

WINTER 2012

Z MAGAZINE

CHESTER ZOO

Baby
BOOM!

The official magazine for
Chester Zoo MEMBERS and ADOPTERS

Z MAGAZINE

WINTER 2012

IN YOUR Z...

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DON'T MISS!

Adopter Days
9 March 2013 Saturday
6 October 2013 Sunday

Members' Days
20 April 2013 - Saturday
28 June 2013 - Friday
3 November 2013 - Sunday

Front page picture: Phil Noble/Reuters



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CHESTER ZOO

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ARE YOU A FRIEND OF THE ENVIRONMENT?

As part of our commitment to the environment, we're giving you the chance to receive **Z** electronically.

Swapping over is easy.

Simply contact the membership office on **01244 650 208** or email membership@chesterzoo.org with an email address you would like us to send the link to – but don't forget to include your membership number or postcode so we can find you on our system. You'll still receive **Z** by post should you not wish to receive it electronically.

Please can you update us with news from the zoo?

It's been a rather wonderful few weeks for the zoo and what better way to open than by celebrating the births of so many magnificent mammals. With the arrival of black rhino, Rothschild giraffe and okapi calves, a Sumatran orangutan and capybara babies, this has been one of the most prolific times for mammal births in our history. I think we've all been wowed by the wonderful images of the proud parents - of Sumatran orangutan *Emma* nuzzling her newborn or black rhino *Ema Elsa* keeping a watch over her charge - and it can be very tempting to say there must be something in the air that accounts for our success. However there's a lot more to good breeding than luck. These new arrivals are down to real team work and years of planning - excellent husbandry and science in effect. Be it our facilities, husbandry techniques, nutrition, endocrinology or veterinary care, it's been a big team effort. Elsewhere, we have also welcomed our future (hopefully) Asian elephant breeding bull, *Aung Bo*, a massively important arrival for our herd of elephants. We also welcomed two young male okapi to assist the breeding programme by temporarily housing them. We are now the second largest holder of okapi in Europe.

Please can you update us on Islands?

One small part of the *Islands* development will be new toilet facilities as we know we need more. The opening of the painted dogs' exhibit has increased visitor numbers in that area and subsequently we know there is a need for additional facilities. *Islands* will deliver this but in the interim we have introduced some portaloos. I know they are not necessarily the ideal solution but will be a temporary fix. If we are successful in achieving planning permission, then we'll be looking to start work in earnest come the new year. In the interim, there's a huge amount of working going on behind the scenes in readiness for this amazing visitor experience.

What is happening in conservation?

In March, we embark on our first annual expedition, this time to Nigeria. We have been involved in Gashaka Gumpti National Park in Nigeria (GGNP) for over a decade, primarily focusing on the chimpanzees of the forest. The aims of this expedition are to gain a better understanding of the different animals and plants there and to engage with the local community through visits and events. This will also be the first time we have taken

staff from other departments right across the zoo and I have been surprised and delighted at the level of interest in this trip and the enthusiasm for finding out more about our field programmes.

And finally....

Christmas isn't far off and our new and bright event, Lantern Magic, will soon be upon us. Our dazzling offer includes a night time journey through our wonderful gardens, past our brand new life sized animal lantern display.

Together with family and friends, you can make a Christmas wish under the giant Cedar Wishing Tree and even find Father Christmas. This will be a great new event for us and I hope you are able to come along and share in the magic!

In the last edition of Z we were on a hunt for volunteers to help in the zoo library so that we could open this fantastic resource once again. We now have a wonderful bank of volunteers and the library has re-opened.

The library is now open every Monday to Friday from 10am until 3pm* as a reference resource and a quiet working area.

Why not pay the library a visit and read up on your favourite species! You will be more than welcome.

(*Notice will be given on the website if the library will be closed for holidays - for example between Christmas and the New Year.)

Until early February 2013 the following catering outlets will be open: June's Pavillion, Café Bembe, Bembe coffee shop and Jaguar coffee shop, all subject to weather conditions and demand.

NEWS FROM THE ZOO

with **Dr. Mark Pilgrim**
Director General

SEEING RED

A tiny Sumatran Orangutan has been born. The baby's arrival has been cause for huge celebration because the species is classed by conservationists as being critically endangered in the wild, where it is estimated that less than 7,000 remain.

Mum *Emma* and dad *Puluh* are part of the European Endangered Species Programme which co-ordinates breeding between zoos to maintain genetic diversity.

Tim Rowlands, curator of mammals, said:

'Emma is a fantastic mum and is doing a brilliant job, cradling her baby and not letting him out of her arms.'

'To see the baby and mother together is a truly beautiful sight and to think that this four-day-old is now part of a safety net in case wild populations go extinct is completely humbling.'





PRICKLY customers



Two baby porcupines have had their first ever health check-ups.

The African crested porcupines – named *Stempu* and *Noko* – were born to mum *Roxie* and dad *Nungu*.

Keepers gave the duo a physical examination, inserted microchips and took their weights during the routine checks.

Keeper Chris Grindle said: "We're very pleased to say that both of our spiky new arrivals are in great shape.

"Both look to be very healthy indeed and so we are extremely pleased with them – as are our visitors judging by their reactions when they see them."

Porcupine babies, called porcupettes, are born without sharp quills. Instead their spikes are soft and bendy but gradually harden after a few days.



Our First BABY OKAPI

History has been made with the arrival of our first ever baby okapi, *Tafari*, to its mum *Stuma*.

Our keepers are giving them vital time to bond.

EXCLUSIVE STORY

LEAF KIDS

These weird and wonderful little creatures are Malaysian leaf katydids (*Ancylecha fenestrata*) – and will grow up to look just like leaves.

Adults can grow up to 70mm in length with an audible call song.

They have spines all along their hind legs which are more visible once they become an adult.

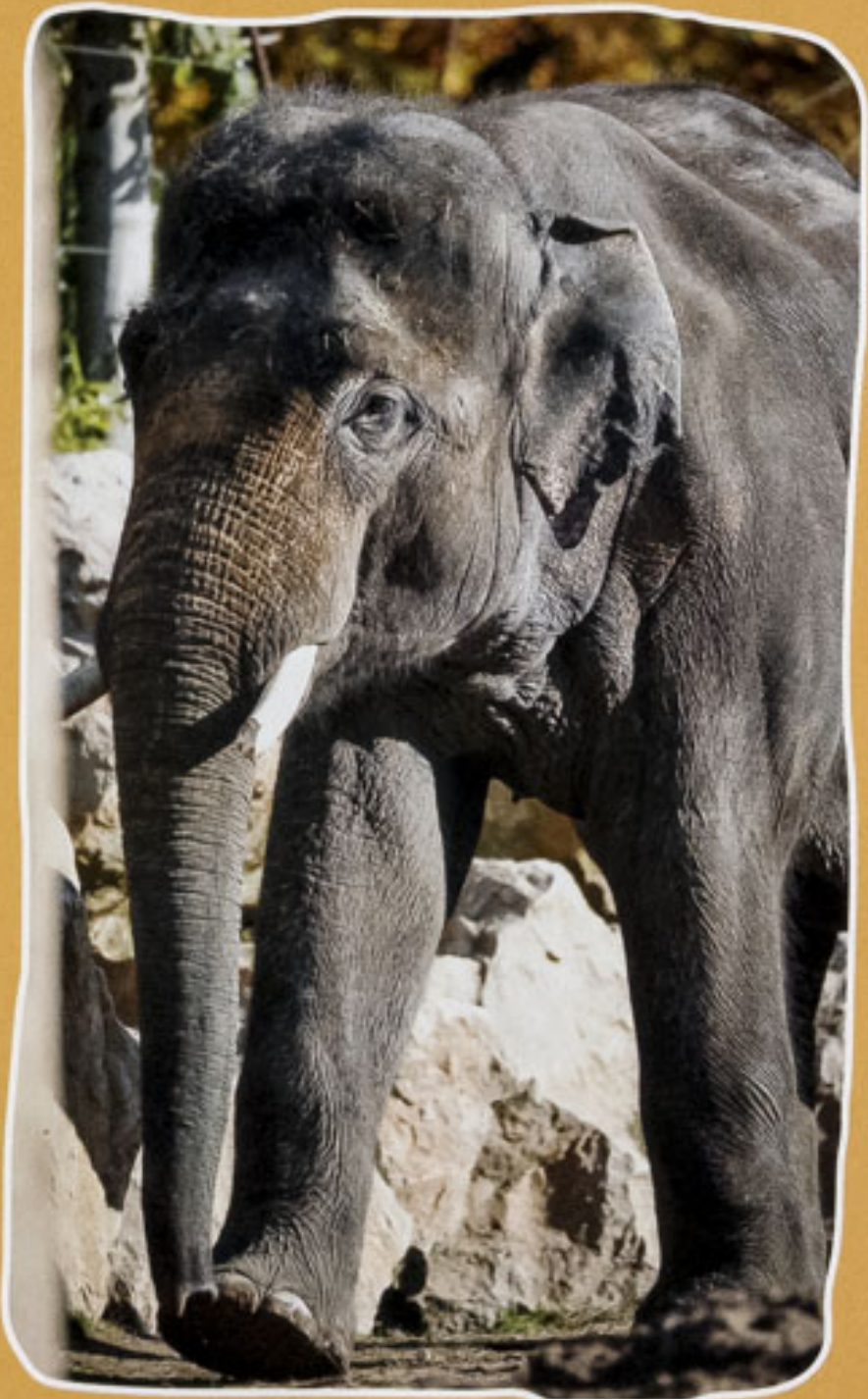
The eggs resemble melon seeds and the female will deposit her eggs into leaves between the upper dermis and the lower epidermis.

The nymphs will hatch out after about four months and feed on *Buddleia* and privet leaves, maturing at around six months. Currently off show, it is hoped the katydids will be on show come the spring.

