

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS
CHESTER
Zoo Life



Spring 1999

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The Magnificent Million!

We started this year in bouyant mood, with 1998 year-end figures 11% higher than the previous year, giving us our biggest visitor numbers for 20 years! Including the under 3-year-olds, we had topped one million visitors by early December. Our total number of paying visitors was 921,471.

This is a remarkable achievement in a year when it snowed at Easter and rained for much of the Summer. It was a year that began with the birth of a baby elephant and ended with the news of the largest sponsorship deal we've ever had.

Out with the old

This winter there has been a big push to remove old, substandard facilities in the Zoo. Following the demolition of the Small Mammal House, the Bird House was flattened and an exciting new development called *Islands in Danger* is now taking its place (see article on page 18).

The Cat House has also been demolished and the animals that were housed there have been transferred to suitable accommodation in other collections.

Jaguar Joy!

Following this, we had excellent news that Jaguar Cars are donating major sponsorship of £1.8 million for a brand new neotropical cat exhibit. Development Manager, John Regan, backed by a team from Animal and Marketing Divisions negotiated for some months. A final decision in our favour by the Chairman of Jaguar, Mr Nick Scheele, happily arrived only days before Christmas.

Details of the exact form of the sponsored project are being discussed at the time of going to print.

However, the new exhibit will likely focus on one of the endangered Meso-American geographical races of



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Director: Professor Gordon McGregor Reid
Editor: Pat Cade



the Jaguar. The whole concept will have a strong educational feel and the funding will also support a field conservation project in Central America.

Certainly, the Jaguar Car Company's most generous donation is a marvellous boost for the Zoo. It is by far the largest external funding the Zoo has ever received and, we believe, the largest commercial sponsorship of any UK Zoo ever.

Our partnership with Jaguar Cars will in part be associated with the proposed launch of the new 'Baby Jaguar' or X400, scheduled to be rolling off the production lines at Halewood for 2001. We aim to be able to officially open the new exhibit to coincide with this event.

As a species, Jaguars have, perhaps, been overlooked by the conservation community. There is, for example, currently no co-ordinated strategic breeding programme in zoos.

Also, zoos around the world do not seem to have recognised the potential spectacle that these magnificent

animals can provide. The Jaguar is a tree climber, but, unlike its relative the Leopard, also swims and eats fish. All of these needs will certainly be catered for in the new exhibit for the contentment of our animals and the delight of our visitors.

Although allied to Leopards which are found across Africa and Asia, the Jaguar is slightly larger and more stocky in appearance with a heavier, more powerful build. Males can weigh up to 113 kg and females 91kg. Also, the rosette pattern on the coat is slightly larger and more distinctive on the Jaguar. However, some Jaguars have very pale coats while others can be jet black. They are usually solitary in habit except in the breeding season. They have been noted to live up to 22 years in zoos but little is known about their longevity in the wild.

Under Threat

While there is a Jaguar rescue centre in Belize, there is comparatively little information on Jaguars in the wild. Their natural range spreads through Central and South America from southern USA to Patagonia. The largest Jaguars recorded are found in the Mato Grosso in Brazil.

All of the eight local kinds are endangered and some may be nearly extinct outside of zoos. Loss of wild habitat and pressures of fur hunting are the greatest threats to this wonderful cat. However, Chester has been very successful in managing and breeding Jaguars and intends to apply this expertise to a very worthwhile, multi-faceted programme of conservation, education and scientific study.

We are confident that the new complex, whatever its precise final form, will not only be the best exhibit for this particular species in the world, but one of the best and most worthwhile zoo conservation projects of any kind anywhere. By 2001 we intend that Chester Zoo will be as renowned for its Jaguars as it is today for its Asiatic Elephants.

A rather late Happy New Year to you - and slightly early greetings for Easter!

■ Front cover:
This colourful photograph of flamingos was taken by Dr Roger Wilkinson.

MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Saturday 13 March 1999
2.30pm in the Lecture Hall
Chris West, Chester Zoo's
Chief Curator –
'My First Twelve
Months.'

Saturday 10 April 1999
2.30pm in the Lecture Hall
Director and Staff – Zoo Review.

Saturday 22 May 1999
2.30pm in the Lecture Hall
Annual General
Meeting of the North
of England Zoological
Society.

1999



Fauna and Flora International – Spring Meetings

Lectures are held at the Zoo's Lecture Theatre

Price, inclusive of light buffet is £6.50, or £6.00 for FFI members

Please telephone Penny Rudd at the zoo on 01244 650215 for booking details

Friday 19th March, 1999

'Badgers of the New Forest'
with Alistair Kilburn

Alistair is Chairman of the New Forest Badger Group, and author of the recently published autobiographical book 'A Life at Dusk'. He'll be taking a rare night off badger watching to talk about his experiences. The evening will include some exciting video footage.

Friday 16th April, 1999

'Nepal – A Himalayan Journey'
with Tim Loseby

Tim is a well-known wildlife photographer, with particular interest in birds. He has travelled widely in the Indian sub-continent, and will be talking about the bird and mammal life, together with the stunning scenery of the Kathmandu Valley and the Jomson Trek through the Himalayas.

CHESTER ZOO

Recent monthly winners:

October 1998

£100 Mr A Carr
£10 Mr M Allsopp
£50 Mrs E. J. Talbot
£50 Mrs J. Jones
£50 Mrs B. M. Piercy

November 1998

£100 Mrs E. J. Norman
£100 Mrs J. Williamson
£50 Mrs G. A. Billingham
£50 Mrs M. R. S. Doogan
£50 Mrs B. Twist

December 1998

£900 Mr P. Kitchen
(see picture page 5)
£100 Mrs O. Griffiths
£50 Mr A. R. Davies
£50 Mr S. Oakes
£50 Mrs C. Pearl

'The Legacy Pledge Club'

Development Manager John Regan reports on the first pledges – and urges you to make a will!

Further to the launch of this new scheme, a number of supporters have contacted us to declare that they have chosen to mention the Zoo in their wills. Legacy pledgers to date include:

Mr M. Johnson of Bolton (No. 6156)
Mr Paul Murphy (No. 1902)
Mrs Hilary Murphy (No. 1376)
Mr Robert Callaghan

A further three members have pledged but have asked to remain anonymous.
... and two member of staff to date have also made bequests towards our conservation work.

Mr Mike Johnson (Financial Controller)
Mr John Regan (Development Manager)

A number of further enquiries on the scheme have been received.

