

Chez Nous



Chester Zoo Life is published by the North of England Zoological Society, Upton-by-Chester, Cheshire CH2 1LH Telephone: (01244) 380280
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ROYAL VISIT

MEMBERS will be aware, through high-profile television coverage and numerous reports in the press, of the visit to Chester Zoo of His Royal Highness, Prince Andrew, the Duke of York on the 6th of October. The Duke very kindly agreed to tour the zoo to familiarise himself with the latest developments in our conservation programmes and to formally open the Monkey Islands complex for rare and endangered rainforest primates. It is not every day that we have the great honour of a Royal visit. Hence there was much tidying, cleaning and polishing and other preparation work to ensure that the zoo was looking its very best.

His Royal Highness arrived at the main gate at 10.45am where Lord Ashbrook, the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, introduced in turn the High Sheriff of Cheshire, Mr Edward Tudor-Evans and Mrs Tudor-Evans; the Chairman of Cheshire County Council, Councillor John Clarke and Mrs Clarke; the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of the City of Chester, Councillor David Evans and the Lady Mayoress, Mrs Evans; the Member of Parliament for the Chester Constituency, Mrs Christine Russell MP; the Chairman of the North of England Zoological Society, Mrs Beatrice Jones; and finally, I am proud to say, myself as Director of the Zoological Society.

I escorted the Duke through the main gate where he was greeted by loud cheers from a very enthusiastic crowd, including large numbers of local schoolchildren. We made our way to the Rhinoceros paddock, where Chris West our new Chief Curator pointed out *Kitani*, our lovely baby Black Rhino, and *Pangani* her doting mother. Prince Andrew indicated that he was very impressed with the efforts that we are making on behalf of this critically endangered species which has a rapidly dwindling world population of about 1,500 individuals.

We then moved on to the outside



enclosures of the Monkey Islands and the special children's play area opposite. There are three play areas within the complex, each designed as an interactive educational game. That is to say, when playing, children are encouraged to compare their athletic abilities with those of monkeys. For example, how long can they hold on to an overhanging branch with one arm? Shrieking with delight, the children gladly demonstrated their skills to the Duke who, smiling, gently quizzed them on what they had learned. Skirting round the Sulawesi Macaque enclosure at the far side of the development, we came to the inside displays and were met by Nick Ellerton, Curator of Mammals and Stephen McKeown, Head of Education. Nick and Stephen explained the inner workings of this world-class exhibit. There were close-up views of very active Sulawesi Macaques and of Mandrills from West Africa, Lion-tailed Macaques from India and Spider Monkeys from South America. Prince Andrew seemed fascinated and asked lots of pertinent questions.

Once more, the Duke laughed and joked with lots of gleeful schoolchildren who were using inter-active displays to learn more about the monkeys and rain forest habitats in general. The tour of the inside area included a behind-the-scenes visit to the kitchens where the monkey diets are prepared. Section head Andrew Lenihan and other keeping staff - Philip Whalley, Catherine McLaughlan, Lois Bassett and Allan Reid - explained their vital role in the day-to-day management of the exhibits and recent innovations in environmental enrichment such as special 'puzzle feeders' to keep the monkeys stimulated and alert.

On leaving Monkey Islands, we were met at the Elephant enclosure by section co-ordinator Neil Spooner. The Duke viewed our magnificent Asian Elephant group, including lively youngster *Upali* and was briefed

■ *Is this what they mean by lion dancing? The Commissionaire takes charge of the animal toys presented to The Duke. They were later passed on to a London Children's Hospital.*

on the latest developments with our four pregnancies, including the recent return of Tonzi and Mambu to Twycross Zoo. We then proceeded to a marquee specially erected for the occasion on the Oasis lawn and beautifully decked out with flowers by Head Gardener Eric Rudman and his team. Inside the marquee, our Chairman Beatrice Jones made a short speech of welcome and invited His Royal Highness to unveil a commemorative plaque. Formalities completed, the Duke then happily mingled with the assembled guests and staff, putting everyone at ease. Among those who shared a word or two were Professor King, Vice President of the Society; Steve O'Brien, Estates Engineer; Peter Owen, Project Construction Manager for the Monkey Islands and Dr Roger Wilkinson, Curator of Birds.

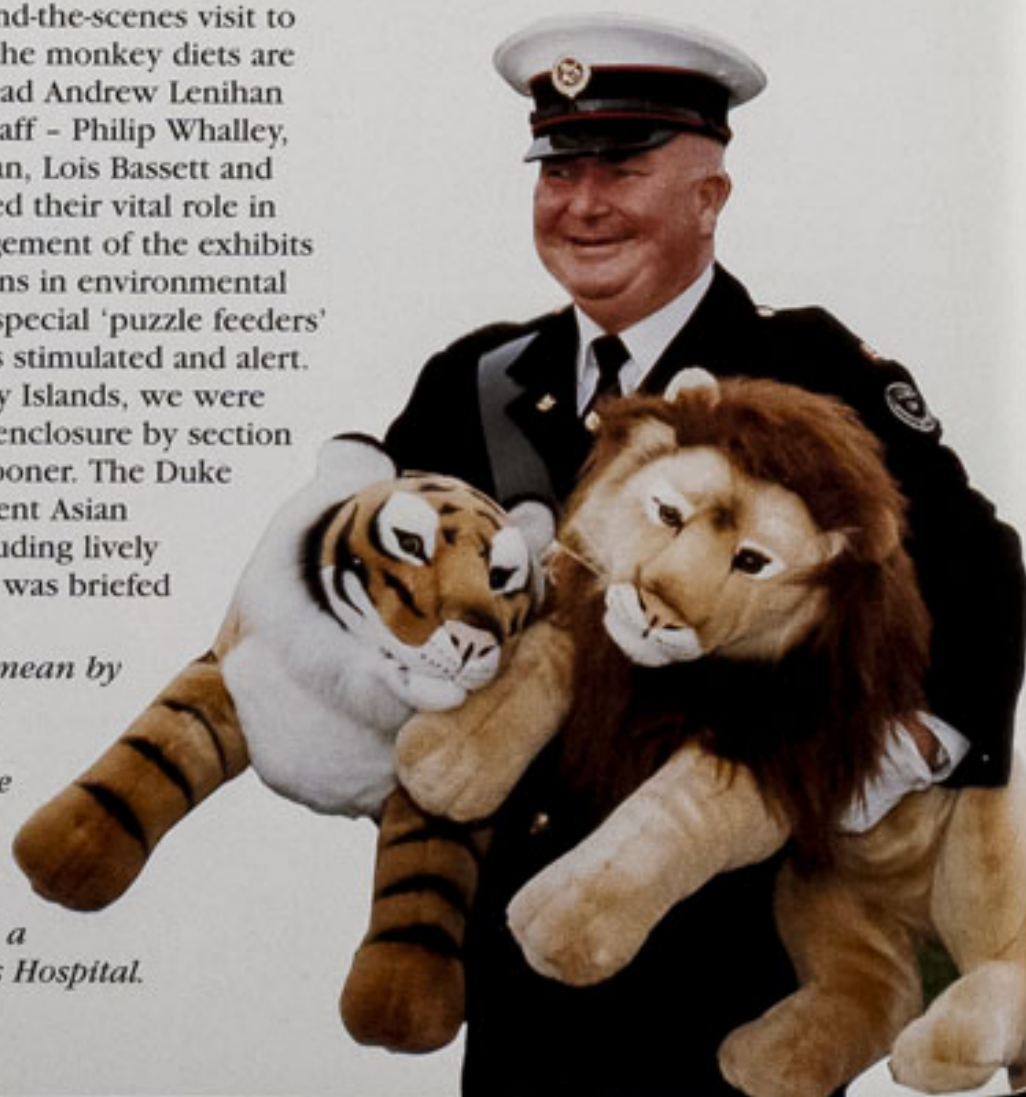
Outside the marquee, my wife Sally and 12 year old son Alexander, presented the Duke with two very large cuddly toys in the form of a lion and a tiger. These were received with much merriment and light-hearted queries as to whether or not they would fit in the boot of the Royal car. Sadly, time was running out. Indeed the entire event was such a success that His Royal Highness extended his visit by a generous half an hour beyond the tightly scheduled hour which was originally allotted! There were loud cheers from the crowds as Prince Andrew took his leave of us and waved as he sped off in the Royal car.

■ **Front Cover:**

HRH The Duke of York with Zoo Director Gordon McGregor Reid.

