

Toucan Talk

A FAMILY AFFAIR

George is a typical dad: big, friendly, and highly protective of his offspring. His five-year-old daughter, Kito, is his little princess. He holds her on his lap, feeds her slices of oranges and apples, and proudly carries her around on his back.


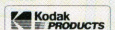
George, the adult male in Metrozoo's chimpanzee exhibit, is 21 years old and weighs nearly 165 pounds. He's often mistaken for a gorilla. As the dominant male of the 10-member chimp family, George lets everyone know who's the boss by daily afternoon displays of screaming, bouncing off the rockwork, smacking the rocks, and running after the females.

The chimpanzees are among the most popular exhibits at the zoo. Visitors especially enjoy the antics of the chimpanzees, which are our closest living relatives.

Chimpanzees are highly intelligent, and live in tight-knit social groups. They talk to each other by hoots and calls, and each sound has a special meaning. Jane



A photo of George surrounded by three of his offspring, earned Steve Murphy the Grand Prize in the Zoological Society's 6th Annual Photo Contest, sponsored by Kodak Film and Lufthansa German Airlines.

Goodall, who observes wild chimps in the Gombe Stream in Tanzania, Africa, deciphered many of these calls, including the "Hoo" call, which is used by mothers to call their youngsters. In addition to vocal calls and signals, the chimps communicate through a series of body gestures, facial expressions and touch.

Zookeeper Dean Krouch has worked with primates for years. He has learned to communicate with the chimps by

signals. They're especially responsive to the "feeding" signal.

Staple food for the chimps is monkey chow, rich in carbohydrates, proteins, and vitamins. They also eat fresh fruits, vegetables, sunflower seeds, and occasionally, peanuts or coconuts as treats. According to Zookeeper Krouch, the chimps especially like mangos and avocados, which are plentiful in South Florida.

In the spring, Metrozoo's chimps had

from page 1

annual physical exams — in zoo jargon, “a knockdown.” Teeth were cleaned. X-rays taken. Blood drawn. Tuberculosis tests given. All chimps received a clean bill of health.

Residing at Metrozoo’s chimpanzee paddock with George are:

BUBBLES, 106½ pounds, is a husky female with a gray chin. She is the only female that can take food from George. Bubbles is known for her signature statement: burlap. She drags it around with her everywhere. She also has an unconventional way of transporting her daughter, Amelia — attached to her hind leg. Bubbles, once a circus performer, is 29 years old.

AMELIA, born February 10, 1991, has a pink face surrounded by long hair and a white tuft of hair on her bottom. The 11-pound toddler is the daughter of Bubbles and George.

SAMANTHA, mother of Abbey, Kito and Niger, stands erect to catch treats from her keepers. She is often found sitting near the viewing window with her head resting on crossed arms. When lying down, she likes to have a leg straight up. Samantha is 25 years old, weighs 90½ pounds, and is the dominant female in the group.

ABBEY, whose face is lighter in color than the other adult chimps, is considered the smartest chimp in the group. She has a very serious look about her and copies the head resting on crossed arms position of her mother, Samantha. Abbey, 10 years old and almost 95 pounds, is a nulliparous female (one who has not borne offspring). Her father was Pancho, who died several years ago. Abbey spends a lot of time with her younger half-brother, Niger.

KITO, daughter of George and Samantha, is an energetic youngster who sometimes gets into mischief. One of her favorite tricks is to steal Bubble’s burlap. When frightened or going in for the night, Kito “buddy walks” (arm over another’s back or shoulder) with her sister and mother. Five-year-old Kito often

carries the younger chimps on her back and down into the moat.

NIGER, the two-year-old son of George and Samantha, was born on the exhibit in front of the public, some of the keepers and security personnel. Niger has a pink face, pink hands and

feet, and likes to suck his toes. He nurses from Samantha while she is standing erect and catching treats from the keeper. His sisters, Kito and Abbey, often babysit Niger while Samantha rests by the viewing window.

