



CHESTER ZOO

official magazine
for members and adopters

SUMMER 2017



Z magazine...

Features

The official magazine for Chester Zoo members and adopters



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ELEPHANT KEEPER... Pages 6-7



BATTY ABOUT CONSERVATION

Pages 28-29

Don't Miss!

MEMBERS' DAYS 2017
Friday 7 July 2017
Sunday 12 November 2017

ADOPTERS' DAYS
Sunday 1 October 2017
Saturday 3 March 2018

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News from the zoo with Dr Mark Pilgrim chief executive officer



With summer fast approaching we've got lots to look forward to as we open our new Madagascar themed PLAY! area and unveil new habitats in Islands. We're also getting involved with more brilliant conservation initiatives and hopefully we'll see some of our many new animal arrivals enjoying some summer sun.

If you visited in spring you'll have noticed we've been working on a few areas around the zoo. Firstly we have our new PLAY! area which is next to Dragons in Danger. Inspired by one of our conversation hotspots, Madagascar, the zone will be filled with fun things to do for children and adults alike. We'll also be opening our new Islands habitats for our sun bears, binturongs, Malayan tapirs and Asian songbirds. I've had the pleasure of seeing these projects develop and they're looking amazing.

Spring brought us some fantastic new animal arrivals including a critically endangered Bornean orangutan. Born to mum Sarikei, the male youngster is the first Bornean orangutan to arrive here since we brought Willie here from Apenheul Zoo in the Netherlands. I'm also delighted to finally talk about our new Andean bear cub. The cub was born to mum Lima back in January but we didn't see them for several months whilst mum and cub kept themselves tucked away in their den. Both have now started venturing out though and we hope to see them exploring their habitat in the summer months. This birth is a huge success. It's a testament to the teams that care for the bears, and provides a boost to this endangered species.

Andean bears are one of the many species we also work with out in the field and they are one of the areas of research that our new prestigious partnership with the University of Oxford's famous Wildlife Conservation Research Unit will focus on. We hope that this collaboration will provide new research to assist conservationists in developing innovative approaches to tackle global challenges such as human-wildlife conflict, and monitoring of populations of endangered species in the wild.

One group of animals currently on the very edge of existence is Indonesian songbirds, with millions caught and sold illegally every year. We've been working with our field partners Cikananga Conservation Breeding Centre in Indonesia for seven years to breed and protect populations of some of the most threatened species. Now we've launched an urgent public campaign called Sing For Songbirds to raise vital funds, help conservation efforts and increase awareness for the urgent need for action. As part of the campaign our education team is working with schools in the UK and Indonesia and 'Sing For Songbirds', a new single written and performed by musician Ashley Fayth, is available to buy with all sales going towards the fight to save them.

In other conservation news I wanted to tell you about an exciting new programme we are on board with. The Montseny brook newt is a critically endangered amphibian native to Catalonia in Spain. The whole population of this newt can be found in just seven mountain streams in the Montseny mountain range, north of Barcelona, and with numbers declining we have been approached to help save the species. We are starting the first breed and release project outside of Spain and keepers are now working on their husbandry techniques with the species before they, hopefully, start to successfully breed them.

And finally... I just wanted to mention that Blast! Productions are back at the zoo filming a fourth series of the hugely popular TV show, The Secret Life of The Zoo. More episodes are now in production and the new series is planned to air later this year.

chesterzoo.org



LIMA'S NEW CUB IS THE FIRST ANDEAN BEAR TO BE BORN IN MAINLAND BRITAIN

The first Andean bear to be born in mainland Britain has started to emerge from its den. The rare cub arrived to first time parents Lima and Bernardo in January and, after spending three months safely tucked up in its den, has now begun to venture out and explore.

Andean bears are listed as vulnerable to extinction by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the birth of the cub is especially significant given how threatened the species is.

Tim Rowlands, curator of mammals, said:

“The cub was tiny when it was born but Lima is doing a fantastic job, particularly given that she’s a first time mum, and the cub is developing quickly. Lima is keeping her new charge close and she certainly has her paws full. But even though she’s not letting it stray far from her side, we can already see that her cub has a real playful nature.

“This is a momentous breeding success for us. To become the first zoo in mainland Britain ever to breed the species is an amazing achievement – one that has taken years of careful planning, dedication and skill.

“Andean bears are still something of a mystery to conservationists and not a huge amount is known about them. But by working closely with the bears here, breaking new ground with this breeding, we’re constantly learning about this amazing species. We’re able to relay much of this information to our field conservation teams and partners in the wild, and it is information like this that could be very important in ensuring a long-term future for the bears.”

Made famous in the UK through the classic children’s character Paddington Bear, the Andean bear is the only bear to inhabit South America. They are found in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.

Population estimates for the species were last made a decade ago, placing wild numbers at just 20,000. Conservation scientists are convinced that their numbers have since continued to decrease but are currently unsure of exactly how many remain in the wild.

The main threat to the Andean bear is habitat loss, with some 30% of the forests that contain sufficient food having disappeared in the past 20 years. Hundreds of bears are also illegally killed by farmers and business owners every year, largely to prevent them raiding crops and livestock - believed to be a result of climate change which has created a food shortage in the bears’ natural habitat.

We’ve recently launched a new conservation project in Bolivia, Latin America, to help protect Andean bears and reduce human-wildlife conflict to stop their numbers from declining even further. The project recently won at the prestigious Whitley Awards - often referred to as the ‘Green Oscars’. Chester Zoo conservationist, Dr Ximena Velez-Liendo, who leads the field project in Bolivia, was one of six winners singled out from 166 conservationists across 66 countries.



MEET SARIKEI'S BEAUTIFUL BABY!

Primate keepers have been celebrating the arrival of a baby Bornean orangutan, the first to be born here in eight years! The tiny youngster was born in April in front of a handful of amazed onlookers to third time mum Sarikei and first time dad, Willie.

The newborn is a huge boost to the breeding programme that is working to conserve the iconic species which, sadly, faces a very uncertain future. According to the most recent population estimates, there could be as few as 55,000 Bornean orangutans left on the island of Borneo in Indonesia - the only place they can be found in the wild. Last year the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) changed the status of the Bornean orangutan from endangered to critically endangered. Now, more than ever before, the species faces a very high risk of extinction.

Tim Rowlands, curator of mammals, said:

"Bornean orangutan numbers are plummeting at a frightening rate. A major threat to the survival of these magnificent creatures is the unsustainable oil palm industry which is having a devastating effect on the forests where they live. They are also the victims of habitat loss and illegal hunting.

"It's imperative that we continue to tackle the excessive deforestation in Borneo and show people everywhere that they too can make a difference to the long-term survival of orangutans. Simple everyday choices, such as making sure your product purchases from the supermarket contain only sustainably sourced palm oil, can have a massive impact."

We are working with project partners HUTAN in a bid to protect wild orangutans in Borneo. Conservationists have been carrying out research in the Kinabatangan - home to one of the largest populations of orangutans in Sabah - to gain a better understanding of how orangutans are adapting to the increase in oil palm plantations and the new landscapes which they have created.

Here in the UK, we are campaigning against the use of unsustainable palm oil in everyday household and food items, working with national governmental organisations and industries using palm oil to adopt Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) practices and raise awareness of the devastating effects unsustainable palm oil has on wildlife.

