

# Alive

Zoological Society of Milwaukee County FALL 1995



PRESIDENT'S LETTER



A Zoo like the Milwaukee County Zoo needs a lot of people to make it a success—many of them people you don't even see during your visits to the Zoo.

And only the people who do the many jobs at the Zoo know just what it's like to, say, plow the parking lots and paths at every snowfall, manicure an elephant's nails, keep an eye on the Zoo at night, handle venomous snakes, tickle a gorilla, and, yes, even vacuum animal waste.

Our story, "Leaving Behind a Legacy," is a tribute to the Zoo veterans who have been doing many behind-the-scenes jobs at the Zoo for years, even decades. In just a few short weeks, if not already, these people—many of whom I've known for over 15 years—will trade their jobs for an early-retirement package offered by Milwaukee County. It's an opportunity they couldn't, or wouldn't, pass up. Please join us in our salute.

As several of the Zoo's seasoned staff punch out for the last time, many of the neotropical migrant birds we enjoyed this summer are heading South. But you can count on watching many favorite backyard birds—mourning doves, chickadees, cardinals, blue jays and sparrows—squabble over morsels from your bird feeder this fall and winter.

This year, the Zoological Society has teamed with Pick 'n Save and Kaytee to give everyone a chance to experience the melody and majesty of birds year-round. Next time you're in a Pick 'n Save or Roundy's member store, look for decorated tins—filled with Kaytee Special Blend Wild Bird Seed—featuring the Zoo's brilliant Scarlet Tanagers. Roundy's will donate \$1 from each tin purchased to the Zoological Society.

Our tins, and the many other gifts in this issue of *Alive*, are guaranteed to shorten this year's holiday shopping list.

Happy holidays!

Gil Boese, President  
Zoological Society of Milwaukee County



The mission of the Zoological Society is to support the Milwaukee County Zoo, educate people about the importance of wildlife and the environment, and to take part in conserving wildlife and endangered species.

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# Alive

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Having given years—even decades—of service to the Milwaukee County Zoo, at least nine veteran Zoo employees are hanging up their hats and turning in their keys.

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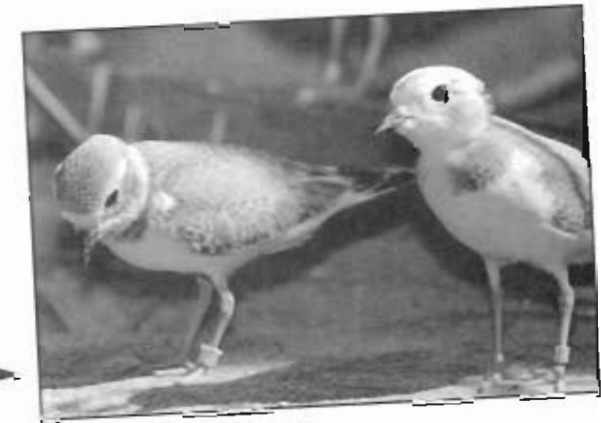
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American Goldfinches by Jay Jochem  
Artwork endowed by Gretchen and Andrew Dawes Endowment, Inc.





**RESCUE  
MISSION  
FOR  
SPECIES  
SURVIVAL**

**WITH SANDY, BLOND PLUMAGE, THEY HIDE WELL ON A BEACH.**

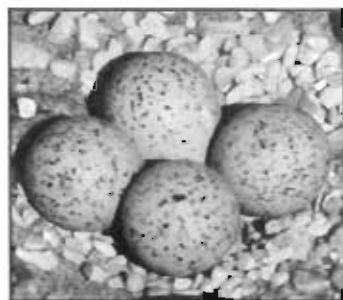
For a shorebird like the diminutive piping plover, camouflage is a survival mechanism that has served them well for eons. But, ironically, that life-saving ability to blend in with its surroundings has made the sparrow-sized shorebird the victim of all-terrain vehicles, trucks and boat trailers.

Magnifying the piping plover's risk: Its favorite nesting site — a sandy beach — evaporates faster and faster as summer resorts and vacation homes gobble up lake and riverfront property throughout the bird's breeding range along the Missouri River system.

"Their numbers have steadily declined in recent years," says Ed Diebold, bird curator at the Milwaukee County Zoo. "Unless they have sandy beaches, they're not going to do very well. Many of the areas where they used to breed are now under water because of dams built to create big impoundments. Their nests are also threatened by direct disturbance caused by the growing use of these places as recreational areas."

Animals, too, prey upon the piping plover. Gulls, cats, dogs and raccoons all prey upon plover eggs and chicks.

Diebold notes that the piping plover has three distinct populations in the United States. Along with those located on the upper Missouri River, a stable separate



**A typical piping plover nest is lined with flat stones and has four speckled eggs pointed downward.**

population lives on the East Coast. Closer to home, on the northern shores of Lakes Michigan and Superior, an endangered Great Lakes population struggles to survive.

"The birds used to breed in Wisconsin until about 10 years ago," Diebold says. "But they're extirpated as breeding birds now."

Buff-white with a black band on its breast, the six- to seven-inch bird combs beaches inconspicuously on a pair of yellowish legs, whistling an occasional peep.