A special 'behind the scenes' day for the club membership is likely to take place some time in June. It may involve a trip over to the Lemur Island, a one-to-one with the elephants and the giraffes, and the chance to feed the penguins.

The Society is delighted with the initial response to this scheme, as it allow us to properly show our gratitude to those have had the foresight and kindness to remember our work in this way.

We look forward to further supporters contacting us to let us know they have already mentioned us in their estate planning, or to receiving enquiries as to how the scheme works. Contact **John Regan** on 01244 650230.

NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF WILDLIFE ART

THE fifth annual exhibition of wildlife art is moving to the Road Range Gallery at Liverpool's business and tourist centre at the Pier Head. This is the biggest exhibition of its kind to be seen outside London and is sponsored by Merseyside's Mercedes-Benz and Porsche dealership, Road Range.

Over 200 top quality works from more than 100 artists will be on show and for sale. The exhibition is open from Good Friday, 2nd April until Sunday 18th April. Weekdays opening hours are from 10am – 6pm, and weekends from 11.00am – 4.00pm. Admission is free, and there is free, secure parking close by.

More information from:

Marion Tuffrey on 0151 334 4167 or
David Wilson, 0151 327 3710.

Visitor Entrance Prices

The zoo entrance prices from 28th March, 1999 will be:
Adults: £9.00 Children (3-15yrs): £6.50 OAPs: £6.50

Half-Price Tickets

Adult members are given half-price concessionary vouchers for friends. This allocation will be increased to ten as memberships are renewed, with immediate effect.

We regret that it will no longer be possible to purchase half-price tickets at the gate or through the membership office. This scheme was used by very few members, and was time consuming and expensive to administer.

Make A Will Week

HARD on the heels of the launch of the Legacy Pledge Club comes 'Make a Will Week' organised *not* by Chester Zoo, but by the Law Society of England and Wales on a national basis. This is a campaign running for just one week from **22nd March** in which the public are encouraged to think seriously about having their wills drawn up professionally.

Astonishingly only three out of every ten people in Britain have actually made a will. Making a will is the *only* way to ensure your family is provided for, and the best way to make sure your will is legally valid is to consult a solicitor.

Make A Will Week is a great chance to do what you might just have been putting off for a while – making or changing your will. The name of a firm of solicitors in most areas within the North West, North Wales, West Yorkshire and the West Midlands is available from John Regan on 01244 650230.

On a lighter but not entirely serious note, did you know that on average, most people die three and a half years after the last change to their will. It therefore follows that if you change your will every three years exactly, you will live for ever!

Aquatic Mammals in the Penguin Pool!

IT was not just the penguins using their new pool during the bleak days of winter. Mark Pilgrim and Bruce West have been taking regular dips to ensure that the new inlets remain free of sticks, leaves and other blockages. The modified intakes seem to be working well and will soon be disguised amongst the rockwork. The water has been consistently clear recently – if a little cold!



One in a Million

WHEN 4 year old Junior Member Simon Davis from Lymm in Cheshire arrived at the zoo in December he was in for a big surprise. The Zoo Director was waiting to greet 1998's one millionth visitor – and Simon, accompanied by his parents, Alison and Allan, and his 18month old twin siblings, Heather and Peter, just happened to be the one. He received a huge soft toy tiger as a memento.

◀ Zoo Director Gordon Reid and Section Head Mick Jones greet Simon and his Mum.

Together for 40 Years – and it don't seem a day too long!

GARDENER Peter Braithwaite, one of the zoo's longest serving employees, retired recently after an amazing 40 years service. Peter received a gold watch from his colleagues. The photograph shows Peter, centre, with gardening colleagues John Johnson (left) and Chris Williams.



Children's Activities

A REMINDER from the Education Division about their Children's Activity Programme:

17th Feb. Poisonous Beasts;	6th March Dinosaur Dig;
8th April Easter Eggstravaganza;	1st May Animal Record Holders;
10th July Creepy Crawlies;	18th Sept. Dinosaur Dig;
16th Oct. World of Bats;	13th Nov. Amazon Adventure.

For further details, refer back to the Winter 98 issue of Zoo Life. Please note that the date for the 'World of Bats' was incorrect in the last issue – the correct date is 16 October.

Peter Taplin

ZOO staff were saddened by the news of the sudden death of Peter Taplin on Christmas Day. Although poor health had forced him to give up his zoo work some time ago, Peter was an Education Volunteer for many years. He was a founder member of the scheme and specialised in leading guided tours. He also enjoyed an active role in the Christmas Journey, performing the readings in the camel house. He will be remembered with affection for his enthusiasm and support for the zoo.

Orang utan Photographs

DUE to an oversight, the photographs illustrating Chris Yarwood's article on the zoo's orang utans, were not credited in the last issue. These lovely portraits were by Anthony Haywood of Wolverhampton, who has a long association with the zoo, and has taken hundreds of wonderful pictures of the animals.

New Faces

TWO new senior appointments have been made in recent months.

Philip Morris has taken on the task of IT Systems Supervisor. Phil's previous role was Network Administrator at West Cheshire College. He believes that a computer network should be designed around the needs of its users, and is spending the first few months in his new job developing the zoo's IT systems. Despite being the first person everyone shouts for when they have a computer problem, Phil says that the enthusiasm of staff members in IT matters convinces him that we can look forward to successful 1999.

Mark Sparrow has the new position of Curator of Botany and Horticulture. Mark joined the Zoo from Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where he was unit manager of the Temperate House. His horticultural trips and expeditions have taken him to Venezuela, Australia, Mexico, South Africa, the Canary Islands and the USA (dare we say he is nearly as well travelled as our Director?) Mark is married with three children.



Philip Morris



Mark Sparrow

Professorship for Zoo Director

THE University of Liverpool has honoured Chester Zoo Director, Gordon McGregor Reid, with a professorship. The full title is Visiting Professor in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine and Animal Husbandry. Similarly, Chris West, Chief Curator, has been awarded a Visiting Lectureship in the same department.

Professor Reid said: 'This will consolidate the growing relationship between the zoo and veterinary faculty at Leahurst, in terms of animal health and welfare as well as research and student training.'

Silver Service

CONGRATULATIONS to Section Head Alan Woodward, who completed 25 years service at the zoo in January this year and received an award.

It's For You!



