

Winter 2006 Issue 28

The official magazine for Chester Zoo
Members and Adopters



Seahorses make a splash

Seal of approval

Skates on for Frost Fair





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Director's Pen

By Gordon McGregor Reid
Director General

Welcome to the last issue of Z for 2006 and we hope you will get your skates on for a festive December!

Our first **Frost Fair** starts in earnest on December 1st and promises to be a whole new Winter experience for the Zoo, running right through until February.

You can join us for an ice skate, meet up with Father Christmas after taking a trip on the Lapland Journey, visit our market stalls, enjoy some live entertainment and take part in the festive lights switch on every day from 5pm.

You can find more details on **Frost Fair** throughout the magazine and we hope you will come along and joy the event with us.

For a taster of what **Frost Fair** is all about, be sure to watch Blue Peter on Wednesday December 6 on BBC One. The show will be broadcast live from **Frost Fair** and will also feature some great animal stories from around the Zoo.

It has been a busy time since I wrote to you last and the Zoo has welcomed many new animals – more of which you can discover on the following pages.

We have also picked up a number of new awards and my congratulations go to each and every member of zoo council and staff for their help and success in these achievements.

Looking ahead to 2007, we await the opening of **Realm of the Red Ape** in Spring next year. **Realm of the Red Ape** will be the largest Orang-utan conservation centre in Europe. It has been quite amazing to see how quickly this new facility has developed. I am sure our Orang-utans will enjoy their new home.

As the year draws to a close, can I personally thank you – our valued members and adopters – for your help and support during another busy year and wish you and your families the very best for a prosperous 2007.

In the meantime, I hope to see you on the ice rink!



Zoo additions

Welcoming new arrivals to the Zoo

Emerald Tree Boa

A refurbished exhibit in the Spirit of the Jaguar is now home to our two Emerald Tree Boas (*Corallus caninus*). This Amazonian Basin species will grow up to 1.8 metres in length. They are strikingly similar in appearance and behaviour to the Green Tree Python (*Chondropython viridis*) from Southeast Asia and Australia (a species we also keep here at the Zoo), but they are only very distantly related. Biologists often cite the similarities between the two species as one of the best examples of convergent evolution.





Black Marsh Turtle

In early 2002, over seven thousand freshwater turtles were seized by Customs officials in Hong Kong. The animals were destined for the food markets of China, where most would have ended up in soup. As part of a global rescue effort, Chester Zoo provided homes for two of the confiscated species - the Spiny Turtle (*Heosemys spinosa*) and the Black Marsh (*Siebenrockiella crassicolis*). Four years later, and these rescued animals have now started to breed. We have hatched a total of three Black Marsh Turtles this year, and are only the second zoo in the UK to have bred this species.



Brazilian Tapir

Yet again we have a baby Brazilian Tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*). The youngster can be seen with its parents in the enclosure down beside the Spectacled Bears. The Zoo has long been supporting conservation activities for this species in the Atlantic rainforests of Brazil.



Red River Hog

We have recently had our seventh successful Red River Hog (*Potamochoerus porcus*) birth, a female piglet that can be seen to display with her parents and older sisters from a previous litter. Chester Zoo was the first zoo in the UK to breed this species and it is hoped that the new female piglet will be able to stay in the group at the Zoo.



Sudanese Uromastyx

In what is believed to be the first European zoo breeding of this Northern African lizard sub-species, a single baby Sudanese Uromastyx (*Uromastyx dispar dispar*) hatched here on the 26th July. The parents of this baby were part of a UK Customs confiscation made last year. Chester Zoo helped to re-home six of the seized animals. The illegal trafficking in African Uromastyx for the exotic pet trade has decimated many wild populations in recent years.

6 Zoo additions



Okapi

Chester Zoo has kept Okapi (**Okapia johnstoni**) since 2004, but this autumn has seen the arrival of our first female, Stuma, who is approximately 18 months old and born in Stuttgart in Germany. She has arrived to join our young male 'Mbuti' who has been at the Zoo for a year. It is hoped that a third animal will join them in the spring of 2007. The Zoo helps to support the conservation of the unique Ituri Forest, home of the Okapi and a World Heritage Site in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.



Rhinoceros Viper

These are arguably one of the most beautiful species of snake on earth. Their incredibly ornate patterning and mix of light and dark colouring helps them to stay hidden on the forest floor where they lie in wait for their mammal prey. The 2-3 large "horns" above each nostril give the Rhinoceros Vipers (**Bitis nasicornis**) its common name. Two young specimens joined our reptile house collection in September from Houston Zoo in Texas, where they were bred in 2003. They will eventually grow to a length of 1.2 metres.



West African Crowned Crane

This year the Zoo has bred 5 West African Crowned Crane (**Balearica pavonina pavonina**) chicks. Chester Zoo is one of the few zoos in Europe regularly breeding this species and so the production of two clutches of eggs and five chicks is a great result for a single breeding season. The eggs were removed and artificially incubated in our incubation and rearing unit with some chicks being returned to the parents and others cross-fostered to be reared by chickens!

Asia

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Asian Elephant

This Asian Elephant calf is the 10th to be born at the zoo. As yet unnamed, he was born at 4.19am on Sunday November 12. Classed as endangered, the number of Asian Elephants in the wild stands at less than 35,000. The zoo has a successful breeding programme for Asian elephants.



Longsnout Seahorse

Chester Zoo has one of the best reputations for the ex situ breeding of seahorses anywhere in the world. The Longsnout Seahorse (**Hippocampus reidi**) is a relatively recent addition to the collection, arriving in May 2005. This species is the largest of the four seahorse species we have in our collection, with adult animals growing up to fifteen centimetres in length. Males can give 'birth' to over a thousand babies at a time, but the successful rearing of these tiny fry takes great experience and skill. Chester Zoo is now one of only a handful of zoos globally to have reared this species to maturity.