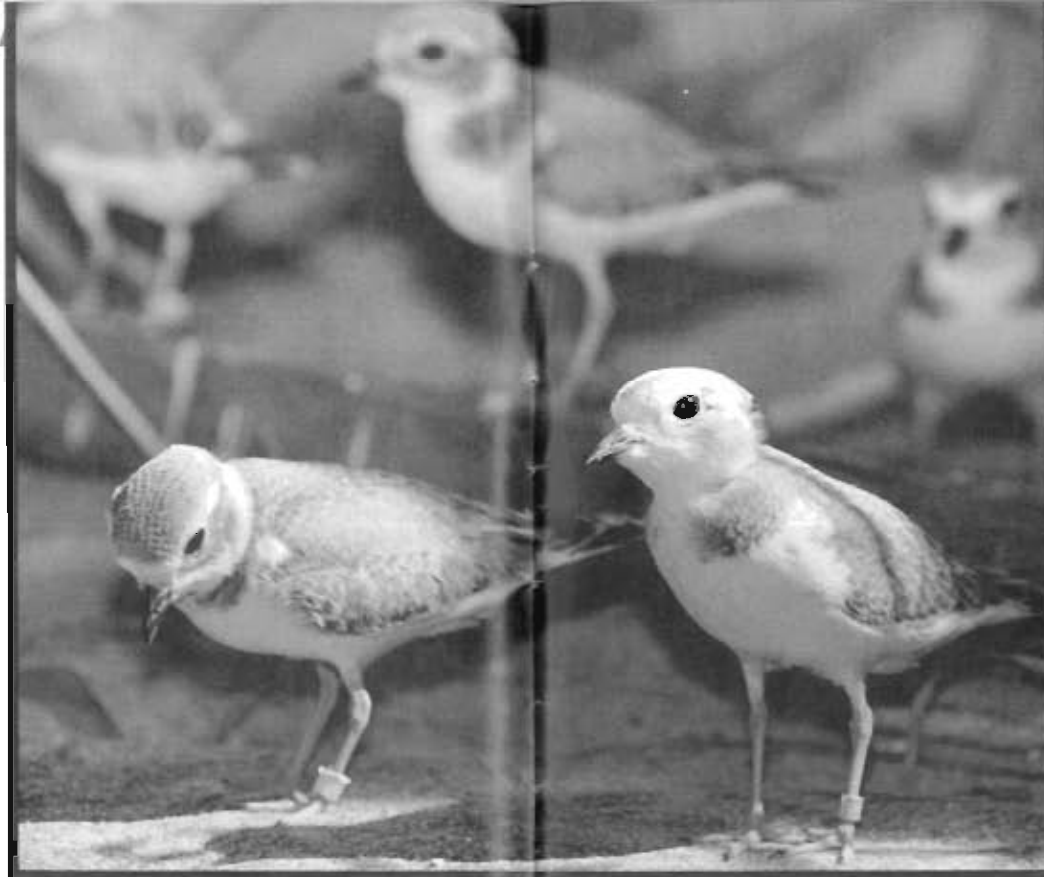
This spring, the threatened bird faced a different and potentially devastating threat: an unusually large snowpack. Forecasters predicted melting snow upstream and spring rains would force the river from its banks, inundating piping plover nests on sandbars along the Missouri and its large impoundments, or man-made lakes.

Congress in 1944

**At each of the rescue team's egg-gathering stops, the team marked the eggs with pencil and recorded where and when the eggs were collected to determine the birds' relatedness.**



photos courtesy of Dr. Bruce Beehler unless otherwise noted



photos by Richard Breueller

authorized the ambitious Missouri River Project. The government built a series of dams along the river to provide flood control, irrigation and electric power. Some of the dams created sprawling impoundments that inundated portions of the piping plover's former nesting sites.

This spring, snow melting in the river's Rocky Mountain headwaters forced the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to open dams to prevent major flooding. Scientists

from federal agencies and officials from the Milwaukee County Zoo then sprung into action to rescue the eggs. The rising water forced scientists to think on the wing, as little is known about captive breeding, rearing and releasing techniques for piping plovers, Diebold says. Officials gathered information on similar species and a plan was developed.

"We saw this as an opportunity to get the eggs and develop a program so that we could learn to care for these birds," Diebold says. "We'll develop husbandry techniques that may be used if this species continues to decline."

"We didn't know a thing about piping plovers," Diebold adds. "We brought together as much information on like species as we could. Piping plovers are in the same genus as the killdeer, which are common in Wisconsin and have been reared in captivity. Other than their small size, we had no reason to believe that the piping plover would be much different from the killdeer."

With the help of Mary and Terry Kohler of Sheboygan's Windway Capital Corp., a zoo team zoomed to the swollen Missouri.

"One of the many ways that the

**The piping plover—its sandy beach habitat threatened by development—faced a different threat this spring: flooding along the Missouri River that washed away the plovers' nesting sites.**

Kohlers have helped us is through donating pilots and a small jet that enabled us to airlift the eggs," Diebold says. "It's critical in a situation like this to move quickly because the portable incubators are simply not as stable as the ones we have here at the Zoo."

Ultimately, Diebold would join Milwaukee County Zoo Deputy Zoo Director Dr. Bruce Beehler and two zoo officials from Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo—Anita Cramm, curator of birds, and Sue Maher, collection manager of birds—to transport the eggs to the Milwaukee County Zoo and Lincoln Park Zoo to be hatched.



First, however, the cleverly concealed nests had to be located amid the swirling waters of the Missouri in South and North Dakota. In Yankton, S.D., on the Missouri River at the Nebraska border, the rescue team, guided by U.S. Army Corps of Engineer biologists, located the first nest.

**GEOGRAPHY**



**T**his spring, Zoo officials rescued threatened piping plover eggs from Missouri River floodwaters.

**To transport the plover eggs from the Dakotas to Milwaukee, Zoo officials safely loaded the eggs in a padded wooden box (below), kept warm with a hot water bottle and cooled by opening and closing the box.**

"We went to pull the most critical ones right away," Diebold says. "That very first nest had been wiped out. The second had been hit by predators and the third had already hatched."

continued on next page

During their search, rescuers found a nest undisturbed a few feet from a parking lot as trailers laden with boats whizzed past, while another had been flattened by tires.

Meanwhile, another nest was found untouched, just three or four inches from a set of all-terrain vehicle tracks.

Eventually, the group pressed on and collected 30 eggs. Rescuers recorded the exact location of nests and the number of eggs taken. The whirlwind trip began in



Milwaukee at 8 a.m. and ended 16 hours later with the precious cargo safely in the Zoo's incubators and another share headed for Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo.

Of the clutch of 30 eggs, 26 hatched.

Milwaukee

hatched 12 successfully but now has 11 healthy piping plover chicks. One died from an infection. "One chick lost is good by any standards," Diebold says. In Chicago, zoo officials successfully reared 12 chicks. "It's all the more remarkable when you consider that we didn't know a thing about them," says Diebold.

But the surrogate piping plover parents learned quickly. Once hatched the improbably tiny chicks — each weighing about one-one hundredth of one pound — scurried about and searched for food. "They were like little bumble bees," Diebold recalls.

Keepers carefully fed the buzzing baby birds a diet of marine invertebrates, including glassworms and brine shrimp, and later, mealworms, waxworms and pinhead crickets.

