes and wellies.



## Saturday 26 April 2003 – Fossil Hunting Expedition

You will not need to be mad about fossils to really enjoy this trip! We will travel to the lovely area along the Long Mynd in Shropshire in search of fossils and fresh air. We have been remarkably successful in the past and will look forward to this event enormously.

Over 8s are welcome to join us and the bus will leave the staff car park at 9.30 am, and return at 5.00 pm. You will need a picnic lunch and decent shoes to walk in.

## Saturday 24 May 2003 – The Greenwood Centre

Back by popular demand, Juniors have the opportunity to visit this lovely spot in Snowdonia, where lots of events and exhibits connected with wood take place. We will make dens, walk the planks, try our hands at archery, and indulge in the lovely woodland walk - and much more. An event not to be missed!

The bus will leave the staff car park at 9.30 am, returning at 5.00 pm. Over 8s are welcome to attend.

## Saturday 21 June 2003 – The Wirral Way

Who would like a walk? Well, this is more than just a quick stroll, as the bus will drop us off near Burton on the Wirral and collect us at Thurstaston Country Park. In between is the old disused railway line, now known as the Wirral Way. It is a lovely gentle walk along about five miles of interesting habitat for many of our native animals and we will take lots of breaks and have our picnic near the dungeons!

The bus will leave the staff car park at 9.30 am, returning at 5.00 pm. Over 8s should bring plenty of picnic and water, because although it is shady for most of the walk, it may be warm.

## Wednesday 23 July 2003 – Day With A Keeper

Always the most popular event of the year, when Juniors of 12 years and over have the opportunity to spend a day working alongside a zoo keeper. The work can be tough so we have to strictly limit this event to over 12s. We try to match Juniors to their favourite section, but places are very limited, so this cannot be guaranteed. Please come prepared to work hard,

*Bookings must be made for all events. Please ring Penny Rudd at the Zoo on 01244 650215, not more than two weeks before the event you would like to attend. Places are offered on a 'first-come-first served' basis and may be limited.*

*This list is provisional, and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter dates and venues. You will be*

with clean wellies and an additional *completely clean set of clothes to work in.*

Owing to the Zoo's bio-security measures, it is important that the clothes that 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. You will also need a good picnic.

We will meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30 am and the day will finish for Juniors at 4.00 pm. Please note that bookings for this event will not be taken before Wednesday 9 July 2003 from 8.30 am, and will be strictly on a first come first served basis.

## Friday 15 August 2003 – Summer Barbeque

Most of our members have never been in the Zoo after all the visitors have left – but Juniors have this lucky offer once a year if they come to the Summer Barbecue. There will be a surprise speaker or a tour of the Zoo, but you can be sure to have a fun and relaxing evening.

Over 8s are invited to join us starting at 7.00 pm when you should arrive at the staff entrance off Caughall Road, and walk over to the *Ark Restaurant*. Parents are requested to collect Juniors from there at 9.45 pm.

## Sunday 21 September 2003 – Cholmondeley Castle

*(Please note that we visit Cholmondeley on a Sunday, as the grounds are not open on Saturdays)*

Located near to the Bickerton Hills in Cheshire, Cholmondeley is a lovely relaxing day, when we visit the Castle's pretty gardens and grounds, and the Home Farm.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 11.00 am and return there for 4.00 pm. Bring a picnic.

## Saturday 18 October 2003 – Colwyn Bay Zoo

It is always interesting to visit other zoos and the Welsh Mountain Zoo at Colwyn Bay is always a popular trip for our Junior Members. Apart from its exotic inhabitants, the Welsh Mountain Zoo also assists with the rearing and rehabilitation of seal pups and we may find they have some there when we visit.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 10.30 am, and return at 4.30 pm. Bring a picnic and warm clothes as it can be quite exposed on the hill.

*informed of any such changes in Zoo Life – not by individual letter – so please keep up-to-date by reading the Junior Page in each issue.*

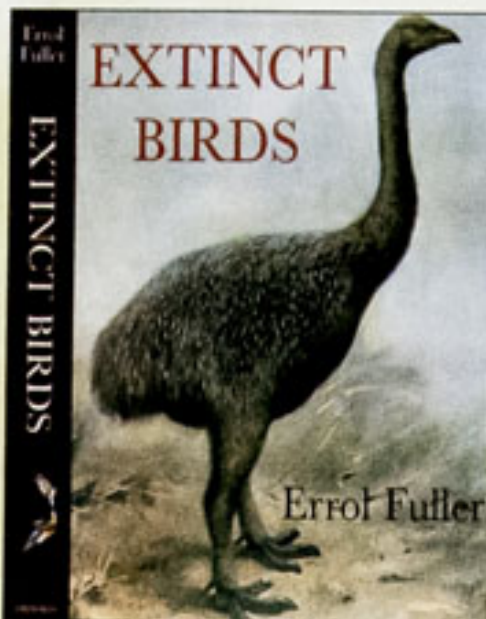
*A small charge will be made to cover the cost of those events which involve transport, materials or the provision of food and you will be informed of this at the time of booking.*

