

ALIVE

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY • SUPPORT • EDUCATE • CONSERVE •

WINTER 1991



PRESIDENT'S LETTER



A NEW YEAR.

Welcome to the first issue of ALIVE of 1991. We're only one year into "the environmental decade" and are already looking forward to a 21st century that is cleaner, safer and more natural—for us and for the wildlife that share this planet.

Working toward our conservation, education and zoo support goals, the Zoological Society is in the midst of exciting times. Thanks to the contributions of many, we are proud to be a 50% partner with the zoo in the renovation of the aviary, which will open this May. We broke ground with the zoo late last year for a new \$10.7 million Great Ape Facility, the largest project of our \$26 million Capital Improvements Campaign. And we'll be completing the final phase of an egret and heron habitat preservation program in Horicon Marsh later this winter. You'll find articles on all of these projects in this issue.

As we celebrate the start or finish of these projects, however, we do not overlook the contributions of our Board of Directors, Associate Board, volunteers and staff. This year, Zoo Pride volunteers will fill more than 30,000 plastic eggs with candy for Easter and will work on a number of projects too numerous to mention here. Our development, marketing, membership, and Animal Adoption staff and their support committees will be putting more aggressive programs in place to increase membership and donation revenue. The Associate Board is planning the year's special events. Our education/graphics staff will continue to develop additional programming that will attract to the zoo even more than the 200,000 school children, youth groups and families that visited the zoo last year.

Finally, we invite you to read the zoo's update on Lota, the Asian elephant that was transferred from the zoo in December (page 19). We certainly appreciate your concern for Lota and all the animals in the zoo's collection.

On behalf of our directors and all of our "family", best wishes for a healthy and happy new year.

Gilbert K. Boese, Ph.D.
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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ON THE COVER:

To commemorate the spring opening of the aviary, Jay Jocham, an endowed artist with the Zoological Society, has designed a set of four notecards featuring different birds to be exhibited in the aviary. Pictured here is a pair of Rhinoceros Hornbills.

ALIVE

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AVIARY



Bird's-Eye View

This is the first of two stories on the renovation of the zoo's aviary. This story explores some of the planning considerations that went into the design of the building's new exhibits. In the next issue, we'll take you on a walk through the building.

Milwaukee will go to the birds this May when the zoo's aviary re-opens, with a feel and a look different from any other exhibit at the zoo.

The renovated bird house retains only a few vestiges of the old aviary, built in the mid-60's. All the rest is new and responds not only to the interests of a more sophisticated zoogoer but also to the conservation, education and recreation goals established by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AAZPA).

"The old building was exclusively an exhibit building that presented people of the '60's era with what they wanted to see and reflected little commitment to animal conservation," said Ed Diebold, the Milwaukee County Zoo's curator of birds. "But technology as well as a stronger commitment to conservation issues have taken over, which have made the old building obsolete."

The aviary will be a departure from the way people are used to viewing zoo animals, Diebold said. "What we're

doing is actually 'transporting' people from here to a different location—the Falkland Islands, an east coast dock—as if they were in that environment."

Various props and murals will create a convincing ambience and establish an important balance between education and recreation. Also, all of the exhibits in each of the aviary's four halls—East Flight, West Flight, African Savannah, and Shorebirds—are being designed to bring visitors close to the residents, challenging visitors to look closely to observe the birds in their natural habitats.

Building a forest

Recreating a rich, green tropical rainforest—complete with waterfalls and streams—and filling the rest of the aviary with vegetation also proved to be a design challenge, Diebold said. For four months, Diebold worked with Tropical Plant Rentals, Inc., to install about 50 different species of trees and plants from all over the world. The vegetation, almost totally funded by a \$72,100 contribution by the Zoological Society, was planted with the birds' natural habitats and environmental needs in mind. Palm trunks, for instance, will serve as nesting sites for Green Aracari birds.

Clearly, the visual appeal of the aviary's environment and exhibits will



Under a \$60,000 contract with the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County, Illinois artist Paul Barker adorns the wall of the aviary's shorebird exhibit with a 20' x 20' mural. This mural is one of nine to depict vistas from around the world.

birds. To prevent disease outbreak and make caring for the birds more manageable, the team decided to subdivide the exhibits while maintaining the illusion of an open space. The new design also features multiple keeper areas, which allow the keepers to feed and care for their bird collections from a single area. Feeding stations will provide a broad menu of avian treats: mealworms, mice, fish, eggs, fruit, crickets and other snacks.

Breeding success

Keeping the birds happy and healthy and helping them to live comfortably are two key priorities in bird management, but one of the aviary's true measure of success will be the number of birds born each year. "Some of the birds to be exhibited in the aviary are here for breeding purposes solely," Diebold said. Among the endangered species to be bred are the Guam Kingfisher and the Bali Mynah, both part of the AAZPA's Species Survival Plan.

Visitors to the aviary will not only learn about the importance of breeding

impress zoo visitors as much as the beautiful bird life in it. But exhibit planners put animal conservation at the top of their lists when they began planning the aviary's design. The big questions planners asked themselves when considering each exhibit's design were: How will the birds like it? and Will they reproduce?

Planners wanted to build environments that would encourage birds to live as if they were "at home"—on an ocean pier, in the canopy of a rainforest, on the side of a cliff, or, in

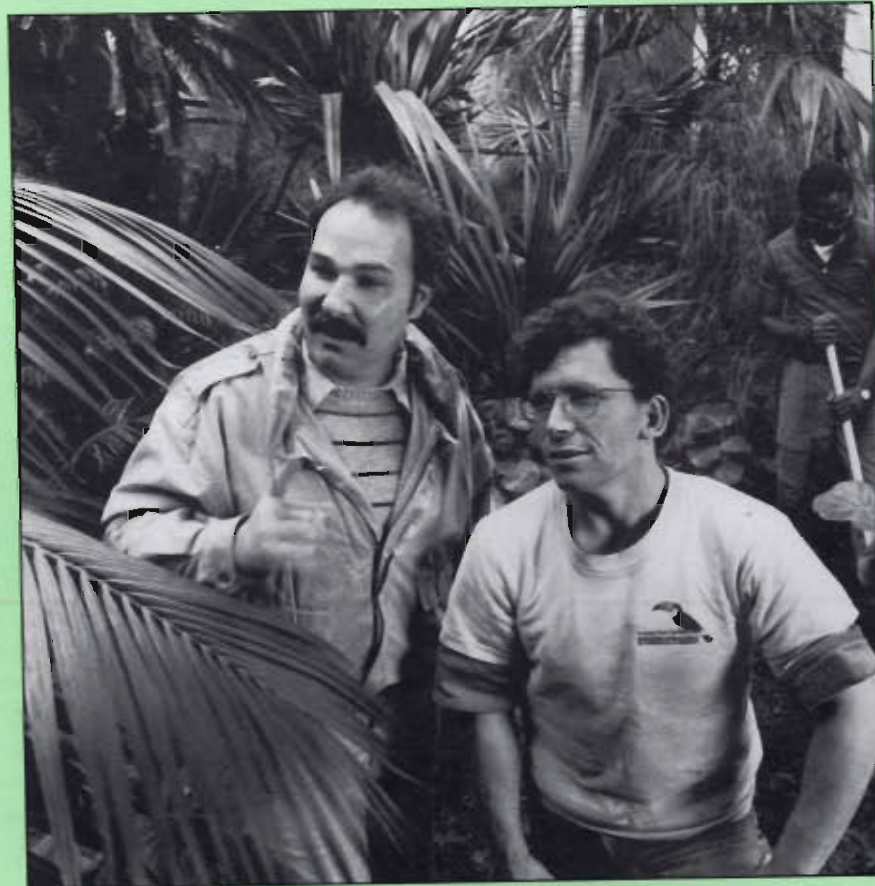
the case of the sub-Antarctic King and Rockhopper Penguins, in a seaside Falkland Island rookery (nesting area).