Bird skills take flight

The Zoo holds over 170 species of birds which means our keepers are able to gain a wide variety of skills in bird keeping, handrearing and incubation.

We are exceptionally fortunate to have two keepers that are entirely dedicated to the running of our bird incubation room. Each summer season they are extremely busy for example, this year they have received over 300 eggs from around the Zoo including 46 different species. Working in the incubation room is complex but there are four main factors to determine egg survival; the temperature, weight loss from each egg, and the turning frequency and angle that the eggs are subject to; these factors vary for each species.

Another area we have a lot of experience in, on the bird section, is hand rearing of

passerines. We have hand reared a number of species eg White-rumped Shama (*Copsychus malabaricus*) and Pekin Robin (*Leiothrix lutea*) both can be found in the tropical realm.

These skills are increasingly in demand on ex situ conservation projects. Over the last 20 years, the Zoo has supported the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, during the last couple of years our focus has been mainly on the passerine work. Like many islands, introduced species and loss of habitat has had a devastating effect on the native bird populations of Mauritius. This has also been the plight of the

Mauritian Fody (*Foudia rubra*) and Olive White-eye (*Zosterops chloronthus*). Until recently these birds were restricted to the Black River Gorges National Park, where nest success is low due to rat (*Rattus rattus*) and monkey (*Macaca fascicularis*) predation of eggs and chicks. Mauritian Fodys are known to have up to 40% of nests lost through predation.

As part of the survival strategy for the species, nests have been harvested and birds reared down at the Black River Aviaries on a diet of bee larvae, papaya, egg, pinky mice, wax moth grubs and cricket guts. These birds are then



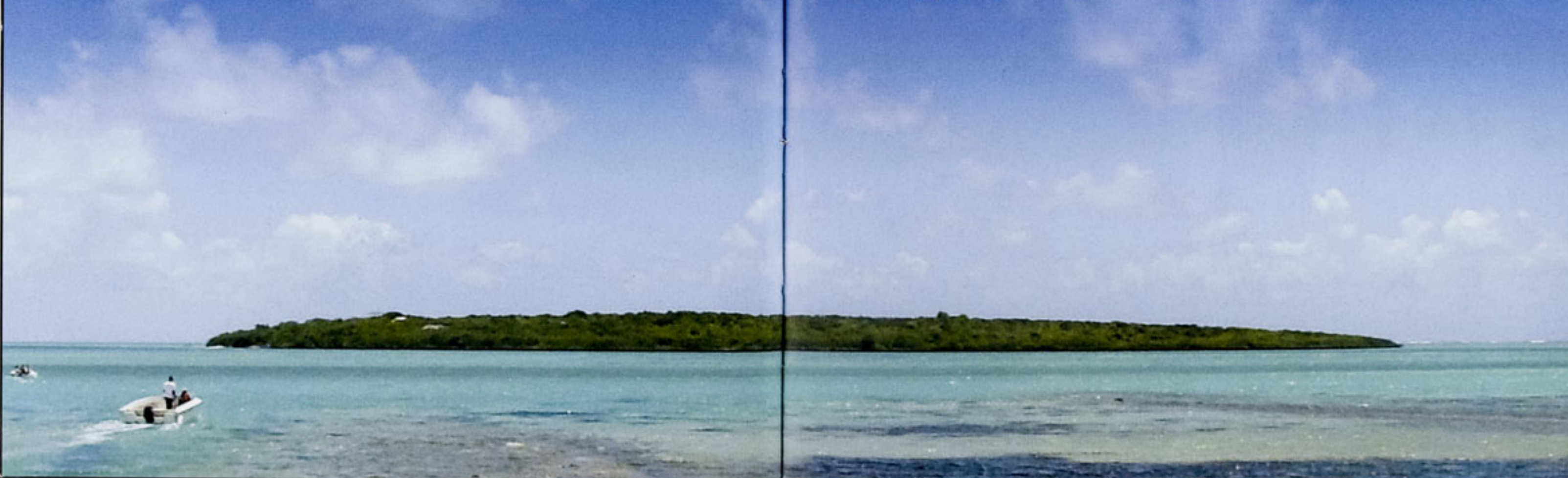
released on to a predator free island called Ile aux Aigrettes and it is hoped that a self-sustaining population will be established there.

When our keeper was sent out to Mauritius to work with the Fodys, the protocol for the re-introduction was to pull chicks at 5 days old. However many of these nests were being predated and some pair territories were more susceptible to predation than others. To maximise genetic diversity of the group to be re-introduced, it was decided by the team to attempt to harvest eggs. Eggs harvested at 10 days have the advantage of avoiding the predation risk

for 9 days over those harvested as 5 day old chicks. It also meant that the parents could recycle, that is lay a new clutch of eggs, more quickly in the wild and had more time to fledge chicks. Of the 22 birds hand-reared and released, 8 were harvested as eggs and artificially incubated at the aviaries. Making a significant difference to the programme, it was the first time in the world that this species had been incubated and hatched successfully.

Due to the success of the Fody project, a year later our keepers were sent away again to work with the Fodys and also this time with the Olive White-eyes. Similarly to

the Fodys, many of the Olive White-eye nests were predated before they could be rescued; for rearing in captivity. However, two nests were rescued one nest had two chicks and the other nest had a chick and an egg. The egg was hatched and reared successfully, contributing significantly to the programme as only four chicks were reared in the season. This made another world first for egg incubating. More importantly over the two years our keeper was there, the incubation skills were passed on to workers in Mauritius enabling them to continue using incubation as a tool for conserving their endangered species.



