



New! Wolf Pups

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President's Letter



Since 1986, the Zoological Society has been offering fun, hands-on summer camp workshops that promote a greater appreciation for nature, wildlife, conservation and the importance of a healthy environment. These camps are extremely popular.

Registering for camps has been competitive and sometimes time-consuming. To improve the long waits in line, we responded to suggestions from our members. We asked in our November '98-January '99 issue of Wild Things newsletter that members who wanted to register in person send a self-addressed envelope to us, receive an assigned registration time and line number, and then show up for that time slot during in-person registration on April 24. As always, in-person registrations were given priority over mail-in and phone-in registrations.

Overwhelmingly, members who participated in in-person camp registration this year responded positively to the change in our registration procedure. We will repeat the "lottery" next year. However, what we did not anticipate was the late mailing of the April 1 issue of Wild Things, which included this year's lineup of summer camps. We realize that you needed this schedule well before registration to make informed camp-enrollment decisions for your family.

I thank the members who contacted me to express their concern about the late delivery of the camp schedule. We share your concern, apologize for the inconvenience and have addressed the supplier issues that caused the mailing delay.

If your child(ren) didn't get into your preferred camp because of space limitations, we are addressing this issue, too. While our classroom space is at capacity now, we are reviewing plans for an education building expansion that will give our members and our community more quality learning space by 2001.

I hope the disappointments some of you may have experienced have not influenced your impression of the Zoological Society as a quality organization dedicated to serving its members. We value your membership and rely on your continued support.

Gil Boese

Gil Boese, Ph.D., President
Zoological Society of Milwaukee County

Alive

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3

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The Zoo's newly renovated exhibit, Wolf Woods, and its five timber-wolf pup stars are dedicated to promoting awareness of wolves and dispelling myths about them. Learn the history of wolves in Wisconsin and why they're coming back.

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Unsure of why amphibian populations are declining around the world, researchers at the Milwaukee County Zoo are monitoring blue-spotted salamanders living in ponds on the Zoo grounds for clues. It's part of a Zoological Society-supported research project.

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Getting around the Zoo is easier with help from 22 new how-to-find-your-way signs and you-are-here maps throughout the park, thanks to generous support from Roundy's Pick'n Save and the Zoological Society.

16 Snake Drill

To maintain the Zoo's excellent snake-safety record - just one zookeeper has ever been bitten by a venomous snake at the Zoo - keepers stage elaborate drills to ensure everybody who visits or works at the Zoo stays safe.



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Timber-wolf pups (see pg. 4)



Omo-Aña, a Milwaukee elementary-school troupe of African American dancers and drummers, performed April 16 at the Zoological Society's Serengeti Circle Luncheon at the Milwaukee County Zoo. The Serengeti Circle is a group of corporations and foundations that support the Zoo and the Zoological Society through sponsoring special events, exhibits, attractions and programs at the \$2,500+ level. Omo-Aña means Children of the Spirit of the Drum.



Correction: On page 9 of the April issue of *Alive*, we incorrectly identified the yellow bird pictured. It is a yellow warbler.

Wolves come home

It is an amazing comeback, given the fact that, by mid-century, there were only 50 wolves left in Wisconsin, and they were all gone by 1960.

It was early morning on the Saturday before Easter. Chuck Matoush was up in far northwestern Wisconsin, visiting his log cabin in Burnett County near the Minnesota border. Heading out for a walk, he stopped at his dirt driveway to observe animal tracks in the damp sand: deer, rabbit, turkey. Then he noticed the clear set of wolf tracks.

As a Zoological Society educator who has studied wolves for two decades, he knew they were private creatures, seldom seen near people. But he also knew how to distinguish wolf tracks from those of dogs or coyotes. And he knew that timber wolves were migrating into Wisconsin from Minnesota. Here was evidence.

In fact, Burnett County is part of what might be called a wolf corridor between Minnesota and Wisconsin. Wolves have been trickling back into Wisconsin since 1975, coming from Minnesota. Their numbers remained small – 28 or fewer – for the first 13 years, through 1988. They suffered from disease. They were hit by cars. And some hunters thought they were coyotes and shot them by mistake.

In 1987, wolf areas were closed to coyote hunting during deer-hunting season. In the next five years, by 1992, the wolf population increased to 45 (see chart). Four years later, in 1996, the wolf population reached 99. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) had not expected it to rise that rapidly. By winter '99 the wolf population was estimated at 197 to 203 wolves in 54 packs – and that was before the pups were born this spring. The DNR decided it needed a new wolf-management plan, especially to deal with wolf human

encounters (see Conservation Chronicles story on page 10). Wolves have been on Wisconsin's endangered-species list since 1975. Now the state is considering taking them off that list but still giving them a protected status.

It is an amazing comeback, given the fact that, by mid-century, there were only 50 wolves left in Wisconsin, and they were all gone by 1960. It's also amazing because, unlike some endangered species, such as the trumpeter swan, wolves have not been brought back into the state by humans.

"Wolves were never reintroduced to Wisconsin or Minnesota," says Maria Hall, the Milwaukee representative of the Timber Wolf Alliance. "They came in on their own from Ontario to Minnesota, and then to Wisconsin."

The Timber Wolf Alliance is connected with Northland College's Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute in Ashland, Wis. It is one of many groups promoting study and understanding of wolves (see end of story).

Before European settlers arrived, an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 wolves lived in Wisconsin, says Chuck

Matoush. Wolves played a prominent role in the culture and spiritual beliefs of Native Americans such as the Oneida and Ojibway. The Oneida, or Wolf Clan, tried to emulate the wolf's bravery, endurance and devotion to family.

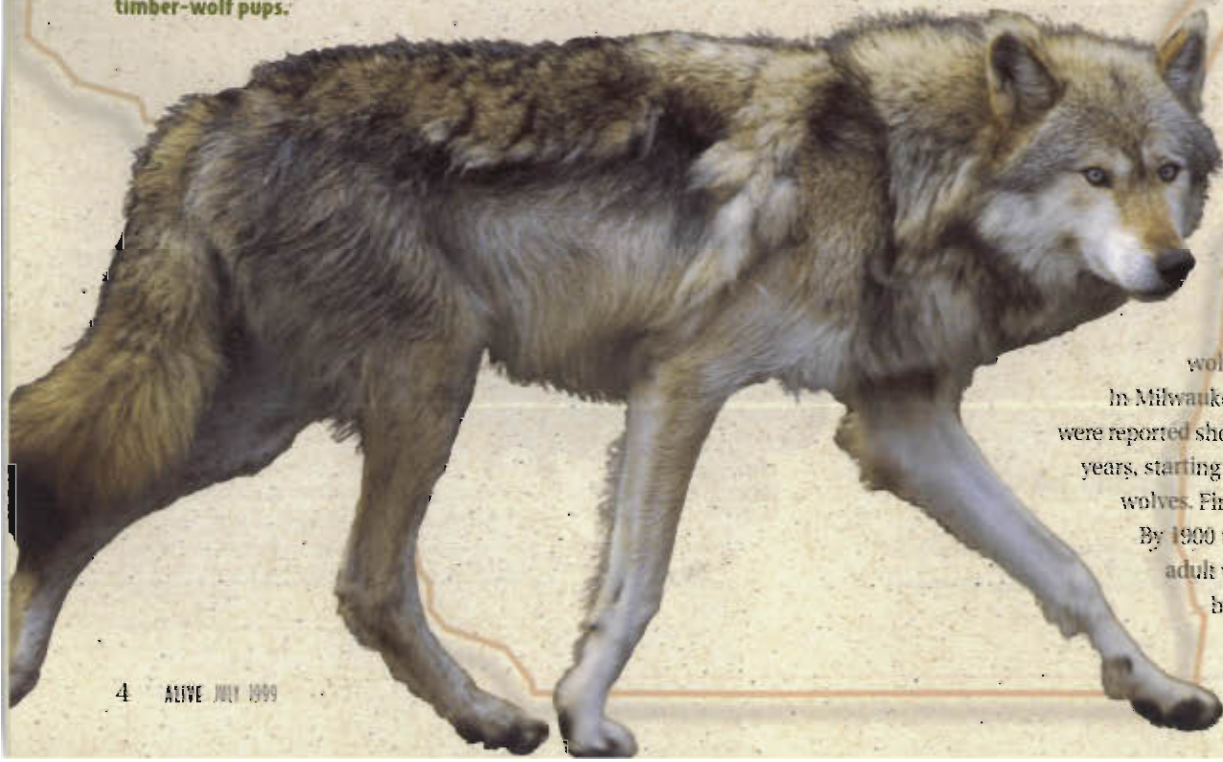
As settlers arrived, they cleared forests, killed large animals that were the prey of wolves, and killed the wolves, too.