A WELCOME surprise awaited Peter Kitchen, a partner at C & C Catering – the Chester company that supplies much of the equipment for the Jubilee Cafeteria. Peter arrived for an appointment with Catering Manager Sue Clews on the day that the '100 Club' December draw was made – and it was his name that came out first, to win the Christmas prize of £900.

To add to the surprise, he was told that the winner was Sue – and asked if he would present the cheque to her. It was a lovely moment when he realised it was his name on the cheque!

Guyana Trip

ZOO Council Member Graham Pollard is helping to organise an expedition to Guyana in October 2000, working on environmental projects. They are hoping to recruit up to 100 volunteers during this Spring. If you are interested in taking part in this exciting trip, please ring Graham on 01270 501080.

Farewells

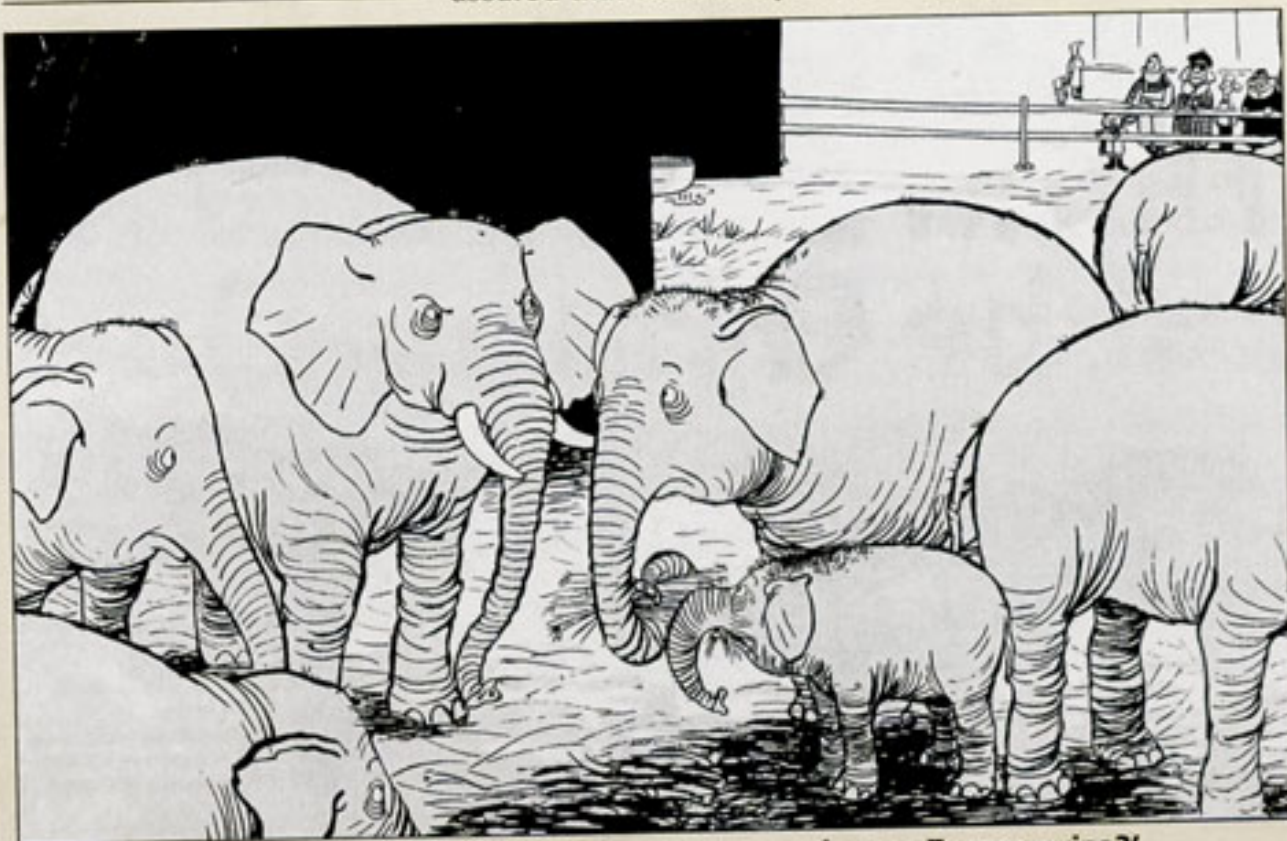
THE Estates Division office lost two valued members of staff in the Autumn. Projects Engineer Ken Roberts took early retirement, and Secretary Helen Smith made a career change to work for a travel agent specialising in luxury holidays.

The photograph shows Ken and Helen saying their very fond farewells to friends and colleagues.



Poo-Paint?

THE use of the by-product known as Zoo Poo as an artistic medium in The Turner Prize art competition, inspired this cartoon printed in the Daily Mail. Any budding artists are assured that there is a plentiful supply available!



'Phew! What's that smell? Has someone done a Turner prize?'

Eagles on the Wind

Chester Zoo Lecture Theatre
Friday April 23rd, 1999

A RARE opportunity to experience a spectacular performance of Native American Indian traditional tribal dance and music, featuring Dennis Lee Rogers, world class champion Navajo dancer.

Dennis Lee Rogers will be making a six week tour of the UK this Spring, and has particularly requested that he gives a performance at Chester Zoo, for the benefit of the zoo's North American species, for example North American Buffalo and Prairie Marmots and the Navajo Indians based in Arizona.

His show has received world-wide acclaim, and we know that it will be an electrifying evening, that will sell out very quickly. For the first half, Dennis will give an illustrated talk on the culture and way of life of the North American Indians. During a refreshment break, he will dress in the full regalia of the Navajo, and the second half of the evening will depict the spirituality and the majestic dances of the tribes.

Tickets for this unique event are priced at £6.00 for members and adopters, £7.00 for others. The price includes light refreshments in the interval.



Please send me _____ tickets for **Eagles on the Wind** at concession rate* (£6.00)
*(please state membership number(s) or animal(s) adopted) _____
and/or _____ tickets at full rate (£7.00)

Method of Payment (please tick where appropriate)

Credit card Debit Card Cheque Cheque enclosed: £ _____

Type of Card

Visa Mastercard AMEX Switch Connect Other

Card Number Expiry Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Daytime Telephone No. _____

Please make cheques payable to Chester Zoo and enclose a stamped, addressed envelope (minimum dimensions 4 1/2 x 9") for the return of your tickets.
Postal applications only please, to: Membership Office, Chester Zoo,
Upton-by-Chester, CH2 1LH

Chester Zoo Elephant Experience Evenings

DUE to the consistently high demand for tickets, we have planned **four** elephant experience evenings for this year! They are always over-subscribed, so please send us your application now to avoid disappointment – first come, first served!

