

# Lifelines

January 2012 • Number 115

*Life in this issue:*

Oceanarium Bournemouth

BIAZA Awards 2011

Alliance for Zero Extinction

EAZA Ape Campaign



**BIAZA**

BRITISH & IRISH ASSOCIATION  
OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS

## LifeLines



Ken Sims receiving the Outstanding Achievement Award from Steve Leonard

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*Gorilla beringei beringei*  
 Photo: Jan Vermeer

The meeting with Animals Asia and the Chinese Zoo Association was kindly hosted by ZSL and presentations given by BIAZA, EAZA, WAZA and ZSL staff. Relaxing over a lovely meal in the barge restaurant on the Regent's Canal we agreed to work more closely with the Association in the future. My trip to Romania was most productive; I managed to visit five zoos and attended part of the very much appreciated SHAPE workshop. Valerie Hare was an excellent tutor and we are now planning training-the-trainers sessions for the future. Janine and I participated in the EAZA conference in Montpellier in September. BIAZA has raised just over €2,000 for the Ape Campaign and we plan to commence BIAZA's support of the East Asia Campaign with the launch of our new website in February.

Our ACE meeting in Twycross was fantastic and the Zoo wonderful hosts. I was personally delighted that Ken Sims who has done so much for BIAZA over the years and whom I have worked with closely on many issues, received the Outstanding Achievement Award. In his speech Simon Tonge expressed the views of so many of us when he said "I cannot think of anyone who has done more for the cause of zoos in this country". A fitting tribute.

Much time has been spent in preparation for the adjournment debate, and John Regan has been working flatout drafting the text for the debate and getting MPs onboard for support. The theme of the debate was the importance of zoos to the economy and the desired result was for us to engage with DBIS (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills) in moving this agenda forwards. The debate took place on 14 December and was a great success. Andrew Rosindell MP tabled the motion and 12 MPs took part, citing examples from zoos in their respective constituencies. All spoke of the positive impact that zoos and aquariums have in their constituencies, as businesses and tourist attractions but also as institutions that carry out important work in education, conservation and research. Stephen Mosley called us a "real engine for growth". Responses were made by Shadow Minister Gordon Marsden and Minister Mark Prisk. We shall be taking the agenda further with the Minister in 2012. This success would not have been possible without the All Party Group and the many Member Collections who have taken time and trouble to engage strongly with their MPs, promoting Brand BIAZA!

### Miranda

**Our Vision** - To be a powerful force in the care and conservation of the natural world

**Our Mission** - BIAZA is a professional organization which represents its members and promotes the values of good zoos and aquariums. It leads and supports its members:

- to inspire people to help conserve the natural world
- to participate in effective co-operative conservation programmes
- to deliver the highest quality environmental education, training and research
- to achieve the highest standards of animal care and welfare in zoos, aquariums and in the wild

BIAZA is a member of:



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 Stewart Muir *Newquay Zoo* • Bryan Carroll *Bristol Zoo Gardens* • Mark Pilgrim *Chester Zoo*  
 Nic Masters *BVA/BVZS Representative* • Jo Limmer *Associate Representative*

### BIAZA OFFICE

Miranda Stevenson, *Executive Director*  
 Janine Robinson *Zoo Biologist* • Zara Gaspar *Communications Manager*  
 Andrea Marlowe *Management Accountant*

# NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

## A New Year, a new website



The BIAZA website as it looks



The new look of the BIAZA website



The 'member area' of the new website

As you can see from the images, the website has a brand new face. Over the past year, creative agency Bang Anderson has helped us transform the look of the website to make it more public-facing and change the navigation to make it easier to use. It was created with design and marketing in mind so when you land on the homepage depending on who you are (a member of the public, research student or member) it should direct you to where you want to go. There are a number of new features such as a donate button and a News from Zoos & Aquariums page for your press releases. The best thing is that the site is completely content-managed so we can add and remove pages, content and photos as and when we choose to. Because of the amount of content on the site, when we launch in February it will still be work-in-progress. Throughout 2012 we will be asking our members, committees and working groups to help us add and change content to ensure we have all the information our members and the public need on the website. The site will live at the same address [www.biaza.org.uk](http://www.biaza.org.uk) and we will keep the old site as a test address in case we need to revisit it.

### Member area

The member area is exactly the same as the public site except when you are logged in you will know you are in the member area because the screen will change from blue to black, and if you are logged in you will be able to view more within all the pages (for example, on the education pages members will be able to see more educational resources and the extra resources will be invisible to those not logged in). Member-only pages (members' home page, e-news, available and wanted, committees and working groups and my information) will appear on the right hand side of the member pages. The members' home page will be used as your main point of information so any events, news or items for your attention will be highlighted in yellow each month.

When the site is launched, members will receive an e-mail with their new username and password and an explanation on how to use the new site.

I will have already e-mailed you asking for your logo and some text to put up on your profile page, but if you have not managed to do this you can upload your logo, text and any photos you want to the website yourself from My Information in the member area.

Unfortunately, because of time constraints we will also be asking you to revisit the available and wanted pages and re-enter any changes made in the last few months - although you will be told about this at the time. We know this will be a bit of work, but we hope the new website will make it worth your while.

If you have any questions or would like to take a look at the new site then please email me at [communications@biaza.org.uk](mailto:communications@biaza.org.uk)

**Zara Gaspar** Communications Manager

# ZOO LIFE

## Walker the polar bear stars in Frozen Planet



Walker the polar bear

**H**ighland Wildlife Park's three-year-old polar bear, the UK's only zoo polar bear, was an unexpected star of BBC's incredible wildlife series Frozen Planet. The three-year-old bear was filmed as a small cub where he was born at Rhenen Zoo in Holland. Together with sibling Swimmer and mum Huggies, the amazing footage of Walker showed him at around 10 weeks old in the actual cubbing den.

## 25 years conserving the ploughshare tortoise



Released ploughshare tortoise

**A**s 2011 came to a close Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust celebrated 25 successful years of saving species from extinction in Madagascar with the reintroduction into the wild of 20 captive-bred ploughshare tortoises, or angonoka, the world's most threatened tortoise and the first species Durrell worked with in Madagascar.