In Milwaukee County, the last known wolves were reported shot in 1842. For more than 90 years, starting in 1865, there was a bounty on wolves. First it was \$5 for every wolf killed.

By 1900 the state bounty was \$20 for adult wolves and \$10 for pups. The bounty was not lifted until 1957.



Galileo is the father of the Zoo's new timber-wolf pups.



Public perception of wolves has changed dramatically in the last quarter of this century. Several popular movies have presented wolves in a better light. Wolf scientists have helped explain wolf behavior. A new appreciation for Native American culture has also increased interest in wolves.

And now, as we head into the millennium, the Milwaukee County Zoo is opening a new Wolf Woods exhibit with a young pack of timber wolves on July 17. (Zoological Society members get to preview the exhibit July 13, 15 and 16.) The wolf pups were born April 28 at the Wildlife Science Center in Forest Lake, Minn. Their mom, Keisha, is 5 years old. Dad Galileo is 6. The pups came to the Zoo in June to bond with their new environment.

Thanks to generous donors who raised nearly \$250,000 for the Zoological Society's Annual Appeal, that environment includes a waterfall cascading into a stream that ripples into a small pond. New foliage, landscaping and a new den grace this area that once held Arctic wolves. The exhibit includes a large log cabin with colorful displays telling the story of wolves in Wisconsin. The cabin will be heated in winter. Best of all is an eye-level viewing window, where wolves may come right up to the glass.

Along the winding boardwalk east of the log cabin through Wolf Woods, you'll find the Ray and Florence Folkman Wolf Woods Overlook, which provides a close-up view of the new wolf den, plus graphics describing the importance of wolves in various cultures. To the west of the cabin is a covered boardwalk and then picnic tables.



Minnesota's Wildlife Science Center's Elizabeth Olson and Peggy Callahan bottle feed two of the five timber-wolf pups before they arrive at The Milwaukee County Zoo's new Wolf Woods.

Jill and Jack Pelisek of River Hills, who were major donors to the exhibit and who named the new pups, have high praise for the new Wolf Woods. Said Jill Pelisek: "I've never seen a wolf display like this one, and we've been to zoos all over the world – Tokyo, Madrid, Frankfurt, Vienna. We always look for wolves. In other places, the exhibits are cramped, there isn't much cover for the wolves, and they're usually in a back corner. Our exhibit is really large and has a variety of landscaping. At the Frankfurt Zoo in Germany, two Arctic wolves share a space that's one-quarter the size."

Jill also likes our two viewing areas, one from the log cabin and one from the east. "I've never seen a zoo where they've had two sides available for viewing. [An exception is the red-wolf exhibit at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. which has three viewing areas.] Portland's zoo has a nice wolf exhibit, but it's considerably smaller than ours, a moat divides the viewers from the wolves, and you can see it only from the front."

continued on page 7



Wolf Workshops

Learn about timber wolves this fall in Zoological Society workshops at the Zoo. Chuck Matoush, our wolf expert, will talk about wolves in Wisconsin and our new wolves at the Zoo. Workshops may include games, crafts, slides, wolf skulls and tours of Wolf Woods. Here is the lineup: **Saturday, Sept. 18**, all-day workshop for children ages 6-8; **Saturday, Sept. 25**, all-day workshop for children ages 8 to 10; **Sunday, Oct. 10**, two workshops, from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 4 p.m. for teachers and youth-group leaders (includes handouts); **Sunday, Oct. 17**, two workshops, from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 4 p.m., for families. For more information, call (414) 256-5422.



The zoo in Portland, Ore., also has socialized its wolves to be comfortable around people, as the Milwaukee County Zoo is doing, she notes. That means the wolves will come right up to the glass viewing windows. "There is an incredible feeling when you see this wild animal head on, up close."

"Wolves just have a certain aura of mystery that has fascinated human beings for centuries," says Jill Pelisek. "And because of that, there is so much misinformation that has been proliferated around the world. It's a shame what we have done to wolves. What we're hoping with this exhibit is that some of those misconceptions will be dispelled, or at least modified."

The educational programs that accompany the wolf exhibit also will help dispel myths. Summer Adventure Camps taught by the Zoological Society include wolf camps, and the fall lineup of workshops also features wolves (see page 6). Plus, wolves and other animals that have myths about them will be the focus of a poster contest (see *Kids Alive*, page 11), with posters displayed in the Zoo's Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building during Halloween weekends this fall.

Chuck Matoush, who is teaching wolf summer camps and fall workshops, is delighted with all this wolf activity - especially the Zoo's new pups. He was sad when Nahani, the last of the Zoo's four Arctic wolves, died in April 1998 after a long life at the Zoo. "Now a new generation of wolves will become the ambassadors for their species."



Chart by Wisconsin DNR

For more information on wolves:

- International Wolf Center, 1396 Highway 169, Ely, MN 55731
- Timber Wolf Alliance - Northland College's Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute, Ashland, WI 54806
- Timber Wolf Preservation Society, 6669 S. 76th St., Greendale, WI 53129 (414) 425-8264
- Timber Wolf Information Network (TWIN), Waupaca Field Station, E110 Enmons Creek Rd., Waupaca, WI 54981
- Wildlife Science Center, 5463 W. Broadway, Forest Lake, MN. 55025



Photo by Wisconsin DNR



This aerial shot by the DNR shows that wolf tracks go along one straight line. Dog tracks, on the other hand, form a wavy pattern.

Wolves & dogs

Wolves, coyotes and dogs are members of the same family. Many people find it difficult to tell these animals apart. Here are some ways to distinguish wolves from big dogs:

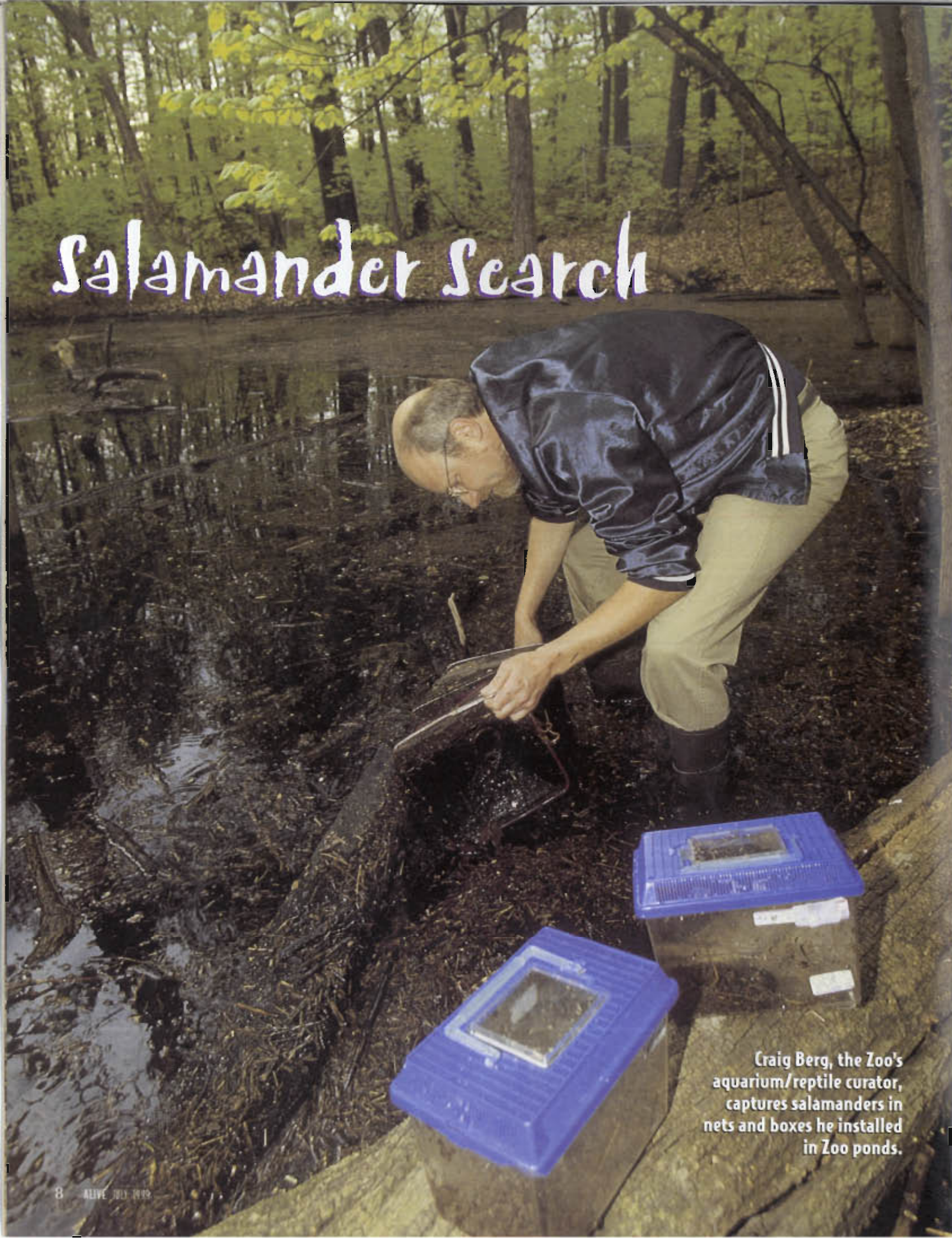
Faces: "A wolf's profile from the top of its head to the nose is flatter than that of a dog, giving a less steeply pronounced forehead than that of the domestic dog," according to the book *Looking at the Wolf* by Bruce Thompson. Look at the tufts of hair that stick out on the sides of wolves' faces. Coyotes do not have these tufts, and most dogs don't, either.

Tails and feet: Only dogs have curled tails. Wolves and coyotes have straight tails. Wolves have very big feet for the size of their body and have long legs.

Ears: Wolf ears are rounded, relatively short, and they never hang down. Coyote ears are pointed and long. Dog ears vary in size and shape, but many of them can hang down.

Tracks: One of the best ways to tell a wolf from a dog is its tracks. Wolf tracks go in a straight line. Dog tracks zigzag more because dogs have wider chests and they place their back foot next to their front foot when they walk. Wolves place their back foot on the same line as their front foot (see photo).

Salamander Search



Craig Berg, the Zoo's aquarium/reptile curator, captures salamanders in nets and boxes he installed in Zoo ponds.

It's a paradox of the animal world. The more common the critter, the less that is known about it.

Consider the salamander.

Granted the slithery amphibian—widespread throughout Wisconsin—isn't as sexy a subject as, say, the Siberian tiger or the timber wolf.

But most of what is known about salamanders—secretive, timid, bug-eating creatures—consists of studies on captive subjects, says Craig Berg, aquarium/reptile curator at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

"There's really not much in the literature about salamanders," Berg says. "Some people have described their breeding habits from watching them in an aquarium. But very few long-term studies have been performed."

Until now, that is.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has placed a high priority on developing methods for monitoring salamander populations. Many scientists view amphibians such as salamanders as an "indicator" species. Since they have highly permeable skins, amphibians can easily absorb pollutants. Watch what happens to amphibians, the reasoning goes, and you can see an indication of the health of the environment.

In recent years, there has been a great deal of concern about the seeming decline in frogs and the discoveries of frogs with deformities. But Berg points out that many of those studies have relied on just 15 years of data.

"The question is, can this be a natural fluctuation?" he says. "That's why you need to have long-term studies."

Thanks in part to a \$2,000 grant from the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County, Berg and other scientists are collecting such data about the numbers and habits of the salamanders that live on Zoo grounds. The grant has allowed researchers to purchase measuring devices, scales, temperature and oxygen gauges, and, Berg says, "something as mundane but vital as a pair of rubber wading boots."

At the Zoo, researchers are concentrating their efforts on counting the blue-spotted salamander. About three to five inches in length, the salamander is, as its name suggests, flecked with blue.

"They look just like the old, enamel pots and pans that your grandmother may have had," Berg says. "They're just beautiful."

The blue-spotted salamander, like the tiger salamander that is also found in Wisconsin, favors damp places, such as creek sides and beneath old, rotting logs.

There the nocturnal amphibians dine on a menu of small invertebrates, insects and earthworms.

It's believed that tiger salamanders, which are associated more with open land, previously were more common in Wisconsin, Berg says. But with more farm land being abandoned and taken over by forest, the blue-spotted salamander now seems predominant.

At first, researchers at the Zoo had used dry-land traps that guided the salamanders toward a bucket into which they fell and could not escape.

A flaw in that method, however, was soon discovered, Berg says, because raccoons treated the buckets like picnic baskets. Even though salamanders secrete a foul-tasting fluid on part of their bodies to ward off predators, that tactic was not enough to deter raccoons.

"The raccoons learned to eat the front half of the salamander," Berg says. "They left the rest behind."

Now, salamander sleuths use traps that capture the animals in the water.

Once caught, the salamanders are measured, marked and released. One goal of the study is to develop a demographic

profile of the salamander population at the Zoo; another is to find effective monitoring methods that may be used elsewhere.

Berg is also interested in studying breeding habits.

The Zoo has two ponds that salamanders use for breeding. Both of the ponds have abundant food for the amphibians.

One is rather shallow and grassy and warms up quickly in the spring. It offers hiding places for salamanders, but the pond also offers cover from predators. The other pond is deep, lined with oak leaves and twigs, but has no live vegetation.

Further investigation could reveal whether, like salmon, salamanders return to the same places annually to lay eggs. Another alternative, Berg says, is that the amphibians simply choose the most convenient pond.

Next spring, he plans to capture salamanders from one pond and move them to an area adjacent to the other.

"I'd like to find out why they choose one pond over the other," Berg says. "Is it a matter of moving downhill to the closest pond, or is there something else at work? It would be interesting to find out."

One positive result of the study, Berg reports, is a burgeoning interest in salamanders. Volunteer interns at the Zoo have helped gather the data.

"We're getting more people involved with this," Berg says. "That's good. These are nice animals. They deserve some attention."



Once captured from one of the Zoo's ponds, the blue-spotted salamanders are measured, marked and released. Researchers also record pond and air temperatures at the time of the animals' capture.



Detering Wolves Safely

Northwestern Wisconsin, timber-wolf territory: The sensitive ears of Kara, a wild alpha-female wolf, pick up the sound of calves being born on a nearby farm. Kara has a den full of newborn pups to feed. There are plenty of deer around, but they are harder to catch than calves.

On a dark night, Kara approaches the border of the farm. Suddenly, the collar on her neck gives her an electric shock. She yips, howls and runs off, making her way back to her den. The farm's calves are safe. This night's experiment is a success.



A collar shocks this wolf when she ventures onto a farm.