Feeling at home

One of the more sophisticated plans to breed King and Rockhopper Penguins in the aviary included updating the birds' former exhibit. To more adequately create a naturalistic representation of the birds' home, exhibit planners removed the skylight and installed an elaborate lighting system

of multiple timers and breakers. The new system will allow keepers to control the intensity of light in the exhibit and simulate the photo period (day length) of the penguins' Falkland Island home. In addition, the birds' pool size has been increased by four times its original volume and an upgraded air chilling and water filtration system have been added.

With the great diversity and number of birds to be exhibited, exhibit planners also needed to take into account how keepers will care for the



Ed Diebold (left), the zoo's curator of birds, works with Dave Welch of Tropical Plant Rentals, Inc., to finish plant installations in the aviary's rainforest hall.



MAY 1991

AVIARY ON THE JOB: Ed Diebold, Curator of Birds Milwaukee County Zoo

When Ed Diebold leaves the zoo at night, he doesn't stop working. The sheer scope of Diebold's professional involvements is a ready measure of his energy and passion for avian concerns. He not only manages the zoo's entire bird collection but also is working to give the birds a new home.

"Supervising the aviary renovation is overwhelming yet very exciting," Diebold said. "Only a small number of curators get the opportunity to do this in their careers."

The demands on Diebold's time don't stop there. He also represents our zoo in the Zoo Midwest Ornithological Association, is a member of the American Federation of Aviculture and the American Ornithologist Union, and is an appointed member of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums' Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee, a group especially committed to expanding AAZPA's conservation programs.

Diebold started his zoo career in 1979 as a keeper at the St. Louis Zoo. He was promoted to head keeper of the Bird Department there in 1983 and joined the Milwaukee County Zoo staff as curator of birds in 1986.

"In my career here, I've faced two major design challenges: to oversee the design and construction of the Taylor Humboldt Penguin exhibit and to do the same for the aviary, a project ten times the scope of the penguin exhibit," Diebold said. "Same thought process, different scale."

birds like these for conservation purposes but will also witness birds' mating behavior and the different ways birds rear their young.

"Through educational graphics and up-close observation, we hope to make the public more aware of the plight some of these birds face in the wild," Diebold said. And the birds don't have to be endangered to be educational. For visitors to be exposed to the beautiful Victoria Crowned Pigeon or the delicate Fairy Bluebird or the unusual Rhino Hornbill is for them to be exposed to the beauty of nature. 🐦

The aviary renovation is a \$2.78 million project, of which the Zoological Society and the Milwaukee County Zoo are 50% partners. Major contributors to the project include Gretchen and Andrew Dawes Endowment, Inc.; Quinn and Jane Martin; Harnischfeger Industries; Annual Appeal '90 (Membership); Rockhopper Penguin Button Sales (Zoo Pride); Zoo Ball V (Associate Board); and Miller Birdies and Eagles Golf Tournament '90 (Associate Board).

SUPPORT SNAPSHOTS



Great Ape Groundbreaking

On October 29, work began on the zoo's new Great Ape Facility, the largest project of a \$26 million Capital Improvements Campaign. The facility will be the second of three interconnected, weather-independent buildings and will be accessible through the Peck Welcome Center.

The Zoological Society, sharing equally in funding the project with the Zoo, thanks the following donors for their contributions to the facility: The Krause Foundation; the James H. Kuehn Family; Mrs. Robert Uihlein, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. William Winkler; Ms. Lorraine Straszewski; and Mrs. Leona B. Stearns. Also, proceeds from several special events coordinated by the Zoological Society's Associate Board were earmarked for Great Ape Facility support. Among them were Zoo Balls IV and VII and a number of fitness events held at the Highlander Elite Racquet and Fitness Club.

Breaking ground (from left): Dr. Gil Boesa, president of the Zoological Society; Richard J. Podell, president of the Society's Associate Board; Dr. Leander R. Jennings, chairman-elect of the Society's Board of Directors; County Board Chairman F. Thomas Ament; William Hanrahan, the county executive's chief of staff; and Zoo Director Charles Wikenhauser.



Z Double Circle

Honorary Zoological Society board member Bill Moomey autographs a copy of the prairie tale he wrote and illustrated, *Dad Always Said*, for Associate Board member Steve Forsythe at a western hoe-down held last fall at the Z Double Circle Ranch (ZOO). The event was sponsored by the Society's Associate Board, Miller Brewing Company, County Line Cheese, and WOKY AM-920/WMIL FM-106.

Watts-Chase Reception

At an exclusive reception held at George Watts in November, Zoological Society members met wildlife artist and conservationist Lynn Chase. Chase, committed to protecting and preserving wild animals and their habitats, contributed to the Society 10 percent of all dinnerware and accessories purchases made during the reception.

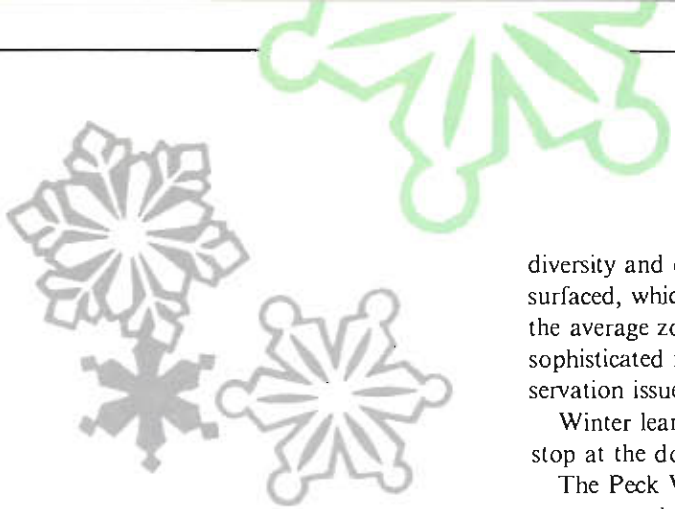


Aviary Scavenge

You could find your old butterfly net and old metal cooler poised next to a mynah in the zoo's new aviary by donating them to the Zoological Society. Filling the aviary with props will begin this month, and we're still scavenging for:

Life jackets and rings	Butterfly/bird nets
Wooden and steel barrels	Chainsaw
Wooden crates	Ax
Cargo net	Old hand tools
Rope	Old camp stove
Fishnet	Canteen
Lobster traps	African masks
Fishing poles and reels	Shark jaws
Tackle boxes and tackle	Traps
Marker buoys	Old microscope
Trap lines	Butterfly collection
First aid kit	Knives
Jerry cans	Backpacks
Boots	Ouffel bags
Lanterns	Camping stool
South American rugs	Cot
African blankets	Sleeping bag
Generator	Tin coffee pot
Pith helmets	Tin cups
Mosquito netting	Frying pan
Old log books or diaries	Cooking utensils

Call the Zoological Society's Education Department at (414) 256-5421 for a complete wish list or if you want to make a donation.