Next, the 23 birds at both Milwaukee and Chicago will be sexed by taking blood samples and using a DNA probe. Painless for the bird, the technique is necessary



**ABOVE:** This plover feigns a broken wing; it thinks its eggs are being threatened. Plovers also distract predators by ruffling their tail feathers.

**BELOW:** To stem further destruction to plover nest sites, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers fenced off areas with eggs along the Missouri River.



because piping plovers have no discernible differences between genders. Eventually, the birds will be paired with unrelated mates for breeding.

"Considering all the things that could have gone wrong," Diebold says, "we really stuck our necks out. But it turned out well."



## Coins for Conservation

Nickel by nickel, dime by dime, quarter by quarter, children and adults visiting the Milwaukee County Zoo have spared precious pieces of tropical rain forest.

The Conservation Parking Meter program, initiated at the Milwaukee County Zoo in 1993, has bought time and safety for 220 acres at the Maya Biosphere Reserve in the Central American country of Guatemala and the diverse fauna species—tapirs, jaguars, howler monkeys and harpy eagles among them—that live there.

The program works this way: Each of the coins dropped in the two meters is donated to the Nature Conservancy. That internationally renowned conservation organization then forwards the cash to the Maya Biosphere Reserve, an area chock full of tropical rainforests, freshwater wetlands, mangroves and marine ecosystems—all threatened by illegal logging and agricultural colonization.

Once in Guatemala, each dollar raised at the Zoo is matched with a \$2 grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development. Thus far, a total of \$8,800 in coins has been collected from the Zoo's two meters. Tack on the 2-to-1 US AID grant and Milwaukee County Zoo patrons are responsible for raising \$26,400 to protect the reserve. All of the money benefits the rainforest; none is used for operational costs.

The Zoological Society originally purchased the parking meters. The program here is part of a national effort linking the Zoological Society, the Milwaukee County Zoo, the American Zookeepers Association, The Nature Conservancy and the Ecosystem Survival Plan (ESP). The ESP acts as the international coordinator of more than 160 meters placed in zoos, aquariums and nature stores across North America. All told, more than \$900,000 has been collected worldwide to help purchase and protect valuable and vulnerable rainforest habitat.



Karin Newman, Milwaukee County Zoo registrar and the ESP coordinator here, says the permanent meter inside the Primates of the World Building and a portable meter used for education have been a success.

Children in particular find the opportunity to contribute rewarding, says Newman. She takes the portable meter with her to schools when she gives presentations on rainforests.

"When they have a nickel or dime or quarter in their pockets, they can drop it in the meter and feel they are taking part, that they're contributing to an important conservation effort," Newman says.

## 50,000 Acres for Rhinos: Saved and Supported by FWC Inc.

The Zoological Society of Milwaukee's partner in international conservation, The Foundation for Wildlife Conservation Inc. (FWC), has heeded a call for help by Kenya's Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, a 50,000-acre refuge for the endangered Black Rhino. Rhino, poached for their horns, require vast habitat for their successful survival.

This year, the FWC is investing \$13,000 to support the Lewa Wildlife

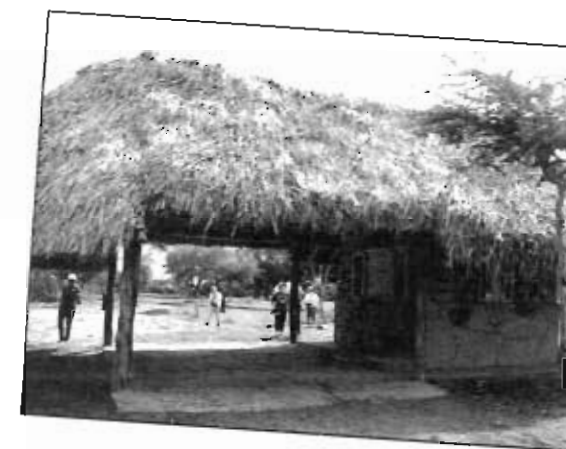
Conservancy Capital Project, FWC President Gil Boese has announced. The foundation's contribution will fund the building of the conservancy's Reception/Conservation Center and living quarters for the conservancy's staff and 50 guards. Each of the guards was recruited and trained to patrol the conservancy full time and protect the rhino.

The Reception/Conservation Center—one main entrance to the conservancy staffed 24 hours a day—is part of an effort to more tightly control access to the animals, to educate visitors on the objectives of the conservancy, and to generate income for the conservancy.

"Since 1992, we've been pleased to have supported the sanctuary's mission to provide immediate safety for the rhino and to secure the long-term future of this endangered species," says Boese.

Besides the FWC's contributions to the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy Capital Project, the Zoological Society matched a donation from the society's volunteer auxiliary, Zoo Pride, to cover the \$7,500 cost of uniforms for the conservancy's rangers last year.

The Lewa Wildlife Conservancy credits FWC with boosting the conservancy toward its goal of being fiscally independent within five years.



**A Foundation for Wildlife Conservation (FWC)-funded Reception/Conservation Center at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya**



## BOBOLINKS:

# Birds in Distress

**L**ynn White had never heard of a bobolink.

As a city child, she was familiar with common birds — blue jays, robins, red-winged black birds. And as an undergraduate studying business administration, ornithology wasn't on her class schedule.

"I'd worked in business for a couple of years after I graduated," White says. "Then I wanted a career change. I decided I'd rather do something that I was really interested in. And I was always interested in animals."

That interest led White to the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and a graduate program in environmental science. Which, in turn, led to a course in ornithology, the study of birds.

It was there, on a field trip, that she had her first meeting with a bobolink, a rather ordinary-looking, black-and-white bird with an extraordinary song.

"I looked it up in my bird guide and found out it was a new species for me," White says. "It's not a bird that a lot of people know about. Farmers are probably aware of them, but they may not know their name."

The more White learned about the bobolink, the more her interest grew. She found out, for instance, that the bobolink breeds in grasslands across a swath of the northern United States and southern



Photo by O.S. Pettingill for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

Habitat destruction is cited as a primary cause of the bobolink's decline.

Canada. She discovered that the bobolink migrates farther than almost any other bird species, returning in late summer to central and southern South America. She also learned that the bobolink, with its ebullient song, was a bird in distress.