Wolf attacks on livestock are not a problem for most Wisconsin farmers. But on the northwest border with Minnesota, along a wolf corridor in Burnett County, one 2,000-acre farm reported more than 20 calves killed during the April-May calving season in 1998. In the last 23 years, 57 calves have been killed by wolves in Wisconsin, many of them on that 2,000-acre Burnett County farm. "The numbers have increased dramatically in the last several years, as the wolf population has increased," says Randy Jurewicz of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which compensates farmers for livestock killed by wolves. From July 1997 through June 1998, the DNR paid \$16,832 for wolf-related damages.

In Minnesota, which has a larger wolf population, problem wolves are killed, says Ronald N. Schultz, a DNR endangered-resource technician specializing in wolves. So far, Wisconsin has been relocating them

because their endangered status does not allow them to be killed, but the state now is considering removing wolves from its endangered list. To avoid the prospect of killing livestock-preying wolves here, Schultz has been experimenting with several non-lethal methods to keep wolves away from livestock. The shock-collar study,

financed with a \$2,668 donation from the Zoological Society of Milwaukee's Zoo Pride volunteers, is going on this summer. Here's how it works:

In early May, Schultz captured Kara the wolf and put a special collar on her. Then, on the 2,000-acre farm near Kara's territory, the DNR installed a battery-powered device that emits a signal for a half-mile radius. For three seconds every minute, 24 hours a day, the device signals the collar on Kara's neck to shock her. She does not get shocked unless she is on the farm within the 160-acre radius of the signaling device.

"A wolf is not going to go into this field if it gets shocked," says Schultz. "It's not a mild shock. The collar is made by Innotek, and it has been used a long time to train dogs." The shock is unpleasant, but it does not hurt the animal. Schultz knows that the shock collar works because last summer he did another experiment with it. Lesa Skuldt, a student volunteer from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, stationed herself with a radio receiver on the same farm for two months, eight to 12 hours at a time. When she detected the signal from Kara's radio collar within the farm boundary, Skuldt

shocked her, then tracked Kara moving rapidly away.

An earlier experiment that Schultz did last summer involved marking the borders of the farm with the scent of another wolf pack. He had help from students at Northland College in Ashland.

"I collected urine and scat from a pack that was 163 kilometers to the east, south of Minocqua. We set that out every three-tenths of a kilometer along the north border, where the pack would enter the farm. I also set up a howling device: tape recorders with speakers projecting a whole pack howling. Kara's pack actually moved 4.75 miles north, to get away." But the experiment failed, said Schultz, because the tape device kept breaking down and because there weren't enough volunteers to put down new urine and scat every few days. "So the wolves started coming back onto the farm. At that point, Kara's mate, Alex, and a yearling we named Claude were caught and transported to Nicolet National Forest." Kara was allowed to stay in Burnett County to care for her pups, but she was fitted with a shock collar.

Schultz is optimistic about the success of the shock collar and signaling device for farms that are in wolf corridors. "It's not going to work for every area," he said, but in areas where there is a high density of wolves, it may be effective. In Minnesota, where wolves are killed if they prey on livestock, studies show that another pack usually moves into the same area and causes the same problem, said Schultz. "By leaving a pack there and training it not to go onto a farm and eat calves, you keep other wolves away, and you also reduce the coyote population, which can kill calves, too."

If you wish to donate to the Zoo Pride campaign to fund this research, call their office at (414) 258-5667. Zoo Pride's Save Our Species wolf buttons are available at the Zoological Society office or on the Milwaukee County Zoo grounds.

Baby in the barn



Baby calves are such fun to see. If you come to the Dairy Barn at the Milwaukee County Zoo this month, you can see a newborn calf in its hutch (house). The mom, Iris, was

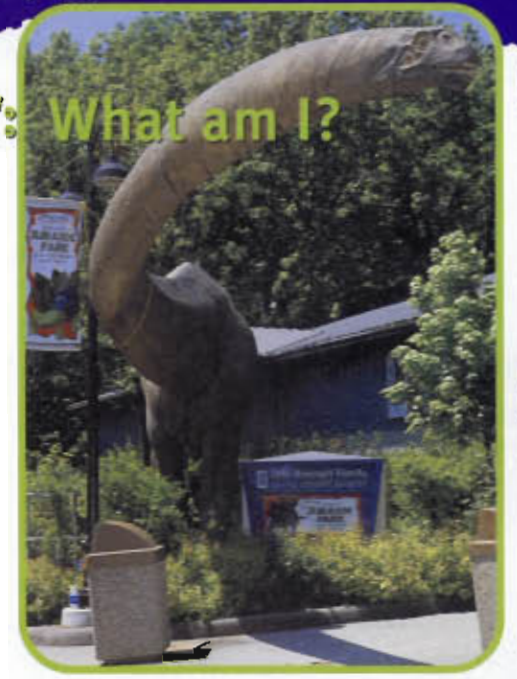
due to give birth on July 4th. Iris is an Ayrshire, one of seven breeds of cattle in the Zoo's registered dairy herd.

The others are Guernseys, Jerseys, milking shorthorns (baby at top is a shorthorn), brown Swiss, red and white Holsteins, and black and white Holsteins. It takes 270 to 289 days for a baby to grow inside the mama cow. And do you know the difference between a cow and a heifer? They're both female cattle, but a cow has had babies and a heifer has not. "Females usually have their first calf at 2 years old," says Randy Deer, supervisor of the Zoo's farm. When you visit the Dairy Barn, stop to see the new milking parlor exhibit provided by Land O' Lakes Foundation and the Charles E. and Dorothy Watkins Inbusch Foundation and view the new farming sign in the cow barn provided by the Kraft Foundation.

DINO QUEST: What am I?

I had the longest neck of any animal that ever walked the Earth—30 feet. I lived in China 150 million years ago. I was a plant eater. The 72-foot-long model of me you can see at the Zoo this summer is the largest dinosaur model ever built. What am I? You'll find out when you visit Ameritech's Dinosaurs of Jurassic Park & The Lost World. You have to crawl under me to enter the exhibit building. This is how you pronounce my name, but it's not how you spell it: Ma-men-chee-SORE-us.* Meanwhile, here's the answer to your April *Alive's* Dino Quest: The replica of a prehistoric bird skeleton in the Zoo's aviary is of an *Archaeopteryx*.

*ANSWER: SORUSHIMENAMA



Monster Myth Poster Contest

Are werewolves real? Can people really change into wolves? No and no. But wolves are smart and sometimes do things that make them seem almost human. Maybe that's how the werewolf myth started. A myth is just a story that someone made up and other people started believing. Wolves have lots of myths about them. So do bats (remember Dracula?) and cats (myth: seeing a black cat is bad luck). So, here's the game: Think of an animal like the wolf that has a myth. Draw that animal on a poster (whatever size you want).



On a separate piece of paper write the name of the animal, the myth about it and then the truth. Also write your name, age, address and phone number. Send the poster and the separate paper to *Kids Alive*, Zoological Society, 10005 W. Blue Mound Rd., Milwaukee, Wis. 53226. If you are aged 4 through 13, and you are a member of the Zoological Society, we will enter you in our Monster Myth Poster Contest.

You can win prizes. A winner in each age group will get a plush-toy wolf and a \$17 certificate to attend one of the Zoological Society's popular animal-science workshops. Plus, winners get surprise gifts. During the Zoo's Halloween weekends—a great time for myths—all posters will be on display in the Otto Borchert Family Special Exhibits Building. All entries must be postmarked by Sept. 1. Or you can bring them to the Zoological Society office on or before Sept. 1. Have fun drawing animals and teaching others the truth about our marvelous animal kingdom.

WolfQuest

The new timber wolves at the Milwaukee County Zoo are members of the family Canidae. Wolves are the largest members of that family, which includes dogs, coyotes, jackals and foxes. What is the smallest canid and in what building will you find it at the Zoo? Hint: This canid is a desert dweller.

Answers will appear in the October 1999 *Alive*.