Do the Zoo in Winter, Too

As the winter days drag on and you start to long for a dose of traditional "summer-only" activities, take heart. The zoo is open year-round and a winter visit promises every zoo-goer V.I.P. treatment—in the animal houses and on the grounds—thanks to the dedication of Zoo Pride volunteers.

"In winter, our visitors see a different kind of zoo," said Judy Garavaglia, chair of Zoo Pride's Do the Zoo in Winter, Too committee. "The animals are more approachable and the people are much more relaxed."

In winter, volunteers feel they have more time to talk with visitors about the animals—their habits and their habitats—and to explain animal adaptations, or how the animals physically adjust to different seasons and climates. And winter zoo visitors seem more interested in learning as much as they can about the zoo's animals.

Committed to satisfying visitors' curiosity by making their zoo visits fun, educational and personal, Garavaglia said "being there for people" as they walk—or ski—through the zoo is the goal of her committee.

Having completed at least two of three levels of Zoo Pride training, the guides, or learning facilitators, are stationed in each zoo building from January through March prepared to tackle even the toughest questions about the animals.

"Everybody seems to want to know an animal's name, how much it weighs, its favorite food and its native habitat," Garavaglia said. But in recent years, more complex questions on gene pool

diversity and ecological harmony have surfaced, which seems to suggest that the average zoo-goer is becoming more sophisticated in his knowledge of conservation issues, she said.

Winter learning at the zoo doesn't stop at the doors of the animal buildings.

The Peck Welcome Center, too, is a harbor of educational opportunities.

Traditionally found throughout the zoo only in summer, Zoo Pride's Remains to be Seen carts have been moved inside the Peck Welcome Center to expand

the hands-on experiences of zoo visitors all winter. The carts—aquarium/reptile, endangered species and North American—are filled with animal artifacts and are staffed by Zoo Pride volunteers.

Bob Jackson, who has spent seven years as a Zoo Prider and the last two "on carts," said of all the carts Zoo Pride maintains, the aquarium/reptile

cart seems to be the most popular. Its inventory includes snake skins, a mounted lizard, star fish, a condor feather, sea horses, three glass-encased tarantulas, and nine other artifacts.

"Children call it the 'icky cart,' but they're fascinated by the bugs, skeletons and snake skins," Jackson said. "Kids never get a chance to see these things up close and have a general fear of the unknown."

Kids generally want to know if the tarantulas will attack and if they're poisonous. Parents generally want to know how to rid bats from their attics. And if Jackson doesn't have an answer, he'll get back to visitors with literature or a phone call. "Generally, the people determine what we're going to talk about, but every volunteer on carts has been trained to handle the basics."

To round out a winter trip to the zoo, visitors can watch National Geographic Nature Series films featured in the Peck Welcome Center

and pet the animals exhibited in the center's Discovery Farm, staffed by zoo professionals.

Robin Higgins, the Zoological Society's director of volunteer services, sees Zoo Pride's winter programs not only as an opportunity to attract people to the zoo during a time when attendance generally dips, but also as a chance to keep volunteers involved with the public—and animals—year-round.

"The volunteers enjoy sharing quirks about animals' behavior and adaptations as much as people like listening to them," Higgins said. "Every day of the year." ❏

Zoo Pride is the volunteer auxiliary of the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County. For more information on Zoo Pride, call (414) 258-5667.



Zoo Pride volunteers Bob Vohl (foreground) and Bob Jackson teach two fifth-graders from Greenfield's Edgewood School, Robyn Falk and Lawrence Douglas, about artifacts found on the aquarium/reptile Remains to be Seen cart.

ZOO PRIDE VOLUNTEERS

Birthday Parties at the Zoo

You haven't had a birthday with a bunch of animals until you've had a birthday at the zoo. During the party, you or your guest of honor will get a special birthday gift and a personalized cake. Each guest will receive a remembrance gift. And your whole party will get a chance to take a mini-tour of the zoo and participate in zoo activities planned and hosted by Zoo Pride volunteers. Celebrate your next birthday with the animals. Call (414) 258-5667 at least three weeks in advance of your requested date.



Behind-the-Scenes Zoo Tours

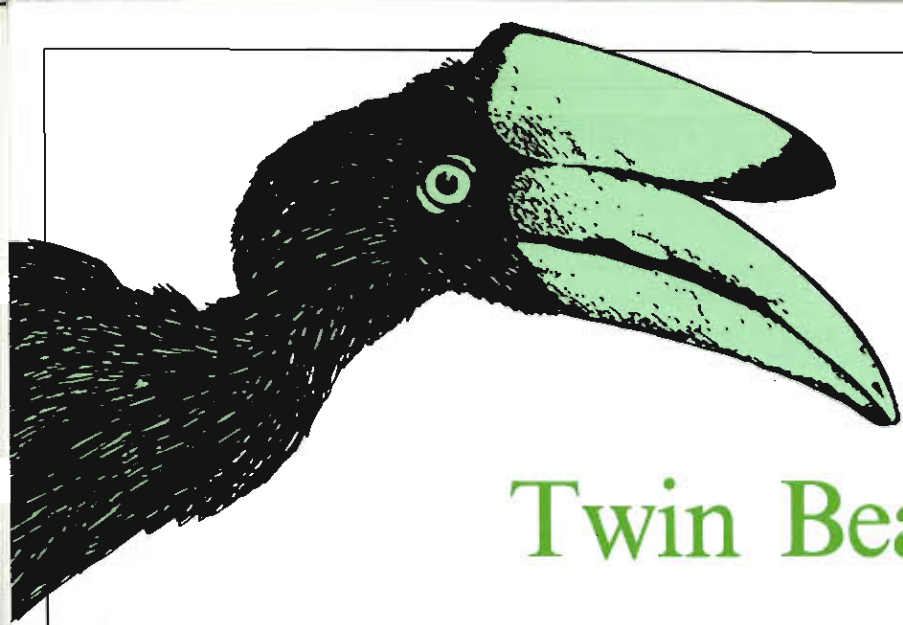
Zoo Pride volunteers will guide you and your friends on a behind-the-scenes tour of the zoo any day of the year. These tours, designed to educate people about animals at the zoo and the importance of conserving them, are open to adults, children over 12, and school groups (9th grade+). On the tour, visitors learn about the habits and habitats of certain animals and discover how zookeepers care for the animals. A tour costs \$7.50 per person, and \$5 per student or senior. Zoo admission and parking are not included in this price. To arrange a behind-the-scenes tour, call Zoo Pride at (414) 258-5667 three weeks in advance of your requested date.

Speakers Bureau

Zoo Pride volunteers visit area civic clubs and organizations to spread messages of conserving wildlife and endangered species and of supporting our zoo. Zoo Priders tell their story through slides of animals and the zoo's animal exhibits. And they tell their story from experience. To get a Zoo Pride volunteer on your next meeting's agenda, call (414) 258-5667.

Volunteer at the Zoo

If you think you'd enjoy watching and recording the birth of a baby bonobo or describing the zoo's elephant training program to zoo visitors or even tying red ribbons around the necks of 400 plush hippopotami, then consider becoming a Zoo Pride volunteer. Membership in Zoo Pride, the volunteer auxiliary of the Zoological Society, offers you a chance to get more involved in the zoo and the Zoological Society. Benefits include: continuing education opportunities, lectures, field trips, workshops, tours, a subscription to ZOOing In newsletter, and friends who share a common interest in the zoo and its residents. For membership information, call (414) 258-5667.