The bobolink population has been in decline for much of the last half century. From 1966 to 1991, the number of bobolinks recorded on Wisconsin Breeding Bird Survey routes dropped 2.9% per year. The trend was most pronounced from 1982 to 1991 when bobolink numbers declined 4.3% per year.

Destruction of habitat has been cited as a primary cause of the bird's troubles. Bobolinks nest on the ground, placing their clutch of brownish-gray speckled eggs in a carefully-hidden pocket of grass and stems. The birds show a preference for moderately moist meadows, grassy lowlands and various types of hay fields.

A shift toward the production of alfalfa away from other grass hays that bobolinks prefer has taken a toll. Alfalfa hay fields are cut earlier in the season than other grass hay fields, which has resulted in the destruction of some bobolink nests, the disturbance of others and a reduction in the number of potential breeding sites.

On their wintering grounds in South America, bobolinks forage in large

flocks and are considered agricultural pests. "They're getting it from both sides," White says. "The population trend for them across the central and eastern United States is decline. In Wisconsin, they're listed as a species of special concern, which means that although they're not listed as threatened or endangered, attention is being focused on them because of suspected problems relating to their



Photos, courtesy of Lynn White, unless otherwise noted

Hay cutting earlier in the season destroys eggs and young nestlings and has contributed to the bobolink's decline.

abundance and distribution within the state.

"I'm concerned about all species in decline," she continues. "It seems like the impact of humans on animals keeps accelerating. Animal habitat keeps decreasing as development keeps going farther and farther into the country."

With the help of a student research grant from the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County, White has made the plight of bobolinks in east central Wisconsin the focus of her master's thesis.

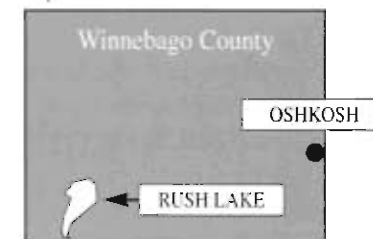
White's graduate study has concentrat-

ed on the bobolink's habitat requirements, specifically where the bird prefers to breed in an area surrounding Rush Lake in Winnebago County. The Rush Lake area has been identified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as the core of its Glacial Habitat Restoration Area (GHRA), which includes portions of Winnebago, Fond du Lac, Dodge and Columbia Counties. The DNR's goal in the GHRA is to restore and protect impor-

continued on next page



## GEOGRAPHY



**A** retreating glacier created Rush Lake about 12,000 years ago. The lake itself is one of Wisconsin's few remaining prairie potholes, similar to those sprinkled throughout the Dakotas. The lake takes its name from hard-stem plants, known as bull rushes, surrounding it.

Prior to European settlement, the area surrounding Rush Lake played host to a variety of wildlife, including wolves and black bear, elk and bison.

Sandpipers nested in its meadows, and prairie chickens boomed during their spring breeding ritual.

Zoological Society conservation grant recipient Lynn White scans for bobolinks in the hay fields near Rush Lake, Wis.

tant wildlife habitat.

White's field work included mapping all of the features of the bobolink's breeding habitat in her study area, including crop fields, wetland areas, trees, streams and hedgerows. She also conducted a bobolink census during the early weeks of summer.

"I drove along every road in my study area, stopping at each field for five minutes to listen and look for bobolinks," White says. "I completed the entire circuit of stops four times during their eight-week breeding season."

She's now spending hours in the DNR's Geographic Information Systems



(GIS) lab digitizing, correcting and plotting her maps. Ultimately, the GIS software package (PC ARC/INFO) will make thousands of measurements between fields containing bobolinks and features like trees, roads, wetlands and hedgerows.

"We're looking at the landscape factors that affect their nesting choices," White says. "For example, do bobolinks prefer fields located near a wetland or do they avoid fields adjacent to a forest? We're looking at these and other variables to see if there are correlations."

Among her initial findings is that the birds are not particular about the species of grass they choose to nest in. Instead, White says, the birds she observed opt for a certain type of structure. "They look for

vegetation with the right height and density. I've seen them in fields of alfalfa, alfalfa mixed with other grasses, pure winter wheat and just plain, idle grass fields.

"What they require is grass thick enough and high enough to build a nest in and conceal it. A two- or three- inch alfalfa field isn't going to do it. But an eight- to 15-inch field would be wonderful, as far as a bobolink is concerned.

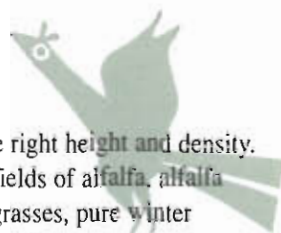
"Unfortunately, once alfalfa fields reach this height, they are usually cut." Maps of bobolink distributions over the four observation periods showed that bobolinks that began the season in one part of the study area tended to congregate in other areas toward the end of the season.

White believes this is due to the cutting of hay fields throughout the season. "Many of them ended up in the last uncut fields of the entire study area."

White hopes the results of her study will be used to help researchers and resource managers develop plans to restore and protect the types of breeding habitats that bobolinks prefer.



White spends many hours in the DNR's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) lab digitizing, correcting and plotting her maps. Ultimately, the GIS software package will make thousands of measurements between fields containing bobolinks and features such as trees, roads, wetlands and hedgerows.



## KIDS!

When you are finished reading about the babies on this page, get out your crayons and color the animals, just like in your coloring books.