ROSEBUD, 21 years old, has a sweet black face, and ears that flop downward. The mother of Binti and Bocco, Rosebud is reportedly George’s favorite female. She also loves burlap and spreads it out under the tree around the bend from the pygmy hippo. Rosebud’s family is usually in that corner of the paddock and the youngsters love to play hide-and-seek in the rocks. When grooming, Rosebud makes a raspberry sound with her lips. Others join in to the harmony of contentment. Rosebud weighs 105 pounds.

BINTI, has the same distinctive ears as her mother, Rosebud. At 106 pounds, she also resembles her mother in size and stature. Binti has a close relationship with her mother, and the two spend a lot of time grooming each other. The ten-year-old was the first chimp born at Metrozoo. Her father was Pancho, making her the half-sister of Abbey. Although she is older than Abbey, Abbey is dominant. Binti is a primiparous female (one who has borne only one offspring). Her baby, after recovering from a bout of pneumonia, was given to Dr. Bern Levine, Rosebud’s previous owner.

BOCCO, a delightful two-year-old, loves to play and jump on the rocks. He loves to do pirouettes. He vocalizes loudly and has a temper. Son of Rosebud and George, Bocco is already practicing displays by beating the ground and making his hair bristle. He weighs 18¾ pounds and responds to his name.

APE AFFINITY

Dean Krouch has an affinity for apes. That’s what makes him so good at his job as keeper for the primate exhibits at Metrozoo. Krouch has cared for Metrozoo’s chimps since the chimpanzee and gorilla area opened in 1983. He knows who likes mangos the best and who doesn’t like peanuts at all.


Krouch, who also worked with primates at Crandon Park Zoo, maintains a close relationship with the chimps in his care. He knows them all by name, and, of course, by temperament. “Every afternoon, our dominant male gets all wound up. George puts on quite a ferocious show,” said Krouch. “The mothers or sisters grab the babies and run.” He admits, however, that George, who has sired four children, is a gentle father.

Krouch has seen the chimps through good times and bad... He was on hand when each baby was born. When Binti’s male infant developed pneumonia, Krouch nursed the baby back to health.

Raised in a small West Virginia coal mining town, Krouch was always fascinated by primates. A stint in the Navy, with exotic ports of call, gave him the opportunity to observe primates in zoos around the globe: Germany, England, France, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Virgin Islands.

When his tour in the Navy ended, Krouch took a job as a carpenter at a Sperry Rand plant in Gainesville, Fl. When the Sperry plant closed, he went back to school at Santa Fe Community College to pursue his interest in animals. (Santa Fe is one of only two zookeeper training programs in the country; the other is in California. Seven of Metrozoo’s keepers graduated from the Santa Fe school.)

Upon graduation, Krouch began working at Monkey Jungle. Two years later, he left to join *continued on page 7*