Zoo celebrates awards success

The Zoo has plenty of reason to celebrate after clinching a number of awards.

Trinity Mirror Cheshire Business Awards

We attended the Trinity Mirror Cheshire Business Awards and were delighted that Chester Zoo was a winner in the Community Award category. We were also highly commended in the Large Business Award. The recent successes follow on from gaining the Large Visitor Attraction of the Year award in the Visit Chester and Cheshire awards.

North West and Chester in Bloom trophies

The Zoo has once again scooped the North West in Bloom and Chester in Bloom trophies. The awards were given for the continuing development of the gardens and the magnificent floral displays. The judges were also impressed with the overall cleanliness and appearance of the site and with our recycling programme. Congratulations to all staff in the Amenity and Gardens and Horticulture and Botany teams.

Queen's Award for Enterprise

The Zoo was visited by HRH The Duke of Kent. Professor Peter Wheeler, Deputy Chair of the North of England Zoological Society, gave a welcome speech. The Duke presented the Queen's Award for Enterprise (Sustainable Development) to Director General Gordon McGregor Reid at a special ceremony. The Duke was shown around the Zoo by Gordon and Director of Conservation and Education, Mark Pilgrim.

The Duke also took a short tour of the Zoo and officially opened the latest exhibit, the Secret World of the Okapi.

This is the second time that the North of England Zoological Society, the charitable trust that runs the Zoo, has achieved the coveted Queen's Award.

The award has been given in recognition of the organisation's contributions to science, conservation, education and sustainability.

The Zoo was visited by HRH The Duke of Kent who presented the Queen's Award for Enterprise...



Cheshire Wildlife Watcher's Diary

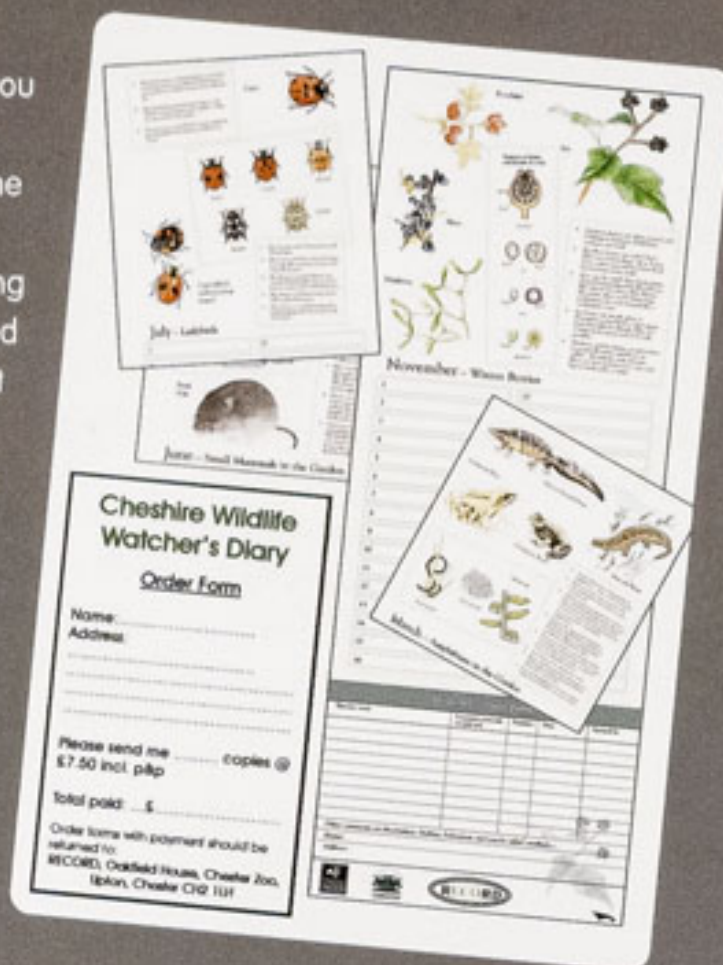
Chester Zoo, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and RECORD have linked up to produce the Cheshire Wildlife Watcher's Diary.

This 'calendar with a difference' will fascinate anyone with an interest in local wildlife, and, since the diary is not for any specific year, you can start to use it in any month of any year.

The diary highlights several species each month, giving illustrations, identification tips and distribution maps, and incorporates a recording card at the bottom of the page to fill in and send to RECORD. The information you have gathered will then be added to the database at RECORD and will contribute to our knowledge of the wildlife of Cheshire.

For more information on the services provided by RECORD visit their website at: www.record-lrc.co.uk

Featured species include birds you might see on your birdfeeder in February, small mammals in June and ladybirds in July. Though particularly relevant to those living in Cheshire the species described occur throughout the North West and completed cards from outside Cheshire will be passed on to relevant records centres. To order your copies please telephone RECORD on: 01244 383749. Price each £7.50 including post and packing.



New President of the International Zoo Educators' Association

Chester Zoo's Head of Education Stephen McKeown became President of the International Zoo Educators' Association at the organisation's 18th biennial conference in Pretoria in October.

IZE was set up in 1972 as a professional organization for zoo educators across the world. Its dual mission is to improve the education programmes in the facilities of its members and to provide access to the latest thinking, techniques and information in conservation education. From small beginnings it has evolved into a global organization with over 300 members in 70 countries. In 2002 IZE was designated as the official education arm of WAZA (World Association of Zoos and Aquariums). IZE has a resource-rich website (www.izea.net) and publishes an

annual journal which is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2006.