(Photo courtesy Chester Evening Leader)

See the centre pages for pictures of the Royal visit



MEMBERS' MEETINGS

1997/98

Saturday 13 December '97

2.30pm in Lecture Hall

Steve McKeown -

'Mokwepa and the Lightning Lizard'

Chester Zoo's Head of Education talks about education with animals.



Members' Christmas lunch is also on 13th December, at 12 noon in Oakfield Restaurant. Pre-booking essential. Please ring Maureen on 01244 650203 to reserve your place.

Saturday 10th January '98

2.30pm in Lecture Hall

Tony Ord -

'Pandas and the Mountains of Sichuan'

Saturday 14th February '98

2.30pm in Lecture Hall

'Dr Roger Wilkinson -

'Northern India - Mainly Birds'

More tales from the Zoo's Curator of Birds.

Saturday 14 March '98

2.30pm in Lecture Hall

'Nick Ellerton, Curator of Mammals -

'Can we afford to love our animals to death?'

Managing for the future, and why we have to move some of our favourite animals. Are we right or wrong?

Saturday 25 April '98

2.30pm in Lecture Hall

'Dr Gordon McGregor Reid, Director of Chester Zoo, with members of staff 'Zoo Review'.

Saturday 30th May '98

2.30pm in Lecture Hall

Annual General Meeting.

FAUNA AND FLORA INTERNATIONAL - SPRING PROGRAMME -



Friday 20th February '98

THE LOST CAMELS OF TARTARY -

John Hare.

John Hare details his four years of visits to Mongolia and China to study the rare wild Bactrian Camels - the true ancestors of the domestic Bactrian - highlighting the genetic closeness and differences. He was the first person in over 50 years to be granted access to this area, after it had been cleared for nuclear testing, and is regarded with great esteem and authority. His talk will highlight the dramatic scenery and landscapes in which these camels live and the difficulties involved in finding them.

Friday 20th March '98

GLIMPSE OF A VANISHED WORLD -

John Edwards

A rare chance to see some fascinating historic photos of zoos of the world, including photos of many animals now extinct, including the Quagga, Thylacine and Javan Rhino. John Edwards is author of 'London Zoo from old photographs 1852-1914' and some of the photos will originate from his research for this book. A historical view of captive breeding and enclosure design - not to be missed.

Friday 17th April '98

ON THE TRAIL OF WHALES AND DOLPHINS -

Mark Carwardine. We are delighted that Mark Carwardine has agreed to fit us in to his hectic schedule as a zoologist, writer and photographer, who frequently appears on radio and TV. Mark

has written many books on wildlife and conservation and his talk will include adventures and stories from around the world, including aerial surveys of Blue Whales in Mexico; Humpback Whales building nests of bubbles in Alaska; last ditch efforts to save Yangtse River Dolphins in China; the return of Southern Right Whales in South Africa - and much more.

Friday 24th April '98

SOUTH ATLANTIC ALBATROSSES AND PENGUINS -

John Croxall

Current threats and future prospects will be the theme, and the news John Croxall brings will be right up to date, as he will just have returned from South Georgia. John is a part of the British Antarctic Survey team, based in Cambridge and his illustrated talk should be fascinating. We have had to arrange two talks in April, owing to the availability of the speakers. Our quality speakers are away for so much of the year, we have to welcome them when we can!

FFI evenings are open to everyone. They are held at the Zoo's Lecture Hall and doors open at 7.00pm, for a 7.30pm start. Ticket price is £6.00 for FFI members, £6.50 for non-members, and includes a light buffet with wine. All funds go to specific FFI projects. Please ring Penny Rudd at the zoo for details - 01244 650215. Whilst not usually vital, it is helpful for catering purposes if tickets are booked in advance.

Members' Winchester Weekend

Maria Warrington reports on the members' July trip to Birdworld in Farnham, Marwell Zoo and Winchester.

Suddenly after a year of planning, the day leapt up and dawned. No amount of planning can affect traffic or weather - but my prayers were answered on the latter and we had three gloriously sunny days. Alas, we were not so lucky with traffic, and arrived at Birdworld at the time we should have been having a close contact session in their Heron Theatre. Too late for our planned session, I was able to arrange an extra special one - which involved running the length of Birdworld twice more in temperatures of around 82°!

Adam Whittington gave us a memorable free-flying, close-contact session. One bird featured was a Turkey Vulture, which wanted nothing more than to cuddle up and offer its head to be stroked! Sunday was spent at Marwell Zoo, where we were given a guided tour by volunteers. We saw very many rare and endangered species in a wonderful parkland setting, with a free road train and a narrow-gauge railway.

Marwell is particularly proud of its new facilities - Penguin World, Tropical World and the superb World of Lemurs. Snow Leopard cubs were a delight, as were good views of Red Pandas.

We left with some of us having done rather well on the Marwell tombola! Thanks to everyone for being so generous of spirit - we all enjoyed one another's company and felt a real group identity as members of one of the best zoos in the world!

CHESTER ZOO

Winning names from recent draws:

Aug '97	Mrs G. Edwards	£100
	Mrs P. Rudd	£100
	Mr A. Burgess	£50
	Mr J. Barrett	£50
Sept. '97	Mr P. Mills	£50
	J. Neville	£100
	Mr A. M. Jones	£50
Oct. '97	Mr M. Wiltshire	£50
	Mrs L. McHugh	£50
	Mr N. Stockdale	£100
	Mr A. Chiverton	£100
	Mr K. Roberts	£50
	Mr G. Milan	£50
	Mrs R. Carson	£50

Membership of the '100 Club' is still open - please contact Alan Sykes at the zoo for details

MEMBERS AND ADOPTERS TOUR 1998

If reading the report of this year's tour (see page 10) has given you the travel bug - then here's your opportunity for a memorable trip! There's a Rhino Tour to South Africa arranged for 17-28 May, 1998. Places are already in demand and will fill up fast. For booking details, please contact Julie Whitear at the zoo or Diplomatic Travel on 01825 740262.

GOOD-BYE TO THE ZOO VET

VETERINARY Surgeon Derek Lyon, who has been a vital part of the zoo for over 30 years, retired earlier this year. He first came to the zoo - as a very young man - at the time of our founder, George Mottershead, and has a wealth of stories about the animals and the people in the zoo.

As a keen video-photographer, he has frequently entertained members at meetings with his films and anecdotes, and has proved one of our most popular speakers.

Everyone at the zoo will miss our aptly-named Vet, and we wish him and his wife Beryl very many happy years in retirement.



■ Photograph, from left: Bea Jones, Council Chairman; Derek Lyon, Gordon Reid and Beryl Lyon.

DOUBLE FIRST!



ZOO Marketing Manager Chris Vere, pictured here, needed both hands to pick up two major prizes at the annual North West Tourism Award ceremony at Blackpool Pleasure Beach this Autumn.

The zoo won the coveted 'Favourite Day Out' award, which is voted for by the public, via newspaper and radio polls. The new 'Energy Efficiency Award' also came to the zoo, along with a silver award for Marketing.

CORAL CONSERVATION

DON'T miss the fascinating coral display in the Aquarium! To mark the 'International Year of the Reef' we have a display, with interpretation panels, of coral that has been confiscated by Customs and Excise.

WENDY IS WORLD CHAMPION

MANY congratulations to our Merchandise Controller, Wendy Locker, who has won two gold medals at the Ladies' World Angling Championships.

Last year she achieved a Silver Medal in Hungary, but this year she has taken the singles title and also first place with the British team. The championships took place on the River Mondego in Portugal.

SPONSORS FOR CHILDREN'S FARM

THE animals in the Children's Farm have a new sponsor - the Kwik Save supermarket chain. The company's Corporate Affairs Manager, John Bellis, was invited to name two newly born kids, to mark the sponsorship - and, unsurprisingly, named them Kwik and Save!

Kwik Save's support is not only helping with feeding and the general upkeep of the animals, but has also allowed a general upgrading of the area. A small floral area with seats has been installed, and more trees will be planted to screen off the area.

Another new feature in this area is a charity wishing well, installed by Chester Deva Rotary Club. We hope that many local charities will benefit from the money collected.

NATIONAL POND LIFE CENTRE

MEMBERS may have seen reports in the press about the proposal for a National Pond Life Centre on zoo land. This exciting project is being run by Liverpool John Moores University, and the zoo has agreed, in principle, to a partnership with the university. In mid-November we heard that a grant application for £2 million from the National Lottery Millennium has been successful. More details about this project in the next issue of *Zoo Life*.

