



Zoological
Society of
Florida

Friends of Metrozoo

Toucan Talk

Volume 16, No. 4
July/August 1990

The newsletter of the Zoological Society of Florida
a non-profit organization supporting Miami Metrozoo

Who's New At The Zoo?

Over the past few months, several new animals have taken up residence at Metrozoo.

We'd like to introduce you to some of them and tell you what makes them unique.

Gibbon island has become the home of two Chinese water deer, *Hydropotes inermis*.

These diminutive creatures are about 30-39" long and approximately 18-22" at shoulder height. They weigh about 33 pounds and inhabit swamps, marshlands, and plains near rivers and streams in the farthest, most northeastern part of China. They stay concealed in dense vegetation generally alone or in pairs (rarely in larger groups) which serves as their best protection against enemies.

A first glance at the male of the species can be rather startling because while they have no antlers, they do have conspicuous long, saber-like curved upper canines (teeth) which protrude about 3" from the upper jaw and constitute sharp, dangerous weapons.

Fighting bucks stand parallel to each other, with their heads level with the rival's shoulder. Swinging their heads down, they attempt to wound the opponent with the canines in the nape of the neck or the shoulder. When successful, they can cause painful wounds. In the does, the upper canines are very short and not suitable for fighting. Water deer alert each other to danger through a brief barking, warning vocalization. In the mating season, the bucks make whistling sounds. After a gestation period of about six months, one or two young are born. The fawns have a camouflage coat with light spots which disappear with age. Gibbon island offers a perfect habitat for these little deer because of its lush foliage. Catching a glimpse of them requires a lot of patience!



Sloth Bear

Across from the bantengs, just before the Asian River Life exhibit, lives the Persian wild ass or onager, *Equus hemionus*. This animal was once distributed across large regions of Asia; now only a few relict herds survive, and some of these are declining further. Their average size is about 4' at the shoulder, weighing about 500 pounds. The upper body is a sandy color, grading to white on the hind quarters and underside. The mane is dark, and the ears are dark tipped.

Wild asses are outstanding animals, capable of surviving in hot, dry weather. They feed on grass, but can also survive on straw and other plant matter with little nutritive value. While water is essential to their survival, they can go for a long period without drinking.

This ability to endure periods of drought has enabled the onager to survive in the deserts of Asia. After a gestation of about 11 months, a single foal is born which nurses for almost a year. The

onager has been domesticated and used for heavy labor since earliest times.

Around the bend in the road, past the camel and sable antelope, is the paddock of the sloth bear, *Ursus ursinus*.

When the first fur, claws and skull remains of this bear appeared in European museums at the end of the 18th century, zoologists viewed this as a rather strange animal. It has long, coarse dark gray to black fur; a light horseshoe shaped chest marking; short limbs, large feet; and a trunk-like snout.

They thought it was a relative of the South American sloth and called it a "bear like" sloth. Sloth bears have long, sickle-shaped claws and are missing two incisors (teeth) on the upper jaw, both features of sloths. The sloth bear, however, is a unique species and when experts discovered their error, the "bear-like" sloth quickly became the sloth bear. Sloth bears inhabited the monsoon forests and thornbush jungles of India. In Sri Lanka, they were found in all forests of the arid lowlands. They are gone from these regions since their habitats were destroyed when the forests of India and Sri Lanka were cleared.

Hunting has also taken a major toll on the species. Sloth bears not only feed on fruits and berries, but also on roots, carcasses and many insects including ants, termites, and wild bees.

Their sickle-shaped claws can crack open anthills, bee's nests, and termite mounds as hard as brick. The claws also help them climb trees, where they can hang on all four limbs from branches and projecting rocks. The sloth bear catches termites in a very unusual way. First it blows the dust away, then with the lips and the long, flat tongue which it can shape into a tube-like instrument, it forms a suction tube through which the food is sucked in, rather like a vacuum cleaner.

The lower lip is the most important structure in this procedure – it can be stretched above the nose to form a chute. Sloth bears are about 2-3 feet at shoulder height and weigh about 300 pounds. Gestation is approximately 7 months, after which 1 to 2 cubs are born.