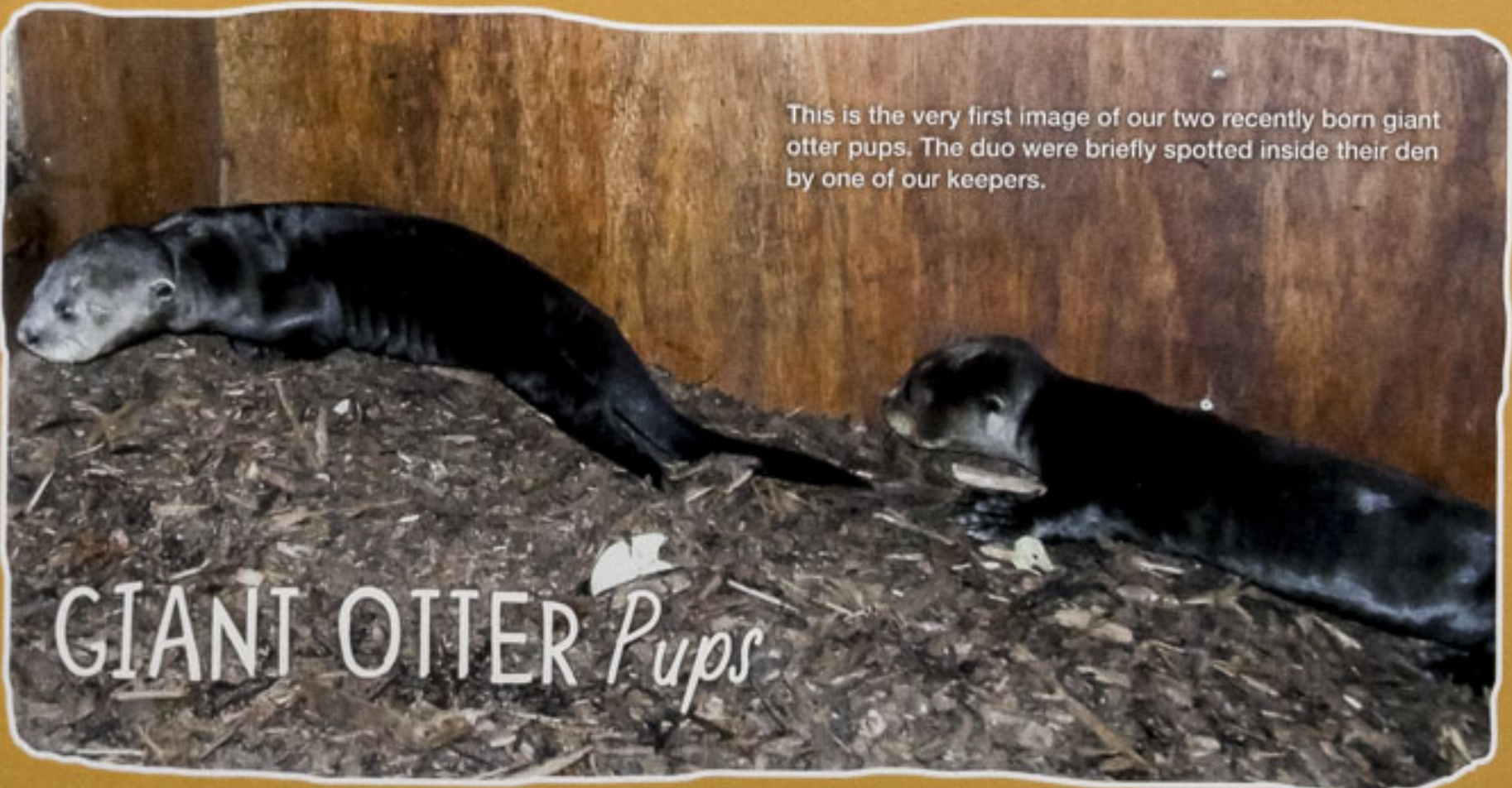


Pictures: Gerardo Garcia

Meet KHERI and AUNG BO



We have two very welcome new arrivals. Okapi *Kheri* has come from Rotterdam and Asian bull elephant *Aung Bo*, 11, has arrived from Seville.



This is the very first image of our two recently born giant otter pups. The duo were briefly spotted inside their den by one of our keepers.

GIANT OTTER *Pups*



Giving RARE SPIDERS a HEAD START

By Karen Lambert, Lead Keeper Herpetology and foster parent to hundreds of spiderlings

Chester Zoo took part in the fen raft spider translocation program for the second time this year. In 2011 we were one of four zoos who played foster home to hundreds of baby spiders. 2012 saw the project, coordinated by Natural England, go from strength to strength with 10 zoos taking part.

The fen raft spider is only found at three sites throughout the UK, and this unique programme aims to increase this number to twelve sites by 2020.

In the wild young spiders have a very slim chance of survival, there are many predators lurking in their wetland habitat and larger spiders will eat their siblings before they even leave the nursery web. To help boost their chances of survival, up to 10 female spiders carrying egg sacs are collected from one of the wild populations - they brood their eggs in a specially made bottle nursery until they hatch. Each nursery can produce up to 700 spiderlings, which are separated into individual test tubes. Once they have been separated and given their first feed they are ready to meet their foster parents.

400 tiny spiders arrived here and they were housed in one of the herpetology department's high tech bio secure units. Raising the spiders is delicate and painstaking work and can take up to two hours a day as individual spiders are fed, their test tubes cleaned, and notes are made about each spiders eating habits and how often they shed their exoskeleton. We were lucky enough to have help from a Biodiversity Trainee funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund Skills for the Future Program. All this hard work helped us achieve great success and we were able to send 369 strong, healthy spiders back into the wild, exceeding the 90% survival rate that was hoped for.

Some went back to Redgrave and Lopham fen in Suffolk - this ensures that the population here is not depleted by the collection of egg sacs, ensuring the continued survival of the species at this site. A total of 2437 spiders were released in an area near Strumpshaw reserve in Norfolk to establish a new population. This site was chosen due to the fantastic habitat for the spiders, and there were lots of opportunities for the spiders to disperse as the population grows. It was a privilege to work with this amazing species and assist in their release back into the wild. The spiders will be monitored in their new surroundings by local volunteers. It is hoped that these spiders will continue to grow throughout 2013, becoming one of the UK's largest spiders, and go on to make nursery webs of their own in 2014.



FEN RAFT SPIDER FACTS

- Scientific name: *Dolomedes plantarius*
- First discovered in Britain: 1956 by Dr. Eric Duffley at Redgrave & Lopham Fen National Nature Reserve at the source of the river Waveney, in East Anglia
- Habitat: Fens and wetlands with sedges or water soldier on which to build its nursery web
- Lifespan: The spiders usually take two years to mature; once adult, the female can produce two egg sacs during the summer but dies before winter
- Breeding habits: After mating in early summer the female builds a silk sac in which she lays up to 700 eggs. She carries the egg sac in her jaws for around three weeks and then guards the young until they are old enough to face the outside world. Although they don't spin webs to catch their prey, they care for their young in a large tent-like nursery webs built in vegetation above the water
- Size: Males up to 18mm body length. Females up to 23mm body length
- Food: Any animal small enough to tackle. It is one of the few spiders big enough to catch vertebrates such as fishes and newts. The spiders can literally walk on water and hunt for prey both at the water surface and underwater
- Conservation status: It is one of only two UK spiders to be fully protected by law under the Wildlife and the Countryside Act 1981. The fen raft spider is listed on the England Biodiversity Strategy requiring special help if they are to recover and thrive again in England

BABY ROTHSCHILD GIRAFFE

This pure Rothschild giraffe, *Kanzi*, is the firstborn for new mum Dagmar, following a 14-and-a-half-month pregnancy.

Tim Rowlands, curator of mammals, said:

"Dagmar is a first time mum but you'd never guess it – she has been doing brilliantly so far. She seems to be taking motherhood all in her, rather long, stride."

"Kanzi is strong and tall and she was on her feet really quickly and suckling from mum not long after."

Dagmar arrived at the zoo on Valentine's Day last year, after finding love via an online animal dating service. She came to us from a wildlife park in Denmark to be partnered with the zoo's then bull giraffe, Thorn, after a long search on a computerised matchmaking service turned up a perfect genetic pairing.

Lizzie Bowen, senior giraffe keeper, said:

"We put Thorn's genetic details into an online database and it turned out a perfect match for him."

"This species of giraffe is very rare and is on the ICUN red-list of endangered species, meaning careful breeding programmes in zoos are vital for their long-term survival. However, finding and getting together a good breeding pair, can be very difficult indeed."

Just like the digital dating services that pair up people, the database contains information on gender, age, height and weight, as well as a page out of most human dating sites – details of an animal's personality.

"Dagmar was described as being rather playful and pretty and she has certainly lived up to that. She seemed to turn Thorn's head pretty much straight away and we've seen the result with the birth of a beautiful, pure baby Rothschild giraffe," added Lizzie.

The new arrival is especially good news as there are now less than 670 Rothschild giraffes left in the wild, following the loss of their traditional habitat in their native Kenya and Uganda and their poaching for their meat. The species is the most endangered of the nine sub-species of giraffe.

BIG BABY BOOM!





BABY BLACK RHINO

Staff had cause for further celebration, with the arrival of another very important baby – a black rhino calf.

She may not have a name yet but she does have an important role to play as the two-day-old is another step towards sustaining a black rhino population which, in the wild, has been ravaged by poachers.

Mum Ema Elsa is nine years old. It's her second calf and she has quickly learnt how to be a very good mother.

Keeper Helen Massey said:

"She's a very attentive mum. She is doing everything right and both her and her calf seem very, very happy."

The birth brings the number of critically endangered black rhinos housed by the zoo to eight.

Helen said:

"Black rhino face a very real threat of extinction and so every birth is vital to ensure their survival."

"The zoo puts a lot of time, money and effort into trying to protect the species in the wild and we support a number of sanctuaries across Africa. However, as the demand for rhino horn intensifies, poaching is becoming a bigger and bigger problem."

"So, in the event that the unthinkable happens and they vanish completely from the wild, we need to ensure we have an insurance population and that's why this arrival is such brilliant news. There's a very happy team of keepers, vets and conservationists at the zoo."