## iPhone app to revolutionize conservation

**I**n November, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) launched its Instant WILD app which hopes to revolutionize the way conservationists monitor remote wildlife hotspots around the world. Motion-sensitive cameras have already been set up by forest clearings, watering holes and plains in Kenya, Sri Lanka and Mongolia. Images triggered by wild animals walking past are sent straight to the app in real-time - meaning users, on their commute home, can get a rare glimpse into the lives of lions, elephants or wild dogs. The new technology will save field workers hours of vital time by asking iPhone users to help identify species from live camera trap photographs. By recruiting thousands of 'citizen scientists' to assist with wildlife identification, ZSL conservationists hope users of the free app will alert them to images containing possible new species within minutes of them being taken, allowing them to analyse the data much faster than ever before.

## Reptile keeper visits Madagascar

**O**ne of Colchester Zoo's reptile keepers, Luke Harding, visited Andasibe in east-central Madagascar in December where he has assisted the work of Mitsinjo, a community-run conservation organization, developing a captive breeding and research station for local amphibian species.

The project is in collaboration with the Amphibian Specialist Group and the Malagasy Government and is the first of its kind in Madagascar. Luke travelled to Madagascar to help train the technicians in Amphibian Husbandry Techniques and to help evaluate which species needed working with, and contributed, to management plans for each species.

The breeding centre will serve not only as a bio-secure location to establish captive assurance colonies of locally threatened frog species; it will also be a place to conduct husbandry research on species of amphibians which have yet to be kept or bred in captivity, and as a training centre to build amphibian husbandry expertise in Madagascar.

## New crab exhibit



One of Tropiquaria's Madagascan land crabs

**T**ropiquaria is pleased to announce that it now has on exhibition a number of Madagascan land crabs *Madagapotamon humberti*. These animals have been loaned to Tropiquaria by Endangered Madagascar's Adrian Fowler who had a large colony which he has split between Paignton Zoo and Tropiquaria.

Tropiquaria Zoological Director Chris Moiser said "We are very pleased to have these animals because they are quite beautiful as well as being listed as Vulnerable in the wild. They come from the Ankarana massif in northern Madagascar where they live in deep water-filled limestone crevices. Their problem is a rather common story - they are now vulnerable because of the reduction in habitat and increase in local human population."

## Kid raises funds for lemurs



A delighted Billy Thompson

**F**ollowing a visit to Trotters World of Animals, 10-year-old Billy Robinson from Cockermonth was inspired to raise money to support the Azafady Project, a conservation campaign which the park supports in the lemur homeland of Madagascar. So far, he has raised £130 by cycling seven miles from Cockermonth to Crummock, and then running round Buttermere twice (9 miles) before swimming in the lake.

## NMA scoops Sustainable Tourism Award



The NMA Team win Bronze at the Devon Tourism Awards

**T**he team from the National Marine Aquarium won Bronze in the Sustainable Tourism category at the Devon Tourism Awards held at Exeter's Sandy Park in November. The NMA received its accolade for its approach to environmental management, as well as its sustainable purchasing policy and interpretation of the marine environment. The Aquarium has made great strides in ensuring its business is as sustainable as possible, including working towards reducing energy consumption, reducing the use of fresh water, and reducing waste impact using a process of waste minimization.

## Two awards in one night

**E**xmoor Zoo took home not one but two awards at the first ever North Devon Business Awards. Out of 200 entries from across the patch, only a select few businesses were picked by a panel of judges to be at the award ceremony at the Barnstaple Hotel in October. Exmoor Zoo won, not only, the Business of the Year Award, but also the award for Family Business of the Year. Journal editor Andy Cooper presented the trophy to overjoyed family members Philip and Tina Rowtcliff.

# OCEANARIUM BOURNEMOUTH

**T**he aquarium on the Dorset coast is sited right on the seafront next to Bournemouth Pier and was first opened in June 1998 by Reallive Leisure, a year after the opening of sister site, the Lakes Aquarium.

The facility initially featured a broad mixture of displays showing examples of freshwater and marine aquatic creatures, representative of both UK and tropical species. Over the following 13 years there have been numerous developments and investments in all areas of the aquarium to continue and expand on this diversity and to showcase amazing aquatic wildlife from all over the world. The majority of the collection is currently made up of tropical marine species, with a complement of tropical freshwater and coldwater marine creatures.

As well as presenting diverse, wonderful and inspiring wildlife in a range of different exhibits and displays, there has also been extensive use of innovative technologies throughout the aquarium journey, aimed at capturing the visitors' attention and imagination through various forms of interactive media. The flagship of these features is the award-winning Virtual Dive Cage with its two-metre wide touch screen walls. It is hoped that these diverse and stimulating experiences inspire visitors to care more about conserving the natural world.

The aquarium has won numerous awards for its experiences and facilities, most recently the 'Tourism Attraction Experience of the Year' at the 2008 Bournemouth Tourism Awards.

As one of the few completely indoor attractions in the area the Oceanarium is entirely contained within one large building located in a prime spot on the popular Bournemouth promenade. The exhibit and display areas are all fully accessible, spread over two floors and divided up into nine recreated environments. Visitors are taken on a global journey amongst a wide range of semi-aquatic and fully aquatic habitats and a representation of the wide variety of creatures that inhabit them.

The building contains a combined total of around half a million litres of marine and fresh water in the display tanks, holding tanks and reservoirs making up the five recirculation systems. These life support systems are continually pumping, filtering, heating or cooling the water between the reservoirs and displays, with the seawater itself supplied by a 150-metre long pipeline running from the sea and buried two metres below the beach.

The bulk of this water is in the 3.5-metre deep Barrier Reef tank, the largest display in the Oceanarium: home to a wide variety of shark, ray, eel and other fish species, along with our two very popular resident green sea turtles. Some key creatures of the collection in the other 32 exhibits around the aquarium include huge South American catfish, several species of freshwater turtle, a diverse variety of reef fish, corals, jellyfish and giant Pacific octopus. The most recent additions to this collection are the Asian small-clawed otters.

The displays, exhibits and enclosures of the aquarium are complemented by a varied and interesting gift shop as well as the very popular café that benefits from its enviable location overlooking the beach. The entire facility is also utilized for corporate event and function hire, promoting the unique potential and appeal of the Oceanarium as a venue.



Friday the turtle

The Oceanarium is operated by Reallive Leisure, as part of a group of three UK sites that includes Blackpool Zoo and the Lakes Aquarium. Reallive Leisure is a subsidiary of the Parques Reunidos group of zoos, aquariums and entertainment parks. This broader network of associated attractions provides a wealth of experience and support for continuing development.