They remain with their mother for 2 to 3 years.

In the outback, or Australian portion of the zoo, brush tailed rock wallabies *Petrogale penicillata* are our newest inhabitants. They are small, kangaroo-like grayish brown marsupials with a long, dark colored tail of even thickness, short ears with yellow edges, and a dark



Onager or Persian Wild Ass



Chinese Water Deer

eyeband with light cheek stripes. The average head and body length is about 22 inches and they weigh approximately 15 pounds. Rock wallabies live in rocky terrain in the dry regions of Australia.

They usually live in colonies on a rocky slope, often miles away from neighboring colonies. Their form of locomotion is distinctive and is an adaptation to their habitat. The characteristically curved tail is stiffly extended during hopping to improve balance.

The legs are held out in front of the body as they bound rapidly among boulders, up cliffs, and off slightly leaning tree trunks. The rock surface of its trails and cave floors are often highly polished from its rough foot pads. Wallabies graze on grass and are most active at night, early morning, and late afternoon. They survive periods of drought by eating bark or roots as a grass substitute and to

obtain moisture. After a period of about 200 days in the mother's pouch, the single young apparently stays in the nest for several additional weeks before following its mother.

These Australian natives have recently been introduced into New Zealand and Oahu Island, Hawaii.

We hope you'll get acquainted with these fascinating new residents on your summer excursions to the zoo.

To err is human

We apologize! In our Feast With the Beasts restaurant listing in the last issue, we printed the wrong telephone number for *Caffe Abbracci*. To make reservations at one of the finest restaurants in town, please call 441-0700.

Celebrity Conservationist Visits Metrozoo

On Saturday, May 12, the Zoological Society proudly welcomed Stefanie Powers – actress, author, wildlife advocate and conservationist – to Miami Metrozoo for a very special whirlwind tour.

With only a few hours notice, the Society staff, volunteers, and Metrozoo's team of professionals worked diligently to make her visit exciting and informative.

Her limousine ride to the zoo was donated by *First Class Limousine, Inc.*, and a beautiful sign donated by *T-Square Miami* welcomed her as she stepped into the lobby of the Society's membership building.

Miss Powers is very much at home with birds, animals, and people. She demonstrated an incredible ability to mimic all the animals she came in contact with, especially the chimps and lowland gorillas.

She exhibited particular fondness for the Malayan sun bears and communicated with them by a series of vocalizations.

Scherley Busch, of *Scherley Busch Photography*, herself an animal enthusiast, also stepped forward in the eleventh hour to donate her professional services. As a result, we have some photographic treasures of Miss Power's initial visit to Metrozoo.

We want to thank everyone who participated in this very special tour for Stefanie Powers. Volunteers and Metrozoo's staff were gracious, informative and extremely helpful. . .because of their efforts, we were able to extend a first class visit of our zoo to a first class lady.

Rest assured, dear friends, Miss Powers has been invited back. She has tentatively agreed to host a lecture or



Stefanie Powers with Trustee Pat Kelly, who conducted the tour.



Stefanie Powers with Karl Burch and Ron Johnson, Metrozoo's Curator of Birds.

participate in a special event. We want all of you to have the opportunity to meet this beautiful, knowledgeable,

woman who has been in the forefront of animal conservation.

PHOTOS BY SCHERLEY BUSCH.

Conservation Corner

Build A Backyard Wildlife Refuge:

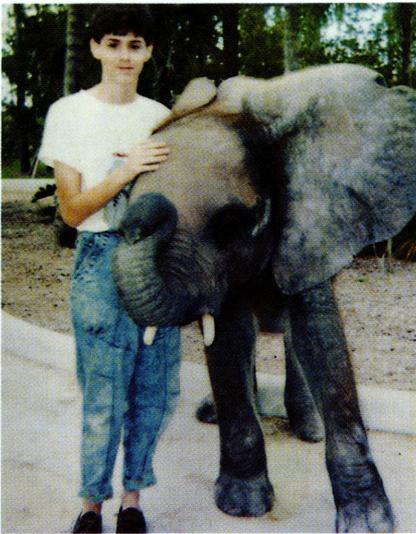
Helping to save and care for animals can begin in your own backyard. By landscaping and planting with wildlife in mind, you can make up for the loss of much of their natural habitat. Simply by choosing the right plants, you can provide them with food and shelter - and yourself with a window, literally - into the natural world.