The dates for 1999 are:

WEDNESDAYS:

12th MAY 7th JULY

2nd JUNE 4th AUGUST

Tickets will be restricted to a maximum of **FOUR** per booking

Price: **£15.00** per person.

Special Concession Price for Members and Adopters: **£12.00** per person.

(NB: Members and Adopters are asked to state their membership number(s) or animal(s) adopted).

Total number of places will be limited to 70 on each evening.

As this is a special event, no other concessionary tickets are valid.

Please note, these evenings are not suitable for children under 14 years of age.

The event begins at 7.00pm in the Elephant House, but your ticket allows admission to the Zoo from 4.30pm, via the staff entrance in Caughall Road, giving time for a stroll around the grounds beforehand. A glass of wine or fruit juice will be served during the evening.



A mammoth fund-raising evening designed to entertain and enlighten!

Please send me _____ tickets for Elephant Experience Evening at concession rate* (£12.00)
*(please state membership number(s) or animal(s) adopted) _____
and/or _____ tickets at full rate (£15.00)

Method of Payment (please tick where appropriate)

Credit card Debit Card Cheque Cheque enclosed: £ _____

Type of Card

Visa Mastercard AMEX Switch Connect Other

Card Number Expiry Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Daytime Telephone No. _____

Date Choices: 1st: _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

Please make cheques payable to Chester Zoo and enclose a stamped, addressed envelope (minimum dimensions 4½ x 9") for the return of your tickets and directions to the event. Postal applications only please, to: Group Sales Office, Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, CH2 1LH

FOR over 15 years Chester Zoo has been successfully involved in the breeding programme for Rodrigues Fruit Bats, a highly endangered species from Rodrigues Island in the Indian Ocean. But the bats' old quarters were a little cramped, and their opportunities for flight were limited.

The new *Twilight Zone* is anything but cramped – though the Rodrigues took a while to adjust to their new space. At first they were inclined to stick to their roost like a cluster of couch potatoes waiting for dinner to be served!

The huge enclosure, dimly lit by day to simulate twilight, is home to 37 Rodrigues Fruit Bats and 140 Seba's Short-tailed Bats. Both species are breeding now that they have settled into their new area.

The bats fly freely around visitors, sometimes coming so close that people can feel the slight draught caused by the beating of their wings. Visitors are delighted to have such a degree of contact with wild creatures, and many stay in the *Twilight Zone* for long periods. Even the most timid and nervous relax once they are accustomed to the atmosphere.

No glass or bars separates visitors from animals – you are walking through their environment. An experience not to be missed!

British Bats

This exhibit inspires people to think of our native wildlife and many visitors talk to us about bats they see near their homes. This has led to the concept of using the *Twilight Zone* for recording data about British bats.

There are many bat groups in the country, but it is by no means the case that they know each other, and every bat on their patch. Most of the bat workers' time is spent rescuing bats from places where they should not be, and attending sick or injured bats and giving advice. Information on the whereabouts of bats in Winter is especially lacking. Sadly, information about the sites of roosts

Working in the Dark



The staff of the *Twilight Zone* report on the progress of this unique exhibit – and make an appeal for information on our native bats

often comes too late – after the bulldozers or chainsaws have acted.

The zoo had over a million visitors in 1998 and potentially our visitors could be an important source of information. All our native bats are protected species, but if the 'Where?' and 'How Many?' questions cannot be answered, protection becomes impossible. There must be an enormous amount of vital information about our native wildlife, but it is in little 'droplets' all over the place.

The Animal, Education and

Marketing divisions have recently been meeting with the Cheshire Wildlife Trust to decide the best way to collect these data, and a pilot scheme involving a questionnaire and maps is enclosed with this mailing. Please let us know if you have any information.

In Britain, the National Biodiversity Network is currently being set up. This will lead to a better understanding of our flora and fauna, what we have, where it is, and in what numbers. This network is the result of the 'Earth Summit' meeting in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 of representatives from 178 nations.

Agreements were signed and measures drawn up toward world environmental protection. One of these measures concerned the protection of wildlife. To do this, audits have to be made and Chester Zoo wishes to make a contribution.

Wrong image?

By listening to the people visiting, there can be no doubt that *Twilight Zone* is very popular.

But some people just won't go in! They think they are avoiding a spooky, scary place, when in fact they are missing out on a magical experience. So what puts them off? What

can we do about it?

Some don't like the dark, or feel unable to cope with things that flutter around them. Some people genuinely think the bats will land on them, suck their blood, get stuck in their hair and generally live up to demonic images as cultivated by Hammer Horror and the like!

For the future, working with the Education and Marketing Divisions, we hope to improve the image of bats, painting a truer picture of their lifestyles and promoting a more positive reaction to them.

It's true that many people enjoy a bit of a scare, but we don't want to join that bandwagon. If you are slightly nervous about coming into the bat cave, a member of staff is there to accompany you. Our bats are delightful, and we know that you will be as fascinated with watching them as we are!

BIRD REVIEW '98

Words and pictures by:
Dr Roger Wilkinson

CHRISTMAS Day morning 1997 saw keepers working in the dark to shore up broken windows and net over open roofs resultant from the gales of Christmas Eve. They were soon joined by other staff in emergency repair-work that saw most missing their Christmas lunches to secure the safety and welfare of stock throughout the zoo.

The major damage was to the *Tropical Realm* where sections of the roof had blown away and glass skylights over the main free-flight areas were broken. Windows were blown out of the Bird House, and damage caused to the Bird Arcade roof and to fencing on the bird paddocks. Stock losses were mainly of free-flying pigeons and doves which escaped from the *Tropical Realm*.

This storm damage necessitated re-programming expenditure to build a completely new and much better roof over the damaged area of the *Tropical Realm*. The hornbill enclosures were rebuilt and, later in the year, also the Congo Peafowl aviary, to much improved standards.

The Bird Arcade was re-roofed and temporary repairs made to the Bird House and crane fencing. The Bird House, which was built in 1965, had been under review for replacement for a number of years. Decisions were made for it to be demolished and the crane areas re-fenced at the end of the 1998 breeding season.