Providing all visitors to the Oceanarium with a memorable, entertaining and fulfilling experience is the key element to the overall mission statement. These objectives are achieved through continual investment of time and money in the maintenance and development of exhibits, facilities and activities. Visitor feedback is constantly collected and reviewed in order to gauge how closely these targets are being met and to gain insight into where resources are best applied.

The most significant development project of the last 12 months has been the construction of a brand new enclosure to accommodate Asian small-clawed otters. These are the first ever mammals to be kept and have made a natural and logical addition to the diversity of invertebrates, fish, amphibians and reptiles. The space required for building the enclosure was created through the combination of two existing exhibit areas into one, with one fish tank converted into a large 70-cm deep pool connected to a stream and waterfall and another tank removed in order to provide terrestrial space and an off-show holding area. Being a mostly indoor enclosure, outside space was provided by the construction of a south facing terrace connected to the main otter enclosure

# OCEANARIUM BOURNEMOUTH

by three large balcony doors. This innovative, varied and stimulating enclosure, overlooking Bournemouth Pier, was developed and built with Dorset-based zoo and aquarium enclosure design specialists and opened in time for the Easter holidays in 2011. The Asian small-clawed otters have been extremely popular with aquarium visitors. Two daily public feeding and training demonstrations have been added to the daily talks schedule as a reflection of this. The enclosure currently houses a young male and female, though the environment has been created with sufficient space to accommodate a family and as such it is hoped that successful breeding from this pair will follow in the near future.

The Oceanarium has been successful in the past with the breeding of two species of shark, two species of stingray, spiny-tailed lizards and several fish species including seahorses.

There have been a number of conservation support initiatives carried out over the past year, including fundraising, *in situ* projects and partner organization support. Over £3000 has been raised over the past year mostly through requested donations for additional events, special activities and experiences. The money raised has been in the most part for the Parques Reunidos Mediterranean Monk Seal Foundation, but also for the BIAZA Reserve project fund and the Marine Conservation Society (MCS). Local beach clean-ups have been organized for MCS events and good partnership links exist with the Dorset Wildlife Trust and the RSPB. Visitors to the aquarium have also been encouraged to lend their support in great numbers to the 'Your Seas Your Voice' and anti shark-finning campaigns, through the collection of petition signatures and informing of website details.

The aquarium is committed to the provision of education to all visitors, with dedicated staff on hand to provide guided tours, feeding presentations and meet the creature sessions. These are assisted and complemented by installations featuring interactive media that provide immersive and exciting experiences with key underlying education and conservation messages. School groups make up a significant visitor base and receive curriculum linked materials and talks. These are very well received with many groups returning year on year. There are also well established links with the Bournemouth University School of Conservation Sciences, working in partnership on events and providing student work placements and research project opportunities.

The environmental policy, implemented several years ago, is now an established feature of daily operations and is included in the staff handbook that is given to all new employees. Plastics, paper, cardboard and glass are recycled in all departments, with only biodegradable and recycled packaging used in the cafe and shop. The means of minimizing energy consumption and reducing the carbon footprint of the aquarium are actively pursued, with switch-off policies enforced and energy efficient equipment, such as LED lighting, used wherever possible.

In summary, the Oceanarium is a well established attraction, having grown and developed in many ways over the last 13 years, though still striving to develop further to make existing features even better and to find new and interesting exhibits and species to showcase. It is hoped that planned projects for the future will continue to raise the profile, impact and contribution of the aquarium, and becoming members of BIAZA has been an important part of this process.

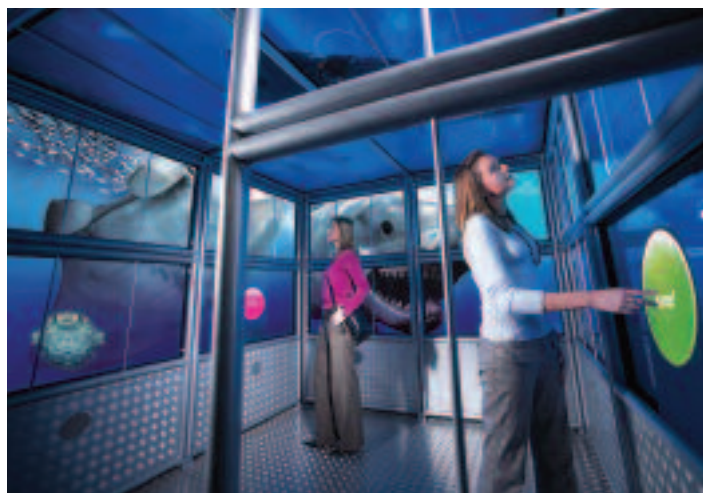
**Oliver Buttlig** Manager



Otter oasis



Meet the creatures



The interactive dive cage

# BIAZA AWARDS 2011

The awards were held this year in the splendid setting of Himalaya, hosted by Twycross Zoo. The event was superbly branded and the dessert even included a BIAZA biscuit! The awards were presented by celebrity Steve Leonard with a commentary by our Chairman, David Field.

Unfortunately the number of submissions was down on the last couple of years with 44 submissions from 18 collections, five of the collections being small. Unfortunately despite encouragement there was no increase in the number of small collection submissions. Two papers were presented at the ACE conference on successful award submissions in an effort to encourage submissions.

The results and some of the successful submissions will be on the new website that is to be launched in February.



The BIAZA Biscuit - too good to eat!