Did You Know

- You can attract specific animals to your garden with certain plants. Hummingbirds, for example, like butterflies are attracted to brightly colored flowers in full sunlight.
- Animals that are active in the daytime (for example squirrels and rabbits) will visit yards if shelter such as walls and shrubs is provided.
- You can set up a bird feeder on an apartment balcony as well as a small garden.

Simple Things To Do

- Consult a nursery to find out what flowers and trees will attract the wildlife you would like to invite into your backyard.
- Create a plan. Sketch out your yard and decide where to plant, provide water and shelter. Your yard can be a backyard wildlife habitat. It's a great way to involve the kids!



Jason Jacobs, age 13, a student at Richmond Heights Middle School and participant in the Zoo Magnet Program, was also inspired by the Leakey Lecture. He is the author of the following poem, lamenting the plight of the elephant.

Elephant's End

Never swift
 Never slow
 Never one to be provoked.
 They are majestic beings of ancient time
 Now their time has come to an end
 From a loud noise coming from the
 bend.
 The herd scrambles, young are trampled
 By the desire to make money.
 The thing that has been a part of all
 nature, coming to an end.
 Will the elephant ever be safe again?
 For their tusks they are wanted –
 nothing else.
 Nothing else. No one cares.
 No one dares to speak out.
 For while you have your trinkets, and
 piano keys,
 An elephant is uttering its last screams.
 Now its life has come to an end, is
 anything ever safe again?
 No more screams of joy
 No more wallowing in the mud
 No more swimming in the lake
 No more grazing among the herd
 No more sniffing the air, to see what's
 there
 No more playful fights over these, the
 elephant's last rites
 No more shredding ground and trees
 with their tusks for every night a herd
 of elephants will be vanquished by
 dusk.
 Twenty years down the road
 We will be a little old, and our children

will ask
 What's an elephant?
 We can say a noble, gentle being.
 And when they ask "did you ever see
 one?"
 People will say Yes, but they are not
 around today.

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Toucan Talk is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Zoological Society of Florida, a non-profit organization supporting Miami Metrozoo.

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Education Outlook

Programs For Children

A.I.R. Scouting Program

Grades K-12

This popular scouting program for girl and boy scouts will return in September. Scout masters, remember to include the A.I.R. (Awareness, Interest, Respect) program in your fall planning.

Programs For Families

Breakfast With the Beasts

Come and enjoy Metrozoo in the early morning when many animals are most active.

July:

RIVER WALK! Our new Asian River Experience exhibit is home to otters, water monitors, muntjac, clouded leopards, and blood pythons, but the animals aren't alone in making this exhibit truly an experience to remember.

The whole exhibit takes into account the interaction between the environment and its specific inhabitants.

Enjoy a special sunrise tour of this beautiful display and the unique animals that make it come alive.

August:

ENDANGERED ANIMALS IN OUR BACKYARD! We all know that elephants, rhinos and orangutans are endangered, but what about animals closer to home? Join us for a light breakfast and a fascinating program about Florida's endangered species presented by our Animal Encounters volunteers.

Dates: July 15 / August 12

Hours: 8:00-10:00 A.M.

Fee: \$15.00 Members,
 \$20.00 Non-members

(Children 5 and under are half-price)

Programs For Adults

Supper Safari

Wildlife Conservation

Seminars

(WCS)

In our ever-changing world, both local and global conservational issues have become paramount in importance. The Zoological Society of Florida takes pride in promoting conservational awareness through the efforts of Miami Metrozoo.

In our new educational WCS (pronounced "wicks") we hope to be a spark to light the flame of a continuously growing awareness of the environment around us and the wildlife that inhabits it.

Various wildlife topics will be emphasized by both Metrozoo staff and outside speakers.