# Alive

for kids and families

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY FALL 1995

PULL-OUT SECTION

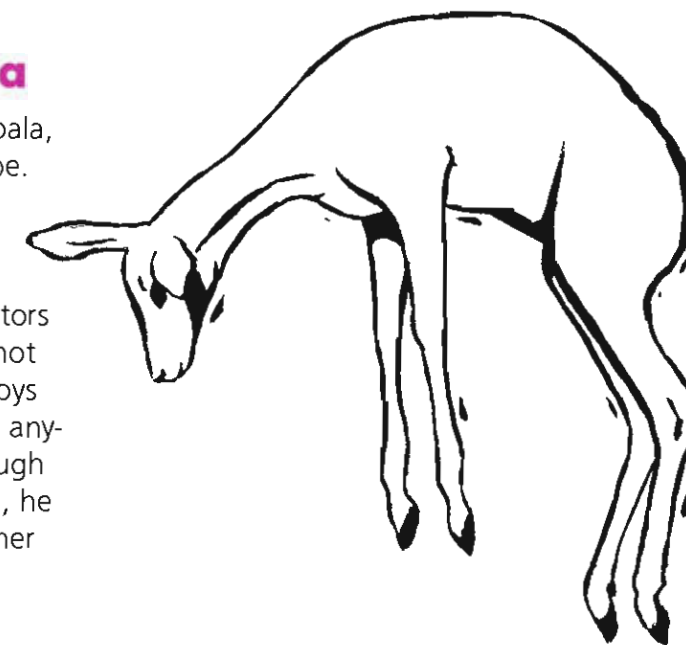


## Play is the work of the young

Play is important in the growth of many animals, especially mammals. What is play? It includes activities that imitate serious life events without ending in quite-so-serious results. It is the chance to try out different behaviors, to see which ones work best under which conditions. When the young animal grows older, all that play will have helped teach the animal what it needs to know to survive as an adult.

### Bouncing Baby Impala

Keep an eye on Bonami, our young impala, and you'll see how fun learning can be. Bonami plays by jumping straight up in the air. No, he isn't practicing his jump shot for a future career in the NBA. He's learning the signal that tells predators that he sees them and he is healthy—not worth chasing for dinner. He also enjoys practicing head butting trees, rocks and anything else that will stand still long enough for a good knock. If he learns this well, he should be able to compete against other males as an adult.



### Camel Education

Not all playtime is spent preparing for a life in the wild. When you grow up in the Zoo, as young Kahn is doing, it is also important to learn how to work with the zookeepers. Each day Kahn is practicing new skills for a life around people. He has already learned the importance of wearing a halter and is beginning to get the hang of going for walks (and remembering to heel). Other skills include presenting his feet for examination by the veterinarians and lying down on command. Learning well brings life's rewards; in Kahn's case that means a treat of maple leaves.



## Aquatic & Reptile Center

Help find these new inhabitants in the Aquatic & Reptile Center. Using a pencil or crayon, color in all the spaces that have a (👉) in them and you will discover the jellyfish, Amazon River turtle and the leopard shark.



## TALK TO THE ANIMALS

Select one of the Zoo's animals that is featured in this *Alive* magazine. Write a simple letter to the animal you select, telling the animal what you learned about it; you can include a picture of the animal if you wish. Send your letter (include your name, age, and mailing address) and we will send you an animal sticker. Send your letter to:

**Zoo Animal Education, Zoological Society, 10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee WI 53226.** All letters will be shared with the animal's keepers. To receive your sticker we must receive your letter no later than **December 1, 1995.**

## CURIOUS CORNER



### DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

If you'd like us to answer your animal question and you're 12 years old or younger, then write to us:

**CURIOUS CORNER-ALIVE  
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
10005 W. BLUEMOUND RD.  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53226**

If we answer your question here, you'll receive a special prize from the Zoological Society.

### Does the snow leopard's fur change to a different color in the summer?

Unlike the snowshoe hare's fur, which changes from brown to white with the change of seasons, the snow leopard's fur does not change. The snow leopard's hair does, however, become thinner in the summer and thicker in the winter. The snow leopard's grayish-white fur provides camouflage year-round against the rocks and snow in the mountainous areas where they live.

Carrie Trepczyk  
Age 9  
Oconomowoc



### Are all apes and monkeys vegetarians?

Monkeys and apes have varied diets. The majority of their diets are plants, although many primates like the mandrills and chimpanzees eat such things as insects, reptiles and small mammals.

Stephanie M. Jahr  
Milwaukee



### How often does the polar bear's fur change color?

Although polar bear hair appears white, it is actually translucent. The hairs on a polar bear are like hollow tubes, and they appear white because they dif-fuse light. Sometimes polar bear hairs appear yellowish from soil stains and seal oil or even greenish if they come in contact with algae.

Jenny Mausak  
Age 12  
West Allis



# Education Programs

The following education programs are coordinated by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County and the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension.

Programs are held from now through May. To register for October programs only, using your credit card, call the Education Department, (414) 256-5424, or stop in the Education Center, Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. To receive the program brochure for November through January, send a self-addressed, stamped (55¢) business-sized envelope (one per family) to: Fall Education Programs, Zoological Society, 10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee WI 53226.

If you would like to receive the program brochure for February through May, send a self-addressed, stamped (55¢) business-sized envelope (one per family) to: Winter/Spring Education Programs, Zoological Society, 10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee WI 53226. Winter/Spring program brochures will be mailed in early December.

If you would like to automatically receive the three brochures for one year (winter/spring, summer, fall), send \$3 (per family) to: Education Mailing List, Zoological Society, 10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee WI 53226.

## OCTOBER - JANUARY PROGRAMS

### Kids Day Out

presented by NFL Alumni-Milwaukee Chapter

Ages 6-11

October 26 and/or 27

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Very limited openings remain in this fun-filled educational experience for your child during the statewide teachers conference. October 26 features "Animals of the Night" and "Simply Spineless" is the topic on October 27.

Children can be dropped off at the Education Center between 7:30 and 9 a.m. and picked up between 3:30 and 5 p.m. Cost per day, which includes lunch, is \$25 for Zoological Society members and \$35 for non-members. Your child can enroll in one or both days. To register, call the Education Department at (414) 256-5424.

You can also call to register for openings in the following workshops:

### Tiny Tots

For the 3-year-old with parent

Cost: \$15 for Zoological Society members, \$18 for non-members (includes parking)

"Hooray For Horses," October 12-18 - limited sessions are still available.

### Preschool Workshops

For the 4- & 5-year-old and the 6-year-old in kindergarten  
Cost: \$12 for Zoological Society members, \$15 for non-members

"Bats 'N Cats," October 12-21 - limited sessions are still available.

Preschooler with parent, same topic; cost \$17 for Zoological Society members, \$20 for non-members (includes parking) October 14, 19, 20, & 21 - limited openings remain.

### Older Youth Workshops

For the 6- to 8-year-old, very limited openings remain on Saturdays for:

"What's For Dinner," November 4 or 11

"Winter Wonderland," December 9 or 16

"Our Blue Planet," January 13 or 20

For an update, call (414)475-4636, a 24-hour recorded message. The recording will also provide information on Tiny Tot and Preschool workshop openings.