To join the fight for orangutans visit:

[www.actforwildlife.org.uk/
orangutans](http://www.actforwildlife.org.uk/orangutans)

WALKING TALL!

Welcome to Narus: Our new Rothschild's giraffe calf! The five-foot-tall youngster arrived to mum Orla back in April and is thriving.

Our keepers chose to call him Narus as it's the name of a valley in Kidepo National Park in Uganda where some of our giraffe field conservation work is based.

The calf was the second Rothschild's giraffe to be born at the zoo in the space of just months, following the arrival of fellow male, Murchison.

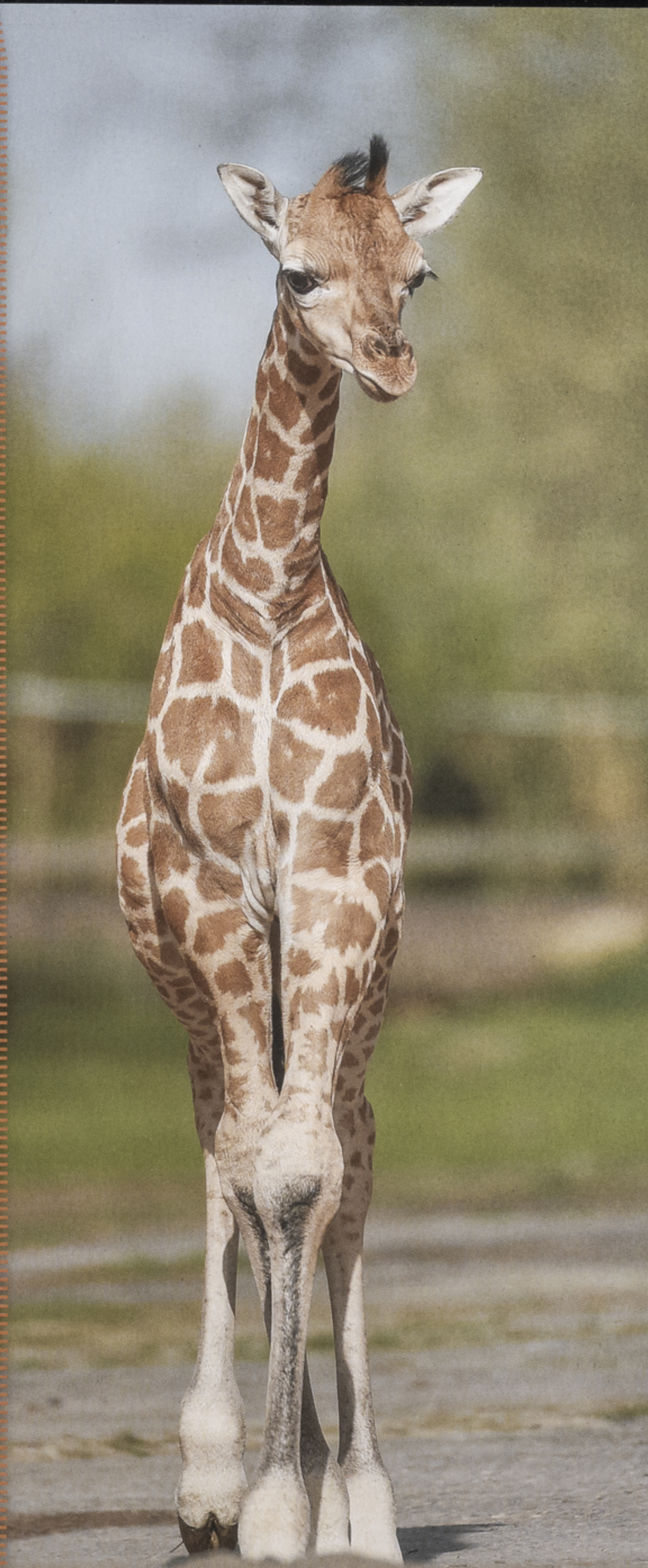
Conservationists at the zoo hope that both arrivals will help to throw a spotlight on the plight of the endangered species and the different threats it faces in the wild. Rothschild's giraffes are one of the world's rarest mammals and recent estimates suggest that less than 1,600 remain.

Mike Jordan, collection director, said:

"Poaching in the wild over the last few decades has led to a 90% decline in wild Rothschild's giraffe numbers. Despite ongoing conservation efforts, the species is really struggling to bounce back as the constant threat of habitat loss continues to push the last remaining population ever closer to extinction.

"Right now the zoo is working hard out in Africa on a conservation action plan to ensure that populations don't fall to an even more critical level. We've got to stand tall for these amazing animals."

The zoo's giraffe experts are part of an ongoing project in Uganda in Africa, which is aimed at helping and preserving the Rothschild's giraffe in the wild. The zoo's team – working with project partner The Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) – is working to better understand why one of the last remaining populations of Rothschild's giraffes in Kidepo Valley National Park is not increasing.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ELEPHANT KEEPER...

Asian elephants are under threat with less than 40,000 remaining. There are likely to be more people watching your nearest Premier League football match than there are elephants left in the wild. This magnificent species is threatened by habitat loss, poaching, disease and direct conflict with humans but its not too late.

We are working in India to protect the species from human-wildlife conflict, while closer to home we are part of a breeding programme focused on sustaining an insurance population.

Our elephant herd here at the zoo are a close-knit family. This is backed by scientific research which has shown that social bonds between individual elephants have a big influence on cohesion in the whole group and consequently the health and wellbeing of the herd.

Richard Fraser, elephant assistant team manager, spends his working day with seven staff and eight elephants. Here, he explains why he loves his job...



A TROPICAL START TO THE CHILLIEST MORNING...

One of the many good things about working on the elephant section is the heat. Our elephant house stays at around 20 degrees which means it's warm all year round and when you travel to work in the middle of the cold British winter, there's nothing better than coming into a toasty habitat. The day starts with the team getting together to discuss plans for the day ahead.

THE MORNING IS THE BEST PART OF THE DAY

I have to say one of the best parts of the day for me is first thing in the morning when we check the herd. We never enter the elephants' habitat, so there is always a barrier between our team and the animals. Yet we still have to make sure they are fit and well. It is important that we build strong bonds with the elephants so that they respond well and allow us to carry out vital health checks. We train our elephants as early as possible because you never know when you'll need urgent medical access. With

new elephant calves we get them used to the keepers being around and coming into our husbandry areas. We have a special extended area to the main husbandry pen just for calves, which gives us better access to them while mum remains near-by watching what we're up to. If necessary we can take blood samples and administer drugs in a calm and cooperative manner that both mum and calf are comfortable with. When the calves are about six months old we take weekly blood swabs from

the ear to check for any presence of elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus (EEHV). This deadly virus affects young elephants and is a major threat to their future survival in the wild and in zoos. It typically strikes around weaning age and is very fast acting. As there is currently no vaccine for the virus we do weekly blood tests so that if the virus is found we can begin anti-viral treatment. Meanwhile our scientists are fighting against the clock to develop a cure which could protect the species globally.



POO GLORIOUS POO

If you're a zookeeper then poo is a big part of your life, you're immune to the smell and it's normal to talk about it over lunch!

Once we have completed the daily health check it's then time to clean out. While our elephants are outside we clean the indoor habitat and while they are inside we clean their large outdoor paddock. Our work is not completely about poo though! We also spend time forming sand mounds, creating bark piles and digging out mud wallows to provide an interactive environment for our herd. A big part of our job is to come up with new and innovative ways of keeping the elephants busy while at the same time encouraging natural behaviours, and it's a task I relish. All the more so as it usually involves us spending time driving around on the section tractor and excavator before watching the elephants explore what we've created.



MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT

I love Asian elephants and enjoy being around them every day. Working here means I play a vital role in conserving this beautiful species. As well as caring for the herd at the zoo, we're also protecting the species in the wild, in India.

One of the major threats to the future of Asian elephants are the encounters between human and elephant populations. The forests of Assam in North East India provide one of the last strongholds for the Asian elephant but these forests have some of the highest levels of human-elephant conflict in the world. Activities such as deforestation are bringing elephants closer to humans, so they often end up travelling through villages, destroying homes and crops. We are working with the local communities to develop ways for them to live safely alongside wild elephants, while being able to support themselves and their families.

We formed the Assam Haathi Project with our partner organisation Ecosystems-India 12 years ago. The project works with more than 24 villages in the Sonitpur and Goalpara districts of Assam, working within the communities to create deterrent measures for the elephants such as electric fences, spotlights and chilli smoke, but also working with the local people to improve livelihoods. I was lucky enough to travel there in 2014 and get first-hand experience of the problems people are facing. It is critically important that our hands-on experience with the species here is used to combat the problems faced in the wild. The dedication shown by the conservation team out in India as well as the enthusiasm and gratitude from the local people has shown me how, with a little extra help, a huge difference can be made to so many lives. In turn this is then helping to conserve the remaining populations of elephants that are found in areas such as Assam.

FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT THIS ENDEARING SPECIES

One of the highlights of my week is watching our elephant herd sleep. We've been observing the social affiliations of our herd for two years now to give us an insight into our elephants' psychology. We do this by observing the herd during the night, giving us a unique insight into how they react without us around. Using a camera system that is already installed around the house, a member of our team watches the sleeping patterns of the herd over a 12-hour period from 7pm to 7am, twice a week.

We hope our work monitoring their social affiliations will develop and grow. We are at the forefront of elephant wellbeing and the work we are doing here will enable us to gain a deeper understanding of this truly fascinating species.

Right now, Asian elephants are under threat but we won't stand back. Conservation is critical, in zoos and the wild. It's time to act for wildlife.

ACT FOR WILDLIFE

For more information about the work we do in the wild with elephants go to

www.actforwildlife.org.uk

WE WILL NEVER FORGET

Help us in our fight to find a cure for the deadly virus threatening the world's Asian elephants by fundraising or donating to our Never Forget campaign:

www.chesterzoo.org/neverforget

SCIENCE AT THE ZOO

We're passionate about protecting wildlife in the UK and around the world. Wildlife conservation is at the heart of everything we do and we work collaboratively with other conservation and scientific organisations to be a major force in conserving the living world.

We use science every day to look after animals, both at the zoo and in the wild. Our scientific work helps identify and address the many challenges our natural world faces, and we're part of a big conservation community. By collaborating and sharing skills, expertise and passion we're making a HUGE difference to wildlife across the globe.

Our work involves highly skilled and experienced zoo staff and falls under six areas of expertise...



PROTECTING ANIMAL POPULATIONS

We're proud to be leading the way in helping to increase numbers of animals and plants, through scientific investigation, conservation breeding and plant propagation programmes.



SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Working closely with local communities around the world and here in the UK is really important if we want conservation projects to be a success. Together we can change the world for the better.



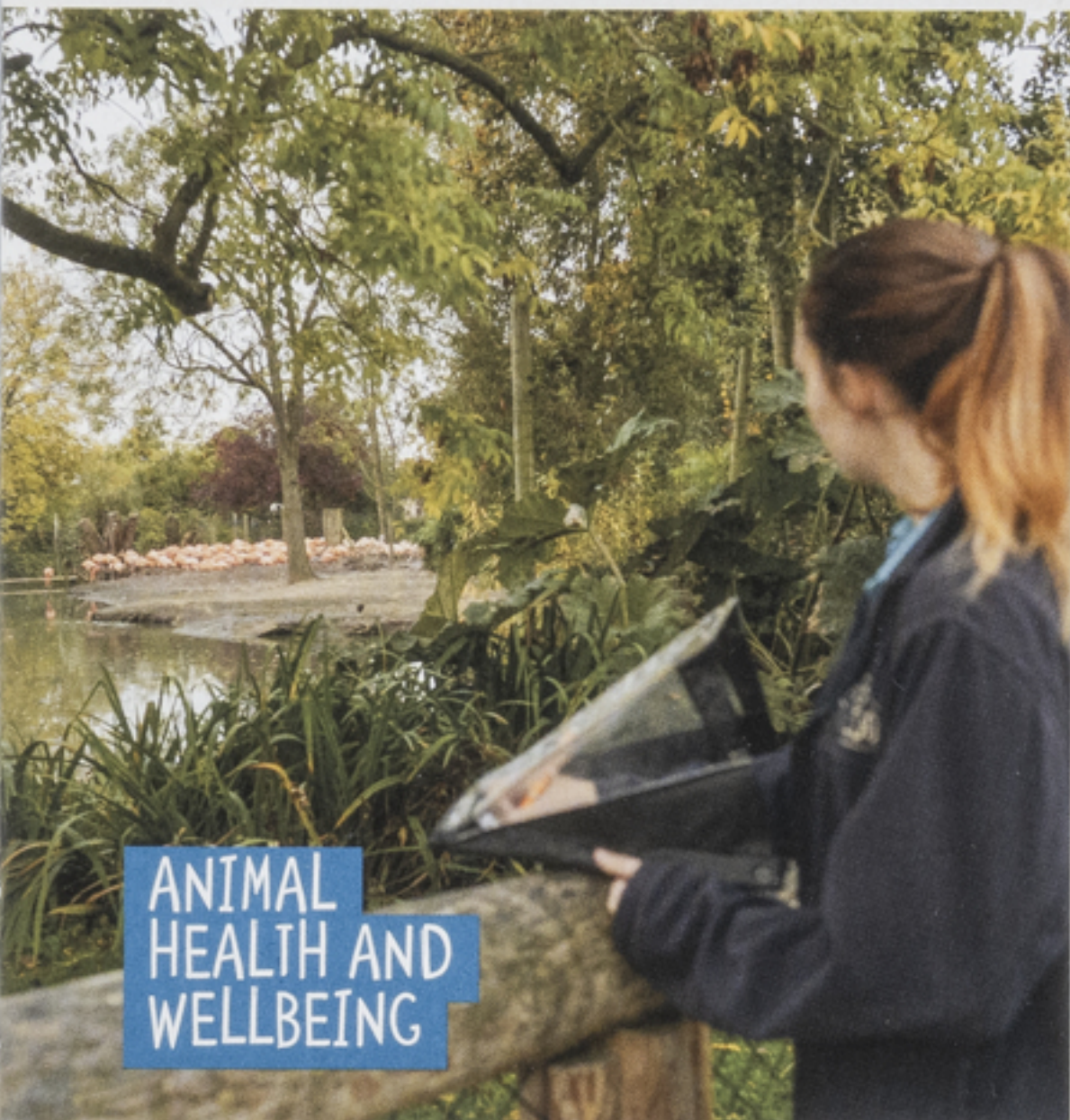
LIVING ALONGSIDE WILDLIFE

We share this amazing planet with over eight million other species so it's important that we find a way to safely live alongside one another. We're pioneering community projects to do just that.