The 1-1/2 hour lectures will include a presentation followed by light refreshments.

July:

S.S.P.: Matchmaking For the Future. What are Species Survival Plans and what do they accomplish? Bill Zeigler, Metrozoo's General Curator, will answer these and many more questions as we find out how the roles of zoos are drastically changing to include computer dating games!

August:

SHARKS, SHARKS, SHARKS! Dr. Gordon Hubbell, Metrozoo's Director of Education, is not only a veterinarian and respected zoo administrator, but also an expert on sharks.

In this WCS, Dr. Hubbell will explain the unique anatomy and reproduction of sharks, exhibit teeth and jaws, and tell us how to avoid shark attacks. Don't miss this one. Dates: July 21 / August 18

Hours: 6:30-8:00 P.M.

Fees: \$15.00 Members,
\$20.00 Non-members

Summer Camp 1990

Zoo camp provides youngsters with an exciting opportunity to learn about animals and their habitats.

Through films, craft projects, observing animals in the zoo, and actual contact with live animals, the campers learn the importance of the environment and conservation.

There are still a few spaces remaining

Registration Policy: Advance registration is required for all programs. Registration is by mail or telephone.

Program information may be obtained over the telephone, however a reservation in the program is contingent upon payment. Fees may be paid by check, money order, cash or Visa/Mastercard/American Express. A confirmation letter will be issued upon receipt of payment.

Cancellations: All fees are non-refundable. Cancellation notifications must be received at least 72 hours (3 business days) prior to the actual program date in order for credit to be accrued. Fees then may be transferred to another program. You may transfer to another program only once without losing your payment and the transfer must occur within 2 months.

in these popular camps, but they will not last long. For information and registration call the education department at 255-5551.

KINDERCAMP:

Children age 3-5 years learn about habitats and the animals that live there. Animal oriented crafts, games, songs and snacks are included in the camp program.

Session 1:

July 2-July 6 (no camp on July 4)*

July 9-July 13

July 23-July 27

Session 2:

July 30-August 3

August 6-August 10

August 13-August 17

Hours: 9:00 A.M.-12:00 Noon

Fees: \$75.00 Members,
\$85.00 Non-members

*For the week of July 2, \$70.00 Members,
\$80.00 Non Members

Jungle JUNIORS:

Students in grades 1-3 spend their afternoons exploring the wide variety of habitats represented at Metrozoo.

Movies, outdoor activities, crafts, and live animal interaction are all part of the summer fun.

Session 1:

July 2-July 6 (no camp on July 4)*

July 9-July 13

July 23-July 27

Session 2:

July 30-August 3

August 13-August 17

Hours: 1:30-4:30 P.M.

Fees: \$85.00 Members,
\$95.00 Non-members

*For the week of July 2, \$70.00 Members,
\$80.00 Non-members.

Zoo Camp:

Students in grades 4-6 learn about animals and their habitats and the functions of a modern zoo from educational staff, zookeepers, and the animals themselves.

Conservation awareness and involvement are stressed.

Campers should bring a brown bag lunch Monday through Thursday; Friday we will provide lunch with the zookeepers. (Only one comprehensive session is offered.)

July 16-July 20

August 20-August 24

Hours: 9:00 A. M.-3:00 P.M.

Fees: \$105.00 Members,
\$115.00 Non-members.

Summer Safari:

This week-long program is for students in grades 7 - 8 who are interested in careers in wildlife biology, zoology, or veterinary medicine.

Participants will gain valuable experience while learning about the management of captive wildlife through behind-the-scenes tours and contact with zoo staff.

August 6-August 10

Hours: 1:30 - 4:30 P.M.

Fees: \$80.00 Members,
\$90.00 Non-members

Register Here

Mail to: Education Department, Zoological Society of Florida, 12400 S.W. 152nd Street, Miami, Florida 33177 (305) 255-5551

Participant's Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Bus. Phone _____

Program(s): _____ Date: _____ Fee \$ _____

_____ Date: _____ Fee \$ _____

Member Membership # _____ Non Member Fee \$ _____

Mastercard Visa Amer. Exp. Expiration Date _____ TOTAL _____

Card # _____ Signature _____

For Children's Programs, please complete the following:

Parent's Name _____

Student's Age _____ Grade in school (as of Sept. '89) _____

Young Conservationists Making Us Proud!

