



**SEPTEMBER
2024**



ZOO



The Ruppell's vulture fledgling, hatched in March, has now been sexed as female and named

LENNY.



The Lead Keeper of Tiger Section attended the ABWAK Otter Workshop at the New Forest Wildlife Park.

The Team Leader of Elephant Section attended a five-day elephant workshop at Chester Zoo.

The BIAZA Animal Behaviour and Training Working Group Conference was held here at Colchester Zoo. Joined by participants from zoos around the UK, our training committee led the conference to highlight the training work we carry out here at Colchester Zoo.

SEPTEMBER

ZOO

Male spur-thighed tortoise Arthur was donated to a private owner on the 13th September.



3 female juvenile crested wood partridges arrived from Tropical World, Leeds, on 15th September.

3 female juvenile reindeers arrived from a private breeder on 17th September. The females have been named Winter, North and Alaska and are 5 months old.

7 adult pygmy goats arrived from a private owner on 18th September. They are currently serving quarantine off-show. There are 5 males named Hank, Earl, Kenny, Peter and Grayson and 2 females named Minnie and Frida.



Section inspections were completed for the remaining animal sections around the zoo (Rainforest, Giraffes, Primates, Elephants and Farm) as part of our internal inspection process and to get ready for our Zoo Licensing Inspection in mid-October.



Within the zoo, work is continuing on the rebuild of the yellow-breasted capuchin enclosure near the entrance, improvements to the visitor viewing platform looking over mangabeys and Lost Madagascar, and a new goeldi's monkey indoor exhibit leading into the main Worlds Apart enclosure. Their vacated habitat in Worlds Apart will house golden-headed lion tamarins in future.

The new Education and Animal Records Office was completed this month, along with new gates leading into the yard for improved security.



Our 2 new female ostrich, Daphne and Daisy, moved to the Kingdom of the Wild paddock on the 10th September. They have been introduced to resident female Doris and have been spending time as a trio in the paddock before the other animals are let out.



SEPTEMBER

EDUCATION



2,247 education visitors visited in September



68% of education groups attended a session
& 27 education sessions were delivered



203 participants also attended school outreach
& 130 participants attended virtual outreach



1206
Exploratorium
Participants

& 900
Exploratorium
Boxes

VOLUNTEERS



15 **Prop Parade sessions**
(Sharing skins, skulls, etc.)



8 **Enclosure Experts sessions**
(At enclosures talking about the animals and how we care for them)



Up to 4
volunteers attend
per day



SEPTEMBER

PRIMATE WEEKEND EVENT

SATURDAY 31ST AUGUST – SUNDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2024

Our aim was to interact with visitors of all age brackets and learning capabilities. We wanted to engage in conversations surrounding primates here at the zoo, the plights they face out in the wild and of course help our visitors identify the differences between monkeys & apes.

THE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:



Monkey vs. Ape,
Whose Skull
Is whose



Voting Boxes

(Visitors tried to guess
the conservation status
of different primates)



Target Training
and Enrichment
Examples



Orangutan hand, skulls
and an enrichment
activity



The Keepers themed
their encounters to
cover different topics
relating to primates
and a couple of
additional encounters

SEPTEMBER

ELEPHANT AND RHINO WEEKEND EVENT

SATURDAY 21ST – SUNDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2024

The event was successful with a lot of visitors engaging and getting involved in activities. Our only let-down was the weather forecast on Sunday.

THE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:



Match the Rhino species and... Do you weigh as much as an Elephant's poo?



Can you jump the length of an Elephant's trunk?



Big-eared photo



Artefacts & Enrichment Examples

Rhino skull, the bottom jaw from an elephant skull, rhino horn, elephant tusk, elephant skin and elephant tail hair



The Keepers provided poo from both species and a large elephant barrel used to enrich their feeding



Social Media & Advertising Content



Encounters

The Keepers themed their encounters to cover different topics relating to our rhinos and elephants at Colchester Zoo and their plights

The Elephant Team made sure the elephants had a big form of enrichment to encourage the elephants closer to the public viewing areas



SEPTEMBER



In the middle of the month, we got a report that the 9 buffalo that we got from the farm next door were just sitting on the neighbour's fence line, not feeding and in an area of little water.

Usually, buffalo are very resilient - like the herd we introduced in November last year who are doing well and finding their own food and water, however these ones are used to being fed in the winter and not fending for themselves. The team started supplementary feeding the buffalo with bales of hay and providing water to a mother and calf who seem isolated from the rest of the herd. The team also collect silage each day and mix in some syrup molasses.