CREATING WILDLIFE CHAMPIONS

As a zoo we have a voice and we're not afraid to use it to inspire our visitors and communities all over the world to take action.



ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The way an animal behaves can tell us a lot about its health and wellbeing. Our scientists are using the latest techniques to study animal behaviour to ensure we maintain the highest standards of wellbeing for all the animals we work with at the zoo and in the field.



CHAMPIONING ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Carrying out surveys and doing regular monitoring is a really important part of conservation. It enables conservationists to keep a close eye on any changes and define the areas and species that are in most need of help.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CAN HELP US LEARN MORE, RESOLVE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT SPECIES AND HELP MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN SAVING THEM. HERE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF OUR WORK...



ONE PLAN FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE BLACK RHINO

We've got a long history of linking our conservation breeding activities at the zoo with our field projects in the wild and this 'one plan approach' highlights just how important it is to work together to save species from extinction.

Dr Simon Dowell,
director of science, explains:

"These days, those working in the field are collaborating more and more with those who are working on conservation breeding programmes and with animals in zoos. It's really important that we think of both zoo and wild populations of endangered species as a single population so we can manage the issue holistically.

"Many of our conservation breeding staff – including our keepers – have been out to our field projects to share their skills and expertise, and vice versa. This concept is really important to us and we certainly want to be leading the way on this new approach. At the zoo we work with animals at close quarters, in controlled environments and this enables us to do research that would be difficult in the wild but can then be applied in the field."



Together with researchers from The University of Manchester and The University of Liverpool, we've been pioneering hormone research with the herd of Eastern black rhinos at the zoo. By monitoring their reproductive hormones in detail we have increased the chances of breeding and have had seven rhinos born at the zoo in the last ten years! We're now working on a new project with the University of Manchester to use these techniques with wild rhino populations and their habitats. And with less than 650 black rhinos now believed to be left in the wild, this scientific investigation is vital in making sure we don't lose some of the world's most endangered wildlife forever.

DELIVERING WORLD CLASS CONSERVATION SCIENCE

We've joined forces with The University of Oxford's famous Wildlife Conservation Research Unit with the shared aim of delivering high-impact conservation research to address the global decline of biodiversity. This is the zoo's largest formal partnership with a university in our 86-year history and is designed to investigate major challenges in conservation by combining some of the international projects that we coordinate with cutting-edge scientific research.



FINDING A SOLUTION TO A DEADLY DISEASE

Elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus (EEHV) is a deadly virus which affects young elephants.

Currently, not enough is known about the disease but we're determined to change that and find a solution. Thanks to your incredible donations towards our Never Forget campaign, we're now working with Chester Zoo fellow, Dr Tanja Maehr to continue vital research into EEHV. Dr Maehr will be working with us as part of a post-doctoral position at the University of Surrey and working with the Animal and Plant Health Agency.



TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSERVATION SCIENTISTS

We're currently supporting 23 Chester Zoo conservation scholars and fellows who are all working on a range of topics from conservation breeding of plants and amphibians to monitoring wild endangered animal populations and human-wildlife conflict in South Asia and Africa. We're really proud to be helping to train the next generation of conservation scientists in collaboration with a number of academic institutions.

Discover more about our conservation science team, our conservation scholars and fellows and the work we do in the zoo and in the field, on our website.

chesterzoo.org/conservation

Twitter @ScienceatCZ

Just
Imagine...



Puddle jumping, leapfrogging, climbing our
9M HIGH BAOBAB TREE and discovering
AMAZING ANIMALS all over the ZOOOOO



READY, STEADY... LET'S

PLAY!
at

CHESTER ZOO



Our new Madagascan themed PLAY! area is now open! This has been lovingly created by play experts. Climb to the very top of our huge Baobab tree and then slippery slide all the way to the ground. If you're feeling brave, make a big splash in the water zone or explore all your amazing senses in the play area. Play hide and seek in our Madagascan grasses. After all of that, chill out and have a bite to eat in our picnic nests.

We have an army of **PLAY!** champions ready to help you join in and have fun! We caught up with one of them, zoo ranger Phil Blackburn, to tell us what it's all about...

"To become a PLAY! champion you need a sense of adventure and a good sense of fun! So earlier in the year myself and 19 staff were trained by an external company who specialise in playful behaviour. I thought I knew what play was but we were taught that the scope for play is huge. It can be frivolous - it doesn't have to have a reason, it just has to be fun in some way and can happen anywhere. You just have to open yourself up to playfulness.

"If you think about adults going around the zoo, you may not think they are engaging in play but a simple thing of a mum waving her arms to a toddler is all part of playfulness. As PLAY! champions we are creating environments where the main rules are - there are no rules!

"We've created lots of activities for you to participate in as you explore the zoo so you can leap like a lemur, balance like a gibbon or stomp like a rhino. There's tonnes of fun stuff you can do and you can find out more about the exciting things we've created around the zoo by looking at our map on the next page.

"We've been conducting adventure stories and an interactive show where people get the opportunity to dress up with a Madagascan theme. What I love is that when we are encouraging play we are also encouraging people to learn. It's so much easier to engage people if they are having fun so we use playfulness as a tool to connect with visitors to deliver conservation messages all at the same time. So one of the things we do is conduct a frog sack race and at the same time we teach people about frog conservation. My personal favourite is playing 'what time is it Mr Wolf?'. Kids love this as it's got an element of jeopardy and it's a great way to teach people about predators."

Phil, along with the rest of the **PLAY!** champions, will be based at basecamp in our new Madagascan themed PLAY! area over the summer so why don't you join in the fun!

This SUMMER at
we want YOU to
find your inner child
and play like no-one
is watching!

CHESTER
ZOO



We've got **15,000 AMAZING ANIMALS** and brilliant gardens! And there's more... **NEW** this year we'll be hippity-hopping, **SKIPPING**, splashing, balancing, **CLIMBING**, **LAUGHING** and having days jam-packed full of fun right across the zoo!

AN EXPLORERS GUIDE TO NON-STOP PLAY!

- Play areas
- PLAY! Base Camp & The Hub**
- Tortoise shells
- Walking with elephants
- Butterfly path
- Skipping lane
- Hot lava stepping stones
- Flamingo balance
- Gibbon balance spot
- Just keep swimming
- Animal footprint crossroads
- Follow the vine
- Monkeys balance
- Follow the line
- Paws for thought
- Rhino stomp
- Puddle jump
- Imagine...crocodiles

PLAY!
at
CHESTER ZOO

Kids' ZOO

SUMMER 2017



TURN OVER FOR YOUR PULL OUT AND KEEP POSTER!



If you've been to visit us recently you have seen that we are giving you lots of opportunities to **PLAY!** whilst exploring at the zoo. We've also got a website completely dedicated to **PLAY!** and we've got tonnes of fun games and exciting challenges for you to get stuck into.

HERE'S A TASTE OF WHAT

YOU CAN FIND...

Jokes

Q: Why did the lion lose the game?

A: Because he was playing with the cheetah.

Fun facts

DID YOU KNOW...

Giraffes' tongues can be up to 50cm long!
That's five times longer than mine or yours!