## Best Marketing Project

Amanda Alabaster Award Winner:  
**ZSL London Zoo** - Zoo Lates 2010/2011  
 Commendation:  
**ZSL London Zoo** - Penguin Beach 2011

## Significant Contribution to Conservation Breeding

Award Winner:  
**Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust** - Pied tamarin conservation breeding programme  
 Commendation:  
**Chester Zoo** - Breeding and rearing the Denison's barb *Puntius denisonii*, at Chester Zoo

## Significant Advances in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine

Award Winner:  
**ZSL Whipsnade Zoo** - The use of detomidine and butorphanol for standing sedation in a wide range of captive hoofstock species

## Best Education Project: public and general visitor

Award Winner:  
**Bristol Zoo Gardens** - All Creatures Great and Small Award Winner (Small Collection):  
**Folly Farm** - Folly Interactive: Entertain and Educate  
 Commendations:  
**Bristol Zoo Gardens** - 'Living with spiders' - do phobia courses really work?  
**Chester Zoo** - Vets - the inside story  
 Commendation (Small Collection):  
**Brent Lodge Park Animal Centre** - Construction of a new small mammal enclosure to give young people a chance to contribute to the local community and enhance visitor experience

## Best New Zoo Enclosure

Award Winner:  
**Twycross Zoo** - Himalaya  
 Award Winner (Small Collection):  
**Shepreth Wildlife Park** - Waterworld and Bug City renovation  
 Commendations:  
**Bristol Zoo Gardens** - AMPHIPOD (Amphibian Breeding Unit)  
**Yorkshire Wildlife Park** - Lion Country



Himalaya at Twycross



Folly Interactive

# BIAZA AWARDS 2011

## Best Research Project

Award Winner:

**Bristol Zoo Gardens** - Conservation ecology, morphology and reproduction of the nocturnal northern giant mouse lemur *Mirza zaza* in Sahamalaza National Park, north-western Madagascar

Commendations:

**Chester Zoo** - Does it matter if you are dull? How carotenoids affect fitness in frogs

**Twycross Zoo** - A cross-sectional survey of the prevalence of *Entamoeba histolytica* in non-human primate populations

**Paignton Zoo Environmental Park** - Investigations into the causes of variation in the vocalisations of captive black and gold howler monkeys (*Alouatta caraya*) and their influence on welfare



Northern giant mouse lemur *Mirza zaza*

## Best PR Project

Award Winner:

**ZSL London Zoo** - Launch of Penguin Beach

Award Winner (Small Collection):

**Shepreth Wildlife Park** - Amba's Life-saving Surgery

Commendations:

**ZSL London Zoo** - Project Ocean

**Chester Zoo** - Dinosaurs at Large!



Amba's surgery

## Best Education Project: schools and educational institutions

Malcolm Whitehead Award Winner:

**Twycross Zoo** - Twycross Zoo Vet Days - so you want to be a vet!

Commendations:

**Chester Zoo** - The Challenges of driving up quality in education

**RZSS Edinburgh Zoo** - Zoo and Environment Skills Training (ZEST)

## Outstanding Achievement Award

Award Winner:

**Ken Sims** - Thrigby Wildlife Gardens and Amazona Zoo

## Photography Awards

*Life in a BIAZA Collection*

Award Winner:

Samuel by **Anna Francis** taken at Bristol Zoo Gardens

Commendation:

Curiosity by **Karen-Jane Dudley** taken at Isle of Wight Zoo

*Behind the Scenes*

Award Winner:

Bat weighing by **Anna Francis** taken at Bristol Zoo Gardens

*Wildlife Vets International Award for the Best Picture of a Threatened Species*

Award Winner: Golden lion tamarin by **Nicola Williscroft** taken at Twycross Zoo

## Significant Advances in Husbandry and Welfare

Award Winner:

**Twycross Zoo** - Improving snow leopard welfare through development of a Wildpro volume, enrichment, operant conditioning and diet modification

Commendation:

**Chester Zoo** - The use of positive reinforcement training techniques to enable foot care in giraffes without the risk of sedation

## Best use of Plants in a Landscape Feature / Display

Award Winner:

**Newquay Zoo** - World War zoo gardens project at Newquay Zoo

## Best Field Conservation Project

Award Winner:

**Flamingo Land** - Udzungwa Forest Project (UFP)

Award Winner (Small Collection):

**Isle of Wight Zoo** - Local advocacy for tiger conservation in Bhadra-Kudremukh Tiger Landscape (LATC-BK)

Commendations:

**Chester Zoo** - Restoration and Reforestation of the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve, Rodrigues

**Bristol Zoo Gardens** - The South West Crayfish Project

## BIAZA and Sparsholt College Hampshire ANCMZA Award

Award Winner:

**Jamie Wharton** - Howletts Wild Animal Park

# COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

## ACE Conference 2011

### Joint Marketing and Education

**T**he day began with a welcome from Susie Boardman, CEO of Twycross Zoo, before handing over to key note speaker, Steve Leonard. He spoke about how his opinion of zoos had changed greatly over the years and he now considers himself a great advocate of our work. He had created a mini questionnaire on his website and the results were surprisingly encouraging with many respondents recognizing that conservation, breeding and education were something zoos were good at. Steve rounded off his talk by saying that, as an outsider, he wants to know all the exciting and great work we do and it is something we should all shout about.

The morning continued with Derek Bishop of Culture Consulting who provided an interesting insight into the steps that lead an organization through to achieving better people dynamics. He has created a website, [www.zoosmeanbusiness.com](http://www.zoosmeanbusiness.com) that tells the story of the process at Twycross. Derek was followed by Andy Walton from Golley Slater, a company that aims to make brands appear bigger than their budget. His talk was a fascinating look at the new and complex face of marketing and how we can get the most for our money. Sophia Collins spoke about the online project, *I'm a Scientist*, which aims to get school children engaged with science and relating to real working scientists through Big

Brother-esque evictions and voting. The morning was finished off with presentations from a mix of exhibitors and Gary Batters explained more about the 2011/2012 EAZA campaign for East Asian biodiversity.

The afternoon was started with free time around the zoo, followed by five workshops: Gill Smitherman of Twycross Zoo gave essential hints and tips for accessing the daunting world of funding; Derek Bishop expanded on his earlier talk, concentrating on planning and improving communication; Rich Storton and Sarah Thomas from ZSL demonstrated that good things happen when education and marketing work together and the ZSL explainers gave several brilliant ideas for how to get people talking about difficult or controversial subjects including games of taboo and reciprocal debating. Finally, Eric Jensen of Warwick University looked at evaluation and how to make sure best practice is used. Group discussions highlighted the need for more evaluation within zoos particularly before a new activity or product is launched.

The final session brought everyone back together to feed back on the key points of each workshop before everyone headed back to their accommodation to get ready for the Hollywood evening extravaganza!

### Marketing Day

**A**fter an enjoyable joint day of varied talks and workshops, the Marketing Day dawned fair and bright after the excellent hospitality of Twycross at the Hollywood dinner. The varied programme was a mix of excellent speakers and an interactive workshop.