LYNN PELHAM

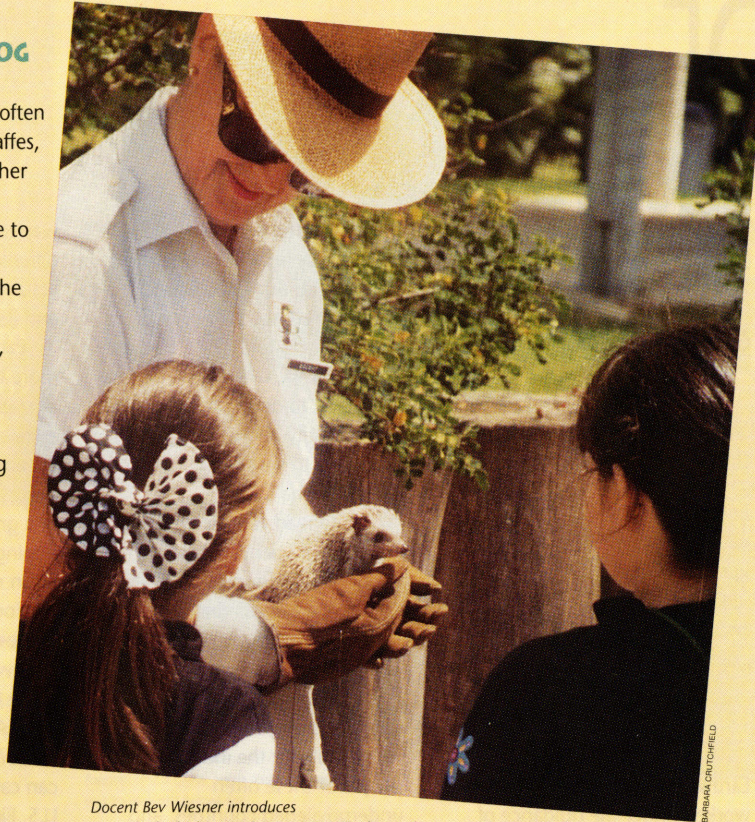


HANDSOME HEDGEHOG

Thoughts of Africa most often conjure up images of giraffes, elephants, rhinos, and other impressive and awesome creatures. Yet, Africa is home to some smaller, but equally fascinating animals such as the East African Hedgehog.

The prickly little creature, found in tropical regions of central Africa, is dormant all day, and spends the night searching for food. Weighing less than two pounds, the hedgehog is not a picky eater, dining on snails, worms, mice, frogs, lizards, berries, acorns, eggs, and even slugs. In one night a hedgehog consumes one third its body weight (the equivalent of a 150 pound person eating 50 pounds of food per day).

Breeding in August or September — with a gestation period of 31–40 days — hedgehogs usually give birth to up to 10 blind, helpless young. The female assumes full responsibility for their upbringing, with no help from the male. At a



Docent Bev Wiesner introduces Larry the hedgehog to visitors at PAWS, the children's petting zoo.

month old, the young begin to make short forays from the nest. They also start to grow the spines that serve as defense against vipers, jackals, hyenas and owls.

When threatened, the hedgehog curls into a ball, presenting spines at every angle. The hedgehog is also resistant to the venom of some snakes.

WHAT'S A DOCENT?

The Zoological Society's staff of Docents is an active group of trained volunteers, who devote their time and talents to helping the zoo educate the public about wildlife. They can be found conducting "outreach," in front of exhibits giving out information, helping with special events, performing in the Texaco Ecology Theater Show, and in a variety of other tasks. Some of them, like Margaret Whitehead, reach out to other countries, contributing to conservation and research efforts. (See *Out of Africa* on page 4.)

Docents often take Larry the hedgehog and other animals to PAWS, the children's zoo, for "close ups." Visitors can get a closer look at the creatures and sometimes even touch them. Docents also take animals on "outreach" trips to local schools.

Sound interesting? If you would like to join the Docent ranks, call the Education Department of the Zoological Society for information at 255-5551. Or, come visit the zoo and see the many exciting Docent activities for yourself. Training classes for new Docents begin in September. Interested parties should call the Education Department by August 15.

RECENT ARRIVALS AT METROZOO

BIRTHS

FEBRUARY

- Black naped oriole
- Bleeding heart dove

MARCH

- Sable antelope
- Axix deer
- Slender horned gazelle
- Gerenuk
- Red kangaroo
- Screech owl
- Maxwell duiker

APRIL

- Mandarin duck
- Grant's Zebra
- Banteng
- Red-ruffed lemur
- European white stork
- Reticulated giraffe
- Colobus monkey
- Defassa waterbuck
- Rudy duck

MAY

- Pagoda mynah
- Argus pheasant

ACQUISITIONS

MARCH

- Yellow backed duiker
- Thomson's gazelle
- Lowland anoa
- Gemsbok



OUT OF AFRICA

KENYA — TUESDAY, JULY 23, 1991: *Almost at once we saw a cheetah. It started to chase a young impala. There were some loud noises and then quiet. A baboon had frightened off the cheetah, and the impala was lying in shock on the ground. Some people had been watching the baboons and saw the confrontation. Seven minutes passed. The impala got up shakily, shook itself, then scurried off. We all cheered. As our van started off, a young male lion walked across our path. To our left a leopard suddenly jumped up a leaning tree and started flicking its tail. We later saw a leopard cub in the bush and deduced that the leopard in the tree was a mother warning her youngster to lie quietly because a lion was nearby.*

Sound like a diary entry of a scientist in Africa, or a member of a film crew from National Geographic? Actually, it was written by Zoological Society member Margaret Whitehead, who spent a month in Kenya last year, part of which was spent as an Earthwatch volunteer.