The Bird House has given many visitors pleasure over the last thirty years and has been the site for the successful breeding of many bird species from the first UK breeding of Bare-faced Curassows in 1966 to our first success in parent-rearing Scarlet Ibis in 1998. Other birds bred over recent years in the Bird House include Lilac-breasted Rollers, Blue-crowned

Motmots, Trumpeter Hornbills, Palawan Peacock Pheasants and Bali Starlings. The demolition of the Bird House has necessitated the relocation of its former occupants either elsewhere in the zoo or to other collections.

A new '*Islands in Danger*' exhibit, planned for completion in 1999, will house birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. This exhibit will house some exciting species including Red Birds of Paradise and Komodo Dragons.

A major redevelopment of the penguin facility has included a larger building for the new water treatment equipment, a new kitchen and keeper area, and a refrigerated cold room for fish storage. The pool has been re-landscaped and new nesting areas provided.

The penguins now swim in salt water where previously they had freshwater. This provides a natural environment for the penguins and allows the use of protein skimming, in addition to ozone treatment, sand filtration and UV disinfection as a purification method.

During this redevelopment the penguins were housed in the Chilean Flamingo winter quarters with access to an adjacent outdoor area. The penguins settled very quickly and in early spring excavated nesting burrows in the outdoor pen. Because they bred so well in previous years, our penguins are particularly well represented in other zoos. We decided to breed only from new stock recently imported from Emmen Zoo, Netherlands.

Two of the three new penguins paired together and laid in 1998. While the other penguin eggs were not allowed to hatch, those of the Emmen pair were artificially incubated and two chicks hand-reared.

While the Humboldt's Penguins were



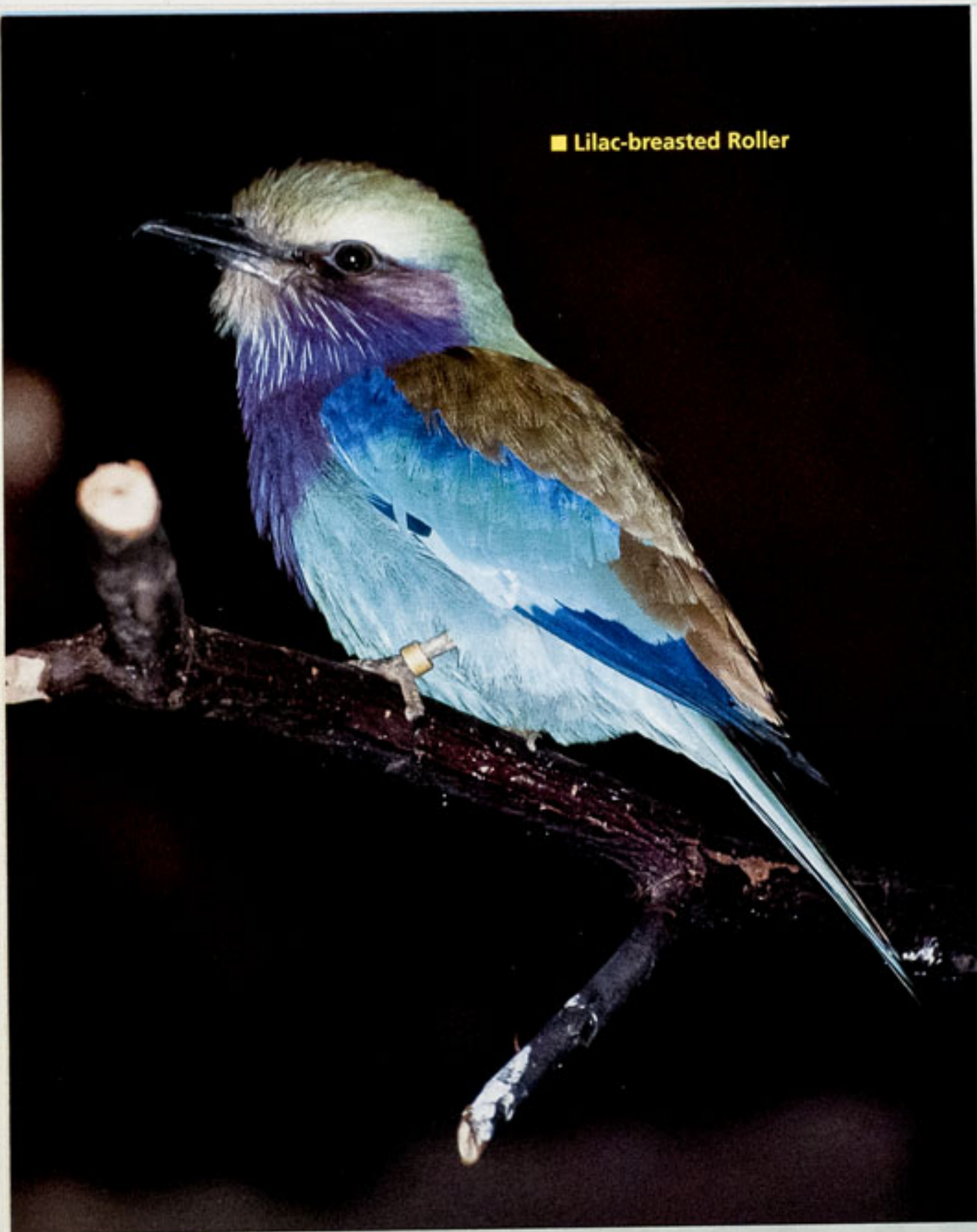
■ Writhe-billed Hornbill

being housed in the Chilean Flamingo quarters the Chilean Flamingos were mixed over the winter with the Caribbean Flamingos. These were separated again into single species flocks in the spring and despite the disruption to their normal wintering routine seven Chilean and two Caribbean Flamingos were reared.

A night of particularly wet heavy snow in mid-April caused further disruption with damage to 'Europe on the Edge', 'Condor Cliffs', the Great Grey Owl aviary, Mauritius Kestrel aviary, Red-crowned Crane enclosure and the 'Oakfield' parrot aviaries.

The Red-crowned Cranes, then sitting eggs only days from hatching valiantly sat through the storm but abandoned their nest mid-morning allowing us to transfer them to West Zoo. The pair then re-laid and reared two chicks in their temporary enclosure.

■ Lilac-breasted Roller



Rapid repairs were made to the aviaries and subsequently the larger enclosures have been re-netted with modified fixing methods including steel rather than nylon supporting cables. Two West African Cranes were reared by foster hens in 1998 and two Gough Island Moorhens reared by their parents.