Wolf Word Search

Visit the new Wolf Woods at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Now see how many wolf words you can find in the puzzle below and circle them. Some words refer to the whole Canidae family, which includes wolves and other animals listed below. You may not know what some words mean. After you have found all the words, look up the ones you don't know in a dictionary or encyclopedia, so you can expand your vocabulary.



Canidae, pup, coyote, jackal, canids, fox, mammal, domestic, non-retractile claw, dew claw, opportunistic, pack, dogs, howl, lone wolf, dhole, dingo, hierarchy, timber wolf

H L O R D G T B T D Q F D R H I A D I N G O
 N O N R E T R A C T I L E C L A W F R R G P
 P N C V W B F S J Z O O C R S R T Z O O A P
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Wolf Facts

There used to be a lot more wolves in the world. But because wolves were feared, humans killed off many of them. "There are only two species of wolves: the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) and the red wolf (*Canis rufus*). The gray wolf was once the world's most widely distributed mammal," according to *International Wolf* magazine. Now it's found mainly in wilderness and remote areas. The gray wolf lives in the northern hemisphere and used to have 24 subspecies in North America. Now scientists talk about only five. Arctic wolves, which used to live at the Milwaukee County Zoo, and timber wolves, which live here now, are both subspecies of gray wolves.



Red wolves became extinct in the wild, but there were still some in captivity. In 1988, they were reintroduced into the southeastern United States, where they used to live, and some of them now are found in North Carolina and Tennessee.

Curious Kids

QUESTION: How will you catch the wolves without being harmed?

— *Steffani Kasulke, Milwaukee*

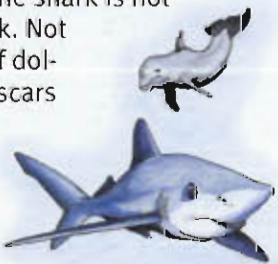


The new wolf pups at the Milwaukee County Zoo did not have to be caught. They were born in captivity at the Wildlife Science Center in Minnesota. When researchers catch wolves in the wild to put tracking collars on them, they use foot hold traps that do not cause damage to the wolf's foot. When they get to the wolf, they use a jab stick to give it a medication that puts it to sleep. That way the researchers don't get harmed.

QUESTION: Why doesn't the shark fight back at the dolphins?

— *Alyse Friedel, 10, Portage, Wis.*

Dolphins attack sharks only when sharks try to eat them. You would think that a shark is fierce, but when a dolphin runs into a shark with its sturdy nose, it can injure and even kill the shark. The dolphin's body shape helps it move faster and make quicker turns than a shark, to avoid the shark's teeth. The dolphin's speed makes it look like the shark is not fighting back. Not true. A lot of dolphins carry scars from shark attacks. A dolphin's main defense is



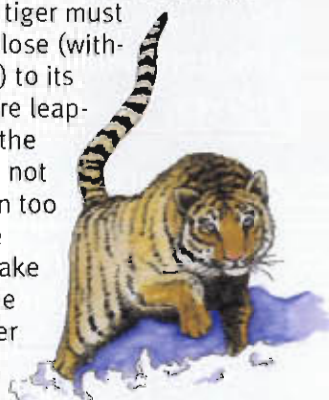
to swim away. But female dolphins that are pregnant or have young with them often have to stand and fight. The dolphin's family group (called a pod) helps defend the young. First they try loud cracking sounds made from their nasal passage to scare the shark. If the shark doesn't leave, the dolphins attack it.

QUESTION: How many stripes does a tiger have?

— *Jonathan, 6, Watertown*

The number of stripes on a tiger varies with each animal. Each subspecies of tiger has a variation of the stripe pattern. These stripes are used as camouflage.

Since the tiger must get very close (within 66 feet) to its prey before leaping on it, the tiger tries not to be seen too soon. The stripes make the outline of the tiger seem fuzzy as it quietly stalks or lies in ambush.



QUESTION: What is a water moccasin? Where do they live? Are they very venomous?

— *Cara Daley, 9, Fox Point*

The water moccasin is commonly known as the cottonmouth, and yes, it is venomous (or poisonous). In fact, it is the only venomous water-loving snake in the United States. It lives in swampy areas, bayous and rivers along the Atlantic Coast and the Gulf of Mexico from southern Virginia to Texas and up the Mississippi River Valley as far north as southern Illinois. There are none in Wisconsin. It is a large, very thick-bodied snake with a chunky head and a short tail. The moccasin, when surprised, often

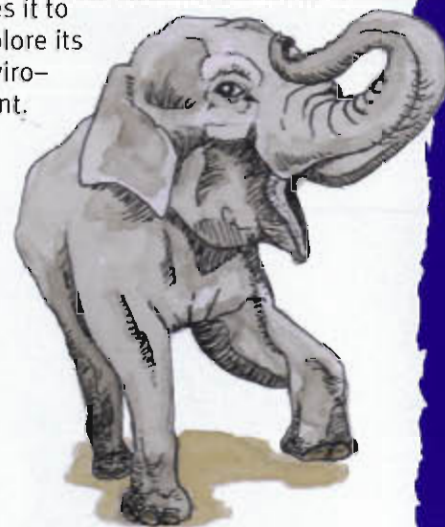


rears its head back, opening the mouth wide, and beating its short tail back and forth in a vigorous steady rhythm. The cottonmouth usually does not go far from water.

QUESTION: Why do elephants have trunks?

— *Derek Schmidt, 7, Menomonee Falls*

The trunk has two nostrils and is very useful for breathing through. But it also is a little like an arm with fingertips and it can pick up large and small objects, bring food and water to the mouth, nudge calves and trumpet warnings. The trunk is an extremely flexible, muscular organ, which has very fine touch. The elephant uses it to explore its environment.



Kids! Why not make your own postcard to send in your questions. You can draw animals like us on it.