HEATHER ANGEL EVENING

BOOKING forms are enclosed with this magazine for the evening talk by the internationally acclaimed photographer, Heather Angel on 22nd January. Heather's lecture is titled '*Natural Vision*' and will include many of her favourite animal pictures, together with photo tips and stories of her world-wide travels. We expect this to be a sell-out - so please send back the forms as soon as possible.

CONSIDERING THE CONDOR

THANKS to three students from Upton High School, there is an intriguing inter-active sign at the Condor Cliffs Aviary, which demonstrates how much more powerful a condor's eyesight is to that of a human. Brian Shaughnessy, Head of Design and Technology at the school, set the task to three 17 year olds - Rebecca Whitby, Peter Daniel and James Hilton. Head of Education Division, Stephen McKeown, said - 'This publically-operated magnifying glass is just as good as a big design company would produce!' The students are shown here with their unique design.



BLOOMING MARVELLOUS!

ERIC Rudman, Head Gardener, collected another award at the Southport Flower Show, when the zoo won - yet again! - the prize for the best large tourist attraction gardens in the North West.

The need for conservation programmes for rare plants is increasingly being recognised by zoo

collections, and five of the zoo's gardeners recently travelled to Edinburgh to take part in the first Plant Taxonomic Advisory Group Meeting. Director Gordon Reid also took part, giving a talk on the Mexican Cactus Conservation programme.

Our photograph shows Eric Rudman with his award-winning team.



BAT CAVE PROGRESS

THE big project for 1988 is the innovative Bat Cave - the first opportunity in the UK for people to enter the same air space as free-flying bats! Work is now well underway on the construction of the building, on the field adjacent to Asian Plains and the far end of Monkey Islands.

With 3,600 cubic metres, this will be the largest bat enclosure in the world. It will comfortably house a stable population of 300 bats.

One of the most important aims of the project is the conservation of the critically endangered Rodrigues Fruit Bat. Our present group, which is managed in partnership with the Mauritian Government and the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, has an

excellent breeding record. But the existing facility is not adequate for a large population. Above all, the Bat Cave will be available to supply any required number of Rodrigues Bats to support an eventual reintroduction programme.

It will provide a dramatic visitor attraction, with an inter-active education area in the foyer, before entering the darkened cavern. There will be paths and waterfalls leading to an area of permanent twilight. Rock pools will house Blind Cave Fish, and there will also be small nocturnal mammals, such as Slow Loris, Sloths and Mouse Lemurs.

We anticipate the Bat Cave will open late Spring in 1988.



FREDERICK SINCLAIR CARSON, MC, MA 1914-1997

Friends and colleagues at the zoo were saddened to hear of the death of Fred Carson, who died on 15 October after a short illness. He was a life member of the NEZS, a past Council Member and retired Zoo Estate Engineer.

Council Chairman Beatrice Jones writes this tribute

FRED - or as he was affectionately known by his family, 'Podge' - spent the first seven years of life in India, where his father, Brigadier General Sir Frederick Carson of the Royal Engineers, was engineer in charge of building and expanding the Indian Railway system.

With his identical twin brother and their parents, he returned to his native Canada, where the boys attended Lakeland School. They went on to the Royal Military College at Kingston, and it was here the twins' lives diversified, although they remained close and as like as two peas in a pod for the rest of their lives.

Fred graduated in engineering from Emmanuel College Cambridge, where he was able to indulge one of his great loves - ice hockey. He played for the University team, whose trips abroad afforded him some of the more colourful stories in a large repertoire. On one such trip to Paris, he met and escorted Katherine Kennedy, sister of the late President. But, as he was to say later, the formidable matriarch, Rose, would have been a little too much of a match for him! Following

family tradition, he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers in the British Army, while his twin was to mirror this within the Canadian Army.

Major Carson gave distinguished war service, seeing action at Dunkirk, in North Africa, and at the Normandy landings. He received the Military Cross for Gallantry on D Day, for saving his colonel's life. After the war and a spell at Staff College, civilian life beckoned, and in the early fifties he brought his wife and baby daughter to settle in Chester.

For five years he was production manager with a local manufacturing company, and then took over the running of a family business. Fred retired from business in 1975 and, never one to be idle, became immersed in local politics. He was Ward Chairman for Upton CRAG (a local ratepayers group) in 1976 and then in 1979 topped the poll to become City Councillor for Newton ward.

From his early years in Chester, Fred had become interested in the work of Chester Zoo. He served on the NEZS Council from 1975 to 1980 and was a

tower of strength during the last year of George Mottershead's life, as a Council member, and as a caring and supportive friend. In 1981, having retired from Council, he accepted the post of Estate Engineer on the zoo staff. He brought not only a fund of technical and practical expertise, but also his ability to lighten difficult times with his inimitable sense of fun. He was always able to see the absurd and the comical and to communicate this to friends and colleagues who shared with him this priceless gift of laughter.

Fred retired from the zoo in 1991, but continued his interest as a member. He was a keen fund raiser for the Samaritans.

Alongside his love of gardening, Fred's last years were blessed with watching his two grandchildren, of whom he was immensely proud, growing up.

Fred will be missed by a large circle of the many friends he made over a long and distinguished life of service to his country and his community. He is survived by his daughter, Emma, his grandson, Paul and granddaughter Helen.

THE CUB QUARTET!

OUR pair of Asiatic lions, Chandani and Jake, produced their third - and largest - litter this summer. Chandani's two previous litters each produced three cubs, but this time it was four - three females and a male.

They make a very appealing family group, and are delightful visitors of all ages.

Marketing Manager Chris Vere, who took these pictures, is still trying to get all four in one photograph!





■ Dr Brambell with the Princess and Senior Keeper Niall Ormerod.

IN the aftermath of that sad morning on 31st August, when the news came through that Diana, Princess of Wales, had been killed along with two of her three companions in the car, I thought back to that day in April 1989 when she came to the zoo to open the Chimpanzee House.

The weather that day was awful. Cold and wet - and the ceremony was to be outdoors. We had invited as many of the local schools as we could, and they all took their places in the rain, waiting the Princess's arrival. All the schools, that is, except one. The children from Dorin Park Special School in Upton stayed in their minibus until the last possible moment. They took their cue to de-bus from the arrival of the royal cavalcade, which drove past them. My wife Patricia and I were joined by our Chairman, Andrew Thomson and his wife, and the High Sheriff, Jeffery Lockitt and his wife, to form the reception party, as the royal car drew up by the Jubilee Café.

As the Princess arrived, the sun came out! Introductions soon over, we started off on our route to the Chimpanzee House. We paused at the Penguin Pool, where Roger Wilkinson gave an uncharacteristically brief explanation of what we were seeing. 'This is getting zanier and zanier!' said the Princess, obviously enjoying the

MEMORIES OF A PRINCESS

Dr Michael Brambell, retired Director of the zoo, has fond memories of the day he hosted the visit by Diana, Princess of Wales

occasion. At the Chimpanzee House, Andrew Thomson attempted to greet her with a formal speech, only to be drowned out by the chimpanzee spectators, who clearly wanted that stage of the event to be over and done with.

We went into the public area inside the house, and watched the chimpanzees - as they watched us. The Princess told me how much fun her family had had fitting the thumbnail character sketches of the chimps (which we had sent to her in advance) to people they knew!

We had been forced to take the precaution that day of keeping the dominant male, *Boris*, behind the scenes, because he could not be trusted not to throw things -

particularly at me. Now *Boris* is a vigorous but inaccurate thrower, so I never felt in the slightest danger of being hit, which meant that the people near me might have had a clod of earth, or worse, descend upon them. It was a wise and provident precaution.

The Princess was taken on a behind the scenes tour by Nick Ellerton and Niall Ormerod, where she could see the facilities and where a very disgruntled *Boris* conducted a monologue on his annoyance at being shut in, ungrateful that for five minutes he had a royal audience to himself.

Then it was time for her to go, and as we walked past the scores of schoolchildren towards her car (we had filled the cattle paddocks with children so that as many as possible could see her) she smiled and talked to many of them. Then came the most amazing moment of all. The last school party was the group of children from Dorin Park School, many of them in wheelchairs. The Princess leant forward to talk to one little boy and told him she had seen him getting out of the minibus when she was being driven into the zoo. That is the moment that I remember most vividly of that day when the sun shone on Princess Diana. It clouded over again as soon as she was gone!