A female Andean Condor was hatched and parent-reared. This was the eleventh chick reared at Chester but gave us particular satisfaction in being the first chick in the UK to be successfully parent-reared. Six Waldrapp Ibis were reared in 'Europe on the Edge' where Little Egrets, White-headed Ducks and Red-legged Partridges hatched chicks. The newly received Griffon Vultures laid but their egg was infertile.

Waterfowl bred included Cuban Whistling Ducks, Common Shelducks, Marbled Teal, Meller's Ducks, Garganey, Falcated Teal, Chiloe Wigeon, Ringed Teal, Mandarin Ducks, Carolina Wood Ducks and Smew. Malay Crestless Firebacks laid for the first time at Chester and a chick was reared.

One Blyth's Tragopan chick hatched but this did not survive. Other pheasants bred included Satyr Tragopans, Lady Amherst's Pheasants, Golden Pheasants and Himalayan Monal. Green Peafowl (another first), Common Peafowl and Congo Peafowl also bred. The Congo Peafowl hatched and reared chicks as a family group comprising the adult breeding pair and their two full grown male offspring.

Two Spectacled Owls were reared. Three Tawny Frogmouths bred included the first to be successfully raised under its parents at Chester. The latter success was due to the keepers'



■ Mount Apo Lorikeet



■ Andean Condor and chick

patience in teaching the parents to feed their chick, taking care to supplementary feed the chick when required.

Two Kookaburras were reared as were three Lilac-breasted Rollers. African Grey Hornbills, Trumpeter Hornbills, and Wrinkled Hornbills all attempted to nest. Although the Trumpeter Hornbills hatched at least one chick none were reared.

The death of our breeding female Wrinkled Hornbill after two unsuccessful nesting attempts in 1998 was a particular blow in that this pair had been so successful previously. Following the provision of a natural nest log, clearly to their liking, the Green Wood Hoopoes reared chicks for the first time at Chester. Touracos had a particularly good year with Violaceous, Schalow's, Red-crested and White-cheeked Touracos all reared. New to the collection were a pair of Fischer's Touracos.

Amongst the smaller birds we were most successful with one pair of Yellow-throated Laughing Thrushes from which a total of five chicks were reared. Less successful were the White-rumped Shamans which fledged a single chick and the Plumbeous Redstarts from which one chick was hand-reared. The Azure-winged Magpies reared three chicks. The Red-billed Blue Magpies had two nests of chicks but none were reared.

In the *Tropical Realm* free-flight the

Scissor-billed Starlings fledged chicks (for the first time at Chester) and Emerald Starlings and Red-eyed Starlings again bred. Other birds fledging chicks here included Speckled Pigeons, Silver-billed Tanagers and Pekin Robins. Two African Pied Starlings were hand-reared from incubator-hatched eggs. At fledging these youngsters were housed with a single Fischer's Starling which proved ideal in caring for these chicks, feeding them until they became independent. Luzon Bleeding Heart Pigeons bred in the *Tropical Realm* and Mountain Witch Doves were reared in the Bird Arcade.

New arrivals included Mindanao Bleeding Heart Pigeons and two Golden Heart Pigeons. Crested Bronzings, Diamond Doves, Mexican House Finches and Red-cheeked Cordon Bleu bred in the Finch Flight.

1998 was a good year for parrot breeding at Chester. Mount Apo Lorikeets fledged two chicks. This was the first successful breeding of this endangered lorikeet at Chester and the first UK breeding for over 90 years. Other parrots bred included a Red-tailed Amazon, two Lilacine Amazons, three Green-cheeked Amazons, three Cuban Amazons, three Blue-eyed Cockatoos, two Red-fronted Macaws, two Blue-winged Macaws, a Yellow-naped Macaw, a Thick-billed Parrot, a Golden-capped Conure, a Blue-throated Conure, four Greater Vasa

Parrots, three Derbyan Parakeets and a Yellow-backed Chattering Lory. Except for the cockatoos all were parent reared. We were especially pleased to breed the Yellow-naped Macaws and Golden-capped Conures as these had not previously bred in the collection.

Despite the difficulties resulting from the weather, 1998 was a good year for bird breeding with some 70 species of birds reared from a total of 80 species hatching chicks.

However it is becoming increasingly difficult to place surplus stock in known quality housing and for successful pairs there is a danger of swamping managed populations with their offspring. We now breed certain species only to order and will become increasingly selective.

Bird breeding will become even more focussed but remains important. Supporting this, the zoo's plans for winter 1999 include the 'Egg Centre', a new incubation and rearing facility with public viewing and educational interpretation. New zoo developments and increasing commitments to field conservation depend on maintaining our recent increase in visitors. Zoo improvements and innovations like 'Islands in Danger' and the 'Egg Centre' should ensure we continue to get the visitor support needed to be better able to contribute to wildlife conservation and education at the same time as providing our customers with a good day out.

Young Persons' Interpretation Committee

WOULD you like to have a say in planning and designing the Zoo's signage? The Education Division wants to get a group of young people together to talk about the best ways to present animal information to the visitors through signage and other kinds of interpretation. This Committee will meet approximately once a month in the Zoo on a Saturday morning and will be chaired by one of the Education Officers. You don't need any special skills, just enthusiasm, imagination and, of course, an interest in animals and conservation.

So, if you're aged between 8-13 and are interested, please write to Stephen McKeown, Head of Education, saying why you think you'd make a good member of the Committee.

Winter Puzzle Results

We thought the 'Beaks and Feet' competition was quite difficult – but we had a postbag full of correct entries! The answers are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| A Great Indian Hornbill. | B Ostrich. |
| C Carribean Flamingo. | D Andean Condor. |
| E Blue-eyed Cockatoo. | F Humboldt's Penguin. |

The first all-correct entry out of the bag was from Michelle Pye of Kirkby, Liverpool, who wins the £10 voucher to spend in the zoo shop. Well done!



Junior Members' Puzzle Time

A puzzle for our younger Juniors this time. Join the dots from 0 to 55, A to I and U to Z to finish this picture of a burrowing animal from North America.