This will continue until the rains come and the grass grows, so at least another 3-4 weeks. In 3 weeks, the team have seen an improvement in their condition especially the mum and calf. However, there are still 2 cows, that despite having large stomachs, still need to improve in body condition.

UMPHAFA



The maintenance team are working on a new fix for the roads; sand, followed by flat rocks and then cementing in the stones to stop them moving. If this works, the team shall do this on other roads to prevent further erosion and to ensure cars can get up the hills smoothly.



At the start of the month, a small run-away fire came onto the reserve. The neighbour who had recently purchased additional land wanted to burn the perimeters ready to put up a new fence - unfortunately it got a little out of hand and the team had to rush out and help before it burnt the tenant farmer's land.



Unfortunately, one of our new camera traps was stolen by poachers, despite them being in a steel cage and chained to a tree. The team are going to try another option of a python lock which should be stronger than the chain.



This month we had a report that the wild dogs we bonded in the boma in April/May had a litter of 5 pups, born approx. 20th August.



UMPHAFA



1 Rare Sighting

This month, the team got an incredibly rare sighting of an aardwolf, only seen on the reserve once before.



2 Completed Captures

The game capture team came back to complete the capture of zebra and female kudu. Using a 300m funnel, the kudu were pushed into the covered funnel by the helicopter, and the interns and the team pushed them down the funnel to the waiting truck.

COLCHESTER ZOO

A Colchester Zoo Member Joined the Interns this month

The interns were joined this month by one of the staff members from Colchester Zoo, Train Driver Andy. They carried out patrols, snare sweeps, maintenance, supplementary feeding, as well as helped to burn several small blocks on the reserve.



1 Meeting with the Police

The Reserve Manager and Maintenance Manager met with the local police colonel for this area and went to visit a known poacher to advise him we knew who he was and where he lived. The new drone got footage of him following a poaching incident and walking all the way to his house.

34

University of KZN Students

The University of KZN joined us at the end of the month with 34 students visiting to do the practical part of their course on soil studies. Field Rangers now have to join the team with the introduction of the buffalo as an extra pair of eyes to keep the students safe.



Visit from the Vet for the Buffalo

The team had a visit from the vet to double check our reserve fence is up to standard for the purpose of keeping buffalo. We failed on one section of fence and, once we did a small amount of maintenance, they came back and passed it straight away. To have buffalo on the reserve means that we have to have the fence checked yearly by the State vet.



Unfortunately Cold Weather

From the middle of the month, a weather warning came in for freezing temperatures, snow and rain! Most of the snow landed on Ithala, the reserve's highest hill, and the northern side of the reserve. With severe weather, the animals stood little chance!

With only just getting the summer rains, there has been little food for them to eat, then with getting cold, snowed on and the wind chill factor, this meant we sadly lost 31 animals that the team managed to locate.



The Maintenance Team Have Done Repairs

This month, the maintenance team have burnt fire blocks, painted the decking at the lodge, repaired 2 sections of road, carried out bush clearance, supplied water to Sully and put in new air bricks inside several of the buildings so we are compliant for gas certification.

With no interns on the reserve for the week, the team took the opportunity to fix a leak behind the cupboards in the kitchen at the intern accommodation, and the team re-tiled behind the sink.

SEPTEMBER



CONSERVATION

The Red Panda Network (RPN) established the world's first community-based monitoring programme of red pandas and their habitat through empowering, educating and engaging local communities in red panda conservation, along with providing livelihood incentives.

One of the key initiatives contributing to the success is the Forest Guardian (FG) programme. FGs are on-the-ground partners, who are paid to monitor and protect red panda habitat and support red panda conservation through multiple activities, such as monitoring red panda populations and habitat, generating population estimates, identifying threats and developing threat mitigation strategies.

They are also involved in carrying out anti-poaching patrolling and work as panda trackers during eco-trips.

Perhaps the most important role these FGs have is within their own communities.

Each FG works within his or her respective village to build awareness of the importance of red pandas to the local ecosystem.

Currently there are 126 professional FGs who are invested in sustainable development and red panda conservation. In 2024, the support for 25 FGs is provided by red panda holders of European Zoos.

This month our annual donation of
£250
was sent to the Red Panda Network.

SEPTEMBER