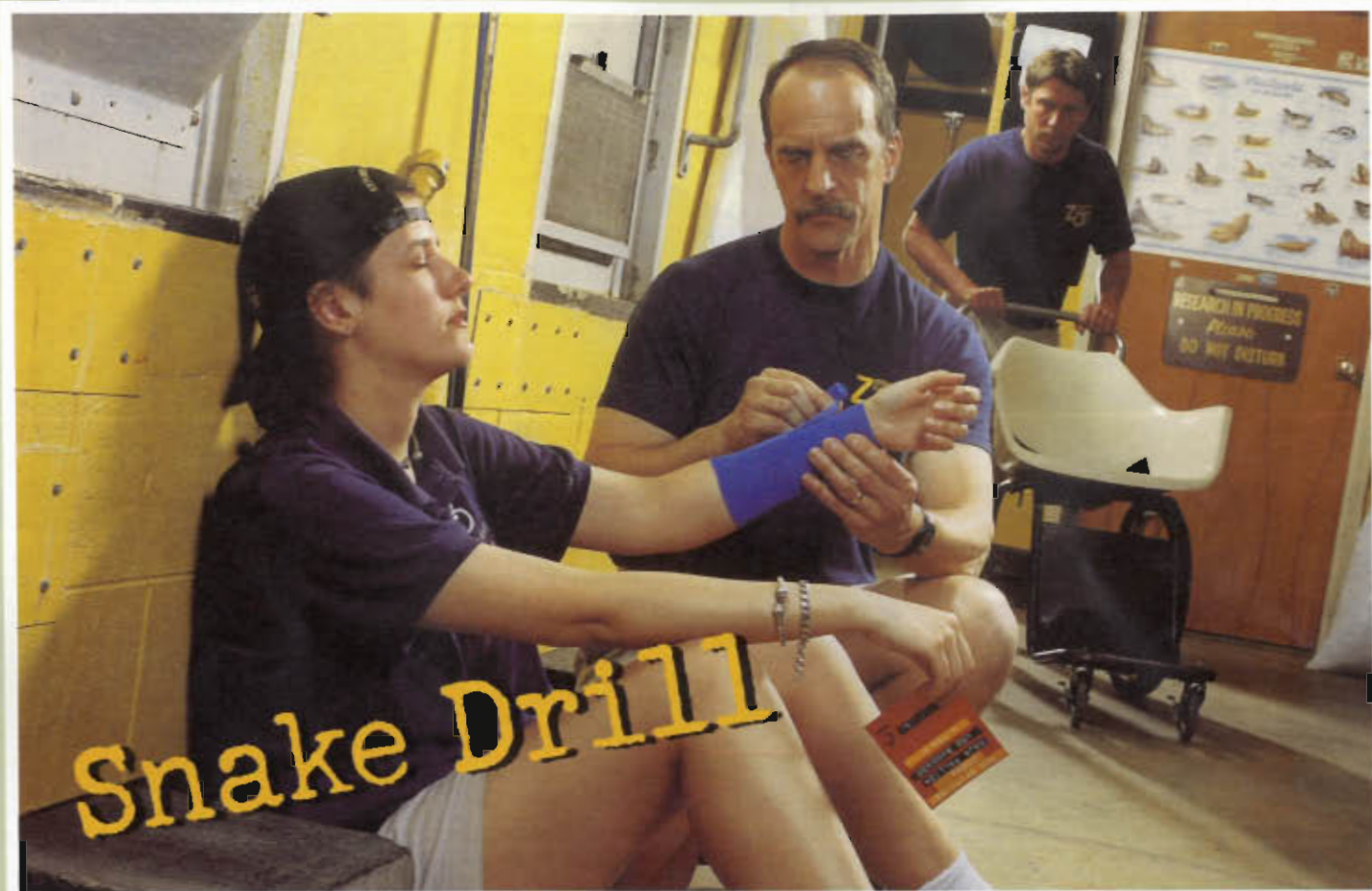
Stepping in the Right Direction



Old sign

Next time you're at the Zoo, you'll find getting to where you're going a whole lot easier when you see 22 new how-to-find-your-way signs and you-are-here maps spread across the 200-acre park. This is the first time the signs have been updated in more than two decades. Designed to blend with their leafy environment, the large new signs feature colorful, bold lettering. Thanks to major support from Roundy's Pick'n Save and the Zoological Society, zoogoers for the 21st century will be better able to find what they're looking for... carihou to concessions, peacocks to parking lots.





During a simulated snake-bite emergency drill, zookeeper Jackie Mundell-Wachowiak is the victim of a snake bite. The card she pulled from the exhibit right after the bite shows she was struck by an elapid (a cobra or green mamba). That tells keeper Tim Tews to apply a close-fitting bandage (to restrict venom flow) to the bite. Keeper Chris Fendos brings a cart onto the scene and prepares to wheel the victim to the back exit of the Aquatic & Reptile Center. Then, it's off to Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital's emergency room.

Tim Tews likes a joke as much as the next person. He's the zookeeper who draws cartoons on the dry-erase board in the kitchen at the Milwaukee County Zoo's Aquatic & Reptile Center (ARC).

But joke about venomous snakes? No way. Some things, like handling a king cobra, are deadly serious.

"You don't kid around and say to another zookeeper, 'Hey, there's a rattlesnake missing,'" Tews says. "We have an excellent track record for safety at the Zoo, because we take it seriously."

The excellent track record—just one zookeeper bitten by a venomous snake ever at the Zoo—is maintained in part by staging elaborate drills that ensure everybody who visits or works at the Zoo remains safe.

Tews, 45, has been a zookeeper for 15 years. His current assignment: the ARC, home to some of the Zoo's more exotic and dangerous animals. He talked about life on the "Hot Side" to explain the Zoo's safety measures and its snake-bite drill.

The Hot Side is a secure area in the ARC where venomous snakes—the timber rattlers, massasauga, king and spitting cobras, green mamba and Gaboon

viper—reside. The locked doors to these exhibits are located far from public access.

Only "snake-certified" zookeepers and supervisors are allowed in there. These are Zoo personnel who have been judged by their peers to be capable of handling the potentially lethal animals safely.

Snakes must be handled on occasion, for example, for examinations or to clean their enclosures. To move venomous snakes, zookeepers use a snake "hook," which is a lightweight, aluminum tool similar to a golf club with a crook at the end to capture the animal. The snake is picked up near its balance point and hoisted above the floor. With poor eyesight and an innate fear of heights, snakes become relatively docile when lifted, Tews says.

But snake handling entails risk. The wrong move can mean life or death. That's where the annual snake-bite drill becomes a serious game of make-believe.

The drills, Tews explained, are conducted for newly certified personnel who will work with snakes and to keep experienced zookeepers sharp. Drills are often held without prior notice.

A drill—or real emergency for that matter—occurs when one of three different alarms sounds in the ARC. A horn indicates a problem in the basement, where off-exhibit animals are held. A buzzer sounds where large snakes such as the boa constrictor and anaconda reside. But it is the tolling of bells that tell of trouble on the Hot Side.

If bitten, the zookeeper's first response is to try to restrain the snake. It could be locked in its exhibit, or placed in a locked box. If neither option is practical, Tews says, the snake must be killed with the snake hook.

"At that point, it's not so important that you get to the hospital that instant," Tews says. "Not every second counts at that moment. It's more important to get that snake before it finds a nook or cranny to hide in."

A tree-loving snake like a mamba on the loose might find its way into duct work or pipes and be nearly impossible to find, he says.

Each exhibit housing a venomous animal on the Hot Side has a card that details the treatment needed in case of a bite. A stricken zookeeper puts that card in his pocket to inform rescuers of the snake that bit him and which antivenom to use to treat the wound. "The card becomes vital if a keeper passes out," says Tews.

Not all venomous snake bites contain venom. A rattlesnake, for instance, in defense often gives a "dry" bite, meaning that it doesn't inject venom, Tews says.

In the case of an elapid bite (from a cobra or green mamba), a close-fitting bandage—not a tourniquet—that restricts venom flow through the lymphatic system, is applied to the victim's bite. Snakes use their venom to kill or paralyze prey. The venom also begins the snake's digestive process by breaking down the muscle tissue of its prey.

"We no longer apply tourniquets or cut open a wound and suck out the venom," Tews says. "Those techniques can do more damage than good."

Zookeepers responding to the alarm are instructed to grab snake hooks. Goggles also may be required in the event that the spitting cobra, which can spew venom, has escaped.

Responders to the alarm must first ascertain whether the snake has been restrained. Next, they try to

calm the victim and restrict his or her movement. That's important, Tews says, because slowing the victim's heart rate can help stem the spread of venom throughout the body.

Rescuers in the drill then notify the Zoo's switchboard, which in turn informs officials at Froedtert Memorial

Lutheran Hospital about the type of snake bite and the serum needed to combat it. The Zoo stocks such serum, and rescuers bring it with them.

On the way out the door, they grab a set of bolt cutters to snap the lock, if need be, on the Zoo gate that exits onto Blue Mound Road.

"We always have a vehicle on hand at the building for emergencies," Tews says. "We drive within the speed limit. We're just five minutes at most from the hospital, and they know that we're coming."

Fortunately, the Zoo has had only one actual venomous snake bite. It occurred in 1978 when a zookeeper trying to feed a fer-de-lance (a South American viper) was bit on the finger. He survived, but he lost some movement in the finger and missed three months of work, Tews says.