Then answer these two questions:

1. What is the animal called?

2. How many paddocks do they occupy in the Zoo?

Send the completed drawing, with your answers, to:

Zoo Life Competition
Chester Zoo
Upton-by-Chester
CH2 1LH

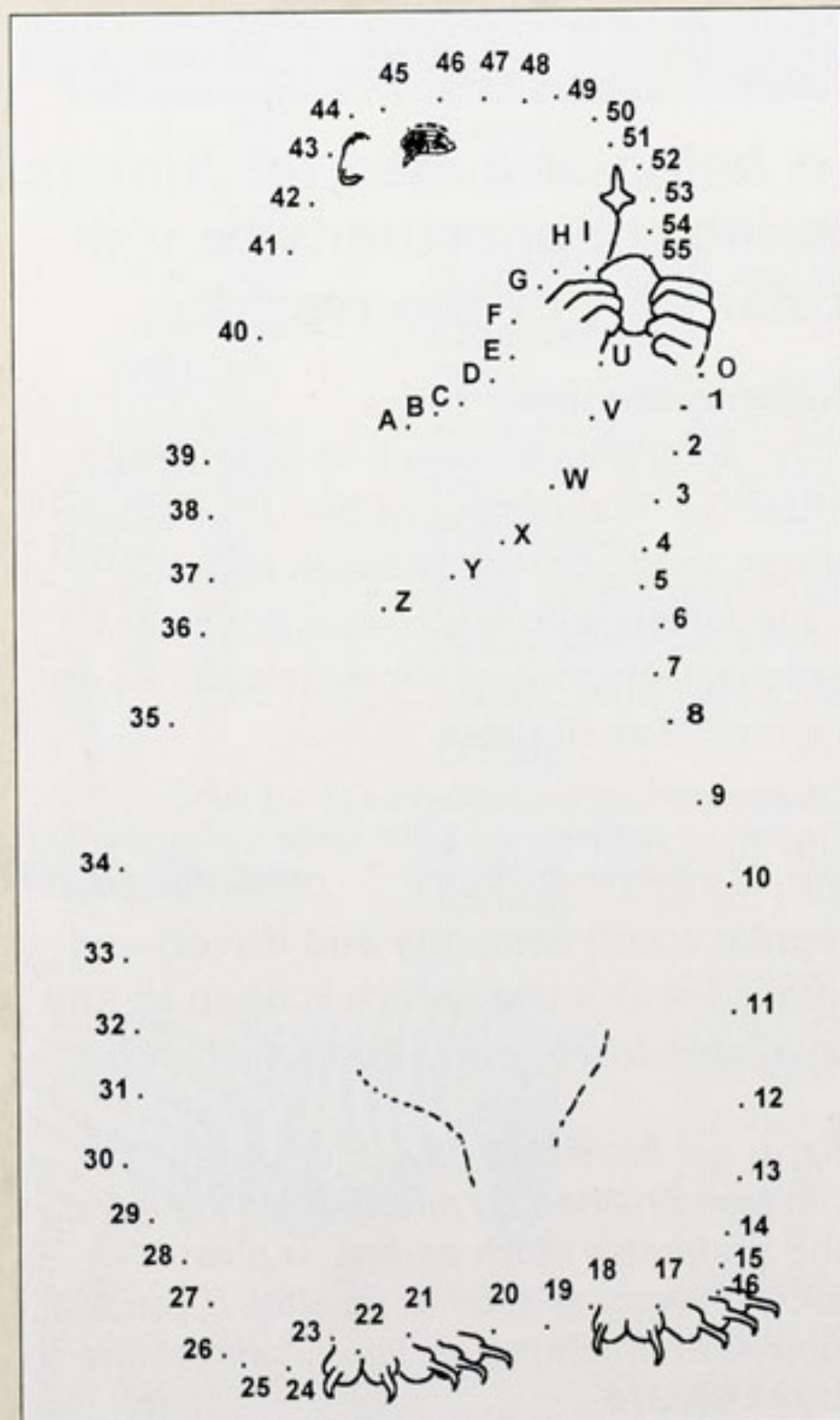
Closing date is 15th April, 1999.

Prize is a £10 zoo shop voucher.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Age _____



JUNIOR MEMBERs

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 1999

SATURDAY 20th MARCH, 1999
'TRACKS AND SIGNS'

NO programme would be complete without this chance to paddle in the mud in our attempts to find suitable footprints inside the animal enclosures from which to make our own plaster casts. We choose March for this event as the damp weather helps us find good footprints. A great day is had by all, but please come prepared to get messy by wearing very warm old clothes and wellies.

Over eights will meet outside the Oakfield at 11.00am and will return there for collection at 4.00pm. Please bring a picnic.

SATURDAY 24th APRIL, 1999
SHUGBOROUGH

SHUGBOROUGH is a beautiful stately home in Staffordshire and whilst we hope to spend some time inside the house and its marvellous kitchens, we will spend most of our visit admiring the many old and rare breeds kept on the estates's Home Farm. Shire Horse cart rides help us view the farm's paddock animals, and there are lots of pigs, sheep and other animals to see in the farmyard itself. We will also be able to see cheese making in the old dairy and baking in the old ovens.

Over eights can come along, leaving the staff car park at 10.00am, returning at 4.30pm. Remember to bring your picnic.

SATURDAY 22nd MAY, 1999
THE CHESTNUT CENTRE

MAY, with all the bluebells in bloom, is one of the prettiest times to visit this lovely wildlife park at Chapel-en-le-Frith in the Derbyshire hills. Specialising in otters from all over the world, we will be able to see lots of these, but the Chestnut Centre also has a big collection of birds of prey and other species too. We hope to have a guided tour around the picturesque estate and hear some of the tales about the animals there.

The bus will leave the Staff Car Park at 9.30am, returning at 5.00pm. Over eights are welcome. Bring a picnic.

SATURDAY 26th JUNE, 1999
THE ISLAND OF ANGLESEY

WE will hope for good weather to enjoy our day on Anglesey, when we will make various trips to places on the island.

These are likely to include the Pili Palace (butterfly farm), the Stone Science Museum, bird watching or the Sea Zoo. This is likely to be a long day out, so please come prepared for everything (including wet and cold weather).

Over eights are invited to join us and the bus will leave the staff car park at 9.00am, returning at 5.30pm. Don't forget your picnic and snacks.

WEDNESDAY 28th JULY, 1999
DAY WITH A KEEPER

ALWAYS the most popular day of the Juniors' calendar, this is when Juniors are given the opportunity to spend a day working alongside a keeper in the zoo. It is because the work involved can be pretty strenuous that we have to restrict this event to Juniors of twelve and over. We do try to accommodate Juniors' areas of special interest, but obviously places are limited so this cannot be guaranteed. Please come prepared for hard work, wearing wellies and with a good picnic.

We will meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30am, and the day will finish for Juniors at 4.00pm.