Stephen has been on the IZE Executive Board since 1998 holding the positions of Regional Journal Editor, Journal Editor and Acting Secretary. His work as President will involve leading IZE through a period of constitutional change with an emphasis on developing a closer working relationship with the WAZA Education Committee on which he also sits. Fundraising, strategic planning and making the educational aspirations of the **World Zoo and Aquarium**

Conservation Strategy a reality are other priorities for what promises to be a busy term of office.



Winter 2006 Issue 28



Junior Members'
events preview 2007

Spot the difference



Enter our Frost Fair competitions inside!

Junior Members' Summer School 2006

The first ever Junior Members' Summer School was held from the 14 - 18 August 2006, and twenty Junior Members enthusiastically participated. Eleven boys and nine girls came from as far afield as Dublin, Northampton, Blackpool, Oldham, Oswestry, Whitchurch and Manchester to take part.

The aim of this special week was to enhance the 'service' offered to Juniors and to fulfil the needs of the 'older' Juniors (12 - 17) at a time when they tend to have been joining in with the regular monthly events for a few years, have a real interest in zoos, but are seeking some more detailed zoo and animal knowledge that will help them make informed decisions about careers, school GCSE subject choices and such like.

Above all, it was designed to be great fun and provide a rare opportunity to become better acquainted with the real work involved in zoos.

Juniors had to participate for the whole week, 8.30 am until 5.30 pm daily, and while based in the Education Department's Columbus Room, they spent a great deal of time outside doing practical sessions. Thanks to the willingness of a wide range of zoo staff, Juniors learned about 'Why Zoos?', Animal Records and breeding programmes, zoo nutrition, outreach conservation, environmental enrichment, animal behaviour (including a practical observation session), botany in zoos, native species, and careers in zoos as a vet, vet nurse, keeper, and presenter.

Our practical sessions included harvesting rare grass seeds in the greenhouses and planting individual cacti to take home, a wildlife garden quiz, live mammal trapping on the 2003 harvest mouse release site,

pond dipping, behind the scenes tours on five sections, bird box making - one each to take home - and a full day out on a conducted tour of Loggerheads Country Park. Throughout the week, in any spare moments, the Juniors also 'created' their magnificent individual collages/mosaics which resulted in much hilarity and enjoyment.

We also had a special session when an ex-Junior Member, Paul O'Donoghue, who recently returned from 10 years abroad 'in the field', came to talk to the current Juniors and to tell them what being a Junior Member had meant to him. He recalled being a Junior Member at the very moment he was being stalked by an adult male Jaguar, miles from anywhere in the Amazon jungle - with absolutely no back-up, and 'nowhere to go', and how relevant the experiences gained 10 years ago continued to be in his life today.

A huge 'thank-you' needs to go to the many zoo staff who each gave a relatively small amount of their time, (and now have a new group of devoted followers!), but the result of which is a 'total' which is almost unquantifiable in its effect on those who attended. I am confident this event will have very positive consequences for the Juniors, the Zoo and the field of conservation in years to come.

The Juniors 'gelled' brilliantly, behaved themselves throughout, were incredibly enthusiastic, learned more than they ever dreamed they would, and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. They were simply 'buzzing' at the end of an extremely busy week, and without exception, they were delighted to have been involved. The subsequent feedback has been very heartening.

Skating at the Frost Fair!

Spot the difference

There are 12 differences between the two pictures. How many can you see?

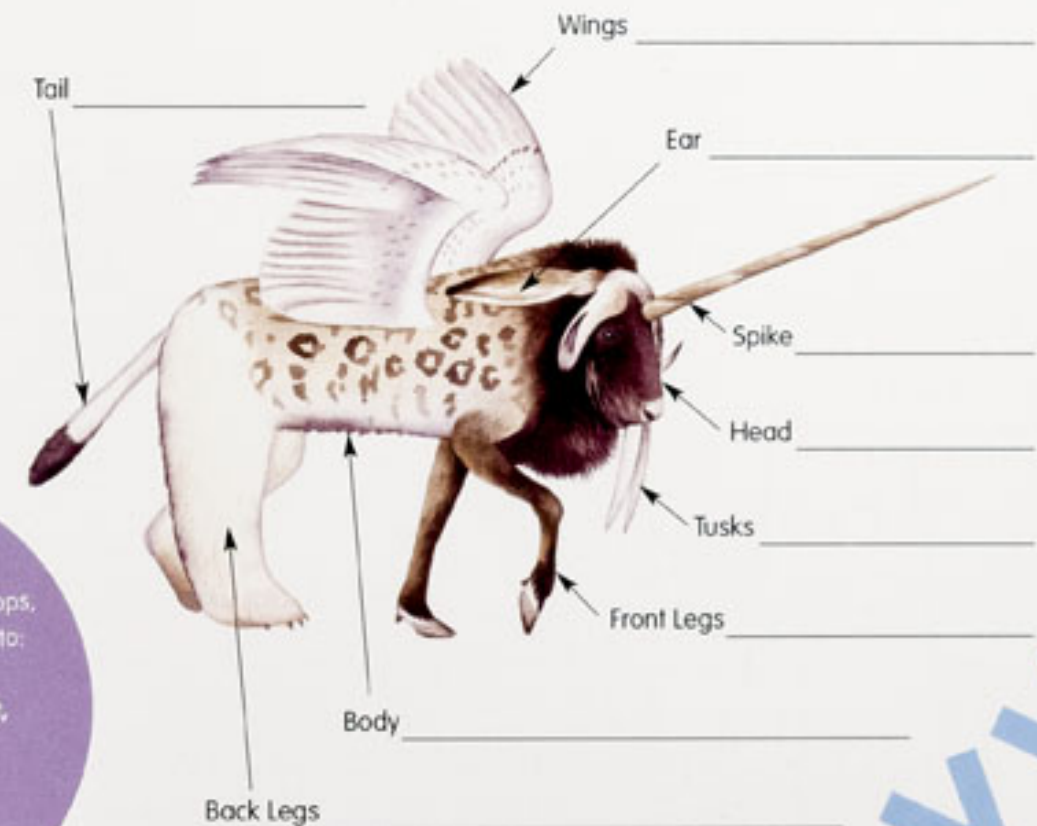


What's a Poleorheindwalox?