Send for your listing of November through January programs. Topics and dates are listed below. You can register over the phone, using your credit card, or stop in the Education Center at the Zoo during the week.

### Tiny Tots

November - "Fantastic Felines," November 8-14

December - "Holiday Happiness," December 6-9

January - "Barnyard Buddies," January 17-20

### Preschool Workshops

November - "Shadows and Light," November 9-18

December - "Rudolph's Adventures," December 6-16

January - "Escape to the Desert," January 11-20

## SOMETHING IS ON THE HORIZON

Do you have a 9- to 14-year-old who is looking for a new challenge during the summer of 1996?

Something exciting is on the horizon!

To receive the program mailing, call (414) 256-5424, Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (After business hours, call (414) 256-5421 and leave your child's name, age, and complete address). The program mailing will be sent to your child in early February.

## Summertime Adventures

Take any day this summer—no matter the weather—and you'd find clusters of children at the Zoo listening to stories about fish that swim upside down, making animal costumes from construction paper, examining goats, cleaning animal exhibits or sketching their favorite Zoo animals.



Summer Adventure Campers Abigail Nitschke and Danny Kuklinski hold baby chicks as part of a camp on the importance of play for baby animals.

It was all part of Summer Adventure Camps at the Zoo, sponsored by Little Caesars.

Myra Peffer, who taught many of the camps designed for 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds, knows that kids who are given hands-on opportunities to learn make the most of them. And indeed, these kids seemed to be having more fun than anything else.

"They're inquisitive and want to share their stories that relate to what you're doing," she said. "They're impressionable. They get pumped up about little things they learn. This kind of teaching is fun because it's hands-on and activity-oriented. They don't know they're learning."

Summer Adventure Camps, which are run by the Zoological Society, have kept staff members on their toes since they

began in June. The staff have worked countless hours this summer to make sure participants get the most out of their experiences.

More than 5,000 students ages 3 to 13 have participated in 30 different camps, which wrapped up in August, said Lee Anne Norris, a youth education specialist with the Zoological Society. "A staff of 21 and a host of volunteers we couldn't do without pitched in to make this summer's program the best ever."

One Zoo Pride volunteer, Marilyn Day of West Allis, devoted about two mornings a week to helping staff members run the camps. Day, who has been volunteering at the Zoo since she retired two years ago, said of her volunteer experience: "I feel I'm giving something to the kids."

Summer Adventure Camps began in 1988 with three major goals: to enrich a child's learning, to encourage science literacy, and to teach children to care about the Earth.

"It's a great wilderness area here," Norris said. "We do things like bird watching to teach how to take care of the animals here at home. Even the little ones learn. We encourage excitement and interest. You'd be surprised at how quickly they learn the differences between animals."

Angela Gade, a college intern from Reedsburg, looks back on her summer working with camp kids as a learning



Catherine Holt, a UW-Madison student and camp intern, works with Zeke Stewart (left) and Mario Douglas to fashion animals from clay during "Custom-Built Creatures" camp. The camp, sponsored by Little Caesars, taught kids how to identify animal adaptations. Holt was one of seven college interns endowed by Alice Bertschy Kadish this summer.

experience. Gade, a junior at UW-Platteville, didn't let her initial lack of knowledge about wild animals stop her from taking the internship. She spent her first two weeks in training, learning about the animals at the Zoo, and the rest of her summer, taking children on Zoo tours and helping in the classroom.

"I had to learn about the animals—I'm not a biologist—and sometimes I felt overwhelmed," admitted Gade, 19. But learn she did, right along with the kids. Once, she was asked, "How long is a lion's tail?" Gade didn't know, but she went right to the source. She asked a zookeeper.

"The keepers have been great about making the kids feel comfortable and answering questions," she said. One zookeeper gave the children a hair from a giraffe's tail.

That was among the coolest take-home projects of all.

—by Heidi F. Schudrowitz

Zoo Pride volunteer Jennifer Narang helps summer campers Nate Ertel and Michael Raisler take note of the goat's health as part of "Veterinary Camp" at the Zoo.



# Leaving Behind a Legacy



# Milwaukee County Zoo

**T**his spring, when Milwaukee County announced its plans to close Doyne Hospital, it opened a window of opportunity for many County employees to retire earlier than they otherwise could have.

A core of trusted, able and loyal Zoo employees have taken the County up on its offer. And they are leaving behind a legacy. Their departure, for many, signals the beginning of a new era at the Zoo. We'll miss their presence, their memories of the "good ol' days," and their expertise. We appreciate their many years of service. Please join us in our salute.

## Joseph Bergmann Zoo Vehicle Machine Operator

Years of service at Zoo: May, 1990 to August, 1995

Favorite part of job: Using the front-end loader. "One time we carried a grizzly in the bucket of the loader to transfer it to the hospital. I'll never forget that."

Least favorite: "I don't like to do the Vac-All (the machine used to clean out the waste pits). It stinks!"

**Bill Grant (left) and Joe Bergmann are both looking forward to spending cold winter mornings in the warmth of their homes rather than behind the steering wheel of the front-end loader, plowing snow.**



## Bill Grant Zoo Vehicle Machine Operator

Years of service at Zoo: October, 1991 to September, 1995

Favorite part of job: "I volunteered to do the Vac-All because then I knew what to expect every day and I could come in and leave an hour earlier."

Plans for retirement: "To travel the U.S. with my wife."

## Dick Boinski Zookeeper/Small Mammals

**Dick Boinski is looking forward to having the time to do all the things he couldn't do when he was working, like fixing things, entertaining and sleeping in.**



Years of service at Zoo: Rover from January, 1967 to 1969, Aviary from 1969 to 1991 and Small Mammals from 1991 to June, 1995

Favorite part of job: "I'll miss the animals, especially the tayras. People would be amazed at their intelligence and the personality and intelligence of all the animals."

Least favorite: The smell in the Small Mammal building. "That's one thing I will not miss!"

## Ken Chelminiak Zoo Maintenance Supervisor

Years of service at Zoo: September, 1980 to September, 1995

Favorite part of job: Working with the people at the Zoo. "I've made some good friends over the years."