Twin Beaks

The images the widely talked-about television series *Twin Peaks* brings to mind—Laura Palmer's secret diary, Diane's covert dictations and plenty of darn good coffee—may soon live only in viewers' VCR's after the show's sister bird, the Rhinoceros Hornbill, makes its

Milwaukee debut when the aviary re-opens this May.

Twin bills?

What is it about the Rhino Hornbill that elevates it to *Twin Peaks*' "sister bird" status? This bird appears to have

twin beaks. Or is it twin bills? Or does it have two bills at all?

Many features make the Rhino Hornbill look exotic—bright-colored bare skin patches on its face and neck, and long stiff eyelashes (which are really feathers)—but its *bill* (and it does have only one) is what really makes this hornbill unique.

The bird's bill is large and curved and has a horn-shaped process called a casque. The bird's casque is what gives it the appearance of having two bills. The casque is very lightweight, yet incredibly strong, is made of a hard, "horny" outer coating and is filled with a sponge-like cellular material. The bird uses its casque for display to attract new mates and as a resonating chamber to amplify their calls.

Tree-living birds, hornbills have long necks and tails and rounded wings. The bird's body type helps it reach fruit growing on trees found on their native island of Borneo, southwest of the Philippines. Besides fruit, the bird also eats frogs, lizards, insects and nestling birds in the wild.

At the zoo, the birds enjoy a similar fruit diet, including apples, oranges, melons, bananas, pineapples, raisins, sweet potatoes, spinach and carrots, with some selections from a different "soft-bill" menu: mice, insects, lizards, mealworms, frogs, crickets and chicks.

Ellen Saksefski, area supervisor of the zoo's Bird Department, said the zoo's two Rhino Hornbills, a male called Cyrano and a female named Roxanne, enjoy sitting next to each other during feeding time. "They like to feed each other, and it will be good when both of them can get into their natural exhibit in the aviary," Saksefski said.

During the 1-1/2 years Saksefski has been studying the zoo's hornbills, she has noticed that Cyrano seems to be more interested in people than Roxanne, who tends to be less curious and somewhat shy.

Fits the bill

Besides the hornbill's exotic appearance and good nature, its educational value makes the bird a particularly strong addition to the zoo's aviary, said

Lowell Warshawsky, a bird lover, enjoys the company of pet parrots Reggie, a Blue-fronted Amazon (on shoulder), and Alex, a Yellow-naped Amazon. Both parrots were hatched in the United States. In the foreground are two of dozens of ceramic and plush penguins Warshawsky has collected over the years. Warshawsky has been a "parent" to the zoo's Humboldt Penguins through the Zoological Society's Animal Adoption program since 1977. Warshawsky also is a Platypus Society member and long-time Zoo Pride volunteer.



ALIVE 2

PULL-OUT SECTION

For Kids and families

These two birds will be part of the new aviary. Read about them and then, color in each bird.



GUAM KINGFISHER

The Guam Kingfisher, a one-time native to the island of Guam, became easy prey to the Solomon Island Brown Tree Snake, an unwelcome island visitor during World War II. Because this snake is a nighttime feeder, these unknowing arboreal (tree-living) birds were easy prey for the tree-dwelling snake. Today, the endangered Guam Kingfisher is part of the Species Survival Plan, which works to ensure the survival of many threatened species.

TAWNY FROGMOUTH

Frogmouths, found in Australia, Thailand and Borneo, are nocturnal birds (active at night) and are similar to owls. The color and markings of the bird resemble the texture of bark. These birds roost in trees by day and feed from them at night. While roosting during the day, the frogmouth points its beak and head upward in a stiff posture and can camouflage itself against a tree trunk or branch. This makes them hard to find.

—by Mary Thiry

FYI: What is a bird?



Feathers are what make a bird a bird! All birds have them, and if you were to count the Whistling Swan's feathers you would find this bird has about 25,000 of them. All birds lay eggs. The largest egg is the ostrich egg, which is equal in size to 18 chicken eggs. Many birds fly, but not all. Can you name one bird that flies and one bird that doesn't fly? Visit the new bird house (aviary) in May to learn the answer to this question and many more fascinating facts about bird life.



Got a bird brain?

Then come up with a short, humorous caption for this photo and hurry it to us. On the back of your entry write your name, age and complete address. Send your entry to: Education, Zoological Society of Milwaukee County, 10005 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226 before March 1, 1991. A winner will be selected and printed with this photo in the next issue of *ALIVE*.

CAPTION:

THE CURIOUS CORNER



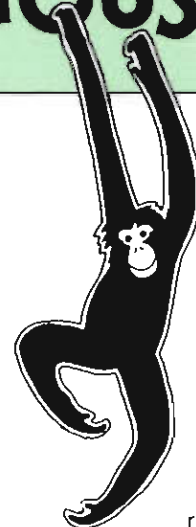
DO BIRDS COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER?

Birds communicate with each other in many ways. They hardly ever change the expression on their faces, but they do change the expression on their bodies. When a bird ruffles its feathers or spreads its wings, it tells other birds that it is angry or afraid.

Birds also communicate with body markings. Each kind has its own markings. Birds that travel in large groups will fly toward other birds with the same markings while birds that fly alone will avoid them.

Sounds are very important to birds, too! Each kind of bird has its own language that is understood by all the birds of that kind.

Submitted by:
Peter Hable, 9, Fort Atkinson



DO YOU TEACH PARROTS TO TALK?

When you were a baby, you learned to talk by copying the sounds that you heard grown-ups make. Many birds learn to sing the same way. When they are babies, they copy the sounds that they hear adult birds make. I once new a bird that made a "drip, drip, drip," sound because it was kept in a room with a leaky faucet. Birds, like parrots and mynah birds, may become so attached to their owners that they copy some of their words.

The zoo does not teach its parrots to talk. However, once in a while, a parrot or macaw may become so attached to the zookeepers that it copies some of of the keepers' words.

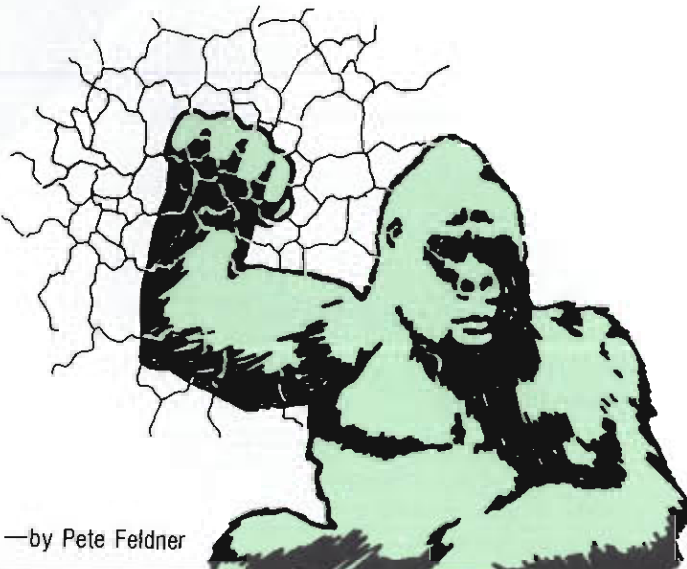
Submitted by:
Amy Gehrke, 7, New Berlin



WHY DOESN'T THE GLASS IN THE PRIMATE HOUSE BREAK WHEN A GORILLA HITS IT?