FRIDAY 20th AUGUST, 1999
SUMMER BARBECUE

THIS is another of our regular events when we meet for an informal summer social evening. It is always fun to see the zoo at night after all our visitors have left. We try to vary what we do at the barbecue each year when we have a surprise event or speaker.

Over eights are invited to come and join the fun, and Juniors should arrive through the staff entrance at 7.00pm and walk through the zoo to the Jubilee restaurant. Parents are requested to collect Juniors from there at 9.45pm.

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

A small charge will be made to cover costs for events involving transport, materials or food. This list is provisional, and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter dates and venues.

These changes will be printed in Zoo Life – not by individual letters – so keep up to date by reading the Junior pages in each issue!

SATURDAY 25th SEPTEMBER, 1999
LOGGERHEADS NATURE TRAIL

THIS will be a new event for Juniors – postponed from last years' programme! We will be going into the wilds of North Wales to do some walking in the Loggerheads Country Park. Starting at Pentre Water Mill we will follow the River Alyn before following the trail up through the wooded hillside to the Loggerheads rocks some 200 feet above the Mill. Walkers will be able to notice the geology of the area as well as the river life, the fauna and flora, and see evidence of former lead mines.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 11.30am, returning at 4.00pm. Over eights should aim to join us and please bring a picnic and warm clothes.

SATURDAY 23rd OCTOBER, 1999
THE DEER RUT AT TATTON PARK

OCTOBER is a special time of year for any park which farms deer, as this is the time for the 'rut' when males battle over possession of females. Tatton Park, is home to both Red deer and Fallow deer and Juniors will be accompanied around areas of the Deer Park by one of Tatton's wardens. This will be a fine time to see nature 'in the raw' and in lovely surroundings. We also hope to call in to see the animals at Tatton's Home Farm whilst we are there.

Over tens should come prepared for the wind and cold and will need a picnic as we will leave the staff car park at 10.30am, returning there at 4.00pm.

SATURDAY 20th NOVEMBER, 1999
LIVERPOOL MUSEUM

WE always have a great day when we visit the Liverpool Museum as they have a really good Natural History Section there. Museum staff will also take Juniors behind the scenes to see how things are used by researchers and how natural history items are stored when they are not on show. There is a taxidermy section within the museum and Juniors can see how animals are prepared for exhibition. One not to be missed by youngsters who want to see what cannot be seen on a 'normal' visit to a museum!

We will leave the staff car park, with picnics at 11.00am, returning at 4.00pm. Over eights.

Arrivals ● Births ● and ● Hatchings ●

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 1998 and JANUARY 1999



■ The three Asiatic lion cubs, born last Autumn, made their first public appearance in January, and starred on both Granada and BBC television. This is Chandani's fourth litter, and, as usual, she is proving a loving and protective mother.

MAMMALS

*Rodrigues Fruit Bat	<i>Pteropus rodricensis</i>	0.0.2	Birth
Seba's Short-tailed Bat	<i>Carollia perspicillata</i>	0.0.1	Birth
*Sulawesi Crested Macaque	<i>Macaca niger</i>	0.0.1	Birth
*Sumatran Orang utan	<i>Pongo pygmaeus abelii</i>	1.0.0	Birth
*Guanaco	<i>Lama guanicoe</i>	0.1.0	Birth
Axis Deer	<i>Cervus axis</i>	0.0.1	Birth
Nilgai	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>	3.1.0	Birth
Congo Buffalo	<i>Syncerus caffer nanus</i>	0.1.0	Birth
*Blackbuck	<i>Antilope cervicapra</i>	0.0.8	Birth

BIRDS

*Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus masaicus</i>	1.0.0	Arrival
*Baikal Teal	<i>Anas formosa</i>	4.2.0	Arrival
*Laysan Teal	<i>Anas laysanensis</i>	1.0.0	Arrival
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	2.1.0	Arrival
*Baer's Pochard	<i>Aythya baeri</i>	3.3.0	Arrival
Crested Caracara	<i>Polyborus plancus</i>	0.0.2	Arrival
*Vietnamese Pheasant	<i>Lophura hatinhensis</i>	0.1.0	Arrival
Crested Bronzewing Pigeon	<i>Ocyphaps lophotes</i>	0.0.1	Hatched
Diamond Dove	<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>	0.0.4	Hatched
Superb Fruit Dove	<i>Ptilinopus superbus</i>	0.0.1	Hatched
Splendid Parakeet	<i>Neophema splendida</i>	1.0.0	Arrival
*Schalow's Turaco	<i>Tauraco schalowi</i>	1.0.0	Arrival
Lilac-breasted Roller	<i>Coracias caudata</i>	1.0.0	Arrival

BIRDS—continued

*Wrinkled Hornbill	<i>Aceros corrugatus</i>	0.1.0	Arrival
*Omei Shan Liocichla	<i>Liocichla omeiensis</i>	1.1.0	Arrival
Red-billed Blue Magpie	<i>Urocissa erythrorhyncha</i>	1.0.0	Arrival

REPTILES

Bearded Dragon	<i>Acanthodracro barbatus</i>	0.0.3	Hatched
Pacific Boa	<i>Candoia carinata</i>	0.0.1	Arrival

AMPHIBIA

*White Axolotl	<i>Ambystoma mexicanum</i>	0.0.10	Arrival
*Black & Gold Poison Arrow Frog	<i>Epipedobates truncatus</i>	0.0.6	Metamorphosed

FISH

Long-nosed Elephant Trunkfish	<i>Gnathonemus petersi</i>	0.0.12	Arrival
Omani Blind Cave Fish	<i>Garra barreimiae</i>	0.0.5	Arrival
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis pyrrhocephalus</i>	0.0.46	Hatched
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis pyrrhocephalus</i>	0.0.2	Arrival
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis sauvagei</i>	0.0.3	Arrival
Lake Victoria Cichlid	<i>Haplochromis xenognathus</i>	0.0.48	Hatched
Boeseman's Rainbow Fish	<i>Melanotaenia boesemani</i>	0.0.36	Arrival
Big-bellied Seahorse	<i>Hippocampus abdominalis</i>	0.0.16	Birth
Knysna Seahorse	<i>Hippocampus capensis</i>	0.0.12	Arrival
Fox Face	<i>Lo vulpinus</i>	0.0.1	Arrival
Cleaner Wrasse	<i>Labroides dimidiatus</i>	0.0.1	Arrival

Key: Col. 1=Male. Col. 2=Female. Col. 3=Young or unknown. *Rare/Endangered.