There are thought to be just 700 Eastern black rhinos remaining across the world, placing the species perilously close to extinction.

Numbers in Africa are plummeting as a result of a dramatic surge in illegal poaching. A global increase in demand for rhino horn to supply the traditional Asian medicine market, where it is wrongly believed to be a cure for everything from nightmares to dysentery, has intensified the situation in recent times. The attrition is being driven by the astonishing street value of rhino horn, which is currently worth more per gram than gold and cocaine.

Back at the zoo, the new calf will eventually join the international breeding programme, which has already seen some black rhinos returned to Africa to help boost numbers.

Helen added:

"Our new arrival is only taking small steps at the moment, but eventually it will have a bigger role to play as part of a co-ordinated breeding programme."



AN ENDEMIC SPECIES

is a plant or animal which is found only in one area/region and nowhere else. The term is often associated with islands, where their geographic and biological isolation means they often have huge amounts of unique, endemic, species.

Fast Fact Around 80% of all known species extinctions have occurred on islands

MADAGASCAR

SAVING 'SMALL ISLAND POPULATIONS' from EXTINCTION in the INDIAN OCEAN

*Writes Assistant Conservation
Officer, Cat Barton*

In the 16th Century, European settlers landed on the Mascarene Islands – found 700km east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. The Mascarene Islands of Réunion, Mauritius and Rodrigues have been isolated from the mainland for millions of years and as a result are a 'hot spot' for endemic species – the islands thrive with flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world.

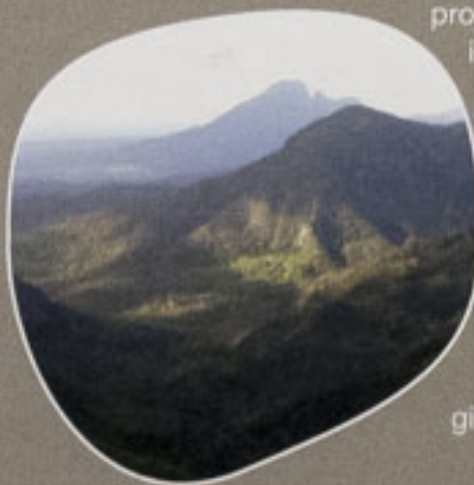
Sadly, almost immediately after the settlement, hundreds of endemic species on the islands were put at risk by human activity – and one famous example, the dodo, was already extinct by the time the settlers arrived having been wiped out by hungry sailors for food. Introduced alien species such as rats quickly began to predate or out-compete native species which, along with native vegetation, soon began to disappear at an alarming rate.

Right now, invasive weeds, introduced predators and a growing human population are still putting increased pressures on the islands' biodiversity. Only 5% of the original forest cover of Mauritius now remains. The Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (DWCT) initiated dedicated species conservation projects on Mauritius and today, this work is mainly coordinated by the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation (MWF) with continuing support from DWCT and Chester Zoo.

Our involvement in the Mascarenes ranges from the restoration of the islands' native vegetation (see page 18) to the conservation of the endemic birds of Mauritius. Here's an introduction to the birds and just some of the support we've given to help save these unique species...



©MWF





MAURITIUS FODY and MAURITIUS OLIVE WHITE-EYE

These two birds are both highly threatened endemic passerines which have been a focus of our support over the past decade.

By the 1970s there were only an estimated 250 pairs of Mauritius fody left in the wild. Following further clearances of native forest habitat, by the 1990s only an estimated 100 pairs survived. The translocation of the fody onto a predator free island was identified as a suitable strategy to establish additional populations. In 2002 the harvesting of young from wild nests was initiated so these could be hand-reared for a conservation breeding program and to provide birds for re-introduction onto the predator-free island nature reserve of Ile aux Aigrettes. This is where Chester Zoo was able to provide both financial and technical assistance. Our skilled bird keepers have assisted MWF with the hand-rearing of these threatened birds out in Mauritius for a number of years. Following a number of exchange visits between our staff and MWF, the first Mauritius fodies from the programme were released in 2003.

LA RÉUNION

By early 2012, a population of around 165 Mauritius fodies was thriving on Ile aux Aigrettes. A reflection of this project's conservation success was the IUCN re-evaluation of Mauritius fody in 2009 which was downgraded from critically endangered to endangered.

In 2005, a similar breeding programme was set up for the Mauritius olive white-eye. Again, technical and financial support from Chester Zoo was a major part of the project. The release of 38 hand-reared birds started in 2006 and was complete by 2010. Currently, the focus for both species is on monitoring and research of the wild populations which our staff are also involved in.



ECHO PARAKEET

MWF staff member **Aurélie Chowrimootoo**:

"The echo parakeet is just one of the bird species we work with. It is a great symbol of the work we do and what we have achieved so far in Mauritius. In 1986 there were only about 12 of these birds left, making it the world's rarest parrot. We have worked hard to help save it, by creating and protecting nests, providing food and rearing birds that we then release into the wild. There are now about 570 echo parakeets in the wild.



©Lara Thick

MAURITIUS

"I'm both a midwife and health visitor for echo parakeets and this is what I'm proudest of. I look at the eggs to make sure they are fertile, then check the hatched chicks to make sure they don't have any disease and take blood samples. Then I check them again once they have fledged successfully. I have been working with the echo parakeet since 2009, and am proud to be the first female Mauritian field worker."



PINK PIGEON

Lianne Concannon, PhD student (University of Reading, MWF):

"In the early 1990s the pink pigeon was one of the rarest birds in the world, reaching a low of 9-10 wild individuals. Thanks to Herculean conservation efforts managed by MWF and the National Parks & Conservation Service (Government of Mauritius) the species was downgraded from critically endangered to endangered on the IUCN Red List in 2000. Despite this amazing conservation success, the wild population seems to have hit a 'glass ceiling' and fluctuates at around 400 birds in the wild. My PhD aims to understand why this is the case and inform the future management and monitoring of the species.

Chester Zoo has a long history of involvement in the Mascarene Archipelago and has supported MWF since 1998. My PhD is a 'CASE' (Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering) studentship, carried out in collaboration between the University of Reading, Chester Zoo and DWCT."



©Lianne Concannon

RODRIGUES





baby capybaras

Three baby capybaras, the world's largest rodents, had a first ever health check.

The trio – a female named *Sakai* and two boys called *Byron* and *Kosh* – were born on Oct 5 to mum *Lily* and dad *Mordon*.

Keepers and vets gave them a physical examination, inserted microchips, took their weights and determined their genders during the routine checks. All were shown to be in great shape.



Sand-ara!

This amazing imprint in the sand was left by a sleeping Sundara, our eight-year-old Asian elephant.

Elephants lie down on their sides to sleep for around four hours a night and usually turn over once, meaning they sleep for approximately two hours on each side.

All of our paddocks are covered in a thick layer of sand which gives our herd a nice, soft surface to sleep on. The elephants prefer to sleep on a slight slope, so every couple of days the sand is turned over and banked up into piles for them to lean against.

We know all of this because every night we record what happens and review the footage the next day. This allows us to note where the eles have slept, who they have been sleeping next to and how long they have slept for.

We can therefore check that everyone is getting enough sleep, that the babies aren't keeping the older girls awake all night, and keep an eye on the social dynamics of the group.



Kidz ZOO

Winter 2012

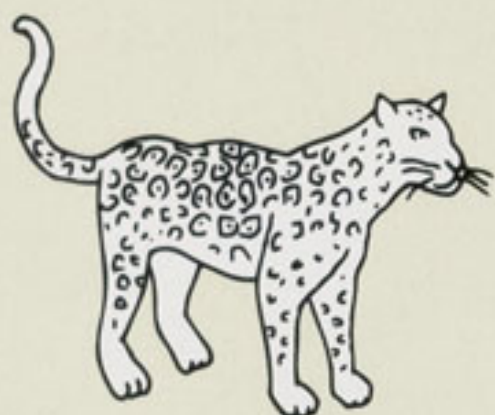


PRIZE
TO BE WON!
with our
WORD SEARCH



Inside...KIDS' PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Junior Members' PROGRAMME of EVENTS 2013



DISCOVERY SESSION

SATURDAY 19 JANUARY 2013

This is your opportunity to get to know your own zoo much better. We will split into groups and do different activities such as imaginative enclosure design which will be your chance to create the best living accommodation for a species we choose, and also to have zoo tours. Store-up some questions about the animals and the way we look after them to ask your guides.

Eights and over are asked to join us, meeting outside Oakfield House (near the lions) at 2.00 pm, and parents can collect the youngsters from there at 4.00 pm.

LIVERPOOL WORLD MUSEUM

SATURDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2013

Liverpool World Museum is large and varied and it has a lovely interactive natural history section and also has a big aquarium with live animals on display which we will visit (plus some other sections of the museum of course!). There will be so much to see and do that we will spend an action-packed cold February day, warm indoors!

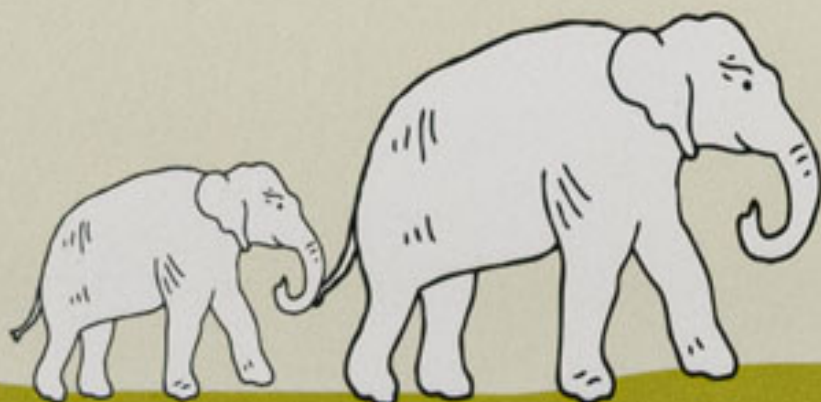
The bus will leave the Staff Entrance at 10.30 am and return at 4.00 pm. Eights and over are welcome to come. Bring a picnic.