Gorillas are very strong animals. A large male gorilla might be as strong as eight men! A gorilla that strong could easily break a regular glass window, so we use special glass in the zoo's primate building. The windows in the gorilla display are about 3/4 of an inch thick. They are built in five layers of glass and clear plastic. Sometimes, a gorilla will hit the window hard enough to crack the glass layers. Don't worry! The plastic won't break and the window will stay together.

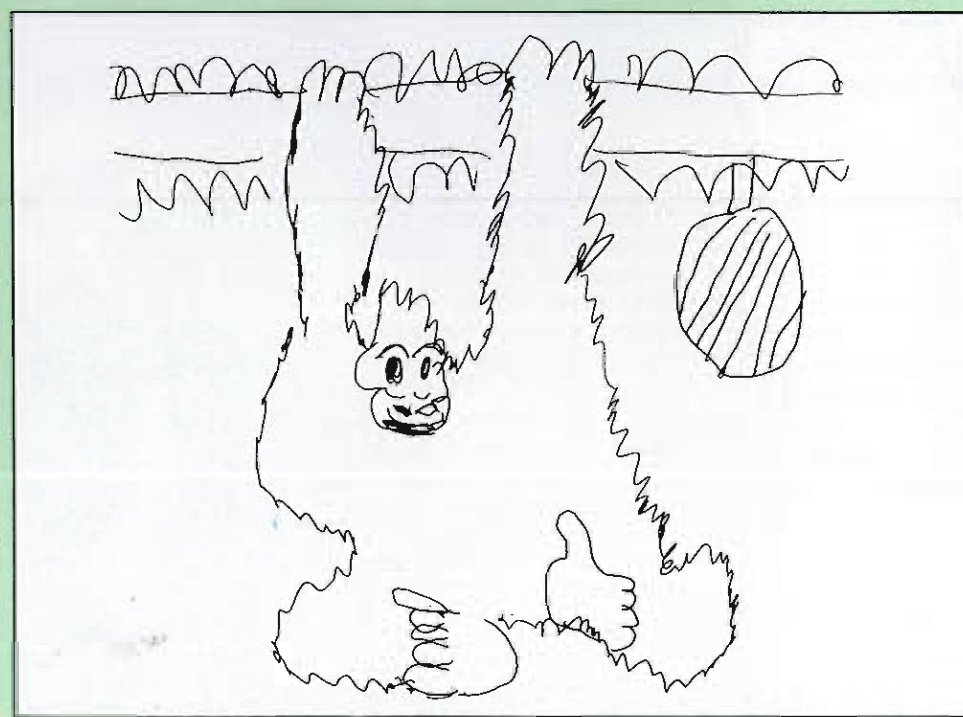
Submitted by:
Ben Sanders, 5, West Milwaukee



—by Pete Feldner

Winner!

Kids especially went ape over last issue's drawing contest—almost as ape as we went reviewing the entries. Here's the winning drawing, sent by Derek Such from Mequon.



Workshops

The Zoological Society's Education Department provides a variety of spring programs for children, families and adults. To receive more specific program, registration and workshop fee information, complete the form below and return it as soon as possible.

Birds, Birds, Birds

This spring break workshop, to be held April 2-5, includes classroom activities for three age levels, a video presentation of the new aviary and a zoo tour.

For children ages 4, 5, and 6 (in kindergarten): A 2-1/2-hour session on April 3 or 4, 9:30 a.m.-12 noon or 1-3:30 p.m. or on April 5, 9:30 a.m.-12 noon. Cost is \$8 for Society members and \$10 for non-members.

For children ages 6 (in first grade) to 8: All-day sessions on April 2, 3, 4, or 5 from 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$12 for Society members and \$15 for non-members.

For children ages 9 to 12: All-day sessions on April 3, 4 or 5 from 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$12 for Society members and \$15 for non-members.

Animal Photography in Winter Workshop

Learn how to capture the zoo's animals on film this winter with noted photographer Andrew Holman on January 12 and 19. These 1-1/2-day Saturday classes cost \$25 for Society members and \$35 for non-members (workshop fee includes parking). **Special Instructions:** To register, call (414) 256-5421, Monday-Friday.

Pre-school Workshops

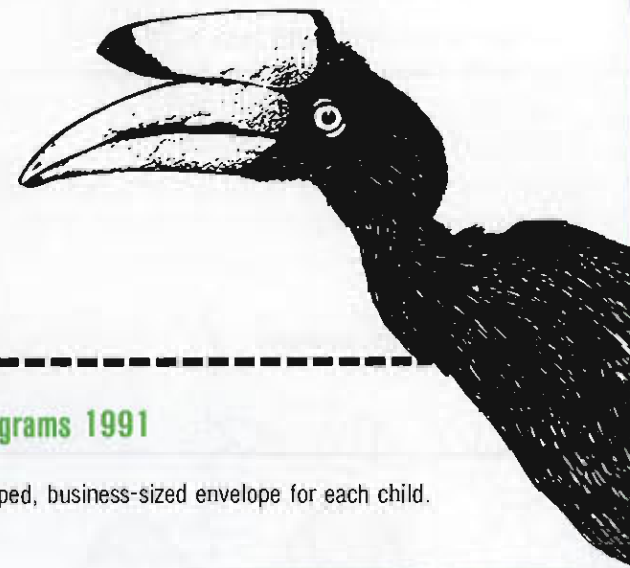
These workshops are for children ages 4, 5, and 6 (in kindergarten) and feature a different animal theme each month. The workshops are designed to help promote learning about the featured animal and include art activities, learning activities, a zoo tour and a snack. Limited openings.

Tiny Tots Workshops

Parents and their 3-year-old children are invited to the zoo for these 1-1/2-hour workshops that feature different animals each month. A variety of activities provide a hands-on approach to learning about animals. Babysitting is offered for siblings not enrolled in the Tiny Tots Program. Limited openings.

Summer Camps

In-person registration for this year's Summer Camp Program will be on Saturday, May 4. You will find more information on summer camps in the spring issue of *ALIVE*.



Order Form: Spring Programs 1991

Please request one form for each child and include a self-addressed, stamped, business-sized envelope for each child.

Name _____

Address _____ Street _____ City _____ ZIP _____

_____ Birds, Birds, Birds Workshop Age(s)

_____ Preschool Workshops # of forms

_____ Tiny Tots Workshops # of forms

Return this form to:

Spring Programs, Education Department
Zoological Society of Milwaukee County
10005 W. Bluemound Rd.
Milwaukee, WI 53226

Ed Diebold, curator of birds for the zoo. He finds the hornbill's unique breeding biology and nesting behavior particularly interesting:

During the breeding cycle, a pair of Rhino Hornbills will find a suitable nest cavity in a tall, hollow tree. The female hornbill goes into the cavity and lays her eggs while the male hornbill builds a wall to cover the opening to the cavity. The wall, made of moist earth, droppings and food remains, has only a small opening through which the male feeds the female and young. The female and chicks are completely reliant on the male for sustenance. Once the female moults and regrows all of her flight feathers while inside her nest, she hatches her eggs, pounds out a larger hole in the nest wall and leaves the nest to help the male bird find food to feed the young. This peculiar nesting behavior is an evolutionary adaptation to ward away predators, especially monkeys and snakes, from the nest.