MONKEY PUZZLES FOR EDUCATION DIVISION

Planning the exciting inter-action equipment and displays in the new Monkey Islands complex has been one of the most ambitious interpretation projects undertaken at the zoo. Sara Ruks, from our Education Division, writes about the setbacks and successes!

ANYBODY entering the Education Office recently while I was on the phone would not have been blamed if they thought that they had wandered into the wrong department - if not a mad house! They may well have overheard the following snippets of conversation.

'... and the design drawings for the hinges ...'

'I wish to order the following sounds; the mating call of *Dendrobates pumilio* (strawberry poison arrow frog), the call of *Cyphorbinus arada* (musician wren) ... thunder and a tropical downpour.'

'Can you please give me the price for five blackboards with natural wood frame and green border.'

'Please confirm that the focal length of the lens is ...'

'We are looking for a manufacturer of 'rustic' play equipment with activities such as ...'

'Surely printing on canvas can't be that expensive?!'

Inspired by our trip to the States (see previous issue of *Zoo Life*), Stephen Mckeown and myself have been hard at work developing interactive interpretation for various areas of the Zoo.

'To see is to believe and to do is to understand' is an old Chinese proverb. This is the principle we are working on when developing the interpretation for the zoo.

By now you should have seen the first six boards in the new set of seven signs by the elephants. The identification photographs with the 'fascinating facts' have already proved to be a talking point. It's very rewarding watching our visitors trying to identify the elephants, watching for the various ways in which the trunk can be used, amazed at 30% decline in numbers in the wild and lifting up the flaps to find discover the differences between Asiatic and African elephants.

The interpretation by Condor Cliffs

has been enhanced by the third sign about the Andean condors. Stephen and I have been working closely with Upton High School Design, Craft and Technology Department to develop the first in a series of interactive displays - 'seeing through their eyes'. By moving a lens a visitors can compare a condor's eyesight with their own. Three lower sixth pupils have designed and manufactured this



display as part of their 'A' level course work. We hope that the success of this project will lead to more cooperation between ourselves and local schools and colleges in the design and building of further interactive features.

The most exciting project, however, has been the work on interpreting the new Monkey Islands. When you enter the Monkey Islands complex, you are immersed in a rainforest experience. A tumbling waterfall and tropical pool greet you. The hum of insects, mating calls of frogs, cries of howler monkeys, screeches of macaws surround you. Listen out for the

entrancing song of the musician wren. Don't be scared by the roll of thunder and sound of a downpour - you will stay dry!

Discover how much rain falls in a year in the rainforest compared to Cheshire. Pump the handle to make it rain. What do monkeys eat? Look at the daily menu boards in the kitchen. Explore the puzzle to find foods other than fruit, for example, honey, creepy crawlies, tree resin or fungus.

Pretend you are a frog or a bird. Can you recognise your mate's call? Listen to a call and then identify the frog/bird that made it.

Touch casts of monkeys' hands and feet. Compare your hand to that of the various monkeys in the house.

Outside, watch the monkeys moving. Can you swing arm over arm or balance on a moving branch? Try out your swinging and balancing expertise on the equipment around the islands. Discover what skills are needed to move successfully in trees - a head for heights, good grip, strength, accurate judgement of distances and a sense of balance!

Devising all these activities was the easy part. Finding organisations able to put our ideas into practise proved more difficult - hence the hours spent on the phone researching suppliers. Also the telephone wires have been kept busy with FAXes and E-mail flying around the world. Seeing the activities slowly take shape, installed and being used made all the hard work and sleepless nights worthwhile.

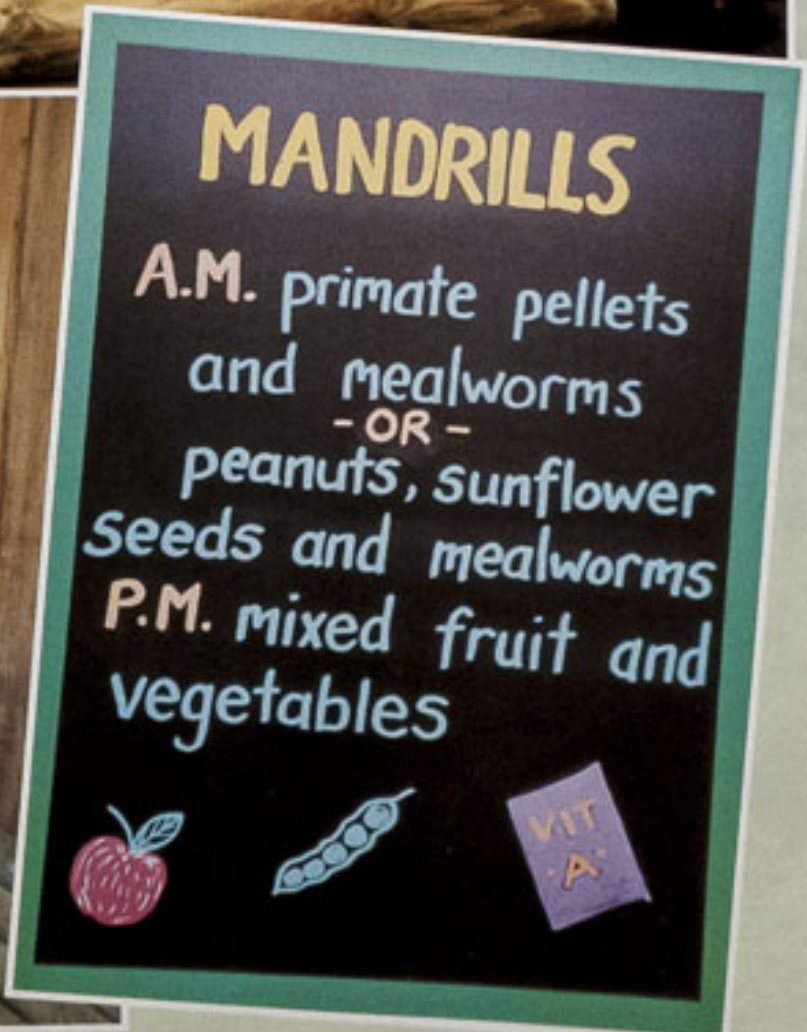
However, most of these exciting developments would not have been possible without the very generous donation from Capital Bank.

This money has enabled us to develop our ideas for the Monkey Islands. A series of education packs designed for use by school groups when visiting Monkey Islands and linked to the interpretation is in the process of development.

Watch out for further developments at other sites around the zoo.



FACT FINDING IS FUN INSIDE THE ENDANGERED SPECIES COMPLEX FOR RAINFOREST PRIMATES



A TASTE OF TANZANIA



Our first zoo members' safari to Africa this Autumn was a huge success. Julie Whitear, Director's Assistant, took part in the trip, and writes about an unforgettable experience!



■ Zebras in the Bologonga area

TANZANIA is home to Africa's highest mountain, deepest lake and great stretches of untouched wilderness. It houses over 100 different ethnic groups and, bordering eight other countries, is half the size of western Europe. It is a country rich in cultural and historical heritage that began nearly four million years ago, when our ancestors left the forest to walk upright on the plains. Today, one quarter of the country is national parks and home to a huge variety of wild animals.

Our first glimpse of Tanzania as we landed in the dark on 7th October was of a sandy grass-lined runway that looked like it was lit with candles – a far cry from Manchester Airport! As we stepped from the plane and breathed in the African air, the heat was overwhelming. We were met by Alan and Elizabeth from *Let's Go Travel* in Arusha, who were the local safari organisers. Diplomatic Travel (represented on the trip by Barry Harding) had made all the

arrangements in conjunction with them. We had our own small bus and after evacuating a few locals who tried to hitch a lift, we were eventually on our way!

Everyone was in high spirits as we sped along a fairly good road. We turned off after about half an hour to arrive at Mountain Village Lodge, which was a tropical paradise at the end of a street of tin shacks and Coca Cola signs! The smell of flowers and the sound of frogs and crickets was overwhelming. After finding our rooms, which were all individual circular straw roofed huts, we met back in the bar to sample some well earned cold beers!

Early next day, eager to see Africa in the daylight, we strolled round the grounds breathing in the surroundings – it smelled even nicer than the night before and the birds and flowers were glorious. We watched the light change quickly as the sun cleared the clouds and showed us Mount Meru in the background. After a refreshing

breakfast we set off, passing coffee plantations surrounded by beautiful mauve Jacaranda trees. It was interesting to see the local town of Arusha with its colourful array of people, cattle and shops as we drove through to the airstrip.