TRACKS & SIGNS

SATURDAY 23 MARCH 2013

This is probably one of our most popular events which entertains the wide age range we cater for. This is your chance to see the zoo from the 'animal's view' of the visitors, as you will be going inside some of the enclosures to search for footprints from which to make plaster casts. March is the best time of year for this as it is normally muddy - but please bear this in mind when you dress in the morning. Hopefully, you will have a souvenir of your day to take home with you.

Eights and over can come along and join the messiness, when we meet outside Oakfield House at 11.00 am, returning there for collection at 4.00 pm. You will need a picnic lunch, and it is important that you wear clean, very old clothes and absolutely clean wellies please.



STOCKLEY FARM - NORTHWICH

SATURDAY 20 APRIL 2013

There is always lots to do at Stockley Farm, whatever the weather! We will hop onto the tractor and trailer ride, meet the farm animals, help to bottle feed the baby goats, visit Pet's Corner, meet the ponies and Ivan the enormous Shire Horse, watch the Birds of Prey and visit the milking parlour for Stockley's 200 dairy cows. It will be a lovely day out.

Eights and over are asked to join us, meeting at the Staff Entrance at 10.30 am, and we will return there for 4.30 pm. Bring a picnic with you.

CHESTNUT CENTRE - OTTER AND OWL SANCTUARY

SATURDAY 18 MAY 2013

This is always one of our most enjoyable days out and we look forward to visiting the much cared-for woodland and hillside which forms the Chestnut Centre in the Peak District. Hopefully we will have a guided tour and the opportunity to meet some otters, owls and other birds of prey there, because as well as a wide variety of Otter species from Europe and beyond, this collection is also involved in rescuing and re-habilitating many of our native species. May is a wonderful time of year to visit as the bluebells are stunning in the woodland.

The bus will leave the Cedar House staff car park (second staff entrance on the left as you are coming up Caughall Road from the Upton traffic lights) at 9.30 am and return for 5.00 pm. Over eights are invited to come along, and you should bring a picnic.

LAKE PADARN - SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK!!

SATURDAY 22 JUNE 2013

Don't worry, we will not be traipsing the juniors up Mount Snowdon, but we will have this famous mountain in our sight at times while we are walking around the huge Lake Padarn, one of the water bodies at the base of the Electric Mountain. We will not be rushing - just enjoying the stroll and if we manage to be quiet enough we will see some of the wild mountain goats which live in this beautiful area.

We will leave the staff car park at 9.00 am and return at 5.30 pm. Bring a picnic lunch and all eights and over are invited to come along for a lovely day out.

HOW TO BE A GOOD ZOOKEEPER!

WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 2013

This is a unique opportunity offered to junior members to spend a day working alongside a zoo keeper. The work can be tough and demanding so we strictly limit this event to those juniors of 12 years old or over. We try to match juniors to their favourite section, but places are limited so this cannot be guaranteed. Please arrive prepared to work hard, with clean wellies and an additional completely clean set of clothes to work in.

Owing to the zoo's biosecurity measures, it is important that the clothes you wear to work on the sections have not been in contact with any farm animals, or even your pets at home, since they were last washed.

We will meet outside the Oakfield at 10.30 am, and the day will finish at 4.00 pm. Please bring a packed lunch. Also please note that bookings for this event will not be taken before 9.00 am on Wednesday 10 July 2013, (01244 650215) and will be strictly on a first-come, first-served basis.

JUNIORS' SUMMER BARBEQUE

THURSDAY 1 AUGUST 2013

Our summer barbeque has become a regular feature for the juniors' diary as it has proved immensely popular. Perhaps this because it is our chance to be in the zoo when there are no other visitor noises to distract you and the animals, so it is a different zoo experience. We usually aim to have a speaker to chat to you or to engage in craft activities or zoo tours during the evening, but you can be sure to find it relaxing.

We would like to invite eights and over to join us for a 7.00 pm start, when you should arrive at the Main Entrance. Parents are asked to collect juniors from the Main Entrance at 9.45 pm please.

THE JUNIOR MEMBERS SUMMER SCHOOL

FROM 5 - 9 AUGUST 2013 INCLUSIVE

Please note that the two week booking rule does NOT apply to this event and EARLY BOOKING IS ADVISED (anytime from December 2012 onwards).

The Summer School is open to juniors aged 12 and above (although preference will be given to those aged 13 and above). Participants must be able to attend all five (full) days and the cost will be £185 for the week.

A full programme of events for this action-packed, but informal week, will be issued in the March edition of this magazine, but essentially the Summer School will encompass a wide variety of theoretical and practical training including a mid-week field trip, live mammal trapping, tours of the zoo, and talks from a variety of zoo staff about all aspects of the zoo's work. It is ideally suited to those hoping to follow a career in zoos, conservation or veterinary science but is also a lot of fun for those just interested in finding out more about how our wonderful zoo works!



Please Note:

Bookings must be made for all events. Please ring Penny Rudd at the zoo on 01244 650 215, not more than two weeks before the event you would like to attend. Places are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and may be limited. This list is provisional and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter dates and venues. You will be informed of any such changes in Z Magazine and not by individual letter, so please keep up-to-date by reading the Kidz Zoo pages in each issue. A charge will be made to cover the cost of those events which involve transport, entry fees, materials or the provision of food and you will be advised of this at the time of booking.



TRENTHAM MONKEY FOREST, STAFFORDSHIRE

SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2013

You will love this visit which offers the chance to walk amongst free-roaming Barbary Macaques at Trentham Gardens. There are around 150 macaques there and you will be able to watch their natural behaviour with no cage barriers. The forest offers a safe place for the monkeys to live and provides areas of space for them to develop and live in freedom.

The bus will leave the staff car park at 10.00 am and return at 5.00 pm. Eights and over are invited to join us for a relaxing day. Bring a picnic.

BLACKPOOL ZOO

SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 2013

It is a few years since the juniors last visited Blackpool Zoo but it is always great to visit other zoos and to see how they do things. We plan to have a guided walk so that we do not miss any of the highlights and Juniors should have an excellent day.

Over eights are invited to come along and enjoy the day, and we will leave the staff car park at 9.30 am and return there for 5.15 pm. You will need a picnic lunch and to dress up warmly.

BURTON MERE WETLANDS - THE RSPB RESERVE ON THE DEE ESTUARY

SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2013

Burton Mere Wetlands it is a magnificent mosaic of wetlands and beautiful woodlands and is perfect if you are new to birdwatching, as the entire reserve has been designed to get you closer to nature. Vast panoramas and a fascinating history are just some of the highlights from Burton Mere Wetlands. Straddling the border between England and Wales, this is a unique landscape. Many years of hard work have restored reedbeds, fenland and farmland.

This is a relatively new reserve to the RSPB and we felt we would love to go along to take a closer look. Many scarce migrant birds have been seen in previous years, including little stints, green, curlew and wood sandpipers. Little egret numbers are at their highest in October/November as the chicks have fledged and large roosts have built up. Also, small numbers of wild geese begin to arrive. We will have a guided walk which should be excellent!

The bus will leave the staff car park at 11.00 am and return for 4.00 pm. You will need to dress warmly and bring a picnic lunch. If you have binoculars bring them along, but we will have some you can borrow too. Juniors of eight and over are more than welcome to join us.

THE JUNIORS' CHRISTMAS PARTY

FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER 2013

Our annual 'bash' welcomes juniors of eight and over to enjoy an evening of games, disco music, and a great hot-dog and beef-burger supper. You will need to bring along a cushion to sit on - and a torch to find us!

The venue will be Café Bembe. Access can be gained through the Main Entrance. You should arrive at 7.00 pm, with your cushion and a torch, and we will guide you to the venue. Parents should arrange to collect you from the Main Entrance at 9.45 pm.

Our **JUNIOR MEMBERS** are up to all sorts of **INTERESTING** things in and around the zoo.
 If you have a story to tell, please contact Penny Rudd via p.rudd@chesterzoo.org

FIND THE ANSWERS IN THE GRID

1. Mauritius is a small island near Madagascar, with important wildlife, but which continent are they next to?
2. What is the collective term for the islands of Mauritius, Reunion and Rodrigues?
3. Before settlers arrived there were no land-dwelling mammals on Mauritius. One group of native mammals are marine mammals, can you name the other?
4. Which bird was famously eaten to extinction in the 16th century?
5. Along with habitat destruction, what was the main cause of native wildlife decline on Mauritius?
6. The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF), with the help of Chester Zoo, has saved species from extinction. Three birds saved include the smallest bird of prey, the last remaining parrot on Mauritius, and a small colourful relative of the bird eaten to extinction by settlers. Can you name them?
7. What is the group name for two native songbirds, named for the distinctive light-coloured rings around the eyes?
8. Which bird is named for the tropical forest it lives in, and it's diet of flying insects?
9. Can you name one of the few native birds which is named after two birds, but is not related to either of them?
10. One island of Mauritius that has been restored to it's native state is Ile aux Aigrettes, can you name another?



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

For your chance to win a £10 voucher to spend in the zoo shops, send your entry together with your name, address and phone number to:

Z Magazine, Marketing Department, Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, Chester CH2 1LH
 by Friday 14 December

MICROCHIPS FOR DORMICE

Our vets have fitted tiny microchips to dormice as part of a project helping conservationists to discover more about the animals.

The dormice - a rare native species which is protected in the UK - are being marked in Denbighshire in north Wales and in Cheshire as part of a joint project between the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales, Natural England, the Wildlife Trusts, North East Wales Biodiversity Partnership and Chester Zoo. The project is aiming to deliver more effective dormouse conservation in the region.

The data collected is providing important information on dormouse habitat use, life expectancy, population size and breeding behaviour.

The dormice at the site in Denbighshire are doing well, due in part to some careful woodland management by Forestry Commission Wales. They have created a diverse woodland with trees of different species and ages that provide lots of food and shelter for the tiny mammals.