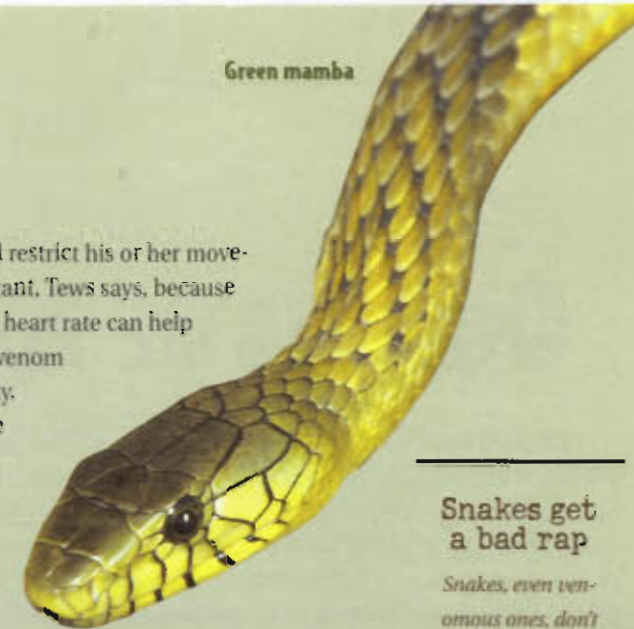
The Zoo's expertise in snake bites has made it a regional center for snake bite information and serum. Tews recalls an incident several years ago when a Manitowoc woman was bitten by an Asian cobra that she owned.

The Zoo, along with others in Minneapolis and Chicago, donated all of its serum.

"As we say in the business, she got 'juiced' pretty good. She essentially depleted the Midwest of serum," Tews says. "She needed 35 vials, but she survived."

The Zoo then was forced to seal shut its cobra exhibits until more serum could be obtained. The hearty animals survived their quarantine undamaged.

"We try to discourage private collections of venomous animals," Tews says. "There's a serious responsibility that goes along with having them."



Green mamba

Snakes get a bad rap

Snakes, even venomous ones, don't deserve the bad reputation they have, says Craig Berg, the Zoo's aquarium/reptile curator. "In Wisconsin, there are no snakes that are aggressive. And snakes are the most effective predator of rodents that you'll find." Plus, snake venom is being studied for its potential as a medicine for some human illnesses.



Circle Photo: This "grab box" is the kit keepers take with the victim to the emergency room. It contains an antivenom serum for every venomous snake in the Zoo's collection, instructions on how to use each antivenom, a reference book for emergency personnel, and phone numbers of the world's snake experts.

OCEANS OF RECYCLED ANIMALS

Laboring under the weight of all manner of ocean life – giant jellyfish to brilliant coral reefs – nearly 3,500 children delivered their hand-made marine-life creations to the Milwaukee County Zoo this spring for display as part of the popular Miller's Recycled Zoo. All of the creatures in the "zoo" followed this year's theme, Explore the Sea, and were made from recyclable and reused materials.

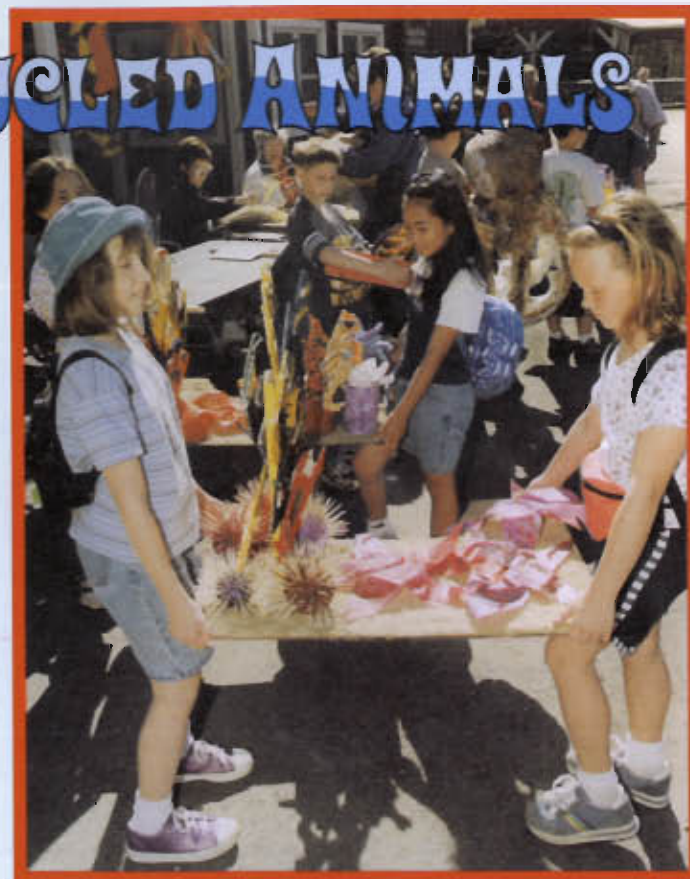
In production since January, the artworks that made up the "zoo" had children from 64 schools, 23 scout troops and 20 4-H clubs assembling octopuses, sharks, squid, and other ocean life while learning the importance of recycling and conservation.

While helping her fourth-grade class position its sea-life assembly, featuring fish, sea anemones, starfish and an old-garbage-can-lid turtle, against one of four coral-reef backdrops, teacher Judy Berry of Shady Lane School in Menomonee Falls said: "We have an ocean unit as part of our fourth-grade science curriculum every year. So the theme of this year's program fit in well with what we did in the classroom." Berry, an enthusiastic advocate of Recycled Zoo since the program began six years ago, added: "The kids love this program and always look forward to it. We appreciate that Miller does this for us."

To Miller, sponsoring a program that gives children the opportunity to learn, create and recycle just makes sense. "As a company, we depend on a healthy environment and we think it's important for children, as they build their lives, to learn the importance of conservation," says Gil Llanas, contributions manager at Miller Brewing Company.

"We're proud to be involved in a program like this because of what the environment means to our products and because of Miller's commitment to environmental leadership. We strongly encourage our suppliers to reduce, reuse and recycle when dealing with our packaging and shipping materials. It's our company's way of protecting the environment."

Miller's Recycled Zoo is co-sponsored by Miller Brewing Company, the Zoological Society, and Milwaukee County Zoo with in-kind support from ACME Corp.



Top: Students from Fair Park Elementary School in West Bend carry their coral-reef sculptures to an exhibit spot at the Zoo.

Bottom: Children take notes on the numerous reef animals created by Meadowview School in Oak Creek.

Left: A fish in Miller's Recycled Zoo created by Slinger's Hi-Lite Happy Workers 4-H Club

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American Airlines
Zoo Ball*

Ameritech

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Miller Brewing Co.
Animal Ambassador Program
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Recycled Zoo
Zoo a la Carte

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
Zoo a la Carte*

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The Frieda and William Hunt Memorial Trust (over a 2-year period)
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Egg Day*
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Father's Day at the Zoo*
Halloween Spectacular and Boo at the Zoo*
Kids Nights*
March Is Frozen Food Month
Ride on the Wild Side Family Bike Ride*
Snooze at the Zoo*
Twilight Safari*

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The Serengeti Circle is an exclusive group of corporations and foundations that support the Zoo and Zoological Society through sponsoring special events, exhibits/attractions, programs and promotions at the \$2,500 level and above. For more information on sponsorship opportunities at the Zoo, please call Patty Harrigan, (414) 258-2333.

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***In-Kind Sponsorships**

Sponsors and grantors committing dollars and in-kind gifts for events and programs after May 20, 1999, will be recognized in the next issue of *Alive*.



The Gough family of Shorewood make their way around the Zoo faster with rented strollers, sponsored by Drypers Corporation. For information on stroller rental discounts on July 24 and 25, see your July – August issue of *Wild Things* newsletter.

What's Gnu

Ruppell's Griffon Vulture Chick

Hatched: April 8, 1999

African Savannah (chick on exhibit late summer; parents on exhibit now)

There's little about this white down-covered Ruppell's griffon vulture chick—about a quarter pound when it hatched—to suggest that one day it will become a big and beautiful bird. But with help from zookeepers, who hand feed chopped mice daily to the chick with a puppet, the vulture will grow to 15 pounds and will be covered with pearly gray, white-and-beige-speckled plumage. This is the first Ruppell's griffon chick in nine years to hatch at the Zoo. That's significant, considering there are only 29 of the birds in captivity. "Unfortunately, our chick's parents have killed their chicks in the past, so the decision was made to artificially incubate the egg and hand-rear the chick," says Aviary Curator Kim Smith. In the wild, the Ruppell's griffon vulture lives in central Africa.