First speaker of the day was CEO of VisitEngland, James Berresford. His presentation provided an extremely useful insight into the future marketing of Brand England to domestic visitors, how the UK's tourism infrastructure was changing and the opportunities and challenges of the economy and the 2012 Olympics. Then James Bailey from the National Science Museum explored the science of audience plans and applying the use of visitor profile data for growth. The test of the five-minute long Top Tips was won by Rebecca Willers from Shepreth Wildlife Park for a host of fundraising tips. Competition was very close with a technology defying demonstration by Steve Sampson (Paradise Wildlife Park) of new social media platform Camgini, Emma Edwards from ZSL's five-minute masterclass on Crisis Management and Stuart Wright from Living Coasts account of marketing diving

with penguins! The final session of the morning was a Media Skills Workshop by ex BBC reporter Sally Jones which included filming delegates' interview skills on camera.

The afternoon included a double bill of CIM Head of Research Mark Blayney Stuart on two very different topics: exploring the future of mobile marketing and then an update on the legal minefield that is marketing. Zara Gaspar gave an update on what activities had taken place for Love Your Zoo Week and launched this year's campaign and there was also feedback on the Tesco promotion which has been very successful and raised funds for both BIAZA and partnering zoos. Everyone was encouraged to take part in the future!

The final sessions of the day brought all delegates back together. Everyone was very grateful to the team at Twycross for a most successful and enjoyable conference, they were excellent hosts in a lovely setting in Himalaya.

**Cheryl Williams** Chair C&DC

### Education Day

**F**riday morning saw the educators separate off from the marketers. The morning kicked off with a talk from Sharon Redrobe, the Director of Life Sciences at Twycross Zoo, who spoke of the win-win situation of using zoos as an academic resource for research. Sharon was followed by Dr Katherine Irvine of De Montfort University with a fascinating talk on how to really impact on behaviour and the motivation to change through a supportive and positive environment. All five top tips speakers were highly enthusiastic about their subject but the winning five minutes was definitely the ZSL explainers with their snapshot view of the talk at ZSL Penguin Beach complete with costume and wow fact about penguin

prostitution! The others were brilliant mini talks: Jessica Riederer (Yorkshire Wildlife Park) talking about her effective new 'Adels alphabet trail'; Alison Lailey about the set of performance guidelines Chester are implementing for education; Amy Moore (Twycross Zoo) with her top tips for engaging teenagers; and Caroline Howard (Lakeland Wildlife Oasis) and Tracy Dove (Isle of Wight Zoo) about the Terrestrial Invertebrate Working Group and how we all need to get more involved with bugs in our collections!

After tea and coffee, the morning continued with another good mix of speakers and topics. Catherine Addison of Paignton Zoo got us all thinking with a quick game of identifying native tree

# COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS



Rebecca Willers as Red Riding Hood

leaves. Our mostly poor identification skills led her on to the growing schools initiative she has developed at Paignton. Adele Clegg followed on with the new, technologically advanced sessions Woburn has implemented and that technology is great, when it works, but animal contact will always rank as the highlight of the session. Caramantha Welstead from Marwell spoke about an interesting concept of creating new exhibits with a particular educational target. A KS3 Animal Behaviour based meerkat enclosure is the first trial and it will be interesting to hear how it works out. The morning was finished off with Mark Norris telling us all about World War Zoo at Newquay. It was a brilliant way to top off the morning with many of us learning a new element of the history of zoos.

The educators and marketers joined up again for the final few sessions of the day. Dr Eric Jenson of Warwick University fed back on a study he had been involved in at Durrell Wildlife Park that held public consultations to find out what visitors really wanted. Helen Featherstone followed that with the results of her PhD thesis, which showed that if we really want to impact on our visitors' behaviour, we need to practise what we preach. The whole conference was finished off with Shepreth's and Yorkshire Wildlife Park's feedback on submissions that won awards in 2010 and a thank-you from Miranda to the Twycross team. We look forward to the conference in 2012 at West Midland Safari Park.

**Claire Pipe** Twycross Zoo

## Small zoos and aquariums meeting

**T**his year BIAZA held its first small zoos and aquariums meeting, after a membership participation survey carried out by Gary Batters, Chair of the Membership and Licensing Committee, showed that many smaller collections felt they lacked the resources to be more involved.

The meeting, aimed at focussing on the needs of smaller collections, was held on October 19 at Birdland in Gloucestershire. Out of 24 people who attended the meeting, 12 small collections were represented.

After a welcome from Simon Blackwell, Miranda gave an overview of the work of BIAZA (which has 48 small members) and addressed the issue that one third of small collections are active compared to two thirds of larger collections. We will now be looking at the number of smaller collections who participate in BIAZA working groups.

Delegates were then given a chance to introduce themselves and talk about their collections and why they had attended the meeting. Most stated that their reason for attending was that they wanted to learn more about the work of BIAZA, to become more actively involved and because they felt meetings are always valuable, especially for networking.

I gave an update on how we are improving communications and how smaller collections can get involved by asking the office for help, taking part in the Love Your Zoo campaign and BIAZA promotions, attending regional meetings to meet people and share ideas, sending me their press releases and updates about their collections, reading e-news and visiting the new website when it is launched.

The workshop was the most useful part of the meeting with a number of resulting actions. The BIAZA office will be trying to ensure that agendas for meetings are more clear and relevant to smaller collections and that hosts keep costs down and provide more options to suit everyone. We will also be encouraging members to let us know what they need and putting the most



important information in **LifeLines**. Ideas included: an e-group as a way to share ideas; and working with BALPPA to share commercial and benchmarking figures. Delegates also discussed the need to prioritize training and specific resources that were needed which will be put as actions on working group agendas.

It was decided to hold an annual meeting and to set up regional groups with coordinators (similar to the education meetings).

Liz Blows from the Raptor Centre and Tracey Moore from Shaldon both gave very interesting talks on their collections, followed by an enjoyable tour of Birdland.

BIAZA would like to thank Birdland for hosting such a successful meeting and we look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting at Shepreth Wildlife Park, Cambridgeshire in October 2012.

**Zara Gaspar** Communications Manager  
[communications@biaza.org.uk](mailto:communications@biaza.org.uk)

# COMMITTEES AND MEETINGS

## BIAZA Records Group

**T**wenty-five records keepers attended the annual, two-day, BIAZA Records Group meeting in early October at Newquay Zoo.