# FREE TALKS FOR MEMBERS & ADOPTERS

All these talks will be in the Lecture Theatre, on Saturdays, at 2.30pm

## Lost Birds, Sabre-toothed Tigers, Politics & Ivory and Orang utan Orphans! Some advance information on future talks.

We anticipate that these speakers will attract a wide audience, so as we cannot guarantee availability 'at the door', we advise you to send for your free tickets in advance. Applications to the Membership Office, Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, CH2 1LH, stating which talks you would like to attend, and number of tickets required for each. Please enclose a sae for return of your tickets. We ask those attending to make a donation of £1.00 per person to cover refreshments.



**19 October: Errol Fuller – Vanished Birds of the World**  
‘Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.’ John Donne’s line is an ominous but fitting inscription for Eric’s eulogy to more than 80 bird species wiped since the 1600s as detailed in his book ‘Extinct Birds’. These include the Carolina Parakeet, the Great Auk and, of course, the Dodo. We look forward to a fascinating insight into the huge number of bird species recently lost to us. Eric’s talk will draw together a number of leading scientific investigations, and be accompanied by beautifully reproduced paintings as well as by early photographs and engravings.

**26 October: Martin Meredith – Africa’s Elephants: Politics and Ivory**

Martin Meredith has spent most of his working life writing about Africa. He was based for fifteen years in Lusaka, Nairobi and Salisbury (Harare), writing principally for the Observer and the Sunday Times. He has covered events in a score of African countries: turmoil in the Congo; the eccentric rule of Hastings Banda in Malawi; Idi Amin’s regime in Uganda; the collapse of Portuguese rule in Mozambique and Angola; murder and corruption in Kenya and, Rhodesia’s final years. In 1989 he participated in the Ivory Trade Review set up to advise governments and international organisations on the impact of the ivory trade on Africa’s Elephant population. His previous books include *Nelson Mandela: A Biography* and *Coming To Terms: South Africa’s Search for the Truth*.



**9 November: Dr Silvia Gonzalez – Death of a Mammoth: A ‘Whodunnit’**

Dr Gonzalez is a geologist working on relatively recent animal extinctions during the end of the Quaternary (around 10,000 years ago). This includes the extinction of the Mammoths, Giant Deer, Sabre-toothed Tiger etc. This talk will concentrate on Mammoth extinction with new information from sites around the Basin of Mexico, discussing the role of climatic change against human influence. This work was featured last year in the Channel Four series *Extinct*.

**7 December:**

**Suzetta Billington & Becki Lawson – Caring for Orphaned Orang utans**



Suzetta Billington is a vet who worked for five years in a practice responsible for the veterinary work at Bristol Zoo. After taking her Masters degree, Suzetta undertook fieldwork in Borneo at the care centre of the *Orang utan Foundation International*, where she assisted in the care of orphaned Orang utans. She now works locally in a practice in Tarporley, specialising in exotic species, especially birds.

Becki Lawson is also a vet and spent two years working for the RSPCA at the wildlife hospital, West Hatch. After taking her Masters degree she also worked for six months in Central Kalimantan, Borneo, in the Orang utan Care Centre, funded by Orang utan Foundation International. Beckie now works for the Wildlife Information Network, a registered charity that distributes information on the health and management of wild animals, both free ranging and in zoological collections.

The following dates and speakers have been arranged for 2003. Further details in the December issue of Zoo Life.

**FROM ASSAM TO ARABIA:** Prof. Gordon McGregor Reid – 25 JANUARY 2003 – Chester Zoo’s Director will talk about conserving Elephants, Leopards and much, much more.

**THE EXTINCTION CLUB:** Robert Twigger – 8 FEBRUARY 2003 – ‘The Extinction Club’ is the title of Robert Twigger’s book, telling the story of the Milu, better known perhaps as the Père David’s Deer.

**Dr Roger Wilkinson** – 8 MARCH 2003 – At the time of going to press, the title of this talk by Chester Zoo’s Curator of Lower Vertebrates had not been confirmed.

**BATS:** Philip Richardson – 15 MARCH 2003 – Phil Richardson is the Bat Conservation Officer with the National Trust. He is the author of many books on this fascinating mammal and has helped bats gain a higher public image through his radio and TV appearances.

**CORPSES, CORRUPTION AND CREEPY CRAWLIES:** Dr Zakaria Erzinlioglu – 2 APRIL 2003 – Dr Zac, as he is known to many police forces, is a leading forensic entomologist. A fascinating talk from the author of *Maggots, Murder and Men!*