Earthwatch, an organization based in Maryland — with branch offices in Australia and England, is an organization that sponsors international research expeditions and helps scientists conduct field research around the world.

Whitehead stayed at Elsamere, the retirement home of Joy and George Adamson, authors of *Born Free*. A variety of wildlife share the grounds of the home, which is located on Lake Naivasha. Whitehead observed fish eagles, a troop of columbus monkeys, and most nights, watched hippos munching on the grass around her cottage.

Along with 11 other

Earthwatch volunteers, Whitehead worked under the guidance of three scientists, who were conducting several research projects. Two were working as

advisors to the Kenyan government, studying management of the lake and fish populations.

The third was studying the natural food supply in Hell's Gate National Park, five miles south of Elsamere, to determine whether the quantity and quality was sufficient to sustain the park's larger animals.

Whitehead was able to work with each scientist for three-to-four days. She spent two days counting zebras, giraffes, warthogs, impalas, gazelles, klipspringers and other wonderful wildlife. "Earthwatch is a way of doing something worthwhile for the indigenous people of these often underprivileged countries, and helping with environmental concerns," she said. "It's also a

way to spend a wonderfully different holiday, where you actually get to know the country and its people."

Each year, Earthwatch has more than 500 projects going on all over the world — even archaeological digs. Whitehead is already planning her next excursions. She intends to be part of a group going to Alaska, and is hoping to make a trip to a Costa Rican rain forest.

You don't need a college degree to participate in an Earthwatch expedition. Volunteers come from all walks of life, and all ages. Anyone interested in learning more about Earthwatch projects can call 1-800-776-0188 or, the U.S. Field Representative in Miami, Patricia Lawson at 856-6977.



Leopard mothers flick their tails to warn kittens of impending danger.

SCIENCE LITERACY

INFORMATION ABOUT ANIMALS, AND TIPS TO MAKE YOUR ZOO VISITS MORE INTERESTING

Zebras are among the most easily recognized of all African animals. Nearly everyone knows this boldly striped “horse.” What many people do not know is that there are different kinds, or species (SPEE-seez) of zebra. Plains zebras are found in the eastern and central parts of Africa, mountain zebras are found in the mountains of southern Africa. Grevy zebras are found in parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia in East-central Africa.

Zebras are related to horses and both species share some important characteristics. Both have long legs and strong muscles to help them run fast. They also have long necks and heads so they can reach the grass without bending their legs. Horses and zebras also have only one toe on each foot which is covered by a very thick toenail called a hoof. The hooves of horses and zebras are made of the same material as your fingernails, keratin (KER-a-tin).

The feature that makes zebras so familiar is the bold pattern of black and white stripes on their coats. People often ask if the zebra is black with white stripes, or, white with black stripes. No one knows for sure. Zoologists are also not sure what purpose the stripes serve. Some feel the patterns are camouflage. The black and white stripes may serve as “disruptive coloration” to make it difficult for predators, such as lions, to pick one animal out of the herd. When viewed from a distance, through heat waves, the stripes make the animal almost invisible. Others think



Telling the difference between a Grant's zebra (above) and a Grevy zebra (below) is easy, once you know what to look for.

the black and white stripes may help the animals to regulate their temperature because black stripes should absorb heat while white ones should reflect it.

One thing that is known about the zebra's stripes is that no two animals have exactly the same pattern. A zebra's stripes are as

distinctive as human fingerprints. A veteran zebra-watcher can identify individual animals by their stripe pattern. Even beginners can tell one kind of zebra from another, if they know what to look for.

The next time you visit the zoo, pay careful attention to the stripes on the two species of zebras. The

Grant's zebras (one of the plains zebra species), have wide stripes that continue under the belly. The Grevy zebras are larger, have bigger ears, and have stripes that are narrower and stop at the belly. See if you can identify each species without looking at the signs or your map.



TOUCAN TRADER'S CHOICE

The magic of Africa is coming to Miami, as the Toucan Trader Gift Shop hosts the Second Annual African Festival Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, July 25 and 26, 1992, at PAWS.