The meeting kicked off with discussion groups of attendees putting forward what they would like from the BIAZA Records Group and key areas for the core group to focus on. Areas highlighted included a clear resource for records-related information, another meeting with Defra concerning transport, support for non-ISIS zoos about maintaining records, and guidelines for keepers and vets about what to record.

Sander Cozijn from ISIS spoke about the ISIS portal, making sure everyone was registered and knew how to update their profile. Then two workshops ran concurrently in the afternoon - one for data quality and studbook reconciliation and the other on ZIMS, focussing on the new user interface with help on navigation from Sander.

During the committee meeting Dave Brunger (Chester Zoo) stood down from the Vice-Chair position and Alice Warren (Bristol Zoo) was voted in. Champions were chosen to lead on key areas including communication, ZIMS, legislation, training, and keeper and vet records.

On the second day Pat Milham discussed deploying ZIMS at Twycross Zoo focussing on new functionality including egg accessions, feeding and training logs and setting up permissions. Clare Jenkinson briefly spoke about using other technology to help with record keeping including Google documents, followed by an overview of the year of a records keeper and the tasks to be completed at various frequencies. Other group members gave short presentations on related topics such as electronic file organization, quarantine records and the BIAZA website.

The meeting was well received by attendees who felt the information provided was very useful and the opportunity to network indispensable. Thanks to Newquay staff, especially Sam.

**Alice Warren** Bristol Zoo, Vice-Chair Records Group



Sander shows BIAZA record keepers the improved navigation of ZIMS 2012

Photo: Dave Beaston

## Native Species Working Group Annual Conference

**D**elegates from 15 collections and six outside organizations attended the Native Species Working Group conference held at Beale Park on 13 and 14 September 2011. The theme for this year was woodlands and hedgerows, and despite some juggling, we managed to stay fairly true to the subject matter.

It had been decided to try and include more hands-on practicals utilizing some of the different habitats at Beale Park and the field skills of members and invited guests.

The conference started with an introduction by the Park's director, Nick Bailey and was swiftly followed by a series of 10 to 15 minute project bites briefly outlining a range of conservation initiatives as diverse as: curl bunting; crayfish; releasing water voles in Scotland; disease problems associated with releasing red squirrels; and a quick summary of fen raft and ladybird spider and tansy beetle projects. BioBlitz at Fota and organizing a site BAP at Flamingo Land were also included in a very interesting session.

The afternoon started with two inside sessions covering ancient trees and tree management for sites and ended with two practicals in adjacent woodland on tree identification and forest schools which people could participate in.

Day two started early with a ringing demonstration which gave delegates the chance to handle various bird species with the brave getting to grips with a mute swan, those less brave, with a goldfinch or chaffinch. Another outside activity was held in the afternoon on invertebrates and involved collecting various beasts for identification using keys and microscope.

Indoor sessions included a brief introduction to Miradi software, camera trapping techniques and an excellent talk on the current populations of dormouse in the UK.

The conference was well received and continued the excellent foundations laid by previous ones at Arundel and Whipsnade. Edinburgh Zoo will host the 2012 Conference in the second week of July. Details will soon be on the website.

**Dave Coles** Beale Park, Chair NSWG



Delegates get a close-up view of a brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* at Beale Park

# Research as a tool to help zoos

**B**IAZA zoos have been involved in scientific research, and providing opportunities for student research training projects for many years. This is facilitated and promoted through BIAZA's website, and the activities of BIAZA's Research Committee (BRC). The BRC supports zoo research activities in a variety of ways, including through its newsletter Research News, and its annual Research Symposia. Despite a formal recognition of the importance of research in zoos, there tends to be a perception that in-zoo research only benefits external researchers and students, and has no real benefit to the zoos themselves. This is probably because much of the research has been driven by the interests of external researchers, and not by the needs of zoos. Whilst there are positives to be gained from this, there are also drawbacks. These include varying scientific quality and accuracy of data in some student training projects; repetition of research topics; a heavier focus on pure rather than applied research questions; time restrictions to fit in with students' courses; and a lack of feedback after a project is completed. There has also been a strong bias towards research on charismatic mammals meaning many species are under-represented in research.

With this in mind, we are trying a new approach to encourage zoos to put forward ideas for issues they would like to see investigated to benefit their collections. Research is important to evidence-based management of zoo animal and plant collections and to our understanding of zoo visitor education and experience. Some of the challenges zoos face, such as problems with breeding particular species, behavioural or health issues, or visibility of animals, could be resolved using targeted scientific investigations. To assist zoo staff in putting forward ideas for future research, we have been piloting an easy-to-use reporting system at Chester Zoo. This will be rolled out to the Taxon Working Groups (TWGs) in 2012 with the help of the BRC and TWG Research Liaison Officers.

So far, the issues we have prioritized at Chester Zoo relate to animal welfare, and to helping animals achieve their role(s) in our institutional collection plan (ICP). Traditionally, zoos' ICPs were generally based more on curators' preferences for particular species, and on the availability of those species, rather than any specific criteria to justify why they should be maintained in the collection. Today our ICP is formulated within conservation targets, so each species must have an identified role in conservation, education, research/husbandry techniques, and/or visitor experience. Amongst other things, we identified several key species and issues relating to animal visibility in Sumatran tigers *Panthera tigris sumatrae*, which have conservation and education roles, and giant otters *Pteronura brasiliensis*, which have an education role. On the assumption that these animals need to be visible to the public in order to fulfil these

ICP roles, we needed to quantify the animals' enclosure use and visibility. If we could confirm visibility is an issue, we could then investigate the reasons why, such as visitor avoidance, or preference for specific resources that happen to be in harder-to-see areas of the enclosure. We could then consider adding preferred resources to the enclosures, to encourage the animals to want to use other areas which could also increase their visibility. We selected several high-calibre work placement students to take part in these short projects, over two consecutive summers, and we are planning further follow-up studies in 2012. The zoo designed the projects in such a way as to provide the specific information we needed from it, and the students were trained in the precise observational data collection methods required. In this way, the zoo could retain ultimate control over the projects' direction, to ensure we would get the information we needed to feed back into our evidence-based management, whilst the students would get good practical experience in carrying out behavioural research.

The students collected systematic data on each animal's behaviour and location within the enclosures (including whether the animals were visible or not), during multiple observation sessions.