Creatures you can create

Make a fun furry spider! For lots more fun head to play.chesterzoo.org/lets-play



WIN

HERE IN Z MAGAZINE WE WANT YOU TO BECOME ANIMAL DETECTIVES! CAN YOU IDENTIFY THE FOLLOWING MAMMAL PRINTS AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW? YOU'LL NEED A KEEN EYE AND GOOD ZOO KNOWLEDGE!



This medium sized mammal's native habitat is South America, although it's rarely seen as it often resides in the high mountains. Each animal has distinctive markings on its face, which often look like glasses.

1 What is this animal?

2 How many live in the zoo and can you name them?

3 A famous fictional children's book character is based on this animal: who is it?



The large animals loves spending time with their family. Their native home is India where they often use their large ears to keep cool. Our group is very close knit and four generations live together. Recently we've had two new additions.

4 Who do the prints belong to?

5 How many live in the zoo and can you name them?



To win a 'Bear Hug' lounge set, send your entry with contact details to:

Z magazine, PR Department,
Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester,
Chester, CH2 1LH
by **Monday 5 July**.

Congratulations
to our previous winner
Ffion Pugh
from **Oswestry**



Summer events 2017

Here are some highlights of events we are organising this summer.

Junior Members

LAKE PADARN - SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK SATURDAY 24 JUNE

Enjoy a day with the junior members as we walk around Lake Padarn at the base of Electric Mountain. We will have Mount Snowdon in our sight at times as we walk. **The coach leaves Cedar House car park on Caughall Road at 9am and returns at 5.30pm. Bring a picnic with you. Tickets cost £15 and are available from Monday 12 June. To reserve your space please call 01244 650214. Places are limited so be sure to book early.**

HOW TO BE A GOOD ZOOKEEPER THURSDAY 27 JULY

This is a unique opportunity offered to junior members to spend a day working alongside a zookeeper. The activities can be tough and demanding so this event is for junior members of 12 years or over. Owing to the zoo's biosecurity measures it is important that the clothes and wellies you wear to work on the sections are completely clean and have not been in contact with any farm animals, or even pets at home, since they were last washed. **To reserve your space please call 01244 650215 from 9am on Thursday 13 July. The cost of this event will be available at booking. Places are limited so be sure to book early. On the day we will meet outside Oakfield House at 10.30am and will finish at 4pm. Please bring a packed lunch with you.**



PLAY! DATES

WE'VE GOT LOTS OF FUN, FREE ACTIVITIES HAPPENING AT PLAY! BASECAMP. THESE EVENTS ARE HAPPENING EVERY WEEKEND UNTIL 16 JULY.

TOTS STORYTIME - WEEKENDS, 11.30AM

Join us for a special story narrated by our zoo rangers. We'll fire your imaginations and take you on a journey through the forest with us...

DISCOVER YOUR OWN WILD ADVENTURE - WEEKENDS, 2PM

Come on an amazing adventure with us. Who knows where we'll go and what we'll find along the way! Our PLAY champions will be narrating an amazing adventure story created and acted out by you!

Zoo Events

WORLD GIRAFFE DAY WEDNESDAY 21 JUNE

Help us celebrate the longest-necked animal on the longest day! Drop by the giraffe habitat between 10am and 11.30am where our team will be talking all things giraffe, as well as showing off skulls and other fascinating artefacts. **With less than 90,000 giraffes thought to be left in the wild it is great to come together and celebrate this beautiful animal and its future conservation.**

INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY SATURDAY 29 JULY

The stars in stripes! Our zoo ranger team will be on hand from 2.30 - 4pm to talk all things tiger! Plus you'll also get the opportunity to ask any tiger questions you might have. **With less than 4,000 tigers thought to be left in the wild it is great to come together and celebrate this beautiful animal and its future conservation.**

WORLD TOMISTOMA DAY SATURDAY 5 AUGUST

Our zoo ranger team will be talking all things Tomistoma (otherwise known as a false gharial, a crocodilian species) at the Manado Town Permit Office on *Islands* between 11.30 - 3pm.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF ALL OUR EVENTS PLEASE GO TO: WWW.CHESTERZOO.ORG/WHATSON

ISLANDS

This summer we're expanding *Islands*, giving you the opportunity to see even more rare South East Asian species.

Sun bears, Malayan tapirs, Palawan binturongs and Asian songbirds will soon be settling into their brand new habitats ahead of the opening of this fantastic new area.

Islands, which first opened in 2015, brings conservation to life through detailed recreations of areas in South East Asia, taking you on your own expedition, walking over bridges, travelling in boats and seeing buildings that are architecturally identical to those found on the islands of Panay, Papua, Sumba, Bali, Sumatra and Sulawesi.

So what can you expect from these new habitats?

We will be opening one of the world's largest Malayan tapir exhibits. This beautiful habitat features both outdoor and indoor pools, and offers stunning viewing opportunities which give a completely unique perspective on this incredible species.

The journey then takes you to a magnificent Asian bird aviary where you'll encounter some of the most critically endangered birds on the planet, such as the beautiful Javan green magpie. This stunning walkthrough aviary will be filled with bird song, dense planting, streams and waterfalls while the birds fly freely above your head.

Your expedition then takes you to our sun bears, Milli and Toni. Their habitat features lush trees for the bears to climb and forage for food, a stream and state-of-the-art cubbing dens. The pair will also be joined by a pair of binturongs – a vulnerable Indonesian mammal that can only be found on the island of Palawan.

Why are we doing this?

The new area continues the 'always building' philosophy of our founder George Mottershead, 86 years after he created the UK's first zoo without bars centred on animal wellbeing and conservation.

Islands has already helped us raise the profile of some lesser known species and driven huge interest in animals that can often be overlooked. We are now throwing a spotlight on even more species and giving you the opportunity to help make a difference too.



SUMATRA



SUSTAINABLE
PALM OIL
CHALLENGE



What is being done to help wildlife in South East Asia?

South East Asia is losing rainforest habitats at an alarming rate as a result of deforestation.

The growing oil palm industry and unsustainable production of palm oil is one of the biggest threats facing the wildlife of Sumatra and Borneo and sadly the demand is increasing.

We're working with partners all over the world to promote sustainable palm oil production and we can all do something to make a difference by checking the ingredients in our shopping.

Forest habitats are being lost, animals are losing their homes and carbon is being released into the atmosphere, contributing to global warming. However, making a simple choice at the supermarket, we can make a big difference globally.

Palm oil is in over 50% of products found in your local supermarket but it is possible to use sustainable palm oil with a less negative impact on the environment. We need to drive demand for sustainable oil to give species like the majestic orangutan a chance of survival.

South East Asia is also currently facing a HUGE songbird crisis as beautiful birds like the Javan green magpie, black-winged starling and Bali starling are captured from the wild for the pet trade resulting in forests falling silent.

In tandem with our field partners in the Indonesia, Cikananga Conservation Breeding Centre, we've been working to breed and protect populations of some of the most threatened species of songbird for the best part of a decade. Millions of songbirds are being captured illegally and taken from the forests in Asia and in some cases there are only handfuls left. This year we've launched a public campaign called Sing for Songbirds to raise vital funds, help conservation efforts and increase awareness for the urgent need for action.



YOUR NEW ISLANDS EXPEDITION
OPENS THIS SUMMER

ANIMAL FACT FILES



SUN BEARS

Sun bears are one of the world's rarest species of bear and native to the tropical forests of South East Asia. A combination of large-scale deforestation, legal and illegal logging and the conversion of natural forests to palm oil plantations has led to sun bears being classified as vulnerable to extinction by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The species also suffers from the illegal wildlife trade, with sun bears used in traditional Asian medicines – although scientific evidence has shown they have no medicinal value. Their forest homes are being reduced dramatically due to habitat loss and it is thought that the population has fallen by 30% in the last 30 years.