We then boarded two tiny planes from which the views were fantastic. The habitat as we crossed Lake Natron (a soda lake) was very barren and volcanic but soon gave way to the Serengeti plains where vast areas were broken only by ribbons of trees showing where rivers were. Excitement mounted as we saw our first 'wild' animals getting closer as we came lower to land, and after the animals had been 'shooed' off the airstrip at Lobo, we bumped down successfully.

Simon King, our group leader from 'Let's Go Travel' and our other three drivers Deo, Bernard and Tadeus, were at the airstrip with the land rovers to meet us. Throughout our stay they all did a wonderful job of looking after

us, putting up with endless questions and driving us through many hours on extremely difficult roads.

Among the first sightings on our way to our destination were Bee-Eaters, Impala, Topi, Kongoni, Buffalo, Zebra, Grant's and Thompson's Gazelles, Steinbok, Sooty Chat, Capped Wheatear, Superb Starling, Guinea-fowl, Lilac-breasted Rollers, Rufous-tailed Weaver and a Jackal chasing a rabbit!

'Whistling thorns' gave a grey sheen along the roadside in between the many different Acacias and Euphobias. We arrived at Migration Camp around 12.15pm. This fabulous tented camp was totally hidden among the kopjes (rocky outcrops) at a place referred to as 'Poachers Post' to the north of the Lobo area on the Grumeti River. The river bed was totally dried up with only very small pockets of water along its whole length. The view of Ndasiata Hills was breathtaking. The tents all had their own raised verandah and a bathroom with shower and flushing toilet! Despite the home comforts, we were completely immersed in the surrounding wildlife with mammals, birds and lizards everywhere we looked.

At night we could hear hippos, hyaenas, lions and buffalo and there were rangers with guns keeping a close eye out for any nocturnal antics!

Over the next few days we learnt a lot from our drivers about the local wildlife, people, tourism and conservation issues. The image of a zoo to most Africans is not a favourable one, but after lengthy conversations I hope we left them all with a better idea of the real conservation achievements of good zoos, such as Chester.

On the first afternoon at the camp we went on a very interesting game drive along the Grumeti river. Among animals spotted were Vervet Monkeys, Giraffe, Wildebeeste, Impala, Reed Buck and our first elephants. (Which I

was convinced I had smelt five minutes before we saw them - a very familiar smell!). We also saw our first Lion - a lone female. We were wondering why she was on her own when further back up the track we spotted a male under a tree. He was soon joined by another young female. They didn't seem bothered by us watching them and by 6.00pm we had found the rest of the group, lying in

had the opportunity of bush walks, either morning, evening or both over the course of the four days. We also had a full day out, with a picnic lunch, to the Kenyan border which involved a very long drive through the panoramic scenery of the northern Serengeti. As we drove, the plains changed from burnt scrub to endless yellow grass surrounded by spectacular hills. As the evening light

came, the bands of rain intercepted by brilliant rays of sunlight were magical.

For bush walks we were accompanied by a local guide and a ranger with a gun. Everyone really enjoyed this as it gave us opportunity to stretch our legs. We learnt some fascinating facts about how to identify different animal tracks and signs and we saw a lot of the smaller creatures that would be missed in a vehicle, such as soldier ants, stick insects, dung beetles, lots of birds and a not-so-small group of lions! One morning walk group had a very close encounter with over ten lions and we managed to get close enough to do a post-mortem on the lion's breakfast!

Nearing night fall on an evening walk, we climbed a huge kopje near the camp where Simon and Bram (the camp manager) joined us with a cool box full of drinks. We sat on the rocks (which were still very hot from the sun) watching the sunset - the sounds, sights and smells were wonderful

- it was definitely one of the highlights of the trip. On Sunday 12th we packed our bags and loaded the land rovers ready to move on. Everyone was sad to say goodbye to Migration Camp, which had been a truly memorable place, but after a staff photo call and much exchanging of addresses we set off for the long drive to Ngorongoro Crater for the next part of our adventure.

To be continued in the next issue.

See page 3 for details of the 1998 trip

■ Weaver Bird nests in a Whistling Thorn Tree



the sand and rocks of the river bed totalling over 14, including several cubs.

During the evenings at the camp we saw hippos, hyaenas and antelope by floodlight from the dining terrace. Dinner was a very grand affair with the main course being ceremoniously presented under metal domes. A regular visitor to the camp was 'Fred' the resident giraffe, whose legs we had mistaken for tree-trunks beside the tents!

Whilst at the camp, we did lots of different game drives and everyone

The Duke of York's Visit



▲ 'Will these animals fit in my car boot?' The Duke is a little overwhelmed at the size of the gifts presented by Sally and Alexander Reid.



Chief Curator Chris West points the Duke in the direction of Black Rhino calf, Kitani.



▲ The official unveiling of the plaque, which was later moved to the Monkey Islands



■ Sharing a joke with the Director (Penguin Keeper Fiona Nelson, peeping over the Royal shoulder, can't quite bear the punchline!).

ON SAFARI DRIVE



LISTEN - over there - the bark of 'a male leopard!' Our bush tracker Reg (Regiment for long!) showed excited agitation - and why? Because the one and only leopard known to be in the territory was a two year old female with whom we had experienced very close acquaintance during the previous couple of days.

This saga started at dusk during our safari drive with six of us having our nervous tea-break. We had been carefully allowed out of the open-topped land rover, when Reg said 'Listen.' The bush ranger/driver Sean, and the rest of us stared 'over there' and asked where the leopard was.

There was no answer but we were bundled back into the land rover and headed off at speed. The ensuing drive directly through the bush veldt, in the dark, over shrubs and around trees, lasted about 20 minutes.

Reg at last focussed his powerful spotlight upon a large male leopard loping his way through a forested area. We watched spellbound as he tracked a small herd of impala. The

The zoo's Financial Controller, Mike Johnson and his wife, Hilary, took an Autumn holiday to South Africa. This is Mike's account of an unforgettable trip to the Londolozi Bush Camp in the Kruger National Park.

spotlight was switched off at this point to allow nature to take its course unaided by human intervention. In fact, the impala spotted the presence of the predator and shot off fast.

The consummate experience and skill of bushmen like Regiment, who is of the Shangaan people, are unbelievable.

He must have heard the bark of the leopard from at least a couple of miles away, and to be able to direct the land rover in the dark and through the scrubland with only a searchlight and an innate sense of direction to the target was truly amazing.

This incident was typical of many we experienced during our three days at the camp and although our journey home that night was in a violent thunderstorm resulting in us being drenched to the skin by the time we got back, the discovery of this large male leopard was the talk of the camp supper that night!

Our holiday had begun with a 21 hour flight from Manchester which included four different aircraft - the last being a 10 seater 'buzzer' which landed us in the centre of a bush fire on the short airstrip near our camp.

A family of warthogs hurriedly escaped from the runway as we landed!

Londolozi bush camp is built in the trees on stilts overlooking the river Sabi. From here we saw water buffalo, nyala, baboons, crocodiles

and many birds. A bush baby joined us for dinner one evening.

Our rooms were in individual thatched rondavels and we had been warned by the official notice on entering, that wild animals roamed the site at night and every snuffle and grunt in the dark became a warning.

In order to get to dinner, we had to flash our torch for a camp guard to collect us.

Bush drives routinely occurred twice daily at dawn (5.30am) and at dusk.

We were briefed on the importance of our conduct whilst in the land rover.

It was emphasised that the bush is the place of the animals and we were very privileged to be there.

We should in no way intrude upon their lives and we were assured that the open vehicle is not perceived by the animals to be a threat in any way, unless someone stands up or waves an arm about.

Our bush tracker sat on the front bumper in a high seat alert to every spoor, sound, dropping and disturbance of the undergrowth, and using his skills took us to see all of the following: lion, giraffe, white rhino, hippopotamus, elephant, leopard, Burchall's zebra, blue wildebeest, spotted hyena, civet, warthog, nyala, bushbuck, kudu, waterbuck, impala, grey duiker, dassie - and so it goes on.

Birds were just as exciting with four species of eagle leading the 'twitchers list.'

Reg could spot the darkest thing at night. For instance, a flapnecked chameleon 20 metres away in a tree.

He could spy a puff adder from its trail in the road dust and we even watched a dung beetle making its juicy ball from elephant



■ *Tsitsikamma Nature Trail.*

Eastern Cape coast; the ostriches which roam on the Klein Karoo lands of the Western Cape and the beautiful flowers of the southern Garden Route.