A member of our conservation team takes a dormouse off to be microchipped. Dormice, which grow to just 65-85mm in length, are believed to spend up to three quarters of their five-year lifespan asleep. To minimise stress to the dormice during chipping, the animals are removed from nest boxes, where they sleep during the day.



In a mobile veterinary unit, set up in the back of a van, our vets prepare to put the dormouse under anaesthetic.



With the dormouse under anaesthetic, vets get ready to conduct the health check and insert a microchip.



The microchip is carefully fitted and will give the animal a unique number which can be read by a scanner.

After being brought around with oxygen, the dormouse is returned safely to its nest box.

**ACT FOR
WILDLIFE**

LED BY **CHESTER ZOO**

THE BIRD is the WORD

You won't find many people moving from Sierra Leone to Stockport with their pet chimpanzee in tow. But that's exactly what Andy Woolham's grandparents did in the 1930s...

The couple were the first of three generations of animal keepers, culminating in Andy becoming the team manager of parrots and penguins at Chester Zoo. Andy's dad - the second generation - was Frank Woolham, bird author, one time regular contributor to *Cage & Aviary* birds magazine and former "questions and answers man then later curator" at Bellevue Zoo.

Unsurprisingly, Andy says animals were always a part of his life. He says he's got many happy memories from his childhood:

"One of my earliest recollections is having a bath and being surrounded by hummingbirds. My dad was a keen aviculturist and his main interest was in very small delicate passerines and he often kept them in the bathroom. It was a nice humid environment. So I'd be having a bath while gazing at the various brightly coloured hummingbirds. My dad also kept snakes. In mid-winter I remember feeling something moving in the bed with me and pulled the covers back to discover a boa constrictor had escaped from its tank. It was cold, so it had wrapped itself around my hot water bottle to keep warm. I've got so many stories about my dad. But it was normality to me. One year I got a kestrel as a Christmas present. We always had various wild and stray raptors being brought to us. At the age of ten I was handrearing abandoned kestrels and tawny owls."

Andy's grandparents had been working as Christian missionaries in Sierra Leone when they returned to Stockport, bringing with them a female chimpanzee. Those were the days when the only bar to bringing exotic animals into the country was cost.

"They moved back to Stockport where the family comes from. It would be in

the early 1930s. It wasn't so unusual to have a pet chimpanzee in those days, believe it or not. You could buy pretty much anything you fancied in Manchester's pet shop street, Tibbs Street. In the end they offered the female chimpanzee to Bellevue Zoo, which turned it down because it was too boisterous. Eventually, London Zoo took it. My grandparent's daughter, my mum, went on to work at Bellevue Zoo, where my dad was curator of birds. That's how they met."

Andy's dad, Frank Woolham, left the zoo world and took up a PR job at Vauxhall motors on Merseyside, at Ellesmere Port. But the family house was right opposite Chester Zoo.

"My dad eventually took early retirement from Vauxhalls and he opened an avicultural supply company in Chester called Fine Feathers, in the early 1980s. Dad being dad - he had his own particular way of doing things - he didn't want a pet shop as such, he wanted to specialise in delicate exotics."

"But the main reason we moved to Chester from Manchester was Dad's love of Chester Zoo and his friendship with its founder George Mottershead"

Andy worked in his dad's shop and of course they were both frequent visitors to the zoo opposite their house. One day Andy got a visit.

"The then curator of birds at Chester Zoo, Roger Wilkinson and assistant curator Peter Bloomfield knocked on the door of our house. They knew me well from the shop. They'd come to tell me there was a junior job going at the zoo. I applied for it and was lucky enough to get it."

"Walking into Chester Zoo on that first day felt like coming home. Would you believe, 28 years later, I'm still working with all the lads that I worked with on that very first day. We have an incredibly low staff turnover rate which is testament to the wonderful working environment we have and to the zoo itself. People just don't want to leave once they start working here."



"Walking into Chester Zoo on that first day felt like coming home."

Andy Woolham, Team Manager of parrots and penguins



This article was originally written by Nick West for *Cage & Aviary Birds*. Website: www.cageandaviarybirds.co.uk.

All these years later, while Andy still loves the job, he says it's changed enormously.

"In the old days, the wild used to come to the zoo. Now the zoo goes to the wild. We send staff out all around the world. We have nine key conservation programmes."

Our focus is now on conserving animals in their environment. Gone are the days where our focus is just having animals on display. Our orientation at Chester is wholeheartedly on animal welfare and conservation."

With that in mind Chester Zoo has moved towards creating all-enveloping visitor experiences. Andy explains:

"We've got the Tsavo walk-through which is a cleverly themed immersive exhibit. When you enter you can just imagine being on a nice hot sunny day on the plains of Tsavo in Africa. The birds we've got in there include black necked Weaver, Spree starlings, Hammerkop, Hottentot Teal and Von der Deckon hornbills. The birds are flying all around you. It makes a totally different connection to the animals."

Chester Zoo is one of the UK's biggest and most important zoos and one of the country's major attractions. Andy says it's great that so many people visit the zoo, as it gives them an opportunity to talk about the need for worldwide conservation and protection of bird species.

"We get over 1.4m visitors a year. And luckily I like to interact with people. One of my areas is the penguins. Visitors can have a penguin encounter whereby they pay some money to come and get involved in feeding the penguins and then through face-to-face contact with people, through conversations, we're able to reinforce the conservation message. In a nice way, of course! If only 10% of our visitors go home having picked up the conservation message, I do really feel we are making a difference from a conservation point of view."

Andy has the same love as his dad for small delicate passerines but he also has other favourites:

"I think the hyacinth macaws are one of the most stunning animals on the planet. The way they look, the level of intelligence, and they're also quite a challenge to breed, which we try to do. We have a fantastic reputation for breeding programmes, such as one of dad's old favourites, the White-rumped Shama. We bred over 20 youngsters last year and they're a difficult species to breed. They're a very aggressive species and yet we do very well with them. We've got a fantastic team of birdkeepers here and over the years we've built up an enormous amount of knowledge."

Along with Andy, his younger brother Michael also worked at Chester Zoo. And while Andy's two sons don't work with birds, there is a fourth generation animal keeper amongst the Woolhams.

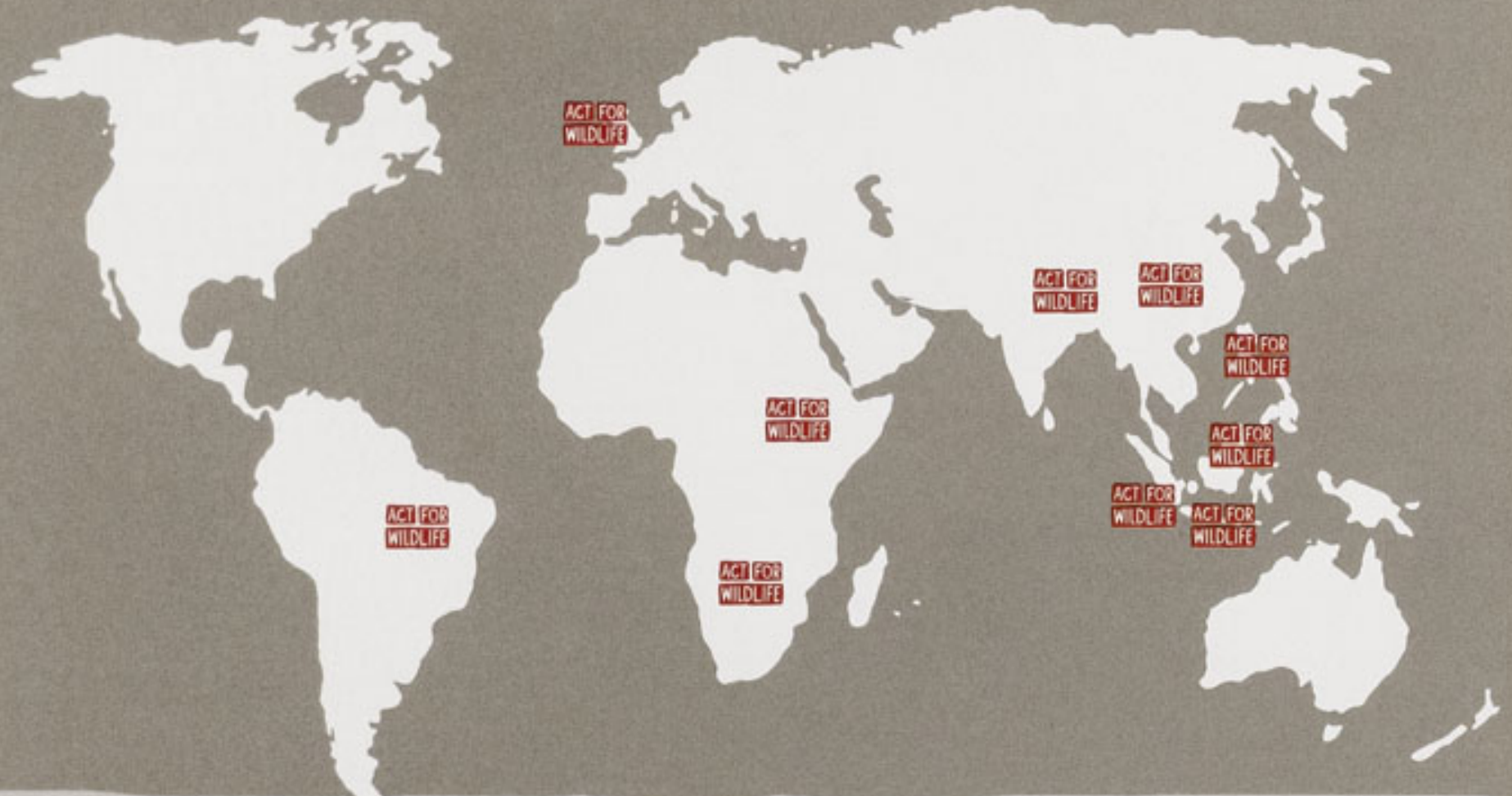
"My younger brother Michael also worked at Cotswold Wildlife Park. He worked on the rhinos! And his eldest son Matthew is also now working at Banham Zoo. So I'm hoping he will carry on the family tradition."