They get their name from the golden markings on their chest which look like a rising sun. They're also known as the 'honey bear' due to their love of honey. They have very powerful jaws that can tear open trees in search of insects to eat, as well as big paws with large claws and hairless soles that help them to climb.

Female sun bear Milli and male Toni arrived at the zoo in 2015. They were rescued as cubs by conservationists working in Cambodia after their mothers were killed by poachers and they were found as mistreated pets.



MALAYAN TAPIR

Less than 2,500 Malayan tapirs are now thought to exist in the forests of their native South East Asia and this is largely due to the destruction of their habitat. The Malayan tapir population in the wild is estimated to have declined by more than 50% in the last 36 years, driven primarily by the wide-scale conversion of their habitat to palm oil plantations and agricultural land. As a result, they are listed as an endangered species by the IUCN and are also threatened by increased hunting for their fur, road-kills and trapping in snares left for other animals.

The Malayan tapir is the largest of all the tapir species, related to both the horse and the rhinoceros. Babies are born with a dark brown coat covered in white spots and stripes to help provide camouflage against forest floors. They lose those patterns in the first year of their life when they develop their adult coats - with one half of their bodies black and the other half white. Malayan tapirs are very good swimmers and live in forests close to water. They are an 'odd-toed' animal, having four toes on each front foot and three toes on each back foot. Their unusual, long flexible noses allow them to forage for food, and are known for their unusual courtship ritual which involves an assortment of wheezing and whistling sounds. They will then sniff each other, walking around in circles before mating.

CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM

Hear more about our work to protect Indonesian songbirds and other projects at our annual

CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM
SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER

focussing on Illegal Wildlife Trade

More information on our website soon.



PALAWAN BINTURONG

These rare and unique animals are in decline on the island of Palawan. They are fascinating, nocturnal animals but sadly they are listed as vulnerable to extinction on the IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species - a direct result of hunting for its meat and fur, destruction of its habitat in order to clear the way for palm oil plantations and poaching for the illegal wildlife trade.

Binturongs, also known as bearcats, are large mammals found only on the Philippine island of Palawan. They are renowned for their sweet scent which is comparable to freshly popped buttered popcorn. The bizarre-looking creatures have cat-like characteristics as well as shaggy black fur like a bear and a tail that's as long as its body, similar to a monkey. They are master climbers, with paws that can rotate backwards to enable them to climb down trees head-first and they are one of only two carnivores in the world that use their tails for climbing and gripping branches.

JAVAN GREEN MAGPIE

One of Javan green magpie is classed as critically endangered by the IUCN but bird experts fear that the species may now be even closer to extinction in the wild – with no recent sightings reported.

The rapid decline of the Javan green magpie in the wild is due to ongoing trapping pressures, agricultural intrusion and a continued loss of suitable forest habitat in west Java in Indonesia. Last year we started the first ever breeding programme outside of Indonesia and six pairs of birds were brought here to create a vital insurance population for this bird on the brink of extinction. Our bird team have been successful in breeding and rearing Javan green magpie chicks at the zoo which is a great boost to the conservation of this precious species.

The bright green plumage of this stunning bird is attained through the food the birds eat – insects, frogs and lizards.





BATTY ABOUT CONSERVATION

How we're helping the Rodrigues fruit bat battle back from the edge of extinction.

The zoo is fighting to protect some of the world's most endangered wildlife in 30 countries around the globe. Working closely with many organisations we provide both funding and expertise to help the fate of species which are on the edge of extinction.

One such partner is The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) who we work with to help conserve some of the endangered endemic plant and animal species of the Mascarene islands of Reunion, Mauritius and Rodrigues. These islands are located 700 km east of Madagascar. Back in the 16th century the first settlers arrived - soon after the last dodo was killed by sailors. Many other species succumbed to the same fate and with introduction of alien species, many native species' habitats disappeared. Today, the islands have lost most of their native vegetation and the growing human population has put increased pressure on remaining forest fragments. However, over the years, some species numbers have increased, including the once nearly extinct Rodrigues fruit bat.

A few months ago David White, twilight team manager and global species co-ordinator for the Rodrigues fruit bat, travelled to the islands...

"The Rodrigues fruit bat was once described as 'the rarest bat in the world'. In the 1970s the species almost went extinct as numbers dropped to just 70 bats. However ongoing conservation work and habitat protection in Mauritius - which we have supported for a number of years - together with research, education and an effective breeding programme in zoos has since seen the population steadily increase. Yet as the bats are only found in a single location on Rodrigues they are classed as critically endangered by the International Union for

Conservation of Nature, so monitoring their numbers is imperative. Therefore on my recent visit I worked with the MWF to help conduct quarterly bat counts across the island.



" One of the most breathtaking moments for me was standing at the top of the valley to Cascade Pigeon, one of the largest habitats for the bat on the island, where some 40 years before, the great conservationist Gerald Durrell had witnessed first-hand the plight of the Rodrigues fruit bat. He decided to create an insurance population, the first for this species, in the 1970s to ensure its survival. The founder animals came from the very valley that I saw before me and I now work with their ancestors in Chester.

" I love the Rodrigues fruit bat, which are also known as the Rodrigues flying fox because their elongated muzzles give them a distinctly fox-like appearance. The first time I experienced a wild Rodrigues fruit bat in flight was a little surreal - they looked so majestic and graceful.

" Roost sites chosen by the bats were in tall trees, situated on steep sided valleys which offered them shelter from the elements. Some of these roosts were very difficult to access due to the sheer inclines and the undulating terrain.

" To get an idea of the wild Rodrigues fruit bat population, evening dispersal counts are carried out simultaneously at each roost across the island. I took part in roost counts in three different locations. It was so peaceful, perched at the top of the cliff overlooking the valley below, bats flying past as they left the roost sites to feed. It really is vital that we succeed in our attempts to conserve this wonderful species.

" So how do you conduct a roost count? Well an imaginary line was visualised from the cliff top to a building in the distance. When a bat crossed this line it was counted as leaving the roost; any returning bats were subtracted and the count finished when it was too dark to see any bats.

" I had the privilege of witnessing some pups, still dependent on their mothers. It still amazes me how the female bats can fly with pups attached to them.

" During my time on Rodrigues Island I visited the nature reserve Grande Montagne, one of the last remaining strands of forest on the island. The reserve has undergone a lot of restoration work to help protect the native and unique flora and fauna and the MWF has overseen the planting of over 150,000 native plant species, whilst eradicating invasive ones. The nature reserve also provide crucial habitats for the last three surviving endemic species: the Rodrigues fruit bat, Rodrigues warbler and Rodrigues fody.

" It was a privilege to lend the skills I've developed here in Chester to our work in the wild and experience first-hand a conservation success story. Back in the 70's it was believed that this species could disappear in the wild altogether but thankfully due to the perseverance of many different organisations and the start of a very successful breeding programme the number of Rodrigues fruit bats has increased dramatically. I hope that with the brilliant work we support with the MWF, the numbers continue to increase and the bats will continue to thrive in their native home."