Our Poleorheindwalox is a mythical creature made up of pieces of 9 animals that come from cold and frosty places. Can you work out which part belongs to which animal?

The animals to choose from are:

- Mountain Hare
- Musk Ox
- Narwhal
- Polar Bear
- Reindeer
- Snow Leopard
- Snowy Owl
- Stoat
- Walrus



To be in with a chance of winning a £10 voucher to spend in the shops, send your completed quizzes to:
Z Kidz Zoo Competition,
c/o Marketing Department,
Chester Zoo,
Upton by Chester,
Chester, CH2 1UH
by Friday January 26

Congratulations to last month's winner Heather Mason from Runcorn!

Junior Members' Programme of Events 2007

Discovery Session

Saturday 20 January 2007

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 2pm, and parents can collect the youngsters from there at 4pm.

The Welsh Mountain Zoo – Colwyn Bay

Saturday 24 February 2007

It is a while since the Juniors visited Colwyn Bay and it is always nice to see how other zoos do things. Be prepared to walk up and down hills as the Zoo has to create enclosures that suit steep slopes!

Eights and over are asked to join us, meeting at the Staff Entrance at 10am, and we will return there for 4.30pm. Bring a picnic with you.

Tracks & Signs

Saturday 24 March 2007

This is probably one of our most popular events that includes 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 11am, returning there for collection at 4pm. You will need a picnic lunch and it is important that you wear clean, very old clothes and clean wellies please.

Shugborough Home Farm

Saturday 21 April 2007

We love our visits to this beautiful stately home in Staffordshire and find that Spring is a perfect time to visit the Home Farm to see the rare breeds and shire horses. Home Farm also has wonderful displays of cheese making and bakery skills.

Eights and over are invited to join us, leaving the Staff Entrance at 9.30am and returning for 5pm. Bring a picnic.

The Greenwood Centre

Saturday 19 May 2007

Back by popular demand, this seems to be one of the Junior Members' favourite haunts! Set within the Snowdonia National Park, the Greenwood Centre is an environmental park offering fun and games as well as good education. The amazing grass slide, boat races, woodland walks, archery and den building activities to name a few always keep everyone well occupied for the day.

Eights and over should put it in the diary early. We will leave the Staff Entrance at 9.30am, taking a picnic, and return at 5pm.

Anglesey Sea Zoo and Butterfly Palace

Saturday 16 June 2007

This will be a busy but enjoyable day split between two very interesting venues on the Isle of Anglesey. We will visit the Sea Zoo in the morning and then travel on to the Pili Palace to see their great collection of butterflies in the afternoon.

We will leave the Staff Entrance at 9.30am and return at 5pm. Eights and over should bring a picnic and sunscreen.

How to be a good Zookeeper!

Wednesday 25 July 2007

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 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 10.30am, and the day will finish for Juniors at 4pm.

Please bring a packed lunch. Also please note that bookings for this event will not be taken before 8.30am on Wednesday 12 July 2007, and will be strictly on a first-come, first-served basis.

Summer Barbeque

Thursday 9 August 2007

Our summer barbeque has become a regular feature for the Juniors' diary as it has proved immensely popular. Perhaps this is 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 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 7pm start, when you should arrive at the Ark Restaurant (near the Tigers) via the Zoo's Staff Entrance on Caughall Road. Parents are asked to collect Juniors from the Ark restaurant at 9.45pm please.

Please Note:

Bookings must be made for all events. Please ring Penny Rudd at the Zoo on 01244 650215, not more than two weeks before the event you would like to attend. Places are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and may be limited. This list is provisional and in exceptional circumstances we may have to alter dates and venues. You will be informed of any such changes in Z and not by individual letter, so please keep up-to-date by reading the Junior 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.

Recycling with a difference!

Here at Chester Zoo we aim to recycle as much as possible, but few people realise that it includes our uniforms!



Each year, Chester Zoo employs seasonal staff in order to cope with the increased number of visitors throughout the holidays. All seasonal staff are provided with uniforms which are returned when they leave at the end of the season. The uniforms are often in very good condition so instead of throwing them away we have thought up a novel way of recycling them. We send them all over the world to the conservation outreach programmes that we support.

Through our conservation outreach programmes we not only help conserve habitats and wildlife but also help local communities. With the provision of

education and employment we work to alleviate human-wildlife conflict which is often a major factor in the decline of species.

The local people employed via our conservation outreach programmes are vital to the success of the projects. They are employed as rangers and wardens who actively monitor and police protected areas, as field guides for visiting researchers and as community liaison officers who act to raise awareness of conservation issues in local communities. It is such people that can now be seen sporting Chester Zoo uniforms.

So far, Chester Zoo uniforms have been sent to staff of:

- The Gashaka Gumti Primate Project, Nigeria
- The Assam Haathi Project, India
- The Sichuan Forest Conservation Project, China
- The Philippine Conservation Programme in Cebu and Polillo (two islands in the Philippines)
- The Black Rhino Conservation Programme in Laikipia District, Tsavo East & Chyulu Hills National Park, Kenya and Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania



How you can help

Please get in contact with the Conservation Department Email: conservation@chesterzoo.org

Tel: 01244 389443 if you have any unwanted, good quality, binoculars or digital cameras that you would like to donate to our conservation programmes.