To replicate the hornbill's unique nesting environment and encourage natural behavior between Cyrano and Roxanne in the aviary, the aviary team will include a large gunnite (cement-like building material) nesting tree with a cavity as well as one large log in the birds' renovated exhibit.

Diebold and members of a nationwide hornbill advisory group are working together to identify the best ways to breed individual hornbill species in captivity.

And they aren't traveling to that tranquil Pacific Northwest town of Twin Peaks to do it. 🌿

The Rhinoceros Hornbill and about 58 other bird species to be exhibited in the renovated aviary are up for adoption through the Zoological Society's Animal Adoption Program. The program gets people more involved in the care of zoo animals and the renovation or construction of their exhibits. For a list of birds and all other zoo residents up for adoption, call (414) 258-2223.

MEMBERANDUMS

Membership Fees/Classifications

The Zoological Society has redefined its membership categories to help make your entrance to the zoo easier. We also have increased our membership fees to provide additional support as requested by the Zoo. The categories, fees and descriptions follow:

Individual (\$35): Person named on the membership card.

Plus One (\$40): Person named on card, plus one guest.

Family (\$45): Two adults living in the same household and their minor children or grandchildren.

Family Plus One (\$60): Two adults living in the same household and their minor children or grandchildren, plus one guest. [Formerly called "Antelope."]

Family Plus Three (\$100): Two adults living in the same household and their minor children or grandchildren, plus three guests. [Formerly called "Grizzly Bear."]

For more information on our redefined membership categories or membership fees, call (414) 258-2333.

Pack Your Bags For . . .

KENYA.

Open savannahs, abundant wildlife, desert air, grass-roofed huts, brilliant sun, radiant stars, and tribal people. These images, along with diverse experiences and adventures, will welcome this year's travelers to Kenya. In a two-week trip scheduled to depart Sunday, July 14, travelers will touch the surface of this mysterious, colorful land, meet its people, share their culture and learn about the animals. Places of interest on this safari include Nairobi, Kenya's capital; Amboseli National Park, the home of lion, black rhino, elephant, cheetah and herds of plains game and noted for its unique ecosystem and Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain; Aberdare National Park, identified by its unusual vegetation; Samburu Game Reserve, the gateway to Kenya's Northern Frontier; Mt. Kenya and the Mt. Kenya Safari Club; Lake Nakuru National Park, the north extension of the Serengeti and haven for thousands of flamingos; and Masai Mara Game Reserve, one of the only places left in Africa that retains a sense of the vast plains untouched by man.



BELIZE.

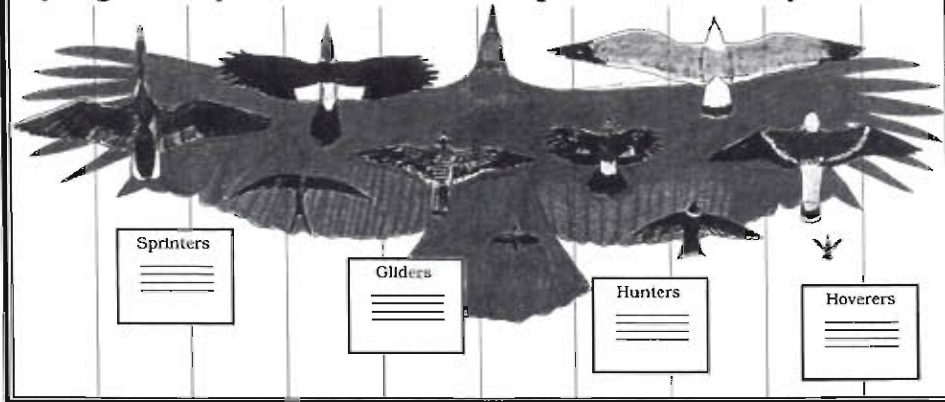
Some call it a "slice of paradise," others call it "a land of wonders and curiosities." And travelers to it never forget it. Slated to depart during the last week of October and return the first week of November, 1991, a visit to Belize promises travelers an adventure—in canoes, on horseback and in the forests. Traveling north of Belize City, Zoological Society guests will experience some tropical vegetation zones, explore Mayan ruins, observe wildlife in the Crooked Tree Sanctuary, and visit the Society-supported Community Baboon Sanctuary. West of Belize City, travelers will receive V.I.P. treatment at the Belize Zoo, where animals are kept in enclosures of only wire mesh and wood. This is your chance to observe the abundant marine life along Belize's noted 200-mile-long coral reef and watch the hundreds of bird species that make their homes on sandy Belizean beaches and in tropical rainforests.

For more information on either safari, call (414) 258-2333.



WHAT'S YOUR WINGSPREAD?

Birds have different wing shapes for different styles of flying. Can you match the shapes with the styles?



Teaching by Design

AVIARY GRAPHICS TO EDUCATE VISITORS THROUGH EXPERIENCE

In our daily lives, we are exposed to news—in classrooms and through the media—about the saddening state of our environment and the dismal future of the world's wildlife. But during a trip to the zoo, where we are exposed to hundreds of exotic animals from far-reaching places, how do we make sense of the stories we read and the reports we hear?

Educational graphics inside the zoo give real meaning to what we learn outside the park. The Zoological Society's Education/Graphics Department works with zoo professionals to present information about the zoo's animals and their habitats in fun and educational ways.

The two types of informational graphics found throughout the zoo are signage and props. Each type is designed to complement the other, but has its own purpose, characteristics and techniques for construction and interpretation.

From Here to There

Zoo professionals, who design and supervise construction of exhibits, generally agree that immersing zoo visitors in actual representations of animals' natural environments and habitats is the best way for people to learn about animals and interpret their behavior. The aviary will be the first of

several zoo buildings to be constructed that will use this "museum" technique of educating zoo visitors.

A walk through the aviary, for instance, will put visitors in a third-world marketplace, on a boat, in a

wetlands, inside tropical rainforest huts, on a dock of a New England port and on Indonesian island continents. From each of these areas, people will watch birds brought to Milwaukee from around the world.

To decide which props will help the aviary "transport" visitors from here to there, Mary Thiry, the Zoological Society's education/graphics director, met with others on the aviary team—Chuck Wikenhauser, zoo director; Dr. Gil Boese, president of the Zoological Society; Bruce Beehler, associate zoo director; Ed Diebold, curator of birds; Julie Radcliffe, Zoological Society exhibit/sign coordinator; and ACME Production Services, a local propping firm.

These people helped Thiry find answers to questions like these: Do the artifacts we're using "fit" in the exhibit? Do they "feel" right? Is this mask indeed from South America? Are the props affordable? Are they durable? Do

they look old even though they're new?

A Universal Language

"A lot of work and a lot of discussion goes into propping and we rely on the expertise of many people," Thiry said. "But many of the same questions we ask ourselves when we talk about props are asked when we talk about educational signage as well."

These questions include: What is the overall educational mission of the aviary? How will signage complement props and the aviary residents? How can we make the signage fun, yet educational? Do we have the most current scientific information? How much will signage cost? What do people want to know?

To most zoo visitors, the answers to the last question are the only ones that matter. From information collected through various focus group sessions, the aviary team learned that zoo visitors

want the aviary to teach them about the zoo's role in conserving bird life, the diversity of bird life, bird habitats and classifications, and much more.