Tsavo bird aviary



MAKING A DIFFERENCE AROUND THE WORLD

All the places we have ACTED FOR WILDLIFE in the last three months.



A focus on THE BLACK RHINO PROGRAMME



September was marked by the launch of an emergency campaign 'Say NO to rhino poaching', aiming to increase awareness of the threats facing wild rhinos. This was triggered by the news that a black rhino had been poached at one of our projects in Chyulu Hills National Park, Kenya. This was the first poaching incident there in over three years. After hearing gun shots, rangers patrolled the area and found an adult bull which had been shot. The rangers work extremely hard to protect rhinos in this area, and losing one is a massive blow to them. This killing is also a sure sign that the increase in rhino poaching seen in other areas of Africa is now spreading. The situation is dire, as poachers are better equipped and are finding new ways to enter places where rhinos were once safe. Our emergency appeal was a great success and we were able to send additional funds over to Chyulu Hills to help in the current crisis.



Fast Fact

By September this year, the number of rhinos killed in Africa in 2012 was at 430 and rising...

News from THE OKAPI PROJECT

We were devastated to hear that six people and 13 okapi had been brutally killed in the Okapi Faunal Reserve in north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The Okapi Conservation Project is one that we have given financial support to for a number of years and have now provided an emergency donation to the project to help the people concerned. Following the attack by poachers and illegal miners on Epulu, efforts are being focused on providing food and supplies to families displaced by the turmoil in the reserve. Emergency funding will continue to support anti-poaching patrols, education and agroforestry around the reserve, whilst security is being reinstated in Epulu. A joint military operation is underway and the outcome will help determine when the project will be able to initiate rebuilding in the area.



NEWS FROM CHINA

The use of new stoves in one of the nature reserves we support has made a huge difference to our habitat protection work in China. Every community in Laojunshan National Nature Reserve burns firewood daily – it's a basic need for every family in the community and is particularly used for cooking their food. However the traditional large open fire in the middle of the main room of the house uses a large amount of wood to fuel the fire. Habitat destruction is one of the biggest threats to native wildlife and although the amount of wood taken by each family is relatively small, if each family in a community has to take wood from the nature reserve it adds up to a huge amount. A big part of our work in China has been to work with local communities to find more sustainable solutions to protect the local habitat. One of the ways we do this is through biogas stoves. Instead of using wood, biogas stoves run on the methane gas produced from the dung of domestic livestock like pigs. We found that biogas stoves lead to householders using 80-90% LESS firewood which is a fantastic result in reducing the negative impact on the environment.

Fast Fact

A total of 12 stoves have been installed by the project so far – with a further six due this year.

NATIVE SPECIES PROGRAMME *Update*

The Sea Mammal Research Unit based at the University of St Andrews has received our support for an innovative project named 'Seal Sky Spy'. The purpose of the project is to build a cost effective, manoeuvrable 'unmanned aerial vehicle' (UAV) to take photographs of grey seals at breeding colonies around Scotland. It is hoped that this will give further insight into identifying individual seal movements and that the technology may be used with other species once it has been developed.



You may have heard about badgers and bovine tuberculosis (bTB) recently in the news; a badger cull was proposed by DEFRA to combat the transfer of the disease from badgers to cattle. As an alternative solution, Cheshire and Shropshire Wildlife Trusts are running a badger vaccination project to vaccinate badgers against bTB. We have backed this scheme with the provision of equipment and expertise in an effort to acknowledge the problem of bTB and the role that wildlife plays, and encourage the development of disease control techniques that protect badgers. The five-year vaccination strategy initially focuses on Wildlife Trust-managed sites and will expand to other private land in the area over the next four years.

Fast Fact Experts estimate that around 50 000 badgers are killed in Britain each year by road traffic

EAZA SOUTHEAST ASIA CAMPAIGN *Update*

We are pleased to announce that we have raised €10,000 for Chester Zoo's EAZA South-east Asia Campaign this year and have received a Gold Award from EAZA. This is a fantastic achievement and the funds will go towards vital conservation projects in south-east Asia. The campaign



will run for another year until September 2013, so watch this space for news of activities taking place at the zoo to raise funds and awareness.

JOIN US TO ACT FOR WILDLIFE AND VISIT
www.actforwildlife.org.uk

MEET OFFICER JAZZ

Officer Jazz is a new recruit at the Chyulu Hills project in Kenya. Bloodhound tracker dogs have been used in the anti-poaching team for a number of years, but Jazz is rather unusual – he is the first German Shepard to be used. At the moment, Jazz is the only tracker dog and despite being alone, has performed superbly. He has facilitated the successful arrests of poachers and the recovery of illegally gained tusks. Take a look at his current score card (right)!

BLOOD HOUND ACHIEVEMENT	
NAME: OFFICER JAZZ	
DATE	ARRESTS/REMARKS
21/11/12	5
21/11/12	3
21/11/12	7
11/12/12	6
11/12/12	4



GRANT SUPPORT

During the last quarter we've also supported a number of other projects around the world. These include:

CENTRAL AMERICA

The black-eyed tree frog is a critically endangered species. In El Salvador, our support is funding an assessment of the status of the species and evaluation of its habitat. This research will help to guide conservation efforts for this threatened amphibian.

AFRICA

Vultures are a vital part of the ecosystem – they feed on dead carcasses and remove them from the environment. By doing this, they are decreasing the chance that diseases from carcasses are spread to other wildlife. As such, protection of vultures is vital. A recent project received our support to conserve vultures in northern Kenya and better understand how human activities impact vulture populations.

ASIA

South-east Asia has been identified as needing urgent conservation attention. Our support for threatened species in the region ranges from the conservation of the Sumatran rhino to a recovery program for the Javan black-winged starling and support for Philippine crocodile conservation. In addition, a new focus for us has been the support of a Sulawesi crested black macaque project in Indonesia. This monkey species is critically endangered and the project will carry out research into the abundance of the species in key villages and survey the attitudes of local people towards the species.

EUROPE

We are supporting a long-term project which is monitoring the predation of woodland birds by edible dormice during the breeding season in the UK.

NEWS ON CONSERVATION *FROM AROUND THE WORLD*

Some good and bad news from the past few months....

GOOD The blue iguana, found only on Grand Cayman Island in the Caribbean, has been downgraded from critically endangered to endangered. Its numbers have increased by at least 15 times over the past decade due to a dedicated conservation programme and recovery team.

BAD An update to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of threatened species found that over half of the world's primates are threatened with extinction. Madagascar was found to be home to the most threatened primates, with 94 of the world's 103 lemur species on the list. Habitat destruction and poaching for the bushmeat trade are the two primary threats to lemurs.

STAFF GO WILD

We are Chester Zoo and we
ACT FOR WILDLIFE. *Here's how...*

KENYA

In September whilst we were encouraging our supporters to 'Say NO to rhino poaching' as part of Act for Wildlife's 'Rhino Month', **Roger Wilkinson** (Head of Field Conservation and Research) and **Maggie Esson** (Education Programmes Manager) were in Kenya looking at the ways in which Chester Zoo is helping the fight against illegal poaching.

They spent time with wildlife rangers working in and around Chyulu Hills National Park, a project we have been working with for a number of years. The rangers are proud of their work and took them to see some of the Chester Zoo sponsored initiatives in action, including camera traps to aid in rhino protection and monitoring efforts and the newly completed ranger camp facility.



SOUTH KOREA

The World Conservation Congress of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the single most important global meeting for conservation, with 8000 or more delegates. Organised every four years, the congress was held on the beautiful island of Jeju, South Korea. Chester Zoo is an institutional voting member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a member of the IUCN Conservation Breeding Specialist Group. It also assists the IUCN in other ways including through the IUCN's Freshwater Fish Specialist Group. This is Chaired by the zoo's Director Emeritus, Gordon McGregor Reid. Gordon and his Programme Officer, Katalin Csáti, represented Chester Zoo in Jeju. Through a series of presentations and workshops they promoted the message that freshwaters are only 0.3% of available global surface water yet support more than 15,000 fish species, many now threatened with extinction. Besides this, Gordon and Katalin voted for the zoo on several key motions for wildlife conservation. These adopted motions set the strategy for IUCN and member nations over the next four years.

Taste of the ORIENT



Research Officer Dr Sonya Hill specialises in applied ethology, the scientific field dedicated to the behaviour and welfare of confined animals. In August, she travelled to northern China as a guest of Animals Asia, a charity dedicated to ending cruelty and restoring respect for all animals

in Asia. Sonya was there to take part in a workshop organised by the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens (CAZG) and supported by the Northeast Forestry University (NFU) and Harbin North Forest Zoo (HNFZ). Along with several other instructors and a translator from Animals Asia, she was invited to train zoo staff from CAZG about animal behaviour, welfare and husbandry, using lectures, question-and-answer discussions, and zoo-based practicals. Sonya was able to experience first-hand some of the challenges Chinese zoos face: China may be a world "superpower", but there is still very limited access to knowledge about animal husbandry and welfare.

Sonya focussed on the importance of husbandry techniques like targeted environmental enrichment, which we use in zoos like Chester to encourage a range of species-appropriate physical and behavioural activities important for good welfare. During the practicals, Sonya spent some time demonstrating the importance of social enrichment, which is crucial for group-living animals, by interacting "chimpanzee style" with a solitary-housed adult male chimpanzee! This was to encourage the delegates to use some simple but very effective ways to improve the lives of such animals, by playing with them on their terms. Not only can this be very beneficial for the solitary animal, but it can also be a very rewarding way to help the keepers build up a stronger bond with a solitary animal and learn to recognise and address their needs better.

In the UK, it is not acceptable to subject highly social animals like chimpanzees to prolonged isolation from other members of their species, so species-appropriate interactions with trained keepers is preferable to complete isolation, until the situation is resolved. As a Trustee of the Jane Goodall Institute UK (JGI UK), whose activities include promoting conservation and welfare of chimpanzees, Sonya will now arrange for some of the JGI's and Chester Zoo's own enrichment information to be translated into Mandarin through Animals Asia, to assist the Chinese zoos. Chester Zoo and Animals Asia have been working together for several years, to provide training here in Chester, and in China, to CAZG.