The festival will feature a variety of African handcrafts, educational lectures, and live African music. "All Night Media," popular with the children last year, will present a program with children's stamp pads and ink.

Joining in the activities will be master carver Jonathan Kioko, who hand-carves sculptures of magnificent jungle beasts from Kisii-stone.

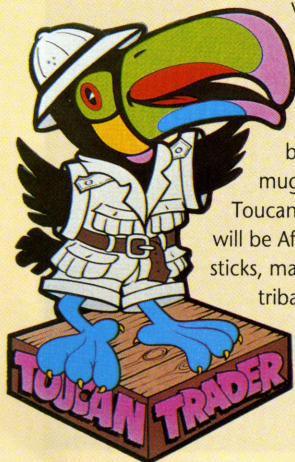
Throughout the weekend, Kioko will demonstrate the techniques used by Akamba tribesmen in carving Kisii stone (also known as soapstone). Using the heritage of the skilled tribal craftsmen who carved before him, Kioko will transform chunks of rough, ordinary-looking rock into: a leopard, a rhino, a hippo, a curio box.

The process is fascinating to watch. One elephant might take the shy, skillful Kioko two days to create. No electrical tools are used; only a chisel and a rough file. Sandpaper achieves the sleek, smooth finish.

"There has been a tremendous response to these beautiful items in the Toucan Trader Gift Shop," said Marlene Hawkins, gift shop manager. "All the colors in the stone are natural. No two pieces are alike."

The real beauty of the art of Kisii carving is in the hands of the skilled carver — and in the stone itself. The natural markings and color characteristic of genuine Kisii-stone cause slight variations in the carvings that make each one unique. The Kisii-stone carvings on display, and for sale at the Toucan Trader Gift Shop,

vary in color from pink to white to grey, and include a wide variety of animals, boxes, bowls and mugs. Also at the Toucan Trader Gift Shop will be African walking sticks, masks, and traditional tribal beads, jewelry and clothing.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE KISII STONE JULY 25 AND 26

In the district of Kisii in Western Kenya, hilltop quarries yield a soft, marbled, rose-to-white soapstone, which has long been in use locally. Soapstone pots were once used for storing fat and for pipes; bowls and other domestic items were fashioned from the hand-quarried stone. Face markings of soapstone powder are still applied today for funerals, circumcision rites and festivals. Each village keeps a large stone to be used in preparation for such ceremonies. Sometimes, soapstone is bartered with neighboring tribes in exchange for cattle or other trade.

Around the time of World War I, the Kisii began to make figurines out of soapstone. Mzee Moseti Orina, one of the first such artists, has taught carving in Kisii since 1918. Missionaries and a few tourists provided the first market for the carvings. Shortly after World War II, a soapstone carving shop was opened in Kisii town by an Indian entrepreneur. Soon, other such shops opened in Kisumu Kitale, Eldoret, Nakuru and Kericho. By the late 1960s, soapstone carvings could be purchased all over East Africa and in various places overseas.

The first carvings were simple, nearly-abstract animals, often copies from book illustrations. More realistic animal figurines appeared next, and more recently, numbers of useful household items have been added. Ashtrays, candlesticks, vases and mugs are unadorned in a smooth pearl-pink or blackened soapstone. The animals have a geometric balance and smooth, usually undetailed, surface. Lately, carvings of human figures have appeared on the market. Images of pipe smokers or water bearers are amazingly intricate considering the difficulty of working soapstone in such small sizes of four to five inches high.

An assortment of Kisii stone figurines are available at the Toucan Trader gift shop.



July/August 1992

APE AFFINITY

from page 2

the staff at Crandon Park Zoo.