To transfer all of this information onto signs that are consistent and fun is a challenge, Radcliffe said. "Some of the most attractive signs in the park use color and symbols in fun and eye-catching ways," she said. Her challenge, though, is to ensure that her visuals don't detract from information contained in the signage.

"Eye appeal is definitely what sets educational graphics—signage and props—apart from all of the other information our visitors are getting from other sources."

The Zoological Society of Milwaukee County has donated \$90,000 toward the aviary's educational signage and \$82,000 toward the purchase of props. A list of props still needed for the aviary is on page 6.



ON THE JOB: Julie Radcliffe, Exhibit/Sign Coordinator Zoological Society of Milwaukee County

For the past couple of years, Julie Radcliffe, the Zoological Society's exhibit/sign coordinator, has been working to make your visit to the zoo an instructive and fun one.

Through various educational graphics at the zoo, you learn from her work. You learn about animals—their habitats, diets, and behavior—and the threat of extinction some of our animals face. Radcliffe has brought her 10+ years of experience in all facets of graphic design and communication to both small- and large-scale zoo projects.

She is especially proud of her work on graphics for the sea lion exhibit. Radcliffe said, "Art directing the educational graphics for this exhibit was fun—from concept to layout and researching, to rough illustrations, to writing copy."

But even though Radcliffe enjoys the permanency and visibility of such major signage as the sea lion graphics, she views creating temporary signs that attract the attention of passers-by as a special challenge.

"When I see a kid reading one of my graphics or interacting with one of my signs, it's especially rewarding," she said. "It's the biggest compliment a visitor can pay me."

Julie Radcliffe (left), Zoological Society exhibit/sign coordinator, and Caroline Beckett and Frank Sander of DePere's Flying Fish Graphics, discuss the design and production of one of 64 identification signs and 30 major educational signs to be mounted in the new aviary. Beckett and Sander have produced graphics for several zoo exhibits here and nationwide.

EDZODCATION

Call for Ambassadors

For the second year in a row, the Zoological Society's Education Department will enrich the educational experiences of low-income students through the Ambassador Program, a unique partnership among corporations, students, families and the zoo. The program depends on sponsors, or "ambassadors", to financially assist low-income students in discovering the educational resources of the zoo.

"We see the program as an important contribution to a nationwide effort to help secure the environmental and educational future of the United States," said Mary Thiry, director of education/graphics for the Zoological Society.

Program organizers are seeking five Milwaukee or Waukesha sponsors who want to become "ambassadors" this semester. For more information, call Chris Savage at (414) 258-2333.

Historic Wisconsin

An antique cream can, a Babcock cream separator centrifuge, glass test tubes, a cheese-making textbook, milk bottle tops and other dairy artifacts from the early 1900's became part of the Dairy Complex in the Stackner Heritage Farm late last year.

All of these artifacts, which are prototypes of modern-day milking equipment, were provided by the Wirkus-Bradley Family in memory of their mother, Florence Wirkus-Bradley, a Milwaukee Public Schools teacher who was killed in a recent auto accident.

Florence's father, Joseph Wirkus, graduated in 1910 a cheesemaker from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studied under Dr. Stephen Babcock, noted dairy professor and inventor, and worked with him on developing a prototype of the cream separator. After graduating, Wirkus pursued his work on the separator as well as a centrifuge and glass test tube. He used all of this equipment on his farm and in his cheesemaking business in the northern Wisconsin town of Wien until the 1950's, and Florence used the artifacts as teaching tools during her 20-year teaching career, from 1961 to 1981.



It is one of the last great spectacles of Wisconsin wildlife: large colonies of great egrets, black-crowned night-herons and great blue herons nesting in the majestic trees on Horicon Marsh's Four Mile Island.

Portrait of a Dilemma



And it is one of Wisconsin's greatest wildlife dilemmas.

According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service information, Four Mile Island, a State Natural Area near the south end of Horicon Marsh, has been home to egrets and herons for the past 50 years, but the number of nests has been declining since 1980. In 1956, for instance, Wisconsin was home to 22 colonies of egrets. Today, only seven colonies remain. The potential is real that Wisconsin could lose whole egret and heron nesting populations.

The leading cause of this serious population decline has been the destruction of the birds' Four Mile Island habitat: large oak, cottonwood and elm trees with far-reaching branches. These nesting trees have died from the effects of heron guano and Dutch elm disease, and other trees, like the box elder and ash, have grown in their place. These trees lack the large crowns necessary to accommodate the birds' big nests. Consequently, as the herons' and egrets' habitat is lost, the birds will leave the area to nest elsewhere.

Lost trees, lost population

"If we lose the trees on Four Mile Island, we lose the entire egret breeding population in the Eastern portion of Wisconsin," said Bill Volkert, a wildlife/ice age naturalist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

"And, as these birds go, so go other

Wisconsin's great egrets, great blue herons and black-crowned night herons nesting on Horicon Marsh's Four Mile Island get the skeleton of new homes as this pole, or artificial tree trunk, is dropped into the marsh. This was one of ten poles dropped. Artificial limbs soon will be added to the poles, which will serve as nesting platforms.

Photo by Dr. Gil Boese



kinds of wildlife. These birds are important to our ecosystem. They're fish-eating birds, and since the marsh is overrun with rough fish, such as carp, anything we can do to encourage predation on fish will help us meet our other objectives."

To prevent further deterioration of Wisconsin's largest heron and egret rookery, the Zoological Society of Milwaukee County has joined the U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service and the DNR in a cooperative effort to construct several artificial "trees" that will replace those lost to guano and disease and place them in the marsh. Representatives from all three organizations hope birds will use the "trees" as nesting platforms.

Past success

The first experiment of this type was accomplished successfully in 1974 with cormorants (large diving birds) nesting in the Mead Wildlife Area near Wausau, Wisconsin. In the first year of the experiment, 80 percent of the platforms were being used by cormorants, and the cormorant population grew until it was no longer threatened. The question being asked by Volkert, Dick Birger, project leader with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Zoological Society's conservation and research committee is: Will the experiment work for herons and egrets?

The answer to this question in large part will be found in the re-design of the cormorant platform to accommodate the herons' and egrets' longer legs and need for greater space. The design of the platforms also will be more aesthetically appealing than those used in the 1974 experiment.

"The platform's structure incorporates design ideas used in modern zoo architecture to visually simulate natural trees while providing stable, secure nest sites," said Dr. Gil Boese, president of the Zoological Society.

As the birds' natural nesting sites disappear, they will be replaced with a structure that would appear, especially

How to attract birds to your backyard

Ensuring that wildlife continues to have a place in our lives begins with an informed and contributing public. Here are some ideas that will help attract a diversity of life, especially birds, to your backyard:

- **Build a bird house.** And be prepared to make a commitment. Once fed, birds mark their feeding locations and will rely on your bird house as a prime food source.

Some birds you might see at the feeder this winter are cedar waxwings, flickers, chickadees, finches, wrens, and nuthatches. For a birdhouse planning guide, write to the National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-2266.

- **Provide shelter and windbreaks.** Plant evergreens—pines, spruces, arbor vita or yews—or collect used Christmas trees and set them up on your property as snowbanks.
- **Plant trees/shrubs as a food source.** Shrubs that will attract birds include dogwoods, viburnums, and chokeberries. Trees include crabapples and hawthorns. And tree-shrubs include the juneberry or serviceberry. Before you purchase a tree or shrub, be sure to carefully select a planting location.

