

COLCHESTER

ZOOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

Research Handbook

Dear Researcher,

Thank you for your interest in conducting your research project with Colchester Zoological Society. Please read through all the information in this handbook before filling out the application form. Once you have completed the application form, please return to the relevant Research Coordinator. Contact details are provided below.

Undergraduate studies: wendy@colchesterzoo.org

Postgraduate and visitor studies: jemmadias@colchesterzoo.org

Please note that applications can be submitted at any time of the year. Please apply as far in advance as possible and a minimum of one month before the proposed research start date to allow for the application to be processed.

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Introduction

Research is one of the primary objectives of Colchester Zoological Society. Colchester Zoological Society aims to continually increase their research potential and output in view of the growing need for knowledge necessary for undertaking conservation tasks and the unique opportunity and environment that the zoo offers for a wide variety of research areas.

Mission statement

Colchester Zoological Society is dedicated to encouraging, supporting, and conducting research that improves captive animal management, benefits conservation programmes and contributes to the body of scientific knowledge about animals and their natural habitats.

Aims and objectives

- Encourage research that supports the mission of Colchester Zoological Society.
- Support and participate in research that furthers understanding of behaviour, husbandry, welfare, environmental enrichment, nutrition, reproduction, ecology, and conservation.
- Support and participate in research that evaluates visitor perception to support Colchester Zoological Society's aim to promote conservation through education.
- Publish research findings which enhance understanding of wildlife, captive animal management and conservation programmes.
- Expand staff and visitor knowledge through promoting research.
- Develop links with universities and other institutions to promote zoological research.

The Research Coordinators

The Research Coordinators are responsible for overseeing all onsite research, and assessing its viability in terms of welfare, husbandry, and captive breeding. They will be the student's first point of contact and are also responsible for acting as a liaison between researchers, keepers, curators, and any other relevant staff.

Priority Research

Through your academic studies, you may have a research project you wish to propose to Colchester Zoological Society. Whilst individual projects will be considered based on their impact on conservation and welfare, all research must be non-invasive and cause no distress to the animals being studied.

Alternatively, Colchester Zoological Society produces a list of priority topics which we are keen for students to adapt into research projects. The list includes areas that have been identified by the Research Coordinators, Zoo Directors, and Animal Management staff. Please contact the appropriate Research Coordinator via email to request the current priority list

Application Procedure

1. Colchester Zoological Society requests that initial contact be made by the tutor/project supervisor or the student.
2. The first stage of the process will be to discuss project ideas with the relevant Research Coordinator at Colchester Zoological Society.
3. An application form must be completed providing information about you, your academic details and proposed project details.
4. Once the application has been submitted it is subject to assessment by Zoo Director and the Curator based on the logistics of the project and the project design
5. Research applications are assessed as soon as possible. Students should be aware that under some circumstances it may take up to one month to accept or decline a project, as it must reach the agreement of all staff. Therefore, the student should apply within plenty of time.
6. The applicant will be informed as soon as possible as to whether the application has been accepted or rejected. There may be some modifications or alterations suggested.
7. If the project is accepted, the student will be invited to attend an induction with the Research Coordinator.
8. Before data collection commences, the researcher **MUST** provide a copy of their university ethics approval; they will then be issued with a research pass at a cost of £30 plus a £50 deposit (£15 plus a £10 deposit for short term studies of up to 3 days). Deposits will be returned when the final report is submitted to Colchester Zoological Society. Unfinished projects will forfeit the research deposit paid at the start of the study.

Assessment of Research Proposals

All research proposals will be assessed by the Zoo Director and the Curator based on the project design and the logistics. The guidelines for assessment are:

- Compatibility with Colchester Zoological Society's mission to conserve and protect wild animals and their natural habitats and to promote zoological research.
- Value to captive animal management, conservation, or scientific knowledge.
- Subject to ethical review, to ensure that animal welfare is not compromised and compatibility with relevant legislation. All research should involve non-invasive methods, to impose minimal stress to the animals.
- Impact of the proposed research on staff and visitors.
- Compatibility with management and husbandry routines.
- Methodology of the proposed research. Proposals should have realistic aims and sound scientific method for data collection and analysis.

It may be the case that only some aspects of the proposal are not suitable, therefore, the Zoo Director and Curator may accept the proposal on the provision that some aspects are altered.