Our final day before we flew home from Capetown, was to Cape Point, where the Atlantic meets the Indian Ocean and where we met a troop of baboons, including babies - one investigated our windscreen wiper! On this trip we also saw southern whales in False Bay and the famous Jackass penguins of Simonstown.

Here we were able to sit on the beach with them and share a period of meditation before the tide turned.

droppings which he and his mate could clear in just one day!

After our three days on safari drive, we needed to go on holiday for a rest - so we drove south.

Of further interest to the naturalist were the forest trails of the Tsitsikamma Nature Reserve on the

NB: One of our party managed a climb up Table Mountain which was the only way up as the cable car was out of action. This was not easy as any form of track is hard to find in the finbos, but nevertheless the view over Capetown was impressive and well worth the effort!



■ *"I spy food!"*



The Vanishing Grey Parrots of Cameroon

In November, Nigerian student Awafor Tamungang received his Doctorate from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Management University of Ibadan. His research into the conservation prospects of the African Grey Parrot has received support from Chester Zoo. Curator of Birds, Roger Wilkinson, has been acting as his co-supervisor and advisor for this important field project. This is a summary of his findings.

THERE'S a worldwide demand for the colourful African Grey Parrot, mainly as a household pet. This demand, coupled with the habitat threats, menace its survival. Its distribution is limited to the remaining and patchy lowland rainforests of West and Central Africa. Hundreds of thousands of them are exported yearly from the endemic region to the rest of the world, to feed the international pet trade. It is the most hunted bird in Cameroon.

The parrot is widely used in the region for consumptive and non-consumptive purposes. There is no consideration for the ecological needs of the bird. Since 1933, CITES has restricted export quotas from Cameroon, and is asking the government there to declare the population status in the wild, to justify export figures.

Unfortunately, little is known about the population trends and its detailed



■ *The African Grey Parrot feeding on oil palm fruit. This is one of the parrot's most cherished food types. It may pluck the fruit and fly up to a distance of 0.5km before perching to feed on it. Note the feeding posture and how the claws are used to grip the fruit.*

ecological affinities in a wild state. This dearth of information is the reason for my study. Sustainable conservation of the parrot in Cameroon will depend on helping local communities and public institutions to understand and implement conservation initiatives. They must all participate in the decisions affecting the management of the bird and its habitat resources.

The Korup National Park and its Support Zone were chosen as a suitable case study area. Here population trends, habitat patterns over time in relation to the major vegetation types are being monitored. Socio-economic activities of people in this area and their knowledge of the bird are also being evaluated.

Results of the study are expected to redress:

- 1 The imbalance between the rate of African Grey Parrot exploitation and its replenishing rate in the wild.
- 2 The unsustainable exploitation of the rainforest without a strong vision of habitat requirements of the bird.
- 3 The inadequate practical grass root conservation awareness, especially in communities where the resource is found.

The results are expected to support the argument that effective bird conservation cannot be totally separated from traditional hunting, gathering, logging and farming in the rural communities. A serious problem with bird conservation is that unlike other animals, birds are difficult to confine in a particular habitat, even one as large as a national park. It is interesting to note that birds such as the African Grey Parrot may find more vital resources where there are human activities. For example, one of their favourite foods is the fruit of the commercially farmed oil palm. Hence they are in greater danger - and need greater attention. My study suggests that the best approach to these problems is to educate the people so that they can sustain the resource.



■ *The author (left) with a field assistant, treating a diseased parrot with ectoparasite powder.*



■ *Chief Efamba of Mundemba, wearing red feathers of the African Grey Parrot on his hat, as a symbol of nobility and authority.*

ALL YOU WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

THE Zoo's Ark Shop is full of imaginative gifts for every animal lover on your shopping list. Think of the advantages of getting all your shopping done in the zoo! No parking problems - or charges; huge choice; and a 10% discount on everything you buy! As usual, we are offering the members' discount to all our adopters for the Christmas season. Just show the attached voucher at the till with your purchases. Our two late-night shopping evenings this year are 5th and 12th December, when there will be free entry for everyone, and complimentary wine and mince pies. The opening of the Ark shop, just two years ago, has given Retail Manager Alan Jones

the scope to stock a much wider range of goods than was possible before. There really is something for everyone here - many of the items are unobtainable on the High Street. There are books, videos, films, jewellery, pictures, ornaments, T-shirts and sweat shirts - and the biggest menagerie of cuddly animal toys in the region. Alan Jones says our giant lions and tigers are now 'by appointment to HRH the Duke of York!'

Our photographs show just a few of the toys on offer - and a very popular seasonal item - reindeer slippers!

From the beginning of December, we will also be selling locally grown Christmas trees on the main car park. Just drive your car to the shop's store entrance, for easy loading.

All major credit cards and Switch cards are accepted.

Father Christmas is in the zoo!

OUR keeping staff have done a good job caring for the reindeer all year, and now Father Christmas has come to set up his December Headquarters in the zoo, to make sure they are ready for Christmas Eve! Bring your youngsters to see him any Saturday or Sunday in December and 22nd and 23rd December. The grotto (usually known as the 'Let's Make Centre,' by the tigers) - is open from 12 noon, and an optional gift is £2.00.

Festive Food

There's still time to book a table for the special Christmas menu in the Oakfield Restaurant. Give Jane or Sue a ring on 01244 650209.



Animal Adopters and Friends

Present this voucher with your purchases in the Ark or Fountain gift shops in Chester Zoo for a

10%

discount on all purchases

Valid until January 31st, 1998

HOLIDAYS ABROAD?

Why not visit a Zoo!

NO sooner is the last Christmas present unwrapped, than the travel industry is in our face trying to persuade us to book for the summer ahead. Few people would choose a holiday destination with zoos specifically in mind (as I would!); yet a number of popular destinations are within easy distance of worthwhile animal collections and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the very best that Europe has to offer.

The most popular British foreign holiday destinations are those of the Mediterranean area and by and large this is not a particularly great area for zoos, although there are a few good examples. Some countries, Greece for instance, have no zoos of any calibre at all. Spain has two particularly famous zoos. For many years the only major zoo in Spain was Barcelona. Since 1966 this has been the home of 'Copito de Nieve' (Snowflake) - a quite amazing white male gorilla with pink skin which apparently burns easily in sunlight! Having blue eyes, he is not truly albinistic and although he has sired a number of offspring, none have so far reproduced his amazing characteristics. Barcelona has a large collection in a relatively small area (14 hectares). The zoo is very pleasant in appearance and 'Copito' is worth the journey on his own. Madrid has one of the oldest zoos in the world, but in 1972 built a much larger replacement at La Casa de Campo, in a modern style. Madrid Zoo recently added a massive new aquarium to its facilities, and that has brought the visitors flocking.

Tim Brown, founder of the Independent Zoo Enthusiasts Society, can find no better way of spending his holiday, than by visiting zoos!

Although not strictly in Europe, the Canary Islands of Tenerife and Gran Canaria are both homes to two of the best collections of parrots in the world. Loro Parque, near Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, not only features these colourful birds extensively, but also has gorillas, tigers, dolphins and an aquarium, all in wonderful sub-tropical gardens. Quite independently, Palmitos Park in Gran Canaria mirrors the bird collection across the water.

Portugal (not strictly speaking a Mediterranean country) has only one major zoo in Lisbon, founded in 1913. The zoo is attempting a modernisation plan and is best known for its success with one of the few Koala bear groups in Europe. The fame of Italy's zoological gardens has never quite matched that of its soccer teams and even its better collections in Rome and Naples have come in for criticism. To a certain extent this is surprising,

as both zoos have origins and history based on scientific protocol. Change is in the wind, however, but at the moment Rome is best noted for some of its remarkable early 20th century zoo architecture.

Heading north for France, we find a country that, rather like Britain, has somewhat re-invented its zoological collections in recent years and a new spirit and enthusiasm is apparent. Paris has two zoos. The Menagerie du Jardin des Plantes is in the very heart of the city. It is the oldest existing zoological collection in the world, exempting those started by various monarchs, and for the most part looks it. Do not be deceived by human perceptions of bars and cages, however. Any critical examination of the stock at Jardin des Plantes reveals that, over a long history, many animals have thrived there and the collection is still a worthwhile and interesting one - as befits an establishment which is part of France's Ministry of Education. The same department also administers Paris's 'modern' zoo at Vincennes, which was opened in 1934 in a massive 'Hagenbeckian' style. This is

■ *Barcelona's famous "Snowflake"*





■ *The entrance to the Asiatic House at Emmen Zoo in Holland*

the famous naturalistic approach to zoo architecture which was pioneered by the German Carl Hagenbeck, who first employed moats instead of bars and artificial rockwork together with planted vistas. In many respects, Vincennes rather overdid this style, but the result was very much a zoo without bars. Recently the zoo has reopened the Grand Rocher - a precipitous artificial mountain providing wonderful views of Paris in the distance. Vincennes has a brilliant collection of lemurs, including the devilish aye-aye. Not too far from the Channel ports of France is the bird collection at Cleres, now administered by the same governmental body as the previous Paris zoos. This was formerly the home of the legendary Jean Delacour, an expert on birds, whose collection, especially of waterfowl, reflected this expertise.