MWF Rodrigues team →



David and Alfred, from MWF, at Cascade Pigeon →

THE PLANT PROJECT



This summer we are opening a brand new plant exhibit. The Plant Project will be a visual and sensory feast as it showcases the threatened plants we care for and the amazing work our botany and horticulture team do to conserve these plant species on the edge of extinction. Phil Esseen, curator of horticulture and botany, and his team have been preparing this exhibit for the past 12 months. Phil spent some time explaining the new exhibit:

"For the past few weeks we've been busily putting the final finishing touches to our new exhibit, The Plant Project. We've created some flexible spaces in our public greenhouses so we not only get to build beautiful displays but we also get the opportunity to tell people about plant conservation. Sadly plant species are often overlooked when people think about conservation but unfortunately it's a growing problem with many species around the globe on the very edge of extinction.

"We invite you to take a journey through our five threatened plant collections, from pitcher plants to orchids and cactus. The journey will not only show visitors the beautiful plants and flowers in the collections but also explain plant biodiversity, and current threats that are facing plants, which include illegal collection from the wild, invasive species and habitat destruction. We also hope to showcase the palm oil plant, which is being cultivated across Indonesia to make palm oil which has led to mass deforestation. The botany and horticulture team will be regularly evolving The Plant Project to tell new stories and display new plants, so be sure to keep popping back.

"By telling stories about the current threats to plants, we want people to come away from The Plant Project understanding what we do. There are many complexities when maintaining a threatened plant collection. Not many people know, but plants need genetic diversity just as animals do, which takes a lot of work and communication with different collections. However the most important thing for me is that people come away from The Plant Project knowing they can do something to help. Whether it be using sustainable palm oil, not planting invasive species or supporting conservation programmes in this country or abroad, we can all do something to help conserve plant species."

The Plant Project, which is located next to June's Pavilion, will open in the summer.

Building in the zoo



Climb through treetop forest walkways, look out over a grassland savannah and explore our Island habitats – welcome to the future of Chester Zoo.

In the last edition of Z magazine we shared with you our long term vision for the development of the zoo. This strategic development plan maps what the zoo will look like in fifteen years' time – as visitors explore wonderful, contrasting habitats in an immersive expedition to the wild and back again.

Our plan will meet the changing needs of the zoo and everyone who uses it - including visitors, staff and trustees, and of course the animals. We will celebrate the zoo's unique character, values and history, while improving on a world class visitor experience that will firmly establish Chester Zoo as one of the world's best.

We will ensure we continue to achieve the most we can from our zoo site, delivering the maximum possible conservation impact by designing perfect habitats for new species that come into our breeding programmes.

The plan ensures that the species in the zoo link to our field work in the world's biodiversity hotspots – areas with high conservation need and high levels of threat.

This powerful story continues the work we started with *Islands*, shaping the zoo into four focused areas – Islands, Forests, Grasslands, reflecting the areas in which we work and the species here at the zoo; and Conservation in Action, giving an insight into the important conservation science which happens here at Chester Zoo.

We believe this zoned approach will help our visitors to make the most of their zoo visit.



Grasslands will be inspired by a variety of African grassland habitats from scrublands to deserts, characterised by large, open landscape habitats containing multiple species.

Forests will have vertical layers. Our aim is to create views not just from the ground but at a high level too.

We'll share news of developments in each edition of Z magazine, and via our website.



FUNDRAISING NEWS



SUMMER STAMPEDE ON WORLD ELEPHANT DAY - BRING YOUR HERD!

Visit us a lot? Fancy a new zoo experience? LOVE our elephants? This could be the event for you...

On Saturday 12 August we're holding our very own sponsored walk around the zoo to raise money for our Never Forget campaign. We're striving to find a vaccine for EEHV, the devastating virus that kills young elephants, both in zoos and the wild. You and your family could give a great big boost to our campaign!

The day will give you and your herd chance to walk around the zoo before we're open to the public, with plenty of staff lining the route to answer any questions you may have on your way round. You may even spot a few famous faces off the telly!

We'll also support you to raise £50 in sponsorship, of which EVERY PENNY will go towards our Never Forget campaign! We'll be offering prizes for reaching fundraising milestones, and we'll be having a celebration tea party in Bembe Coffee Shop afterwards to say a big, big thank you to everyone for helping to give Asian elephants a brighter future.

If you'd like to receive more information about this family-friendly fundraising event, you can visit chesterzoo.org/stampede or you can email development@chesterzoo.org with any questions.

Entry to the event costs are:

Members

All members £5

Free under 3s

Non-members

(entry price includes entry into the zoo for the day too!)

£18.20 adults £15.40 children Free under 3s

RUBY SPARKLES WITH ZEBRA ZEAL



A zebra-loving youngster from Manchester has turned up the heat on the extinction threat to the Grevy's zebra.

Ruby, 10, from Chorlton, recently combined her two passions – zebras and cooking – with a cake-bake to protect her favourite animal. Her bake-off not only earned her zebra stripes, but £13.50 from a triple batch of cakes. The money has now been donated to the zoo to further their work and links with Africa to protect the species.

Speaking about her culinary conservation, Ruby said:

" I love zebras and have taken a toy zebra with me everywhere since I was three months old.

" I don't want them to die out in the wild – because they are such amazing creatures. That's why I wanted to raise some money for them."

Over the last 30 years it is thought that Grevy's zebra numbers have declined by more than 80% - leaving just 2,500 of them in the wild.

DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COFFEE MORNINGS GET A BOOST THANKS TO SANCTUARY CARE

We're really pleased to be working with Sanctuary Care's Upton Dene Residential Home on our dementia-friendly coffee mornings.



Our dementia-friendly coffee mornings take place on the second and fourth Monday of the month from 10.30am until 12.30pm. Completely free of charge, attendees are offered a cup of tea and a warm welcome to people with dementia and their families.

To find out more about these mornings, please contact the events team on events@chesterzoo.org

CHESTER ZOO "100 CLUB"

WINNERS OF THE RECENT PRIZE DRAWS WERE:

JANUARY 2017

- £100 Mrs Louise Anne Burrige, Chester
- £100 Ms Fiona Matthews, Wirral
- £100 Mr David Bronson, Salford
- £50 Miss Jennifer Worrall, Warrington
- £50 Mr Alan Andrews, Northwich
- £50 Miss Madeline Channon, Chester
- £50 Mr Mark Lunt, Liverpool

FEBRUARY 2017

- £100 Mr Alan Andrews, Northwich
- £100 Mrs Jill Van Schie, Chester
- £100 Mr Michael Shepherd, Wirral
- £50 Miss Nancy Williams, Chester
- £50 Mrs Ivy Bentley, Devon
- £50 Mrs Catherine J. Piercy, Chester
- £50 Mrs Wendy Channon, Chester

MARCH 2017

- £100 Miss Christine Parker, Merseyside
- £100 Miss Lynsey Beck, Clywd
- £50 Dr Terry Gleave, Holywell
- £50 Mrs Caroline Ridley, Chester
- £50 Mrs Andrea Warner, Wrexham
- £50 Mrs Jane Spencer, Mollington

All prize winners are notified by post, in addition to appearing in Z magazine. Please inform us as soon as possible if you change address. If you have any questions as a member of the 100 Club, please contact our team on 01244 650229.

Talking Conservation...

**SUMMER
PROGRAMME
2017**

If you would like to find out more about the work your membership supports both here and out in the field, then why not come to one of our membership talks. This summer you have the opportunity to meet some of our dedicated keepers, learn about how the science work we are conducting is helping our conservation work around the globe and hear about how we are helping orangutans in Sumatra.