Terms and Conditions

Colchester Zoological Society agrees to fulfil the following conditions:

1. Before commencement, all research to be conducted with Colchester Zoological Society must be assessed and approved by Colchester Zoological Society to ensure scientific and ethical validity, that animal welfare is not compromised and that it complies with relevant UK and EU legal requirements.
2. Any equipment or questionnaires to be used in the study **MUST** be approved by Colchester Zoological Society in advance of the study being completed
3. The researcher must understand prior to the commencement of the project that an animal/s may not be available for study at short notice due to emergencies, e.g., veterinary care or conditions may change which could potentially affect the research, such as enclosure design, husbandry management or group composition. In such cases, Colchester Zoological Society will ensure to inform the researcher of any necessary changes as soon as possible.
4. Colchester Zoological Society will provide basic information about the animal(s) and their enclosures (if available), diets and husbandry related to the project.
5. Any information (including biological samples, data, photographs, film footage etc) provided by Colchester Zoological Society remains the property of Colchester Zoological Society and can only be used for agreed research.
6. Data and biological samples acquired from Colchester Zoological Society premises may only be used for the purposes stated in the approved application documents and may not be passed onto third parties without prior consent from Colchester Zoological Society.
7. CCTV footage must be analysed on-site at Colchester Zoological Society using a Colchester Zoological Society owned laptop. The Research Coordinator will organise a space for the researcher to analyse footage and will arrange for any software to be available for this where appropriate. Raw data only will be permitted to be taken off-site.
8. The Research Coordinators will not act as immediate academic supervisors for research conducted in association with Colchester Zoological Society unless otherwise arranged but as a support for research conducted during your time studying as Colchester Zoological Society.
9. To provide free access to Colchester Zoological Society during the pre-agreed data collection period for the purpose of their specific research project.
10. Colchester Zoological Society reserves the right to refuse admission at any time and revoke any agreed upon research agreements.

Whilst conducting research in association with Colchester Zoological Society, the researcher agrees to fulfil the following conditions:

1. Research projects carried out in association with Colchester Zoological Society must be fully written up and students must provide an electronic copy of the final report within one month of the course submission deadline. If a study lasts longer than 12 months, the researcher must send a progress report every 12 months to Colchester Zoological Society until the report is finalised.
2. All reports on research carried out in association with Colchester Zoological Society must fully acknowledge Colchester Zoological Society. Dependent on mentoring contribution of the Research Coordinators and/or Zoo Directors, co-authorship may be used as an acknowledgement.
3. Once data collection is complete, raw data MUST be submitted with clear and instructional annotations to Colchester Zoological Society. If data is not published or submitted for publishing after a period of one year from the conclusion of the study, Colchester Zoological Society reserves the right to publish data. In such cases, the researcher will be contacted, and all due acknowledgements will be given.
4. It is the researcher's responsibility to notify the Research Coordinators of any changes regarding your personal details, such as contact details, or research information.
5. The researcher will adhere to all Health and Safety guidelines as laid out during the research induction; if the researcher is seen or is reported to have ignored any of these instructions, then the research partnership with Colchester Zoological Society may be terminated.
6. Before data collection commences, the researcher needs to arrange any accommodation or travel necessary for accessing Colchester Zoological Society.
7. Upon completion of your final write up, the researcher will be invited to present their project to relevant staff members at Colchester Zoological Society.

Application Checklist

Application form	To be completed after initial contact has been made. Return to relevant Research Coordinator	
University Ethics Approval	Copy to be sent to relevant Research Coordinator before data collection commences	
Research Agreement	To be signed by student and Research Coordinator before data collection commences	
Final project	Electronic copy to be sent to relevant Research Coordinator up to ONE MONTH after submission	
Project Summary	To be returned to relevant Research Coordinator with final project	

Application Form

Colchester Zoological Society Research Application Form

Please email a completed request form to conduct onsite research at Colchester Zoological Society.

All boxes must be completed for your application to be considered.

If available, please also email a full research proposal.

Undergraduate research, return to: Wendy Lehkjy, wendy@colchesterzoo.org

Postgraduate research or visitor studies, return to: Jemma Dias, jemmadias@colchesterzoo.org

Section One - Your Details	
Your name (first and last name):	Click here to enter text.
Phone:	Click here to enter text.
Email:	Click here to enter text.

Section Two – Academic Details	
Name of College / University:	Click here to enter text.
Course of Study:	Click here to enter text.
Level of Study (BSc, MSc, etc.):	Click here to enter text.
Name of Supervisor / Tutor:	Click here to enter text.
Supervisor / Tutor email contact:	Click here to enter text.

Please provide the details for one academic reference not involved in this project (e.g. not a supervisor)

Reference Name (first and last):	Click here to enter text.
Email:	Click here to enter text.
Phone:	Click here to enter text.
Their University / Institute / etc.:	Click here to enter text.

Section Three – Data Collection	
Proposed data collection period: (DD/MM/YY – DD/MM/YYYY)	Click here to enter text.
Estimated number of days per week:	Click here to enter text.
Estimated number of total days:	Click here to enter text.
Date you require a decision on this application (latest possible deadline):	Click here to enter text.
Type of study:	Observational (in person - no modifications) <input type="checkbox"/> Observational (requires installation of and/or access to additional equipment (if available) e.g. cctv, audio recorders etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Experimental (modifications necessary e.g. providing scents) <input type="checkbox"/> Sample request (e.g. faecal) <input type="checkbox"/>

What information and/or assistance is required from Colchester Zoological Society?