For more information on landscape plants that attract birds or attracting and feeding songbirds, call the University of Wisconsin-Extension's InfoSource, a touch-tone answering service, by dialing IS-257-5359 and requesting the three-digit topics 550 and 592, respectively.

This list of suggestions was provided by Melinda Myers, home horticulture director of the University of Wisconsin Extension office in Milwaukee County.



from a distance, as a natural part of the landscape and would feel to the birds like "home."

"We've legally given Four Mile Island to the birds to keep indefinitely, but now we know the island won't be there indefinitely," Volkert said. "The trees aren't replacing themselves and it would be too late if we started planting real trees now, so we needed to use artificial 'trees' as a stop-gap solution."

The first phase of this project happened in October, when the artificial "trees" or poles, were dropped from a helicopter into the marsh. This winter, when the marsh is frozen, artificial limbs will be attached to the poles. Then, in early spring, more than 2,000 egrets and herons are expected to gather on the 15-acre island to nest on the

platforms and hatch and rear their young.

The success of the experiment will be measured by DNR professionals who will count the number of egrets, herons and cormorants and their young living on the island in the summer. They will also survey the number of nests and monitor the heron-to-egret ratio in winter, when the trees are bare.

This summer, the sight of great blue herons, great egrets and black-crowned night herons floating down in the reeds next to artificial trees "planted" among the birds' natural nesting sites will represent enormous hope for these birds in Wisconsin. But whether we keep them here into the next century is something experts won't be able to tell us for another couple of years. 🌱

WHAT'S GNU

From penguins to passerines (perching birds), the new aviary's got it. But building the new bird collection was no fly-by-night project. Selecting and purchasing more than 200 new birds for the aviary has taken zoo aviculturists (people who raise and care for birds) several years of planning.

Whether a bird was selected for the new collection depended, among other things,

New Birds in the Flock

on the bird's compatibility with other birds, its visitor appeal, the zoo's ability to care for the bird, and how well the bird can help the zoo satisfy the captive breeding, educational and recreational goals established by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums.



Plush-capped Jay

Some birds, of course, didn't need to work very hard to earn their way into the aviary. These "pretty birds", having natural visitor appeal, include the Fairy Bluebird and the Lilac-breasted Roller. The Rhinoceros Hornbill, though not considered a "pretty bird," was added to the collection because of its educational value to aviculturists here and at other zoos who are studying the bird's unique breeding biology and behavior (see story, page 10).

The Rhino Hornbill is an important addition to the collection from a conservation perspective as well. The large hornbill species are threatened by the cutting of the large trees they need for nest sites. Island species are particularly threatened.

The Guam Kingfisher will also be exhibited in the aviary for conservation purposes. The kingfisher has been pushed to the edge of extinction by the Solomon Island Brown Tree Snake, which was introduced on Guam around the time of World War II. Today, there are millions of snakes preying on the kingfisher, a bird that evolved on an island without having to protect itself from a predator like the brown tree snake. As a result, all of the remaining Guam Kingfishers were captured and brought into captivity. A Species Survival Plan was developed for the species, and as of last year, only about 60 Guam Kingfishers remain, all in captivity.

By selecting for the zoo's bird collection the Rhino Hornbill, the Guam Kingfisher, and several other birds in danger of becoming extinct, the zoo is performing a valuable service to bird populations everywhere. The destruction of natural habitats around the world makes the captive breeding and species conservation mission



Red-billed Hornbill

of our zoo vitally important.

At the same time zoo professionals were deciding which birds to exhibit, they were also thinking about which birds could live comfortably together. Many aviary exhibits will be mixed-species exhibits, or will feature many different birds. But each exhibit was designed to give the birds more living flexibility and to give zookeepers more management flexibility, Ed Diebold, the zoo's curator of birds, said.

"For instance, we increased the number of exhibits inside the aviary by subdividing a single tropical rainforest into eight new, smaller exhibits," Diebold said. "These exhibits now include four neotropical rainforests, three Asian rainforests and one African rainforest."

This division allows Diebold and his

team to manage four to six bird species per exhibit (for a total of 40-50 species) in the same space and allows the birds exhibited in each space to live in harmony.

The birds' nesting requirements also told Diebold where to exhibit many of the new species. The Waldrapp Ibis, for example, is a cliff-nester, the Inca Tern is a burrow-nester, and both will be exhibited together because neither will invade the other species' nesting area. Other species that would likely live together are any of several ground-nesters: plovers, waterfowl, thick-knees, and others.

If all the birds can live together happily and successfully reproduce, then they will have accomplished the zoo's conservation, education and recreation goals—all under one roof.

ZOO BRIEFS

Lota Update

After two years of increasing aggression toward Tamara, an Asian elephant at the Milwaukee County Zoo, another of the zoo's Asian elephants, Lota, was relocated to an elephant management facility, Hawthorn Corporation, in Richmond, Illinois late last year.

"Before we decided to relocate Lota, we tried a number of different management techniques to control the situation, including hobbling Lota to slow down her movement, separating Lota from Tammy, and separating Moola, another Asian elephant, from the other elephants," said Elizabeth Frank, curator of large mammals for the Milwaukee County Zoo.

When exploring facilities to which Lota might have been transferred, zoo management looked at whether each facility has a long-term commitment to elephants, a social group of Asian elephants in its collection, and an elephant management program similar to the program at the Milwaukee County Zoo. After considering the options, zoo staff felt that the Hawthorn Corp. provided an appropriate environment for an active and intelligent elephant like Lota.

The decision was supported by professional elephant managers from around the country, many of whom are members of the Elephant Managers Association (EMA). All members care for elephants daily. Most association members attended the 11th International Elephant Workshop sponsored by and held at the Milwaukee County Zoo in late October.

"Many of them had the opportunity to visit our elephant facility, discuss the situation with keepers and zoo management, and offer their opinions," Frank said. All options discussed were considered by Zoo Director Charles Wikenhauser and the professional zoo staff.

Lota's transfer also received support from Milwaukee County Executive David F. Schulz: "After extensive consultations with our professional zoo staff, I concur with and support their handling of Lota as not only in the best interest of the zoo, but more importantly, in Lota's best interest as well."

Zoo staff have visited Lota in her new home and reported that she is doing very well. She currently is being housed with nine other elephants and has been allowed to freely socialize with Ronnie and Dumbo, two other female Asian elephants.

Samson Stomp and Romp

Tie your tennies for the zoo's 11th Annual Samson Stomp/1st Annual Samson Romp on Sunday, January 20. The "Stomp" is a 10K run, with first-, second- and third-place finishers in each of eight divisions to receive awards. The "Romp" is a series of unscored races: a one-mile race for kids ages 7-12, a 1/4-mile race for kids ages 2-6, and a two-mile race for anybody wanting to participate. A light brunch and awards ceremony will follow the romp. For information on race start times and registration, call (414) 256-5412.

Egg Days

Don't worry, be hoppy. This Easter, come to the zoo to meet Mr. and Mrs. Bunny and their friends; make Easter baskets, bonnets and ties; color and hunt for eggs; and enjoy an Easter parade. Egg Days, sponsored by the Olive Garden Restaurant, will be held from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., March 30-31. All activities are covered by regular zoo admission. For more information, call Zoo Special Events at (414) 256-5412.



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