A living fossil

The Wollemi Pine

On September 10th 1994, David Noble a park ranger and avid bushwalker, was exploring canyons in the Wollemi National Park. The park covers a vast expanse of over 500,000 hectares and is located two hours drive west of Sydney, Australia. Despite its close proximity to urban civilisation this wilderness area remains largely unexplored.

After absiding down into one of the network of canyons in the landscape, Noble found himself among a grove of trees that he did not recognise. He knew they were conifers but the leaves and bark were completely unfamiliar. He described the tree as being 60 – 70ft tall with leaves shaped like a Stegosaur's tail and bark that looked like bubbling chocolate. He collected a section of foliage to show his colleagues. Botanists soon realised that they were looking at a completely new species of tree and one they thought had become extinct tens of millions of years ago. They declared it a part of the same family as the Monkey Puzzle (*Araucariaceae*) but because of its unique characteristics it was pronounced a completely new genus. The botanical name given to it was *Wollemia nobilis* – honouring both the park where the tree was found and its discoverer, David Noble.



The Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) is a plant that survives from the Age of the Dinosaurs. Only discovered in 1994 it has been hailed as one of the botanical discoveries of the twentieth century. Thought to be extinct and only previously known from fossil records, its discovery has been described as the equivalent of finding a dinosaur still alive on Earth.

Soon after the discovery a decision was made to keep the location of the trees, fewer than 100 adults, a closely guarded secret. Seeds and cuttings were collected and propagation was undertaken by the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney to establish a population in cultivation. Since its discovery many hundreds of plants have been grown and they are now on sale to the public in limited numbers. Every Wollemi Pine sold returns a royalty to conserve the Wollemi and other threatened Australian plant species.

"Chester Zoo has acquired a specimen and we will be growing it in our Nursery this winter ready for planting out in the Zoo grounds next spring. Nobody yet knows how hardy the Wollemi Pine is and whether it will grow well in the UK but we are very excited about the prospect of having a living dinosaur in the Zoo", said Mark Sparrow, Curator of Botany and Horticulture.

One nursery in England is currently selling the trees – Kernock Park Plants in Cornwall. For more information go to www.wollemipine.co.uk

Chill out, have fun!

A big freeze will turn Chester Zoo into a winter wonderland this Christmas with a spectacular ice rink as the centrepiece!

Believed to be the only one of its kind in Cheshire this winter, the 20 metre ice rink will be at the hub of Chester Zoo's Frost Fair extravaganza.

The two-month event in the Zoo grounds will provide the perfect place to chill out from December 1 with entertainment, animation, a giant prize-giving Snow Cannon, and an exciting Santa's Lapland Journey.

Market and craft stalls selling local produce and festive gifts will be set up together with performances from local pantomime groups and ice skaters. The Elephants of the Asian Forest exhibit – home to Chester's nine elephants – will also remain open until 7.30pm for the duration of the Frost Fair, which starts on December 1 and runs until February 4 next year.

The ice rink will be available for corporate and private events. It is hoped that the Zoo will attract 100,000 visitors during the Frost Fair.

Work on the event, which is the brainchild of Chester Zoo's Commercial Director Silvio Liedtke, is well underway. The ice rink is expected to be delivered in November and work on Santa's Grotto and its decorations have already begun. Silvio said: "The Frost Fair will be a unique event, unique not just to the Zoo and to Cheshire but also the North West. It will be truly remarkable with the ice rink as the centrepiece. Santa's Lapland Journey will take visitors on an animated trail throughout various countries with Father Christmas at the end with a gift for every child.

"Frost Fairs were traditionally held on the River Thames in bygone days and I wanted to capture the essence of those good times here at the Zoo this winter. Our event will be a magical experience and we look forward to welcoming visitors, particularly to our Twilight experience which will capture the imagination of everybody with a stunning display of lights, sounds, entertainment and action."

The Zoo will be open as usual throughout the Frost Fair period and a special Twilight Ticket will allow guests into the Frost Fair after the Zoo itself shuts.

For further information and to book go to www.chesterzoo.org/frostfair

'Our event will be a magical experience and we look forward to welcoming visitors.'

www.chesterzoo.org/frostfair

FROST FAIR
1st December 2006 - 4th February 2007

- outdoor ice skating rink
- Festival gift stalls
- Live Entertainment and fun activities for the children
- Journey through Lapland to meet Santa

**Chester
ZOO**
IT'S REAL!

To book or for further details call: 01244 650240 or book online.

Tiger image courtesy of Photofest, Inc. Chester Zoo is a Registered Charity No. 206071

Making a difference

NEZS conservation outreach update

Chester Zoo Mascarenes Programme

Chester Zoo continues to support several projects involved with the conservation of endemic plants, birds and mammals on Mauritius and Rodrigues.

A recent addition to our support is the work on the predator-free island of Ile aux Aligrettes; a small island off the coast of Mauritius. Here 90 Mauritius Fodies

have been introduced already and there are now plans to reintroduce 25 Mauritius Olive White-eye. Chester Zoo supports the in-situ conservation programmes for both of these critically endangered species, and the bird rearing experience of Chester Zoo staff working on these projects has been integral to their success.

Chester Zoo Jaguar Programme

Chester Zoo continues to support Jaguar monitoring and research studies in the Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Reserve, Belize. In addition, Rodrigo Nunez was awarded a Jaguar Small Grant for his research in Mexico: "Livestock Predation by Jaguar in Sierra de Vallejo Reserve: Social Perceptions and Habitat Characterization."