Please be as specific as possible to allow us to assess the feasibility of this request.

Click here to enter text.

Section Four – Project Details	
Project title:	Click here to enter text.
Research animal (species / group)	Click here to enter text.

Research aims and objectives:

Purpose of study – project rationale (e.g. why this project is important; the values of this research to a captive breeding programme or conservation link, etc.)

Click here to enter text.

Description of project:
 Please provide as much detail as possible including your methodology. If any questionnaires, surveys, etc. are to be used please include or provide as an attachment.
 Click here to enter text.

Section Five – Zoo Relevance		
Have you applied to the BIAZA Research Committee for a letter of support?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is this research intended to be shared with the wider zoo community?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

How do you plan to share this research? (e.g. potentially which journals, conferences, etc.)
 Click here to enter text.

How will this research link to Colchester Zoological Society and/or species conservation?
 Click here to enter text.

Please submit in an email, along with this completed form, your University Ethics approval, and any additional relevant information (e.g. full research proposal; letter of support from organisations or tutors, etc.)

Section Six – Consent and Declaration

See our privacy policy (www.colchester-zoo.com/privacy-policy) for more details of how we store and protect your data.

- I declare that the above information is trueful and correct.
- I will supply Colchester Zoological Society with a copy of all data and written work produced from researched gained at Colchester Zoological Society.
- A copy of my work, and my personal data including the information collected in this form will be held on file at Colchester Zoological Society.
- If using material gained from the zoo (e.g. written statements, photographs, etc.) I will acknowledge Colchester Zoological Society.
- I agree to comply with Colchester Zoological Society’s research procedure.

I consent and agree to the above conditions:

Research’s signature:	Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
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By signing below I agree to supervise the project outlined in the proposal above:

Supervisor’s signature:	Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
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Research Agreement

Please complete this form if your application for research at Colchester Zoological Society, as detailed in your research proposal, has been formally accepted by the Research Coordinator. This form will be used as a record of your agreement of our terms and conditions. Please read the terms and conditions fully before signing the form.

For undergraduate research, return to: Wendy Lehkyj, Research Coordinator, Colchester Zoological Society, Maldon Rd, Stanway, Essex CO3 0SL wendy@colchesterzoo.org

For postgraduate research and visitor studies, return to: Jemma Dias, Research Coordinator, Colchester Zoological Society, Maldon Rd, Stanway, Essex CO3 0SL jemmadias@colchesterzoo.org

General information

Your personal details will only be used to contact you in relation to your research project. Please contact us if you have more questions.

Title	First name	Surname (Family name)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Email address	Mobile phone number	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

Researcher details

Please provide details of the academic institution and supervisor you are completing your research in conjunction with.

Name of College/ University	Course and level of study (BSc, MSc etc)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Name of Supervisor/ Tutor	
<input type="text"/>	
Agreed study start date and end date	
<input type="text"/>	

Project Information

Project Title

TERMS AND CONDITIONS - please read carefully

The visiting researcher must agree to fulfil the following conditions:

1. Researchers must have the agreement of their course supervisor that the study is acceptable and that they will supervise the study.
2. Researchers must provide a copy of the university ethics approval before their agreed data collection period.
3. To pay the research fee of £30 plus a £50 deposit (£15 plus £10 deposit for short term studies of up to 3 days). Deposit is returned when Colchester Zoological Society receives the final write-up) before data collection commences.
4. Researchers must ensure that they always have their research pass with them whilst in the Zoo.
5. Upon entry, research students must report to the Admin Office to collect a research hi-vis vest, which MUST be worn at all times whilst the researcher is conducting research. The hi-vis vest MUST be returned to the Admin Office at the end of each observational day. Failure to return will result in a £10 deduction from the refundable deposit.
6. Always behave in a responsible and acceptable manner and remain within the public access areas of the Zoo, unless otherwise agreed with the Research coordinator.
7. CCTV footage must be analysed on-site at Colchester Zoological Society using a Colchester Zoological Society owned laptop. The Research Coordinator will organise a space for the researcher to analyse footage and will arrange for any software to be available for this were appropriate. Raw data only will be permitted to be taken off-site.
8. Researchers must ensure that the study is completed or inform Colchester Zoological Society as early as possible in the event of the project remaining unfinished. Unfinished projects will forfeit the £50 (£10 for short term studies) research deposit paid at the start of the study.
9. To inform Colchester Zoological Society and discuss any changes to the study proposal and gain approval for any alterations of the aims or methodology of the study.
10. On completion of the study, researchers must provide an electronic copy of the final report within one month of the course submission deadline.
11. To gain the permission of Colchester Zoological Society before the submission of any papers or presentations of the research.
12. To guarantee the anonymity of Colchester Zoological Society in any papers or presentations if requested.
13. To acknowledge Colchester Zoological Society in any papers or presentations (unless anonymity is requested) and to include the Zoo Director as co-author if requested (where the Zoo has had significant involvement in the project).