Plans for retirement: "I'm going to finish building our house up north, eventually move in there and live the good life."

**Ken Chelminiak fans a stack of work requests—one of many that inundate his department daily.**



## Steve Gyarmaty Zookeeper/Rover

Years of service at Zoo: Rover from June to December, 1971, Aquatic & Reptile Center from 1972 to 1975, returned to roving 1975 to September, 1995

Favorite part of job: "It was exciting and challenging to be a part of the elephant management program when it first began in the early '80s."



**Zoo's longest-term rover, arranges browse for Dajarra, a female koala.**

Plans for retirement: "Take it easy for the first couple months and then look for employment for 5-6 years in a totally different field."

**Steve Gyarmaty, who may be the**

## Sam LaMalfa Area Supervisor/Primates

Years of service at Zoo: Rover, March to May of 1964, Aviary for next 10 months, moved to Primates in 1965, promoted to Area Supervisor in 1977, retired September, 1995

Favorite part of job: "I'll miss working with the gorillas; they're like an extended family."

Plans for retirement: "As a kid, my first choice was to get a job at the Washington Park Zoo, and if that didn't work out I wanted to work at a pet store. I may apply at a few stores in the area to work part time with the critters."

**Sam LaMalfa "tickles" gorilla Magi Magi. "Asking me to pick my favorite is like asking a parent to choose their favorite kid," LaMalfa says.**



## Roger Martens Zookeeper/Nights

Years of service at Zoo: Monkey Island from June, 1965 to 1967, Elephants from 1967 to 1992, Nights from 1992 to August, 1995

Favorite part of job: "Working with the elephants and the rhinos was very special. Discovering the births of Kwaanza, the baby Rhino, and Mgbali, the baby gorilla, was also very exciting."

Plans for retirement: "Doing housework, yardwork, and staying active with the Wisconsin Senior Olympics in running, speedskating and biking."



**Babe the elephant opens her mouth wide for a familiar scratch on the tongue from retired keeper Roger Martens.**

## Rich Sajdak Curator/Aquatic & Reptile Center

Years of service at Zoo: Small Mammals from June, 1977 to 1978, Nights



**Not even medicating a boa constrictor can interrupt the familiar banter between Jack Uphill (left) and Rich Sajdak. "We'll miss each other," Sajdak says. "We'll take better aim next time," Uphill retorts.**

for one year, Aquatic & Reptile Center 1979, Supervisor in 1984, Curator since 1985, retires in December, 1995

Favorite part of job: Sajdak came to the Zoo hoping to work with reptiles, if not that, then small mammals. "I like creepy things."

Least favorite: "Leaving the Zoo, especially after jumping through all the hoops of renovating a building. I'd kind of like to stick around another year or so to really get it running."

## Jack Uphill Zookeeper/Aquatic & Reptile Center

Years of service at Zoo: Arborist from November of 1968 to 1970, Rover from 1970 to 1971 and then moved to Aquatic & Reptile Center until retirement in September, 1995

Favorite part of job: "The people in this building are super—we've got it so nice here. We've been blessed."

Plans for retirement: "To spend lots of time pursuing my hobbies and enjoying my one-year-old grandson."

# Platypus Society

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Bill Borchert Larson  
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*"Our family has a long-term dedication to the conservation of wildlife and our natural resources. Therefore, supporting the Platypus Society through the years has been a personal commitment to help ensure that our children and our children's children can experience the benefits of our world-class Zoo. We are proud to be Platypus Society members because it helps to educate young and old, and is very involved in important research and species preservation programs."*

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*We are proud to be*

## CORPORATE II \$1,500-\$1,999

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## IN-KIND GIFTS

In-kind gifts of products or services are now being listed separately for the donor-stated value of the gift. This list will be updated as in-kind memberships are renewed. The following gifts are listed below as of September 1, 1995:

\$10,000  
American Airlines  
Bayshore Clinical Laboratories  
Direct Marketing Concepts  
Ernst & Young  
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\$5,000-\$9,999  
Ace World Wide Moving & Storage  
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## NEW MEMBERS

The Zoological Society welcomes the following new Platypus Society members as of September 1, 1995:

## PATRON I (\$1,500-\$1,999)

Steven & Tammy Wentworth

## CORPORATE I (\$1,000-\$1,499)

Robert K. & Joyce R. Cope Foundation  
Covenant Healthcare System, Inc.

## PATRON I (\$1,000-\$1,499)

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Donald M. Levy, M.D.  
Dr. Ron & Bobbi Michalski  
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## NEW IN-KIND GIFTS (\$2,000-\$2,499)

Graef, Anhalt, Schloemer & Associates  
(\$500-\$999)

## Jim & Janet McKenna

## NEW GIFT LEVELS

The Zoological Society thanks the following members for their increased levels of giving:

## CORPORATE III (\$2,000-\$2,499)

Consolidated Papers Foundation, Inc.  
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## PATRON II (\$1,000-\$1,499)

John & Linda Sapp

## STEERING COMMITTEE

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Andrew T. Sawyer, Jr.  
Judy Stathas  
John Steiner

## CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Friends contributing to the Platypus Society after September 1, 1995 will be recognized in the next issue of ALIVE.

## 5 year Platypus Society Member in bold (updated each fall)

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## \*Contributing Members

The Platypus Society is a group of about 350 Milwaukee-area foundations, corporations and individuals that contribute more than \$300,000 annually to the Zoological Society. If you would like to join this group in helping the Society uphold its mission of supporting the Zoo, educating the community about wildlife and the environment and conserving endangered species, call Patty Cadorin (414) 276-0843.

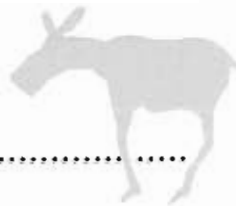


## ◀ Moose

(Moose Yard)  
Arrived: July, 1995

Take a wedding in Boston, a wrinkled blouse, suburbanites' distaste for a wild moose trampling through their landscaped yards, a tranquilizer dart and what do you have? A companion for Bullwinkle, the Zoo's 9-year-old male moose. Melrose, our new one-year-old, female moose - named after the Boston suburb where she was captured - came to the attention of Bess Frank, our curator of large mammals, as she was watching a Boston TV news report about Melrose's capture while ironing a blouse for a wedding. Frank had been searching for a mate for Bullwinkle for three years, as moose are hard to find among zoos. Not many zoos exhibit moose. Moose are native to northern Europe, north-central and north-eastern Asia and north-eastern and north-western North America.