One of the more unusual zoo locations is situated in the Loire Valley at Doue la Fontaine, amongst old quarry workings. Many of the enclosures are approached through tunnels. It works very well and although the animal collection is scarcely 80 species, it is worth a visit. If free-range animals are your thing, then you must try the zoological park at Branfere in Brittany, which has a large number of animals at liberty. Over on the Swiss border, the collection at Mulhouse has quite a reputation amongst zoo folk and other

substantial French zoos exist at Thoiry, Montpellier, Lyons and the collection of European animals at Villiers-en-Bois.

Switzerland has two zoos in particular with international reputations. These are Basle and Zurich, which in the 50's and 60's had very famous directors - Dr Ernst Lang and Dr Heini Hediger. Both men contributed greatly to the development of the modern zoological garden. Basle in particular is known for its breeding record with Indian rhinoceros, pygmy hippo and okapi; as long ago as 1959 they bred Europe's first gorilla and first bred the African elephant in 1966. Zurich and Basle zoos are scarcely 50 miles apart, yet still average over 1.5 million visitors between them each year - and that with a substantial collection of European fauna at Berne, not far away.

Holland is another comparatively small country with a large fondness for its zoos. At least four of them regularly attract more visitors each than any British zoo. Emmen is regarded by many people as the world's best zoo. Situated in the far north east of the country, the zoo was hardly known 25 years ago, yet by putting the emphasis on education and display values, it has achieved international acclaim. It may seem strange that Emmen places comparatively little emphasis on education in terms of the direct breeding of endangered species, yet here is a place that works by virtue of

the superb exhibition on non-endangered species, such as common hippopotamus and Kodiak bears. The best collection of animals in Holland is at Rotterdam Zoo, and as this is now expanding due to acquisition of new land, I would make this my personal Dutch favourite. The new Asiatic House has ten Indian elephants; Komodo dragons can be seen in the vast Riviera Hall and the latest crowd-pullers are sea-otters - fur in perpetual motion, drawing gasps of admiration from a huge throng.

Amsterdam's zoo is popularly known as 'Artis' and is on a smallish site hemmed in by city buildings. The place is crammed with interest, including a planetarium, museum and an old, but still world-class aquarium. All this, plus a large animal collection.

The Burgers Zoo at Arnhem is another large attraction, part safari park, part zoo. It has recently opened some very large tropical and desert exhibits. Other worthwhile zoos in Holland included those at Rhenen, Amersfoort, Apeldoorn and the bird garden at Alphen on the Rijn.

That concludes my journey for this issue. In the Spring 'Zoo Life' we'll take a look at some of the best zoos and wildlife parks in Germany, Austria and Belgium.

For further details of the Independent Zoo Enthusiasts Society write to Tim Brown, PO Box 4, Todmorden, Lancs OL14 6DA.

JUNIOR MEMBERS

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

THE CONTACT SESSION

Saturday 24th January '98

Make the close acquaintance of our friendlier creatures! Over 8's meet outside the Oakfield at 2.15pm. Back at the Oakfield for collection at 4.00pm

THE WELSH MOUNTAIN ZOO

Saturday 21st February '98

Wrap up warm - the hilly heights of Colwyn Bay can be chilly in February! The bus will leave the staff car park at 10.30am, returning at 4.00pm. Over 8's welcome - bring a picnic.

TRACKS AND SIGNS

Saturday 28th March '98

A messy, muddy day, making plaster casts - so old clothes to-day please! Meet outside the Oakfield at 11.00am, collection at 4.00pm. Picnic lunch needed. (Over 8's)

WENLOCK EDGE - FOSSIL

HUNTING

Saturday 25th April '98

A lovely walk along the Wenlock escarpment, with the chance of finding some brilliant fossils. Bus will

leave the staff car park at 9.30am, returning 5.00pm. Good shoes, warm clothes and a picnic needed! (Over 8's)

THE WIRRAL WAY WILDLIFE WALK

Saturday 23rd May '98

A chance to enjoy our local flora and fauna. The walk starts at Parkgate, and seven miles further along at Thurstaston Country Park, we'll be collected by bus. Meet in the staff car park at 9.30am, returning at 4.30pm. Picnic needed. (Over 8's)

TREE GUARDIAN DAY

Saturday 27th June '98

A day in a woodland in Vale Royal, learning about trees and woodland habitat conservation. A fun day, with quizzes and discovery games. Bus leaves staff car park at 10.30am, returning at 5.00pm. Bring a picnic and wear your wellies! (Over 8's)

DAY WITH A KEEPER

Wednesday 22 July '98

A strenuous day for over 12's only. Come prepared for hard work, wearing wellies and equipped with an

energy-packed picnic! Meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30 am, finishing at 4.00pm.

SUMMER BARBEQUE

Friday 20th August '98

Lots of fun, food and a few surprises! Arrive at the staff entrance at 7.00pm, and walk through the zoo to the Jubilee Restaurant. Parents are asked to collect Juniors at 9.45 pm.

LOGGERHEADS NATURE TRAIL

Saturday 26th September '98

A trip to Loggerheads Country Park in North Wales. The bus will leave the staff car park at 11.00am, returning at 4.00pm. Bring a picnic. (Over 8's)

MANCHESTER NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Saturday 24th October '98

A fascinating day at this excellent museum. The bus will leave the staff car park at 10.30am, returning at 4.00pm. Picnic needed. (Over 8's)

LEIGHTON MOSS - SILVERDALE

Saturday 21st November '98

A journey to the RSPB Reserve near Carnforth in Lancashire for a very special day.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 9.00am returning around 5.00pm. Warm clothes, waterproofs and wellies needed, together with a picnic. Over 10's only for this trip, as it is a long day.

ENDAROFTA

1997



A HUGE thank you to all those many Juniors who made donations to help our friends at the Endarofta Secondary School in Tanzania visit their own wildlife 'on Safari' in the Serengeti National Park at the end of last year.

The report the students sent back to us (see facing page) says it all. Clearly a most rewarding time was had by every student who made the Ndotu trip.

Hopefully we will be able to help again with this worthwhile project in the future.

Anyone wishing to read the essays written by the students about their wildlife and conservation, or who would like to be a pen pal to one of the students at Endarofta School (whose written English is brilliant by the way!), should contact Penny Rudd at the Zoo.



■ Endarofta pupils on safari - sponsored by Chester Zoo Junior Members.

ISLE OF WIGHT

Summer Trip 1997



■ We really did see *The Needles!*

The Ndotu Trip 1996 Students' Report

It was on the 30th November 1996 the students who had the offer to visit Ndotu were already in front of the staff room waiting for a truck. Every one of us enjoyed the day. We were twenty students and four teachers.

Having waited for a truck for half an hour we saw it coming. The truck was green and big enough to contain enough seats for us all. After the driver talked to teachers for some seconds we boarded the truck and off we went across Karatu town. On the way we discussed about the Serengeti as a whole. While going on with the discussions we found ourselves at Ngorongoro entry gate.

At the gate we met a man who introduced himself as a museum lecturer. Being among the tourists we entered a room where we were given a short description of Ngorongoro conservation area. The man said it was an area for preserving and conserving nature including animals and forests. Concerning the difference between Ngorongoro and other National Parks like Serengeti, Mr Ole Laltaika said that in Ngorongoro people are allowed to live and perform their activities.

After this discussion we started the journey to our destination. On the way we saw some animals. The animals included lions, elephants, baboons, hyenas, hippos and zebra. We arrived at Ndotu at 2.00pm. We all enjoyed the Lodge, the happy workers and the surroundings. The day after, we went across the plain seeing animals and birds as well as other tourists.