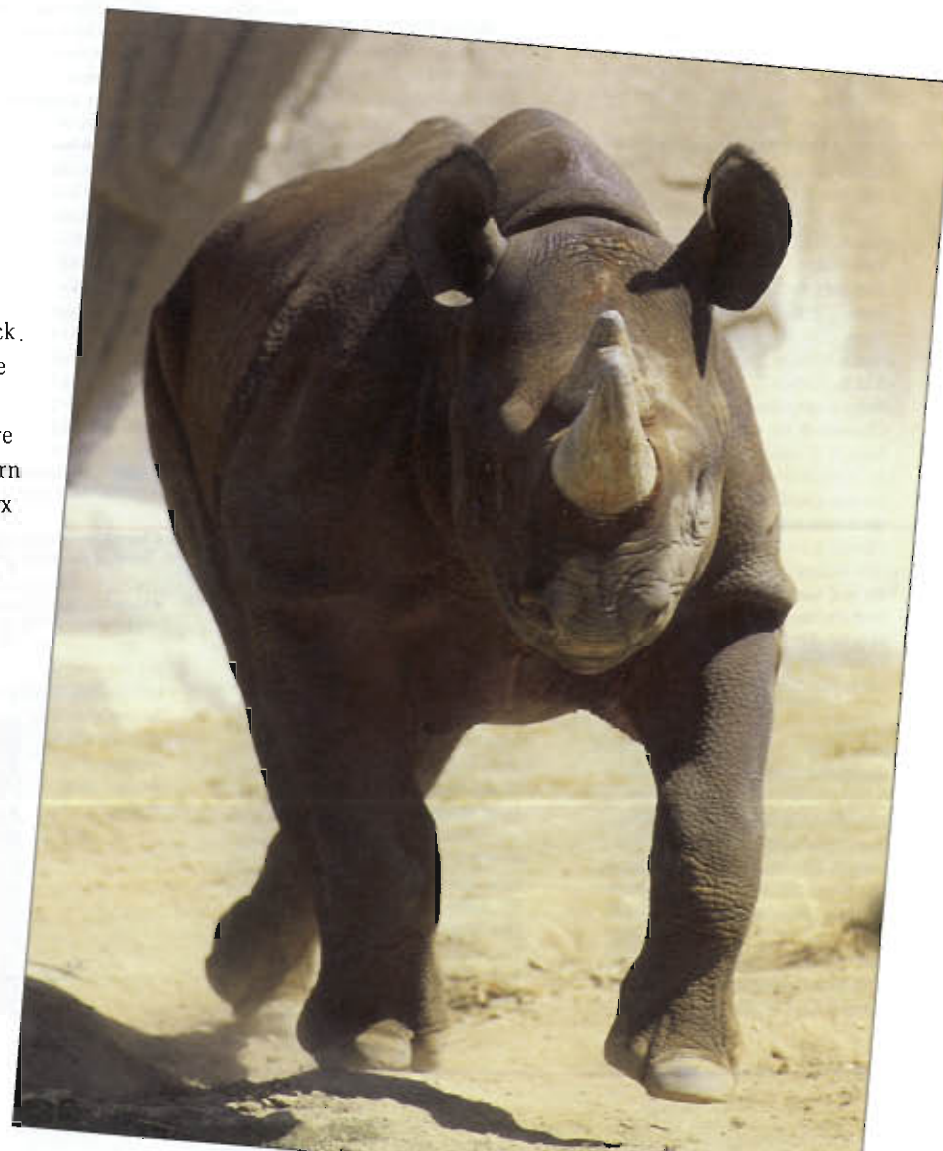


Black Rhinoceros

Arrived: April 16, 1999

Pachyderm Area

Onyx is truly a rare gem. This 2½-year-old southern black rhino, who recently arrived at the Milwaukee County Zoo from Fossil Rim Conservation Center in Glen Rose, Texas, is the daughter of wild-caught black rhinos. That makes her very valuable genetically. She is part of a Species Survival Plan for the endangered rhino. In the wilds of Africa, where they live, there are fewer than 2,400 black rhinos left, and of the southern black rhino subspecies, fewer than 1,300. When Onyx is a few years older (between ages 4 and 6), she will breed with Brewster. Also wild-caught, Brewster has fathered three rhino calves at the Zoo, including Buster, born October 1998. Zookeeper Dana Nicholson, who's in charge of rhino training, says Onyx already is being trained to stay still for blood samples and health exams. She's very cooperative, he adds. "We hope to have the ability to perform medical procedures such as ultrasounds before she gets pregnant." The Zoo's other rhino female, Barley, has not had an ultrasound exam. The Zoo now has four rhinos.



Mohol Galagos (aka Senegal bushbaby)

Born: Found in its exhibit first week in April
Small Mammals building

The bushbaby (*Galago senegalensis moholi*) is a delight to watch leaping about its exhibit. "They can jump over 7 feet," says Nina Schaefer, area supervisor of small mammals. There are three animals in the Zoo's exhibit: mom, dad and the new baby, which Schaefer discovered in a hollow cylinder log when it was about 2 weeks old. The baby stayed there about two months, venturing out occasionally. Now, says Schaefer, "It's out jumping all around, just like the parents." In the wild, the bushbaby lives in African woodland savannas to primary forests. They eat insects and tree sap, commonly from the Acacia tree, and seldom weigh more than 15 ounces. Bushbabies are primates equipped for hunting at night. Their ears contain rib-like structures that allow them to move their ears as they listen for insects. Their eyes have a light-enhancing membrane that aids night vision. Powerful legs allow bushbabies to spring quickly, catch an insect in midair, and land back on the same tree. During the day, they sleep in tree hollows.



European Legless Lizard

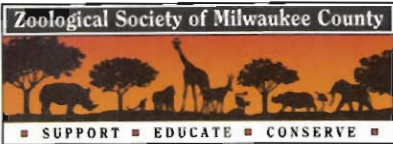
Arrived: March 14, 1999

Aquatic & Reptile Center

When you don't have legs, running from predators isn't an option. The European legless lizard, a new addition to the Aquatic & Reptile Center at the Milwaukee County Zoo, has developed an ingenious method of outwitting predators. The two-foot-long lizard is mostly tail. In fact, its tail accounts for about 85%

of its length, says Craig Berg, reptile/aquarium curator at the Zoo. If handled roughly, the lizard's back end falls apart in wiggly pieces, leaving predators to wonder whether it has captured a head or tail. "It's quite an effective escape mechanism," Berg says. The lizard, by the way, has the ability to regenerate its tail after such an escape.





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Fifth Annual Animal Art Competition

These are the four winning artworks in the Zoological Society's 1999 Fifth Annual Animal People's Choice Art Competition, sponsored by the Robert K. & Joyce R. Cope Foundation. The artwork was on display at Mayfair Mall April 27-May 9, 1999. Students won \$100 and received a Zoological Society membership, which includes a year's free admission to the Milwaukee County Zoo. Winners of honorable mention are Carrie Davis, Wisconsin Lutheran College, for her pastel of an Asian elephant; Liz Meister, Wisconsin Lutheran College, for her snow leopard pencil illustration; and Sara Hasslinger, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, for her acrylic painting called "Us." All honorable-mention winners received \$50 gift certificates to Milwaukee's Artist & Display art-supplies store.



A. Male Tiger, laminated photo by Debra Kissel of Menomonee Falls, from Milwaukee Area Technical College

B. Taken for Granted, pastel by Elizabeth M. Schulz of West Allis, from Mount Mary College

C. Bald Eagle, pencil drawing by Jonathan Baas of Milwaukee, from Wisconsin Lutheran College

D. Our Friend the Orangutan, pastel with painted frame by Liz Snowden of Wauwatosa, from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