Wednesday 21 June

AN EVENING WITH THE TWILIGHT TEAM

The twilight team, headed by David White, look after lots of weird and wonderful animals from bats to giant anteaters! Learn more about the wide range of animals they care for as the team gives you an in-depth look at each species and provides updates on their animals. So if you want to learn more about our red pandas, giant anteaters, Malagasy narrow striped mongoose, meerkats and aardvarks, to name but a few, come along and meet the keepers.



Tuesday 18 July

WHY WE DO SCIENCE AT THE ZOO DR SIMON DOWELL, SCIENCE DIRECTOR

Our scientific research provides the evidence base to ensure that our conservation work is effective and has the greatest possible impact, both in the zoo and in the field. This talk will show how we use research to tackle a wide range of conservation issues. Come and find out how we use science to improve breeding success in rhinos, work out how many frogs there are in a rainforest and help elephants live alongside people in India.

Wednesday 20 September

SUMATRAN ORANGUTAN CONSERVATION STEVE UNWIN, VET AND GUESTS

The Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme (SOCP) is an organisation we support in Indonesia. Join members of the SOCP team and Steve Unwin, zoo vet, to find out how we are helping orangutans in Sumatra. Learn more about human-wildlife conflict, orangutan health in conservation and find out how we are linking our veterinary work here in the zoo with orangutans in Indonesia and Malaysia through the One Plan – One Health approach.



INTERESTED IN ATTENDING?

Please call Kate in education
on 01244 389831 or email
k.brankin@chesterzoo.org
Booking essential.

chesterzoo.org

MEMBERS' TALKS: held in the Geraldine Russell Lecture Theatre (near the zoo's main entrance off the A41), start at 7.30pm and:

- Are free to members (please bring your membership card and welcome letter)
- We offer a special rate of £2 to adopters
- Members of the public and guests are welcome (£3.50 for non-members)
- Our Lecture Theatre seats up to 160
- Refreshments will be served which will give you the opportunity to have an informal chat with speakers, zoo staff and fellow members.

AMAZING ADOPTERS & MARVELLOUS MEMBERS' PRIZE DRAW!

**PRIZE
DRAW**

To say **THANK YOU** for your valued support during 2016 all current members and adopters will automatically be entered into a quarterly prize draw to win an adoption! Our two previous winners were adopter Pamela Millard and member Rachel Darrall.



THE SECRET LIFE OF THE ZOO

We are thrilled to announce that another series of the *The Secret Life of the Zoo* has been commissioned by Channel 4.

The show is firmly established as one of the most popular programmes on the channel with the last series averaging around 2.5 million viewers per episode. It has not only been a resounding success for the channel but it has also been a huge hit for the zoo, providing us with a real showcase for the brilliant work we do here, raising our profile both nationally and internationally. A crew from Blast! Films have been in the zoo since April capturing the secret life of many of the animals here and the show is expected to be on our screens in the autumn.

NEW IN THE SHOP

STEVEN BROWN MCZOO RANGE

Steven is a modern contemporary artist who came to be well known for his McCoo portraits of highland cattle which achieved worldwide popularity.

Following on from those iconic paintings, Steven introduced his *McZoo range* of wild animal portraits. As a huge fan of the zoo, Steven decided to paint our very own chimp, Boris, and is kindly donating the proceeds of the sale of the original portrait to **Act For Wildlife**. We are very proud to stock Steven's *McZoo ranges*, including Boris; with the images available on a wide range of gifts to complement your home. All the proceeds from the sale of Boris *McZoo* items will go directly towards our chimpanzee conservation work in Uganda.



NEW BOOK SHOP

If you're visiting the zoo make sure you don't miss our new book area in the main shop.

We stock more than 300 titles with something for all ages. Books will change on a frequent basis, so make it a regular stop!

FREAKY, SQUEAKY & STREAKY!

We have a bizarre new species at the zoo, the lowland streaked tenrec!



The unusual lowland streaked tenrec is brightly coloured like a bumblebee, covered in spines like a hedgehog and boasts a long pointed snout like a bird's beak. Our twilight team, who are looking after this new species, say it is unlike anything that most people will have seen before. Our new quartet are thought to be the only individuals of their kind to be found in any of the world's leading 1,096 zoos!



Lowland streaked tenrecs are found in tropical humid forests in Madagascar where we are working to protect habitats threatened by deforestation.

Dave White, team manager, said:

"Lowland streaked tenrecs are spectacularly peculiar and have some incredible traits.

"If they need to communicate with one another then, much like a violinist rubbing their bow across their violin strings, they have special quills on their backs which they brush together to produce high pitched squeaks. They are the only mammals in the world that are known to do this.

"In actual fact though, relatively little is known about tenrecs and they are part of a highly threatened wider taxonomic group. The loss of a tenrec would mean the loss of millions of years of evolution and a huge amount of scientific knowledge that we're yet to uncover about these unique mammals. There is a vast amount to learn so the skills our keepers will develop by caring for the species here will be very important and could help conservation efforts in the longer term."

Lowland streaked tenrecs are highly social animals and live in family groups. They have very delicate jawbones and can only eat soft-bodied insects such as worms and beetle larvae and a small amount of fruit.

Such is their rarity, our awesome foursome are being cared for in a special behind-the-scenes habitat. However, another species of tenrec – the lesser hedgehog tenrec – can be seen in our nocturnal Fruit Bat Forest exhibit.



RARE PHEASANT CHICKS HATCH FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THE ZOO!

Two great argus pheasant chicks arrived in May - much to the delight of our bird keepers as it's the first time the species has been bred at the zoo.

The birds, which are found on the Malaysian peninsula, south Myanmar, South West Thailand, Borneo and Sumatra, are iconic in their homelands but are threatened by hunting and habitat loss.

Andrew Owen, curator of birds, said:

"The great argus pheasant is under real pressure in parts of South East Asia. Like so many bird species in that part of the world they are the victim of rapid deforestation and illegal trapping.

"Great argus males in particular are among the most unusual and distinctive of all birds, with their astonishingly long wing and tail feathers adorned with thousands of eye-spots. It is their beauty which is, in part, what makes them so prized by hunters.

"To have two chicks hatch here for the very first time in the zoo's long history is a great achievement - they're certainly important young birds."

As part of its mating ritual, the male constructs a ring on the ground out of sticks and twigs then calls to entice a female to enter into the circle. He then performs a mating dance, culminating in him spreading his wings wide to show off a complex pattern of eye-spots in his plumage.

It is these 'eye-spots' that give the argus pheasant its name - Argus Panoptes (or Argos) being a many-eyed giant in Greek mythology. The argus pheasants can be found in *Dragons in Danger*.

MEET OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS!

We have just trained our new visitor engagement and learning volunteers which takes our number of volunteers to a record breaking 200!

The newly trained recruits will be joining our existing team of volunteers out in the zoo; talking to visitors about our animals and conservation work. We've also just introduced a new volunteering role, whereby learning volunteers will be helping our education officers with schools groups in the Learning Centre.





MADAGASCAN PLAY! SPACE NOW OPEN!

Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, Chester, CH2 1LH
Tel: 01244 380280
Fax: 01244 371273
Email: info@chesterzoo.org
www.chesterzoo.org

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

Registered charity no. 306077

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?

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