When returning to school we passed by Olduvai Gorge. There we saw the Shifting Sand. This is where an early man was discovered by Dr Leaky in the year 1959. We were happy to visit such a historical place. Generally, we all enjoyed the trip very much. To see Ngorongoro Crater and Olduvai Gorge particularly, makes us not forget anything concerning the trip.

OUR busy summer of events started with our field trip to the Isle of Wight for a week at the end of July. Seventeen Junior Members (and the adults) had a brilliant time. The Centre where we stayed was a beautiful old 17th century house, set in 10 acres of its own woodland, with a lovely view down a grassy and wooded slope to the sea. We had daily access (which was well taken advantage of) to a heated swimming pool set in the grounds as well as tennis and badminton courts and a ping-pong table. The Juniors involved themselves in a wide range of activities including nature walks and field trips, dinosaur fossil-hunting, fox and badger watching, stargazing, beach combing and competitions in orienteering, sand-sculpture, woodcraft skills as well as team building exercises. We also had visits to

Sandown Zoo, the huge Botanical Gardens, a lovely Rare Breeds Centre, 'The Needles', the Dinosaur Farm, Amazon World and the Donkey Sanctuary, as well as an afternoon on the beach and another in the Ice Rink! Trampolining and swimming were the favourite sports but there was also plenty of walking (and talking!). Evening events included discos, a video, craft sessions, softball game, and perhaps best of all, two evenings spent around an enormous campfire in the woods with singing, marshmallow toasting and music making (?) on a real didgeridoo. Our Centre Team Leaders, Mandy and Dereck, made us feel very welcome and we had an excellent, really friendly week when everyone enjoyed themselves and seem to learn quite a bit too!

1998 FIELD TRIP

We may well try to run another Field Trip during 1998, so start saving now! We will aim to be away in either the third or fourth week of August 1998 so that those who were very disappointed not to be able to join us during 1996 and 1997 owing to fixed holiday times will have the choice of different dates. We will try to keep the price as low as possible so we aim for between £150 and £280 depending upon how long we go away for and how far we travel! Look for details in the Spring Zoo Life Magazine.



LOTS of Juniors helped with 'Native Species Week' which was run in conjunction with the Education Division and was our opportunity to show visitors to the zoo some of the species they could find in their own back garden or local countryside. Over twenty Juniors 'manned' the exhibition which was a mixture of information boards and live animals.

Juniors had to use the zoo's library to research the species on show and then they made up the labels and information sheets about the animals, using the zoo's computers. The Juniors 'held station' and talked to visitors about the animals in their care after inviting visitors to the zoo into the Education Division building.

We had newts, frogs, toads, bank voles, a hedgehog, harvest mice, and a couple of rats, so the very young visitors could handle something. The 'stars' were perhaps the two young moles which came to us via the Curator of Mammals cats and who became very tame and friendly.

Rarely seen, and even less commonly handled, these two mole youngsters, housed in a deep tank of earth, seem to thrive on the attention and did not mind being handled at all. Keeping the moles fed with enough earthworms proved to be a huge task involving the Juniors digging up their gardens each night, and this brought home to us all the large quantity consumed by these active small mammals.

Everything on show at the exhibition (except the Harvest Mice - but that's another story) was released safe and sound at the end of the week having done an enormous amount to create interest in their lifestyles.

Thanks to all the Juniors whose hard work was much appreciated.

NATIVE SPECIES WEEK



■ *Above:*
Our Junior Information Team, getting to grips with a few native species.

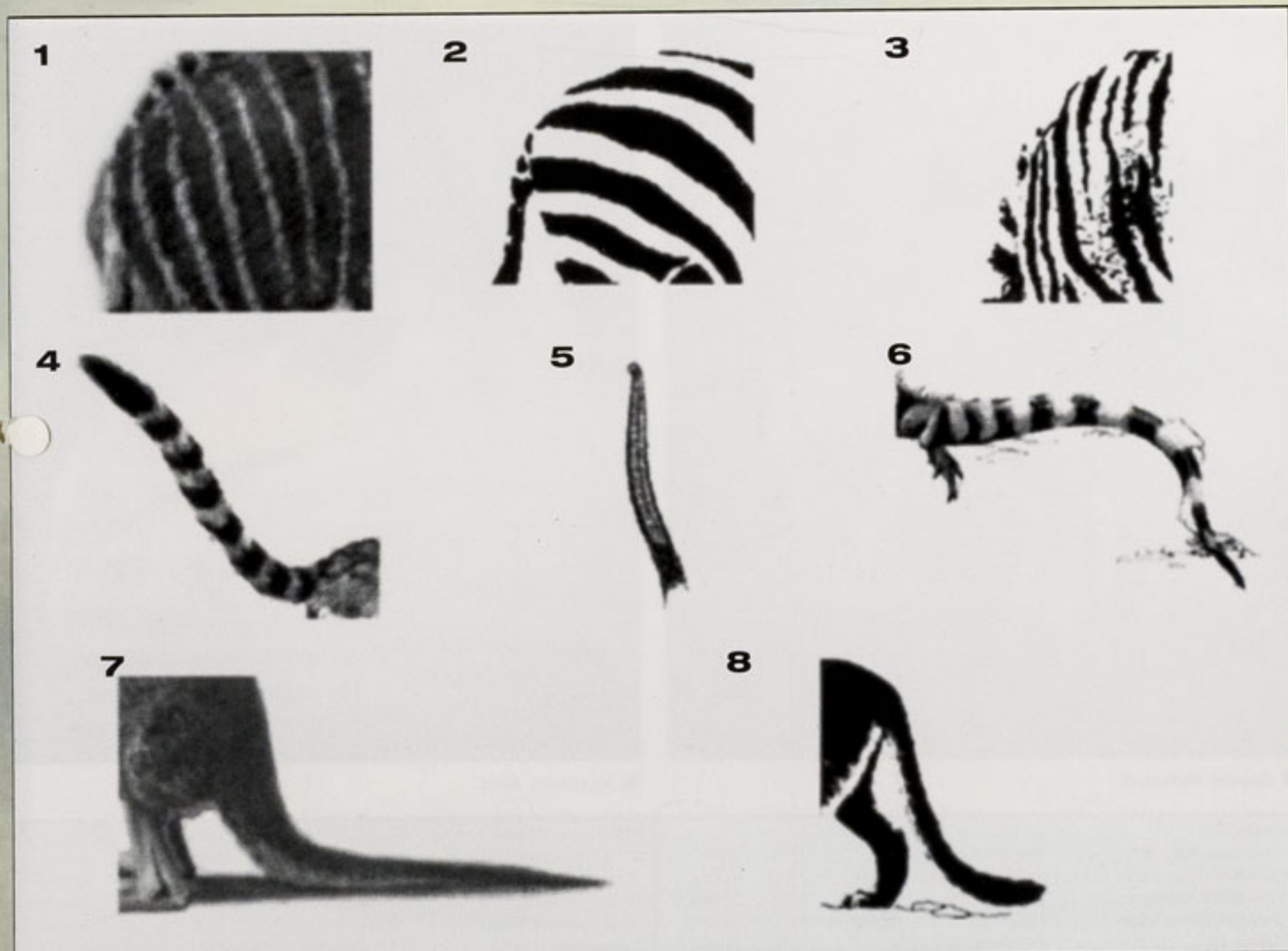
■ *Right:*
Caroline Rowe keeps Mole in order!

■ *Below:*
Pleased to meet you!



- TAIL ENDS! -

Can you name these animals?



For our puzzle this issue, we are asking you to get to the bottom of things! Just to make it a little easier – after all it is the season of good will – we have listed the animals shown, but not, of course, in the correct order. Link the number on the picture to one of the names listed, and send your answers to:
 Junior Puzzle, Marketing Office, Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, CH2 1LH.
 Closing date is 31st January 1998. Prize for the first correct answer opened is a £10 voucher for the zoo shops.

AUTUMN PUZZLE RESULTS

The Dingbats puzzle proved very popular, with more entries than for any of the previous puzzles. The answers are: 1. Upside-down catfish. 2. Fruit bat. 3. Starfish. 4. Blackbuck. 5. Rainbow fish. 6. Spoonbill. 7. Arowana 8. Great Grey owl. 9. Zebra fish. 10. Hyacinthine macaw. 11. Cuban boa. 12. Three-spined stickleback. *The first correct solution out of the bag was from Felicity Owen of Northop, Mold. Well done, Felicity - you win the £10 voucher to spend in the zoo shops!*

Seasons Greetings



Penny and all the staff wish a very happy Christmas and a brilliant 1998 to all our Junior Members

DOLIP



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