In addition, they used standardized recording methods already used throughout the zoo, to assess the visibility of animals from a visitor perspective. By using these standardized methods, the data are comparable with other ongoing research in the zoo. Amongst other things, the research confirmed that both the Sumatran tigers and the giant otters spent large amounts of time out of sight (up to 56% and 45% of the observed time, respectively), and that certain areas of the enclosures were more heavily used than others. Since the data were collected, modifications have been made at the two



Student studying otters at Chester Zoo

enclosures: a tiger viewing platform for visitors, and a new underwater viewing area for the giant otters. Further data will be collected in 2012, to assess whether visibility of the species has improved. If visibility is still an issue, further methods will be investigated, such as targeted enrichment efforts in certain areas of the enclosure, and/or refining the resource allocation in those areas. By collecting data before and after we implement any changes, we can make modifications based on evidence, rather than anecdote, we can use research to help the zoo's collection, and we can still provide training opportunities for students. As we roll out the system for reporting BIAZA collection issues through the TWGs, we will no doubt refine the system further, and with time we hope that in-zoo research will play a larger role in the good management of collections.

Sonya Hill Chester Zoo, Research Committee Member  
[research@chesterzoo.org](mailto:research@chesterzoo.org)

# LIFE GUARD

## Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE)

**T**he Alliance for Zero Extinction is a relatively new organization, set up in 2000 and by 2005 was launched internationally. The organization is composed of nearly 100 NGOs whose goal is to avert extinctions of species. Many organizations claim the same goal but AZE has a unique system or formula for targeting priority cases.

AZE works to ensure the conservation of species with the highest risk of extinction found in a single location. This is achieved by identifying and monitoring of the site that hosts certain IUCN Red List generated EN and CR species. These species have been prioritized by using the IUCN criteria of irreplaceability (options in space for conservation) and vulnerability (options in time). Priority species have both high irreplaceability and high vulnerability along with the aforementioned single site and therefore take precedence for conservation. The IUCN Red List is used to assist in these assessments.

More about these selection criteria for site:

### Endangerment

An AZE site must contain at least one Endangered (EN) or Critically Endangered (CR) species, as listed on the IUCN Red List.

### Irreplaceability

An AZE site should only be designated if it is the sole area where an EN or CR species occurs, contains the overwhelmingly significant known resident population (>95%) of the EN or CR species, or contains the overwhelmingly significant known population (>95%) for one life history segment (e.g. breeding or wintering) of the EN or CR species.

### Discreteness

The area must have a definable boundary within which the character of habitats, biological communities, and/or management issues have more in common with each other than they do with those in adjacent areas.

Over 600 AZE sites have been identified of which only 250 qualify as protected areas: in these sites 950 species have been identified comprising mammals, birds, amphibians, some reptiles and conifers. The sites must also be homogeneous and manageable for conservation. AZE will develop a 'Candidate List' for any areas that are narrowly disqualified or unclear for inclusion. Examples include sites that do not quite meet the irreplaceability criteria, that are not quite threatened enough (VU and DD species) but which are restricted to one or a few sites, unevaluated species, and species with taxonomic uncertainties (including undescribed and newly described species). This list will be periodically reviewed so that the best judgments can be made in cases of uncertainty.

There are great advantages in investing in AZE species. We are most likely to lose these species next. We can prevent the extinction crises most effectively. It is the most cost effective way to proceed.

Membership in the Alliance is open to any non-governmental environmental organization that has as a primary purpose the conservation of biological diversity. Zoos should consider taking membership in AZE - it is a 'win-win'. The AZE method is a good tool for the selection of conservation projects undertaken by zoos, which are changing the image and meaning of zoos. Moreover the data collected through supporting projects will add to the global database.

## ALLIANCE FOR Zero Extinction



### Indian case study

Zoo Outreach Organization (ZOO) has set up an Indian AZE and is encouraging NGOs in key areas such as the Western Ghats to take up some of the AZE identified species of fish and aquatic plants which were recently assessed under IUCN criteria. ZOO has also taken up a project.

Of ZOO's several taxon based Networks covering South Asia, the Amphibian Network and the Bat/Rodent Network have selected one amphibian species and one small mammal species that need urgent conservation action, viz, *Indirana gundia* and *Millardia kondia*. *Indirana gundia* is a small rock frog that occurs only in the Gundia/Kempholey forest of Karnataka State. *Millardia kondia* is a rat with soft fur restricted to Sinhagad Plateau/Fort in Maharashtra State. Both of these species have a very restricted distribution and are not recorded from any other location. Both are CR according to IUCN Red List criteria.

These two lesser loved species are excellent AZE examples that require urgent conservation efforts that include stakeholders such as locals, forest staff, temple authorities, and many others. Lesser-known small fauna face higher threats due to neglect, which occurs due to their non-charismatic qualities and human ignorance. There are hundreds of such neglected species and projects out there. As zoos have so dramatically improved their image with the enormously successful *in situ* conservation projects, perhaps species such as these have a much better chance of survival.

Sanjay Molur Zoo Outreach Organization  
[www.zeroextinction.org](http://www.zeroextinction.org)

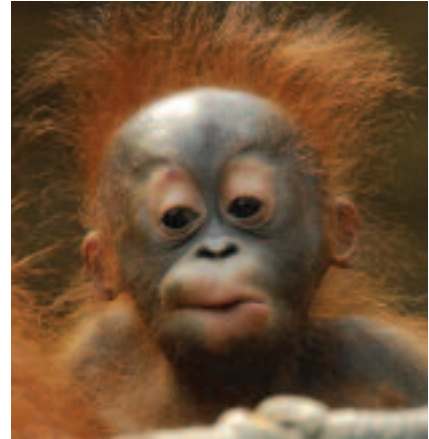
## EAZA Ape Campaign 2010-2011: Action for Apes



Bonobo juvenile *Pan paniscus*  
Photo: Eva Gross



Gibbon *Nomascus nasutus*  
female at Cao Vit  
Photo: Zhao Chao



Infant orangutan *Pongo pygmaeus*  
Photo: Christoph Matzke

**T**he EAZA Ape Campaign was launched in September 2010 and ran for a year. It was the ninth EAZA campaign and also marked the 10th anniversary of EAZA campaigning. The Ape Campaign had the overarching aim of making a significant and lasting contribution to the continued survival of apes and their habitats. Just over 160 EAZA zoos, and a further dozen or so non-EAZA zoos, signed up, committing to raise funds and awareness of the conservation issues faced by apes.