 **Animals Asia**
Until the cruelty ends



Restoration and reforestation of the GRANDE MONTAGNE NATURE RESERVE, RODRIGUES

Mark Sparrow – Curator of Horticulture and Botany, Yvette Foulds – Conservation Assistant
Chester Zoo

The Grande Montagne Nature Reserve is a 25.5ha fenced area of montane evergreen forest, estimated to represent 45% of the remaining native forest found on Rodrigues. It is recognised as a National Nature Reserve and Conservation Management Area and is one of only two protected reserves on the island.

The project is currently implementing a ten year restoration plan with the objectives of:

- Restoring the full 25.5ha area of the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve.
- Supplementing the current population of threatened Rodriguan plant species through propagation and reintroduction.
- Enhancing community involvement by recruiting from the local workforce and promoting environmental awareness.

The Mascarene Islands form part of the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot. This region is noted for its high levels of species endemism, for example 65% of plant species found on these islands are endemic. More specifically, Rodrigues is estimated to have the highest rate of plant extinctions of the three Mascarene Islands with 21% of its 47 endemic species already considered extinct. Over 70% of all remaining endemic plants on Rodrigues are threatened with extinction.

Today, only a few relics of forest remain on Rodrigues and the island is a conservation priority. In some cases, surviving plants have

been reduced to a single individual or a small isolated population. This has also had a considerable impact on the island's native fauna, with just three endemic vertebrate species surviving today.

The overarching aim of the project is to increase the extent of native forest on Rodrigues to enable viable populations of Critically Endangered endemic species to establish.

In total 37 endemic Rodriguan plant species are found in Grande Montagne and this project benefits 29 of those, many of which are classified as Critically Endangered.

The reserve also provides habitat for the future survival of the island's three remaining endemic vertebrate species: Rodrigues Fruit Bat (*Pteropus rodricensis*) – Critically Endangered; Rodrigues Fody (*Foudia flavicans*) – Vulnerable; Rodrigues Warbler (*Acrocephalus rodericanus*) – Endangered

The reserve is supported by the Solitude Nursery which was established by the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation (MWF) for the propagation of native plants. Seeds and cuttings are collected from the 29 species for transfer to the Nursery for propagation.

Our partnership with the MWF began in the late 1990s, and has since expanded to the provision of annual financial and technical support for various projects. In-kind support has been provided for both in-situ and ex-situ training of MWF staff. This has involved the exchange of field staff to the zoo for



advanced training in plant propagation and care, thus facilitating the successful propagation of endemic species at Solitude Nursery and other nurseries in the Mascarenes. MWF also works closely with the Rodrigues Forestry Service, with whom they have a long-standing collaborative relationship.

The project is currently implementing a ten year restoration plan which encompasses a number of objectives to be achieved by 2018. The project also supports a strong education programme. It makes use of an established Interpretation Centre at Grande Montagne and is supported by the MWF Environmental Education Project.

Outcomes

The increased area of restored forest appears to be having a very positive impact on the numbers of Rodrigues Warbler (*Acrocephalus rodericanus*) and Rodrigues Fody (*Foudia flavicans*). Studies are currently being undertaken to determine the increase in population size. The higher density of plants has also provided a greater number of potential nest sites and nesting materials for the birds.

Since the start of Chester Zoo's support in 2008 there has been a rapid increase in the project development whereby the area of restored forest has almost doubled in the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve from 10ha to 19ha.



LOVE A CHALLENGE? THEN **ACT FOR WILDLIFE** IN 2013

We have secured places in some fantastic events next year:

- Great North Swim, Windermere, June 22
- Great Manchester Swim, Salford Quays, July 1
- Ride London100, August 4
- Great North Run, Newcastle, September 15

So if you're interested in taking part in one of these challenges, raising money for Act for Wildlife in the process, then please email us at actnow@actforwildlife.org.uk and we'll make sure you receive all of the selection info once it is available. (Please note that our places are limited and so there'll be selection criteria, details of which will appear on our website in the new year.)

Of course if there's any other event you'd like to take part in to raise some funds for our projects, then we will be more than happy to support you. We can even offer an Act for Wildlife vest if you fancy running the London Marathon for us!

Let's see how many people we can get Acting for Wildlife in 2013.

The winners of the prize draws, held recently, were:

CHESTER ZOO 100 CLUB

July 2012

£100..... Pauline Huxley, Chester
 £100..... Mrs Kathleen Cranfield, Manchester
 £50..... Mrs Angela Evison, Buckley
 £50..... Mrs Gillian Edwards, Wisaston
 £50..... Mrs C. J. Reynolds, Malpas

August 2012

£100..... Mr Simon Parrott, Wirral
 £100..... Mrs Pamlea McGrath, Manchester
 £50..... Mrs Elin Yewdall, Montgomery
 £50..... Miss Victoria Hughes, Knypersley
 £50..... Mrs Joyce Harrison, South Wirral

September 2012

£100..... Mr Ian David Finch, Shrewsbury
 £100..... Miss Jane Ithell, Wirral
 £50..... Mr M.K. Batchelor, Wilmslow
 £50..... Miss Alice Wakefield, Chester
 £50..... Mr Steve P. Ryder, Chester
 £50..... Mrs Penny Rudd, Cheshire

Membership of the 100 Club is still invited. All prize winners will be notified by post and will be listed in the next edition of Z. Please inform us as soon as possible if you change address.

If you wish to participate, please contact the Development Office on 01244 650 229.



OUT WITH THE OLD, *IN WITH THE NEW!*

If you've asked Santa for a new mobile phone this Christmas, why not recycle your old one and donate it to the zoo's recycling scheme so you can do your bit for the environment and support a good cause, without it costing you a penny. The majority of funds for this scheme now support our primate conservation project in Nigeria.

And now you can also recycle unwanted iPods, CDs, DVDs, inkjet and toner cartridges as well as old jewellery. So there's never been a better excuse to have a sort out.

To take part, simply request a freepost recycling envelope by calling 01244 650229 or email development@chesterzoo.org or hand your items in at the Guest Services Pavilion or Cedar House reception next time you visit the zoo. (Please note that CDs and DVDs can't be sent through the post and must be dropped off at the zoo).

Happy recycling!



WIN *and* SAVE SPECIES *with our* WINTER RAFFLE

Our raffle tickets are now available with many amazing prizes on offer. Tickets are **just £1** each (books of five are available) and prizes include a Chester Zoo meerkat experience, an animal adoption and many passes to other great visitor attractions.

The proceeds of this year's raffle will go towards the current European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) campaign, raising funds and awareness for the conservation of the biodiversity of south-east Asia. For more information on the campaign see: www.chesterzoo.org/conservation-and-research

For further details of the raffle and a full list of prizes see our webpage www.chesterzoo.org/raffle and you can request books of raffle tickets by calling our fundraising team on 01244 650229 or by emailing development@chesterzoo.org

The draw date is Tuesday December 18. Winners will be posted on the website and a future edition of Z magazine.

Good luck!



Events at OAKFIELD MANOR

In the early 1930s George Mottershead and his young family moved to a beautiful Victorian mansion called, Oakfield Manor. As a child George had a dream to create a magical and inspiring place; "a zoo without bars". His dream became Chester Zoo. With Oakfield Manor at its heart, we have 110 acres of magnificent, award winning gardens and 8000 exotic animals. We're passionate about the zoo and about using our elegant surroundings and talented people to create special memories and unique experiences for the guests that host special events at Oakfield Manor.

CONTACT THE EVENTS TEAM

Telephone 01244 650209

Email events@chesterzoo.org

Whether you are looking for a business meeting, birthday or anniversary celebration or a wedding or civil partnership, we have a dedicated events team that can make your day everything that you dreamed of. We've listed some of our wedding and corporate packages that we've put together especially for our winter season but you can contact us to talk about any event, at any time of the year.

WINTER WEDDING PACKAGE ONE

Exclusive Hire of Oakfield Manor including the Boardroom for your civil ceremony
 Your own personal wedding planner
 Chair covers and sashes (Ivory or Purple)
 Flowers for Registrar's Table
 Foliage baskets in the Manor

The package also includes:

Drinks reception with a choice of hot winter Pimms or pink sparkling wine
 Canapés
 A four course wedding breakfast served with tea, coffee and mints
 A glass of wine with your wedding breakfast meal
 Evening reception buffet
 Cake knife and stand
 Table linen (white or buttermilk)
 Candelabra
 Master of Ceremonies
 Free admission into the zoo
 110 acres of picturesque gardens for the bride and grooms photo's
 Resident DJ
 Free parking

Monday – Thursday Bookings
 £3,800.00

or Friday to Sunday Bookings
 £4,300.00



© Andrea Ellison Photography

WINTER WEDDING PACKAGE TWO

Hire of the boardroom for your civil ceremony and the library for your celebrations
 Your own personal wedding planner
 Chair covers and sashes (ivory or purple)
 Flowers for the Registrar's table
 Foliage baskets in the manor

The package also includes:

Drinks reception with a choice of hot winter Pimms or pink sparkling wine
 Selection of gourmet sandwich platters and a selection of cakes served with tea and coffee
 Cake knife and stand
 Table linen (white or buttermilk)
 Candelabra
 Master of Ceremonies
 Free admission into the zoo
 110 acres of picturesque gardens for the Bride and Grooms photo's
 Resident DJ
 Free parking

Monday – Thursday Bookings
 £1,100.00

FOOD AND DRINK

Our team offer delicious menus and only the best service for you and your guests. We are passionate about preparing high quality, locally produced and seasonal food.

We're as passionate about our food as we are about our animals and we care about where it comes from. We've even produced our very own blend of coffee, 'SHUKA' and we know that every cup that you buy will help to educate the coffee growers' families.

From a sensational three course dinner to a sophisticated afternoon tea, a beautiful buffet or a bacon butty, our chefs can prepare anything that you need to make your occasion truly special.