We have said it time and time again – children are our hope and our future. We would like to take this opportunity to thank these youngsters for their commitment to our vanishing wildlife.

PINE CREST B.S.C.S. CLUB
J. G. DUPUIS ELEMENTARY
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN SCHOOL
ATLANTIC COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL
LEEWOOD ELEMENTARY
STUDENT COUNCIL
MCARTHUR HIGH SCHOOL
BLESSED TRINITY SCHOOL
PERRY MIDDLE SCHOOL
WHISPERING PINES ELEMENTARY

Since October, 1989 through May, 1990 the schools listed above have contributed to our Adopt-an-Animal program. This is the finest example of "group" conservation efforts in action.

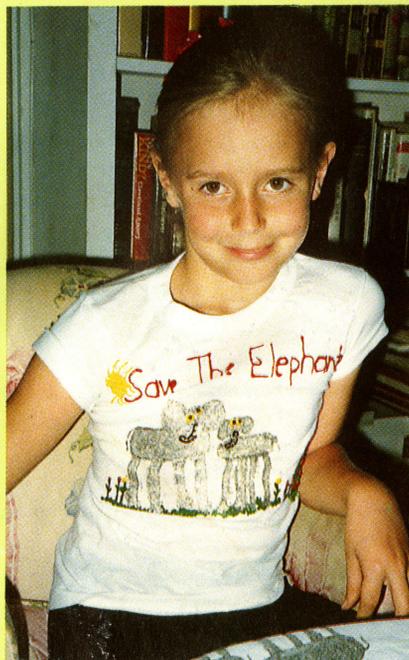
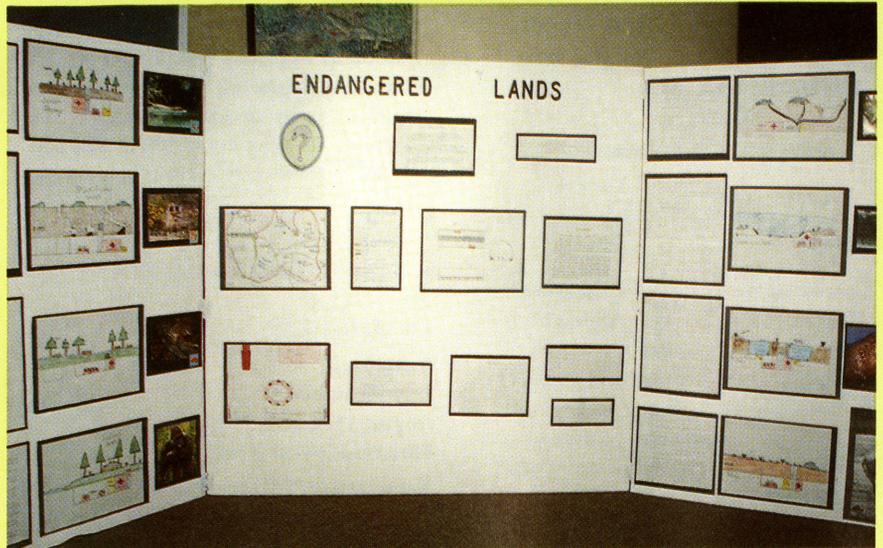
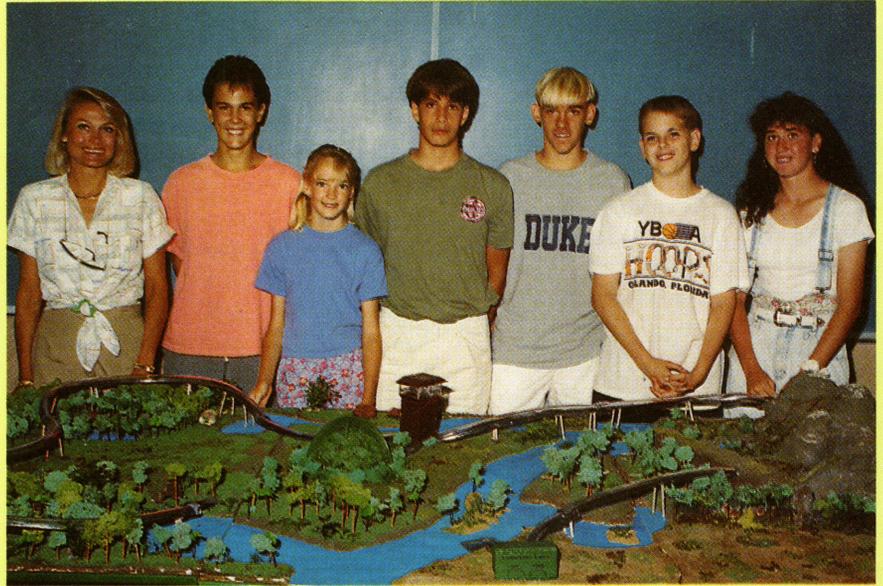
We have a free slide presentation to aid students in the selection of an animal to sponsor. If you would like information about how your school can participate in the Adopt-an-Animal program, please call the development department at 255-5551.