Chester Zoo Rhino Programme

Ongoing support continues for the Community Conservation Programme in the Laikipia District of Kenya. The Laikipia District is biodiversity rich, including a large population of Black Rhino, but also experiences high levels of human-wildlife conflict. This programme works with local communities to raise conservation awareness and promote sustainable use of natural resources.

Chester Zoo Nigeria Biodiversity Programme

As part of our ongoing commitment to conservation in Gashaka Gumti National Park we have recently provided funds for the 3rd phase of the project to demarcate the park's boundary. The project involves the installation of permanent boundary markers. This will help to control issues such as encroachment and illegal harvesting, which until now have been difficult to resolve due to the park's undefined boundary.

Other Grants

- Epulu Okapi Project – Chester Zoo's support of the Okapi conservation project in the Democratic Republic of Congo is linked to our membership of the Okapi European breeding programme.
- "Seeking a balance between subsistence fishing and reef conservation", Borneo - this project aims to develop a strategy which allows local communities to continue to fish and harvest reef resources but with less impact on marine species.
- Buffy-headed Capuchin conservation project in Brazil's Atlantic Rainforest – continued support for ecology and behaviour research in order to provide sound foundations for future conservation work. This links with the breeding programme here at Chester.

Conservation News from Around the World

Good

After reporting in the last issue of Z that the West African Black Rhino is now feared extinct we can now happily report more positive news regarding another rhino species. Scientists have found evidence of four rhino calves in Ujung Kulon National Park, Java. The Javan Rhino (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) is critically endangered with as few as 60 individuals remaining in the wild. It is the first time in 40 years that evidence of so many calves has been found and it has been described as a remarkable achievement for conservation.

Bad

Many of us at Chester Zoo were shocked and saddened by the death of Steve Irwin in September. Kevin Buley, Curator of Lower Vertebrates and Invertebrates paid tribute to Mr Irwin saying: "There has never been anybody in recent years who has managed to so publicly raise the profile of reptiles as Steve. He will be sorely missed but his work has already helped to inspire the next generation of herpetologists."



Realm of the Red Ape

The building phase of one of the Zoo's most complex projects is now almost complete.

One of the final jobs now is to cover the three indoor and two of the outdoor enclosures in a lightweight steel net. This was key to the design as it will allow the Orang-utans to use all of their new enclosures. It will enable them to climb up to 10m in the internal enclosures and up to 15m in two of the external enclosures and so allow them the opportunity to move and behave more naturally. The two large outdoor enclosures are soon to be constructed.



The project will also be shortly moving into the 'theming phase' of construction. This will include the building of the public passageway and will include extensive planting to create a forest canopy theme, 14 new exhibits for the variety of animals that will share the forest with the Orang-utans and interactive interpretation displays.

Following a period for our orang-utans to settle into their new home, Realm of the Red Ape is scheduled to open to the public in Spring 2007.



'Our Orang-utans will have the opportunity to move and behave more naturally.'

Spring Programme 2007

'Big Cats, Kingfishers and Canoes!'

Friday 26 January 2007

Nigel Pope

Nigel Pope is one of the BBC Natural History Unit's most experienced producers. During the last two years, he has travelled to more than 20 countries creating hit peak-time TV wildlife programmes ranging from *Jungle with Charlotte Uhlenbroek*, *Britain Goes Wild with Bill Oddie* and two series of the huge ratings hit – *Big Cat Week*. In this entertaining show, Nigel Pope will reveal what really goes on behind the scenes in Natural History Unit filming – from travelling in dugout canoes for three days in central Africa to filming gorillas to dressing Bill Oddie up as a compost heap so that he can watch kingfishers go through their paces in front of his nose!

'Azafady – Hopes for Madagascar'

Friday 23 February 2007

Mal Mitchell

Azafady is a Non-Governmental Organisation that has been working on conservation and health-related and sustainable development projects in southeast Madagascar since 1995. Azafady works in partnership with disadvantaged communities to improve living standards and quality of life in positive coexistence with the fragile and unique local environment. Azafady works with local people to conserve threatened forests along 70km of coastline, home to countless endemic and endangered species. Working with the people, a core priority is to conserve the delicate ecosystems of Madagascar through facilitating viable alternatives to deforestation.

Mal Mitchell is the Education and Funding Co-ordinator for Azafady and will be able to tell us about their worthwhile work in Madagascar. This is also an opportunity for FFI (North West) to link in with the 2006 - 2007 EAZA Campaign on Madagascar.

Bottle-Nosed Dolphins - The Use of Research Photography

Friday 23 March 2007

Charlie Phillips

It probably sounds nice to spend much of your working life taking photographs of your favourite animal on earth, but it can be jolly cold when they live off the North East coast of Scotland! Charlie Phillips has dedicated much of his adult life to the research of the individual animals that live around the Black Isle and Moray Firth, and his photographs form the basis of 'Charlie Phillips Images' which make it look easy. It isn't! Charlie is also the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society's 'Adopt-a-Dolphin' Field Officer, and as such he has a unique affinity with the individuals he tracks, and with those who support the invaluable research work of the WDCS. Come and view these amazing animals from Charlie's stunning photographs.



Picture courtesy of Charlie Phillips

Fauna and Flora International
(North West Group) at Chester Zoo



Joseph Banks Room



On Friday 8th September the Joseph Banks Room was officially opened by Marks and Spencer Money Chief Executive, Brendan Cook. The opening marked the culmination of a successful eleven month partnership between HSBC in the Community, Marks and Spencer Money and Chester Zoo, which has rejuvenated the old Wildlife Discovery Centre.