Apes (the six species of great ape and 16 species of gibbons) are under threat from hunting, deforestation and disease. Without our support these beautiful and iconic animals will become extinct. All the apes are threatened and almost all are classed as either Endangered or Critically Endangered. For some species really urgent action is needed. The Hainan gibbon, for instance, is on the brink of extinction with fewer than 20 surviving, while there are fewer than 400 Cross River gorillas left in the wild.

We need to ensure that the apes survive and thrive, not simply because they are iconic but because we have a moral obligation to do so. Tropical forest ecosystems are essential to humans, and apes play a vital role as keystone species in the ecosystems they inhabit. They help maintain the forest structure and are important seed dispersers for many plant species. Their conservation is not an easy task, but we know that real strides can be made through focussed attention applied to habitats and species.

This campaign had four objectives:

- To increase habitat protection and reduce habitat loss
- To reduce hunting and trade of apes, both live and dead
- To change consumer behaviour to reduce pressure on apes and their habitats
- To raise €1 million to establish a lasting fund providing ongoing financial support to ape conservation

The EAZA Ape Campaign aims to raise €1 million to establish an EAZA Ape Conservation Fund, enabling us to provide ongoing financial support to a range of projects. This is an ambitious target - but we calculated that if 300 institutions or individuals each raised €3,333 then we would reach that target. It was not just zoos that have been fundraising for the campaign. Corporate members of EAZA have done so as well together with other suppliers of goods to zoos. Perhaps the most unusual of these non-EAZA supporters was Andy Briggs, who has written some new Tarzan

books with a modern twist, portraying Tarzan as a conservation warrior. Andy is donating part of his royalties for the books, and his publisher, Faber and Faber, are making a donation based on the number of copies that are printed.

By October 2011 €500,000 had been raised by the EAZA Ape Campaign. Fifteen BIAZA collections contributed €107,285 of this.

### Projects supported

Four projects were pre-selected prior to the launch of the campaign. Remaining funds raised during the year form the EAZA Ape Conservation Fund, with the idea that zoos, individuals and other supporters will continue to support the fund in years to come, thus providing this lasting legacy for ape conservation.

Awely's Green Caps of the DCR  
Democratic Republic of Congo, bonobo

Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation Programme  
Borneo, orangutan

Dja community integration in great ape conservation  
Cameroon, chimpanzee/gorilla

FFI Cao Vit Gibbon Conservation Project  
China/Vietnam, Cao Vit gibbon

Grants totalling over €130,000 were awarded to these projects, leaving around €380,000 in the fund, which is still being added to as time goes on.

### What now?

EAZA campaigns usually have a continuing life after the official end of the campaign. Although we did not meet our target of a million Euros within the campaign year, we intend to keep the fund open for donations and to continue to support ape conservation for as long as we can. In the New Year, we will write to the zoos that hold apes across Europe and ask them to commit further money to the fund if they do not already support ape conservation in other ways. The apes need a lasting commitment for their conservation and continued survival, and zoos should be leading the way in making that commitment.

**Bryan Carroll** Campaign Chair and Director of Bristol Zoo Gardens  
**Mirko Marseille** EAZA Executive Office

# DIARY

## 2012

### 19 January

NSWG Meeting,  
Colchester Zoo

### 26 January

Living Collections Committee Meeting,  
ZSL London Zoo

### 27 January

Southern Region Education Meeting,  
Chessington Zoo

### 27-30 January

European Zoo Nutrition Conference,  
University of Zurich

### 31 January

C&DC Meeting,  
Yorkshire Wildlife Park

### 6 February

Middle Eastern Education Meeting,  
Paradise Wildlife Park

### 6 February

Presenters Conference,  
Cornwall College, Newquay

### 21-22 February

Animal Movements & Zoo Legislation Workshop,  
Twycross Zoo

### 28 February

Northern Education Meeting,  
Flamingo Land

### 3-4 March

ABWAK Symposium,  
Bristol Zoo Gardens

### 8 March

ES&CC Meeting,  
ZSL London Zoo

### 13 March

M&L Committee and Council,  
ZSL London Zoo

### 15 March

South West Education Meeting,  
Exmoor Zoo

### 17-18 March

New World Primate Symposium,  
Twycross Zoo

### 26-29 April

EAZA Mid Year Meeting,  
Munich

### 27 April

Southern Education Meeting,  
Beale Park

### 30 April

Far North Education Meeting,  
Deep Sea World

### 10 May

BALPPA Zoo Group Meeting,  
West Midland Safari Park

### 14 May

Regional Meeting,  
Galway Atlantaquaria

### 17 May

Ivy Zoo Symposium,  
Budapest Zoo and Botanical Garden

### 26 May-5 June

Love Your Zoo campaign,  
throughout the UK

### 14-16 June

BIAZA Annual Conference,  
Paradise Wildlife Park

### 16 June

AGM and Council Meeting,  
Paradise Wildlife Park

### 21 June

UFAW Conference,  
York Merchant Adventurers' Hall

### 22-23 June

Bioblitz event,  
UK wide

### 25 June

National Insect Week,  
UK wide

### 4 July

BIAZA Parliamentary Reception,  
Westminster

### 10-12 July

NSWG Conference,  
Edinburgh Zoo

### 11-12 July

Research Symposium,  
Newquay Zoo

### 28 July

M&L Committee and Council,  
ZSL London Zoo

### 28 August

IZE Conference,  
Chester Zoo

### 9 September

International Congress  
on Zookeeping,  
Singapore

### 25-30 September

EAZA Annual Conference,  
Alpen Zoo, Innsbruck

### 8-11 October

WAZA Conference,  
Melbourne

### 12 November

DMZAA Steering Group Meeting,  
Sparsholt College Hampshire

### 13-15 November

Aquarium Working Group and National Aquariums Workshop,  
Blue Planet Aquarium,  
Ellesmere Port

### 28 November

M&L Committee and Council Meeting,  
West Midland Safari Park

### 28-30 November

ACE Conference,  
West Midland Safari Park

### 3-5 December

TIWG Conference,  
The Deep, Hull

### 6 December

BALPPA Zoo Group Meeting,  
Colchester Zoo

Full details of these events can be found on [www.biaza.org.uk](http://www.biaza.org.uk)



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