Eighth grade students in the *Quest* program at Zion Lutheran School in Deerfield Beach treated members of the zoo and Society staff with an up close and personal tour of their model of a Zoo For Endangered Species.

Students Brent Hutson, Paige Gore, John O'Bryan, Jimmy Myrick, Stuart Ilovitch, Megan McLaughlin with the guidance of their teacher Pamela Farmer, envisioned and constructed a facility where vanishing species would live with no contact with humans except for medical emergencies. Visitors would see the zoo by traveling on a sound-proof, moving walkway, completely enclosed by one-way glass. Feeding facilities, keepers quarters and labs were underground and through the use of elevators and doors cut into the ground, the animals were fed, cared for, and observed.

The project required a year of research and construction and their knowledge and love of animals was evident in every detail.

We offer a special salute to these conservationists, architects, and engineers of tomorrow.



Zoological Society member Cameron Stoll, age 6, and her original t-shirt design "Save the Elephants." Cameron attended the Richard Leakey lecture last February and decided to raise money for Mr. Leakey's cause by selling the shirts. Through her entrepreneurship and the help of her mother, Mrs. Faith Stoll, a \$200 check was sent to the Leakey Foundation.

Volunteer!

If Metrozoo is one of your favorite places in Miami, how would you like to share it with more people? Volunteer and become part of the action! This year, the Zoological Society's docents will contact more than 500,000 zoo visitors, using their training to talk about everything from the plight of endangered species to the location of the nearest monorail station.

Using live animals, animal biofacts and the zoo itself as teaching tools, you can bring the world of animals up close to people of all ages. You can be the one to show a prickly hedgehog to a child who hasn't imagined such a thing or help a family find birds hidden in the aviary.

If you've had the desire to get more involved and now have the time, why not call for more information? The eight-week volunteer training course will begin in September and enrollment has already begun. Please call the Volunteer Coordinator at 255-5551 for an application.

Travelogue 1991

Back by popular demand, the Zoological Society is returning to **Australia** next year! Join fellow members on a 16-day trip exploring the cities and parks of the continent "down under."

You'll explore the best that Australia's cities have to offer as well as some of its natural wonders. Swim and snorkel the Great Barrier Reef. See the abundant wildlife in the rainforests of Barron Falls and Lamington National Parks. Walk among kangaroos and see the underwater life of the platypus at Healesville and hold a cuddly koala at Lone Pine Sanctuary. See the nightly ritual as the fairy penguins parade at Phillip Island. In Sydney, you'll visit another of the world's great zoos at Taronga Park and, if you wish, enjoy an evening at the famed Sydney Opera House.

No trip down under would be complete without experiencing the unique charm of **New Zealand**. From Christchurch, the most "English" city outside of England to the Maori village at Rotorua, you'll explore the towns and countryside of this beautiful country's North and South Islands.