Back in October 2005, Chester Zoo was invited to apply to the HSBC in the Community fund. HSBC were so impressed

with the proposal for the Joseph Banks Room that they agreed to fund the entire project, donating a fantastic £58,745. Marks and Spencer Money staff then donated their time to help plant the external area around the Joseph Banks Room – helping to create the beautiful environment which we see today.

The partnership does not end there though. Three teams from Marks and Spencer Money have already committed to supporting the Zoo through volunteering and discussions are underway to see how HSBC in the Community can further help to support the educational work of Chester Zoo.

And so the opening of the Joseph Banks Room also marked the start of a new relationship, one which all three organisations believe will be long and prosperous.



Better odds than the National Lottery!

Would you like to be in with a chance of winning a cash prize every month, ranging from £50 to £1000? If so, why not join Chester Zoo's 100 club which was created specially for members and adopters who are feeling lucky! Monthly draws take place and you can see the lucky winners for the last three months in this edition of Z.

So what are you waiting for? The more people participating means more prizes so join today.

For further information, please contact the Development Office at developmentoffice@chesterzoo.org or telephone 01244 650229.

Chester Zoo 100 Club

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

July 2006

Mr Donald McNeil, Newcastle	£100
Captain M Ramsbottom, Bolton	£50
Mr Micheal Allsop, Wirral	£50

August 2006

Mr Gordon F. Weston, Flintshire	£100
Mr Garry Wynne, Cheshire	£100
Mrs Ann Buglass, Lancashire	£50
Mrs S Wakefield, Ellesmere Port	£50
Ms Sharon Dodd, Chester	£50

September 2006

Mrs C. Ronaldson, Cheshire	£100
Mr Karsen Lambert, Wrexham	£50
Mr Geoffrey Elkin, Stafford	£50
Mrs Meriel Brocklebank	£50

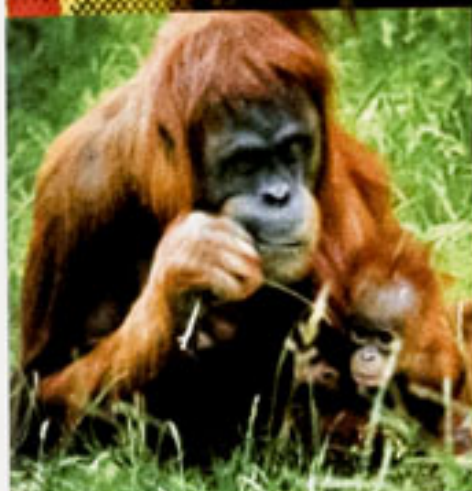
Membership of the 100 Club is still invited. All prize winners will be notified by post and will be listed in the next edition of Z. Please inform us as soon as possible if you change address.

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

Dying to be saved!

HOW ENDANGERED DOES AN ANIMAL HAVE TO BE TO GET ATTENTION?

It's a small step from endangered to extinct:



Orang-utan - extinct in the wild in 10 years?



Black Rhino - 3,600 left in the wild



Chinese Blue-crowned Laughingthrush - only 200 left in the wild



Nigerian Chimpanzee - extinct in the wild in 15 years?

The North of England Zoological Society (NEZS) is involved in projects both at home and abroad to secure a better future for endangered animals, their habitats and their communities.

But we can't do this alone.

We urgently need funds to continue and expand our vital work in conservation, research and education.

You can make a real difference by making a donation today.

Thank you for your support!

NEZS
CONSERVING
WILDLIFE
WORLDWIDE



I enclose a cheque for £10 £20 £30 Other £ _____ made payable to "North of England Zoological Society".
You can also donate on line at www.chesterzoo.org/donate or by calling 01244 650229 with your credit or debit card details.
Please send cheques to Development Office, Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, Chester CHZ 1LH.

giftaid it

Gift Aid Declaration - If you are a UK taxpayer, we can claim tax back on your donations at no extra cost to you. This means a further 28p in every £1 donated can be claimed by the Zoo.
'I would like The North of England Zoological Society to treat this and every subsequent donation as Gift Aid donations'.

Name _____

Address _____

postcode _____

Signature of person making payment _____

Date _____

(You must pay income / capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations)

NEZS runs Chester Zoo. Chester Zoo is a registered charity No.306077. Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, Chester CHZ 1LH. Tel: 01244 380280 Fax: 01244 371273

North of England Zoological Society

Events 2007

January & February Weekend Specials

£19.50 adults & senior citizens

£14.50 children under 11 years

Admission into the Zoo from 10am.

Two course roast lunch served in the Oakfield Restaurant. Ice Skating will be available up to 4th February 2007 (pre-booking essential).

Mothers Day Lunch Sunday 18th March

£23.25 adult

£15.75 child under 11 years

Admission into the Zoo from 10am.

Treat the special ladies in your life to a three course lunch within the Oakfield Manor House.

Elephant Evening & Buffet Thursday 17th May

£31.50 per person

Take a tour with our knowledgeable guides to meet our Elephant Keepers taking in many other animal enclosures along the way. The evening will be rounded off with a buffet served in the Oakfield Manor House.

Evening Garden Tour & BBQ Thursday 28th June

£29.50 per person

The gardens of Chester Zoo are justifiably famous, winning many awards over the years. Enjoy a tour in the company of our knowledgeable gardeners followed by a buffet served in either the Roman Garden or within Oakfield House.

To book contact:
The Events Office
01244 650209

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Founded in 1934, the North of England Zoological Society is a registered charity and receives no government funding. We need your help and support to raise funds for the care and conservation of our rare animals and endangered species across the world.