SOMETHING A LITTLE SPECIAL?

No other venue in the North West can offer you a barbeque safari to see magnificent animals as part of your special event. Just ask for details about the special experiences that we can arrange as part of your amazing event.

DAY DELEGATE RATE PACKAGE

£35.00 + VAT

Our day delegate rate Includes:

- Private meeting room hire in Oakfield Manor from 8am – 5.30pm
- Tea, coffee and biscuits, served with warm pastries on arrival
- Mid-morning tea and coffee served with handmade biscuits
- Mid-afternoon serving of tea or coffee served with shortbread biscuits
- Selection of buffet lunch choices available
- Iced water and cordial throughout the day
- Free access to the zoo for all your delegates (guided tours can be available on request dependant on guide availability)
- Selection of boiled sweets on tables
- Free reserved parking

NEW for our corporate guests in 2013

APEMANAGEMENT

Using what we know about the behaviour of apes, our courses aim to help managers to understand social behaviour within their own organisation.

By gaining an understanding of social behaviour and organisational cultures, managers will be supported to develop strategies to improve communication and productivity.

Please call or email the events team for more details.

ZOO TALK

TALKING CONSERVATION 2013 Programme

2013 kicks off with a great talk for all those budding animal keepers out there or for those who wished that was the road they'd followed! Find out just what it's like to be a zoo keeper and how to become one. Following that the year is packed with talks from more of our keeping staff bringing you up to date with the species on their sections. There will also be first-hand experience of what's happening in the field from our staff who have worked in the projects, culminating with the Nigeria Expedition, which brings together staff from all parts of the Zoo volunteering in a biodiversity assessment in the Gashaka Gumti National Park in March 2013. Hear all about their adventures in December for our special end of year talk.

As always, we've put together a series of interesting and diverse talks to suit all tastes, arranged especially for our members to keep you abreast of the work your membership supports.

Saturday 12th January at 14:30

A Day in the Life of a Mammal Keeper

Rachael Bodenham

Zoo keeping involves a lot more than just cleaning, feeding and looking at cute furry animals! It can involve a lot of hard physical work, patience and a great deal of commitment and determination.

This talk will describe what it takes to become a keeper as well as an insight into a typical day as mammal keeper; including all the responsibilities a keeper can face on a day to day basis, whatever the weather!

Rachael Bodenham is a Mammal Keeper at Chester Zoo.

Friday 15th February at 19:30

Snailing Away into the Sunset!

Karen and Jeff Lambert

The Partula Snail Programme has come a long way since its inception in 1986 and during its 27th year we have a lot to be positive about. In July 2012 the husband and wife team, Karen and Jeff Lambert spent their honeymoon in the valleys of Tahiti and Moorea, surveying for these rare and elusive snails with Dr Trevor Coote. They were also able to help out at the newly constructed reserve site, where captive bred Partula snails, are due to be released back into their natural habitat.

Join them on their journey through this exquisite landscape, and find out what surprises waited for them in the lush silent valleys....

Karen Lambert is one of the Lead Keepers on the Herpetology department at Chester Zoo. She has been working with the Partula snails for the last 11 years and this was her second visit to French Polynesia.

Jeff Lambert started his zoo career six years ago as an intern at Chester Zoo. He has since gone on to work at The BugWorld Experience and now works at ZSL London Zoo as a qualified keeper in the B.U.G.S department.

Thursday 14th March at 19:30

Bats and Other Animals

Chester Zoo's Bat Team

Our Bat Team doesn't just look after our three species of bat! Also, in their care are the crested porcupines, giant anteaters, meerkats, red pandas, spectacled bears, two-toed sloth, to name but a few!

Spend an evening in the company of our Bat Team and learn more about the diverse group of animals on the section and why the zoo keeps them, our future plans for the species and hear a few anecdotes, finding out how all the animals are doing.

Keepers from Chester Zoo's Bat Team

Tuesday 16th April at 19:30

All Creatures Great and Small

Chester Zoo's Giraffe Team

Ever wondered how a giraffe is moved? Or an okapi? Come along to find out and enjoy an evening of behind the scenes chat with our keepers from the giraffe team. There will be lots of pictures and videos of the animals on their section including the onager, duiker, pudu, okapi and of course the giraffes.

Lizzie, Fiona, Hannah, Charley, Sarah and, of course, Phil from Chester Zoo's Giraffe Team.

May

Improving the health of wild orangutans

Steve Unwin

Veterinarians in both Indonesia and Malaysia work very hard with limited resources to help conserve orangutans. In response, in 2009, the Orangutan Conservancy, with the assistance of Steve, began the first of what would become annual week-long workshops for wildlife veterinarians and animal managers in Indonesia and Malaysia. These workshops focus on the need to share research and information between experienced staff both in situ and abroad. The group at that first meeting chose the name OVAG – Orangutan Veterinary Advisory group. OVAG provides a unique forum for experts in and outside of orangutan range countries together to increase and share their knowledge. These include formulating management protocols on disease diagnostics, rehabilitation, release and monitoring of both wild and captive orangutans. 2012 saw the first involvement of Hutan (part of the zoo's RORA programme) and the Sabah Wildlife Department. This presentation will be a mixture of video and discussion highlighting this year's workshop, as well as health challenges Chester Zoo is assisting with at the Hutan site in the Lower Kinabatangan in Sabah.

Steve Unwin graduated with degrees in zoology and veterinary science in 1998 from Massey University in New Zealand. Worked in wildlife rehabilitation and conservation medicine in Australia, SE Asia and Africa before joining the Chester Zoo team in 2003. Steve is an honorary lecturer at Liverpool University and is veterinary co-ordinator for both the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance and Orangutan Veterinary Advisory Group.

Look out for confirmation of the date in the next edition of Z.

June

Primates

Chester Zoo's Primate Team

An evening with our primate team bringing you up to date with the animals on their section.

Look out for confirmation of the date and further details in the next edition of Z.

October

Aquarium

Chester Zoo's Aquarium Team

An evening with our aquarium team bringing you up to date with the animals on their section.

Look out for confirmation of the date and further details in the next edition of Z.

November

Keeper for a Day Evening

Chester Zoo Staff

Each year, the Zoo welcomes a number of guests as Keepers for a Day and we put the money they pay into a pot which is then used to fund staff to volunteer at certain projects. Our Keeper for a Day fund is open to all permanent employees and gives staff from non-animal sections fantastic opportunities to do conservation work in the field. This talk brings together a group of staff who undertook Keeper for a Day funded work in 2012 and 2013. We'll look at the outreach work they did and how this relates to our own zoo collection.

Look out for confirmation of the date and further details in the next edition of Z.

December

Nigeria Expedition

Mark Pilgrim, Becca Biddle and the Nigeria Expedition Team

In March 2013 we will be running the first annual 'Chester Zoo Expedition' - two weeks to Gashaka Gumpti National Park in Nigeria (GGNP).

Chester Zoo has been involved in conservation in GGNP for over a decade, primarily focusing on the chimpanzees of the forest. The aims of this expedition are to gain a better understanding of the different animals and plants there (through a biodiversity assessment) and to engage with the local community through visits and fun events. It will also be a great opportunity for us to highlight our involvement with conservation worldwide, specifically in Nigeria.

The expedition team will be made up of 10 Chester Zoo experts and staff volunteers to help with the biodiversity assessment by setting field traps, collecting data, recording data, general day to day cleaning and preparation of equipment, plus mucking in with all aspects of surviving in the field including domestic chores.

This will be a celebratory end to the year of members' talks and all the Nigeria Expedition Team will be there to give you feedback from the trip - the highs and the lows - and the biodiversity findings.

Look out for confirmation of the date in future editions of Z.

Members' talks are held in the Geraldine Russell Lecture Theatre (near the zoo's Diamond Jubilee Quarter, off the A41).

- They are FREE to members (please bring your membership card and welcome letter)
- We offer a special rate of £2.00 to animal adopters
- The public and guests are welcome (£3.50 for non-members)
- Our Lecture Theatre seats up to 170. We recommend booking in advance to secure your place
- Post-talk refreshments give you the opportunity to have an informal chat with speakers, staff and fellow members

Interested in attending? Please call Kate Brankin on 01244 389444 or email k.brankin@chesterzoo.org to book.

Deeside Leisure Centre, Chester Road West, Deeside, Flintshire CH5 1SA, Tel: 01244 845440

2 for 1 Ice Skating
Offer valid until 13th January 2013

DEESIDE ICE RINK

www.sirffflint.gov.uk/hamdden www.flintshire.gov.uk/leisure



LLAWR SGLEFRIO GLANNAU DYFRDWY

Cynnig i 2 Sglefrio am bris 1
Yn ddilys tan 13 Ionawr 2013

Please call or visit the website for current prices and opening times. Offer valid on entrance and skate hire. All children under 8 years must be accompanied by a skating adult.

Gallwch heblio neu ewch i'r wfan i weld y prisiau a'r amseredd agor cyfiedol. Cynnig yn cynnwys mynediad a phris llugi esgidiau sglefrio. Rhaid i bob plerfyn dan 8 oed ddod yng nghwmni aedolyn sy'n sglefrio.

Canolfan Hamdden Glannau Dyfrdwy, Gorllewin Ffordd Caer, Glannau Dyfrdwy, Sir y Fflint CH5 1SA. Ffôn: 01244 845440

The Circuit

massive INDOOR KARTING ARENA

with 2 tracks



metres of Pure Fun

Mon to Thurs 5-9pm
3 x 12 minute races for £20 per person

Free helmet and balaclava for all Chester Zoo members!

On arrival you will be kitted out in race suits before being given a driver safety briefing. Your group will then take part in 3 x 12 minute races with a break in between each race. Computer print outs of lap times are available to find out who was the fastest driver. The offer is only valid Mon to Thursday Evenings from 5 pm to 9 pm. Expiry Date 30/10/2013. Members just need to show their membership cards to receive the offer.

Please call 01244 531 652 for details
or visit www.thecircuit.co.uk

Babbage Road, Engineers Park, Sandycroft CH5 2QD



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