Departing March 9-March 24, 1991, the cost of the 16-day trip to Australia is \$3,995 per person from Miami. The optional 9-day New Zealand extension is \$1,695. For more information and a complete itinerary, please call the Travel Coordinator at 255-5551.



We gratefully acknowledge *The Allstate Foundation* as our newest corporate benefactor, and thank them for their \$5,000 contribution to sponsor the Col-

obus monkey. Pictured here are Fausto Alonso, Jr. with Marian Klement and Susan Clark.

Ocean Bank Charts A Course With The Zoological Society of Florida

The month of June was designated as Zoological Society of Florida Month by Ocean Bank. The Board of Directors and Membership of the Society wish to thank Ocean Bank for its commitment in helping make Metrozoo one of the world's best zoos.

The fun-filled month began on June 2nd with Ocean Bank Family Day at the zoo in our picnic area. Employees of the bank and their families enjoyed a day at the zoo and were served a hearty BBQ lunch.

As part of Zoological Society of Florida Month, Ocean Bank also purchased ZSF memberships for all employees and their immediate families who will enjoy all the benefits that come with membership for an entire year.

ZSF month at Ocean Bank also included a display of our 1989 photo contest pictures. The beautiful lobby of

the bank served as an art gallery for all customers to witness the wonderful animal life at Metrozoo.

Ocean Bank's enthusiasm for community involvement does not stop there. In a wonderful gesture of their commitment to the Society, Ocean Bank mailed statement stuffers to all their banking customers urging them to become members of the Society. Not to preclude the Hispanic portion of our community, Ocean Bank also agreed to translate our membership application into Spanish for our Spanish speaking friends.

We again thank Ocean Bank for dedicating June as Zoological Society of Florida month.

Left, Benigno Aguirre, Vice President of Human Resources, and Jose A. Concepcion, President of Ocean Bank, at the Ocean Bank Family Day.



Discovery Cruises Hosts Beastkeepers

More than 100 of the Feast With the Beasts™ elite "Beastkeepers" were recently treated to an evening aboard Discovery I as the special guests of Martin Salzedo, President of Discovery Cruises.

Beastkeepers enjoyed cocktails on the ship's view deck at sunset, a seven-course filet mignon and lobster dinner, with continental French service including wine and champagne. After dinner, guests took in a Las Vegas revue, danced to a live band, and tried their luck in the ship's full action, tri-level casino. Everyone enjoyed this lovely evening and agreed that the cruise was fabulous, indeed!

In addition to offering the Beastkeepers a complimentary cruise, Discovery Cruises also participated in Feast With the Beasts™ and served the chef's shipboard specialty at the black tie gala.

Discovery sails daily from Fort Lauderdale, Port Everglades with day and evening party cruises. For more information on shipboard amenities, call 1-800-226-7800.



Henry Gonzalez, Marketing Coordinator for Burger King's Miami Market, displays one of the knapsacks Burger King has donated for participants in Kindercamp, Jungle Juniors, and Zoo Camp. There are still a few spaces remaining in these programs. Call the Education Department for information and registration.



Left to right: Senator Paul and Sandy Steinberg, Joseph E. Ferrer, Kay Schull, Martin Salzedo, President of Discovery Cruises, Marjorie Ferrer, Lawrence O. Turner, Jr., CEO of Enviropact, Inc., and Burt Beer, Vice President of Administration, Discovery Cruises.

TOUCAN TRADER'S CHOICE

The Toucan Trader has a treasury of merchandise which will keep you and your children entertained for hours.

In addition to children's toys and plush animals, we have an easy to use guidebook designed with kids in mind.

Places To Go With Children In Miami and South Florida is invaluable to keep on hand for all your outings. Visitors and natives alike will find a wealth of information in this comprehensively researched book about a land rich in tropical beauty and family fun.

Miami Metrozoo and Parrot Jungle and Gardens are two of the South Florida attractions included with tips on best times to visit, rest areas, entertainment, recreation and educational programs, to name a few. *Places To Go In Miami and South Florida* is essential for parents, teachers, and caretakers.



Zoological Society of Florida

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