Colchester Zoological Society agrees to fulfil the following conditions:

1. To provide free entry to the researcher during their agreed data collection period for the purposes of their specific research project.
2. Will not provide free entry to other individuals (e.g., friends and family) unless there has been written agreement from the Research Coordinator to assist with data collection.
3. If conditions change, e.g., enclosure design, group composition, or husbandry which could potentially affect the research project, Colchester Zoological Society will ensure that the researcher is informed as soon as possible.
4. To facilitate the practical requirements of the study and to conduct the manipulations as agreed when the project is accepted. If circumstances make this impossible, Colchester Zoological Society will ensure that the researcher is informed as soon as possible.
5. To provide basic information about the animals, their enclosure, diet, photocopy facilities (at a cost), other equipment or information as agreed by Colchester Zoological Society and the researcher.
6. Will not provide supervision for independent projects but may provide supervision for projects from the priority topic list, which will be agreed when the project is accepted.
7. Reserves the right to publish or present the data/project. In this case, the permission of the researcher will be sought, and they will be named as a co-author.
8. Retains the right to revoke agreements or refuse admission to the Zoo at any time.

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

During your data collection period you will be representing both Colchester Zoological Society's research department and your own institution. Therefore, you must act responsibly at all times.

You are responsible for your own health and safety when in the Zoo and any aspect of your research is undertaken at your own risk. However, the following guidelines must be followed for your own safety, and the safety of other visitors, staff, and animals.

1. Do not attempt to pet any animal (with the exception of domestic stock in the Familiar Friends area), do not enter an enclosure with any animals and do not poke any object through the enclosure mesh or put items in enclosures. You must inform keepers or another member of staff if you see anyone attempting to do any of these things.
2. Do not cross any safety barriers or enter any enclosures or off-show areas of the Zoo without the permission of the Senior keeper or Curator and without a member of staff being present *. You must inform keepers or another member of staff if you see anyone attempting to do any of these things.
3. Wash hands after working with or around animals.
4. Do not take, use, or move any tools or equipment without permission from a relevant member of staff and having received sufficient training *.
5. Follow any instructions given by members of staff, e.g., in the event of an emergency, to ensure your own safety and the safety of other visitors, staff and animals.
6. If you are injured in the Zoo, please inform the Research Coordinator or another member of staff immediately, who will ensure that appropriate action is taken.
7. You will not be allowed in the Zoo outside of opening hours, except with permission from the Research Coordinator/member of management *.
8. Smoking/Vaping is not permitted in any part of the zoo grounds.
9. You must inform keepers or another member of staff immediately if you see anything in an enclosure which might harm an animal or could be used by the animal to escape or if you think an animal is sick or injured.
10. Do not feed any animals or put any item in an enclosure without permission from the keeper responsible for the section *. You must inform keepers or another member of staff if you see anyone attempting to do any of these things.
11. You must inform a member of staff immediately if you see anything in the Zoo grounds which could pose a potential safety risk to visitors or staff.

*** Permission should always be obtained by approaching the Research Coordinator initially**

PUBLIC RELATIONS INFORMATION

1. Always have your pass on display the entire time that you are in the Zoo conducting research.
2. If you are asked any question by visitors or staff, always be polite and provide assistance if you can, or direct them to a member of staff or Guest Services.
3. Do not talk to any media reporters about the Zoo, other than when requested by the Business Development Department.
4. Do not post any material relating to your study on any social media websites or any other online forum, unless requested or approved by the Business Development Director.

Researchers' signature: I understand that by signing above I have agreed to the Terms & Conditions, Health & Safety Guidelines and Public Relations Information for visiting researchers.	Date:
Staff signature: I understand that by signing above I have agreed to the Terms & Conditions on behalf of Colchester Zoological Society.	Date:

Summary Report for Research Project

The following document is a report to summarise the project undertaken by a visiting researcher at Colchester Zoological Society. It is intended to inform management, keepers and any other interested staff of the project's success and what its main findings were.

Project details

Researcher name:

Project title:

Institution:

Course:

Academic Supervisor name:

Dates of data collection:

Date final project received:

Aims and objectives:

Method:

Summary of main findings:

Difficulties encountered during research:

Benefit of study to Colchester Zoological Society/zoo community/species conservation/ welfare etc.

Any other comments:

Please return completed form to:

Undergraduate projects: wendy@colchesterzoo.org

Postgraduate projects: jemmadias@colchesterzoo.org

Along with a PDF copy of your completed research project