Sources: Bess Frank, Curator, Large Mammals and Daron Graves, Supervisor, North America/Australia



## Amazon River Turtle ▶

(Amazon River Exhibit, Aquatic & Reptile Center)  
Returned: August, 1995

There is absolutely nothing new about this old favorite, Onassis, except that she has returned from her hiatus at the Omaha Zoo while her exhibit was being renovated here. Weighing in at 118 pounds, she is one of the largest of her kind in North America. Estimated to be over 40 years old, she also is the oldest reptile in the ARC. She is the surviving member of a pair of turtles, Jackie and Onassis, brought to our Zoo in 1968. In the wild, the number of endangered Amazon River turtles has been greatly reduced by excessive exploitation.

It's common practice in South America to poke a hole in the turtle's shell and tether the turtles to the riverbank to save as food for later. Onassis arrived with a hole in her shell, which has now covered over.

Source: Rich Sajdak, Curator, Aquatic & Reptile Center

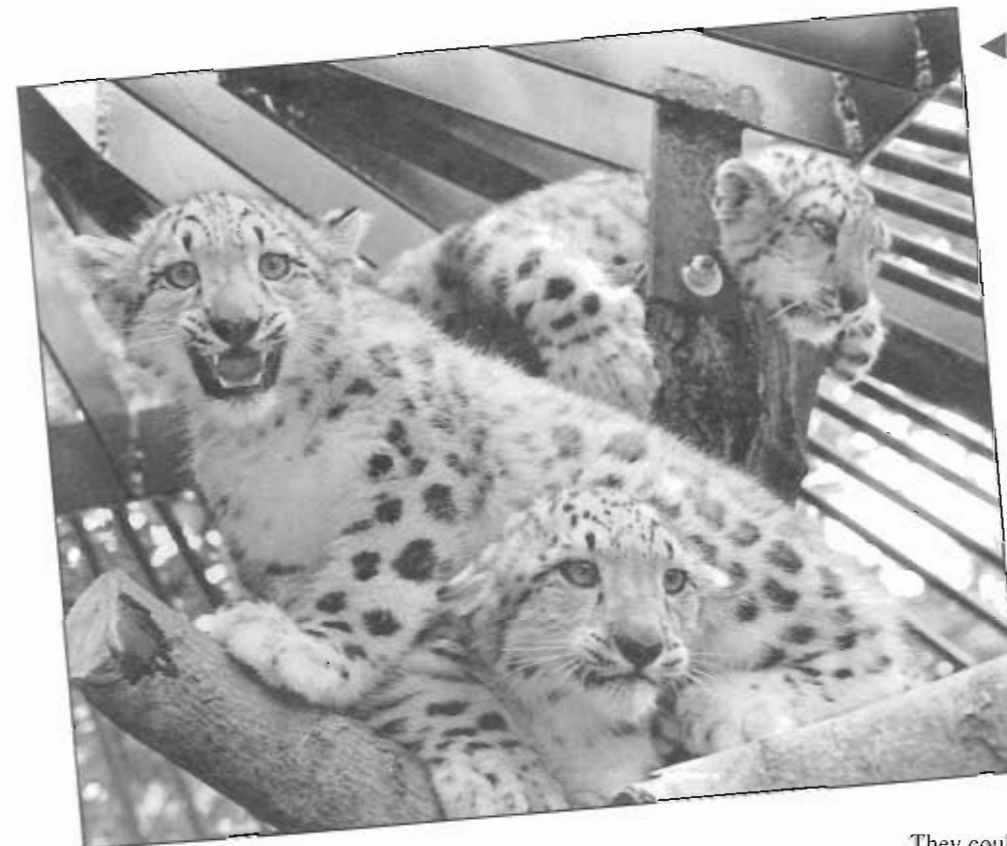


## Micronesian Guam Kingfisher ▶

(Aviary)  
Hatched: June 9, 1995

Although the physical size of this bird is minimal - it weighed just 5.2 gm. when it hatched - its significance to our Zoo and the rest of the world is monumental. Guam Kingfishers are highly endangered; there are just 47 left in the world - all in captivity. Once native to the island of Guam, they have been eradicated by the Brown tree snake, introduced on Guam probably via the wheel wells of airplanes. The SSP (Species Survival Plan) for Guam Kingfishers may be this species' last defense against extinction. If enough offspring can be produced in a manner that provides genetic diversity, this bird may be saved. The chick that was hatched this summer is the first of this species to hatch at our Zoo. Despite what their name implies, these birds do not "fish" for food. Adult kingfishers eat small rodents, lizards and bugs.

Source: Ellen Saksefski, Area Supervisor, Aviary



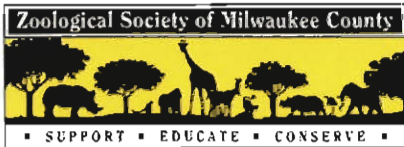
## ◀ Snow Leopards

(Feline Building)  
Born: April 16, 1995

These curious cubs may look cute and cuddly now, at 25 pounds, but soon the two males will grow to about 90 pounds and the female, to 70 pounds. In the wild, Snow leopards inhabit remote, high-altitude areas of Central Asia, mainly the Himalayan Mountains. Their diet consists of wild goats and sheep. Because of their endangered status, this species is also part of a Species Survival Plan (SSP). The births of Ro, Rom and Rigel - Trekkies will recognize the origin of these names - are important to future breeding and perpetuation of the species. The cubs started eating solids at about six weeks; they'll nurse until they're about five or six months old. Adult Snow leopards are excellent jumpers; they can leap up to 50 feet.

They could easily jump across the moats in our outdoor feline yards. That's why they're kept in covered exhibits here.

Source: Neil Dretzka, Area Supervisor, Felines



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### **First Annual Animal Art Competition**

**This untitled wire sculpture of a fish was one of four top award winners in the First Annual Animal Art Competition, sponsored by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee County Zoo.**

**By Kevin Wadzinski  
Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design**