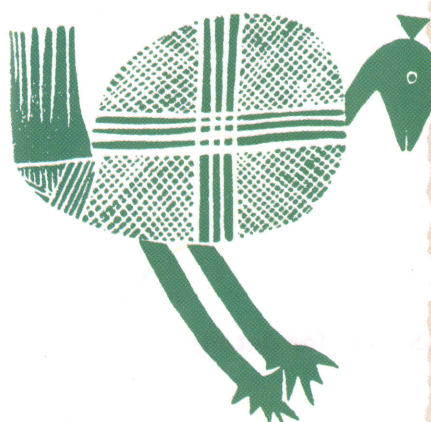
While Metrozoo was being built — and he waited for the completion of the chimpanzee and gorilla area — Krouch worked in the quarantine and Asian areas. He spent three years as the zoo's night keeper.

Krouch has worked with just about every animal at Metrozoo except the elephants. "Primates are my greatest interest," he said. "They are also quite a challenge. You always have to be on your toes. Some of the chimps even check the door at night after we lock up. At the Crandon Park Zoo, one chimp could open a lock with a key."

As in any family, there are some mischievous characters. In Metrozoo's chimp population, their names are Abbey and Kito. Together, Abbey and Kito sometimes throw rocks at Metrozoo visitors. "They get grounded, just like human children who misbehave," said Krouch.

Two of the most popular residents are the infants, Amelia and Niger, who play all day. "Having the babies on display has really sparked up the chimp area," Krouch admits. "People love them and sometimes spend one or two hours just watching their antics."

Although the chimps at Metrozoo are a well-cared-for lot, the species in general is in danger. The world's chimpanzee population, once in the millions, has been reduced to 175,000, classifying them as an endangered species.



PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

(Please observe age limits)

Summer Zoo Camp

(Age 4–grade 6)

Zoo campers will learn the many tricks animals use to survive in the wild. Craft projects, films, stories, games, and visits with animals are part of this exciting summer experience. A few places in Summer Zoo camp are still available.

For information and registration call: The Education Department (255-5551)

Air Scouts, Zoolnn, and Mini Camp programs will return in the fall. Watch for announcements and schedules.



Zoological Supervisor Mike Gerlach demonstrates roping skills for zoo campers.

FOR ADULTS ONLY

(No children, please!)

FIU at Metrozoo

This popular course for teachers will return in the fall. The class meets weekly at Metrozoo to learn about modern zoos and wildlife. The program includes

behind-the-scenes activities. The course is offered in conjunction with FIU's College of Education and can be used for recertification. Registration and fee payments are made through Dr. Ed Reichbach at FIU

(348-2561). There is a charge for materials. Thursdays, 5:00–7:00 p.m., beginning September 10, 1992



Programs may be cancelled without sufficient enrollment. Please call for reservations.

REGISTER HERE

Please send registration form and a check or money order with a self-addressed envelope to:

Education Department, Zoological Society of Florida
12400 S.W. 152 Street, Miami, Florida 33177-1499 • (305) 255-5551

Participant's name
 Street address
 City State Zip
 Home phone Business phone
 program(s) Date Fee \$
 Date Fee \$

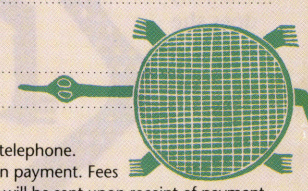
Member membership # Non-Member
 Mastercard Visa American Express
 Expiration Date (important!)
 Card # Signature
TOTAL \$

For children's programs, please complete the following:

Parent's name
 Student's age Grade in school (as of Sept. 1991)

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 is contingent upon payment. Fees may be paid by check, money order, cash, or Visa/Mastercard/American Express. A confirmation letter will be sent upon receipt of payment.

Cancellations: All fees are non-refundable. Cancellation notices must be received at least 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.



MEET THE ZOO CREW

Ron Magill, Assistant Curator

Martha Thaden has been a vital member of Metrozoo's animal science staff for almost a decade. She started as a zookeeper in 1983. Prior to joining us, she was a keeper at the Louisville Zoo in Kentucky where she gained substantial knowledge of hoofstock, felines, primates and reptiles.

Born and raised in Colorado, Martha's first love was Arabian horses. She dedicated herself to training and showing them from the time she was 10 years old through her college years. Prior to her employment at the Louisville Zoo, she was the manager of a prestigious Arabian horse breeding facility, where she supervised 13 grooms and dealt with everything from artificial insemination to assisting with foaling procedures.

When she arrived at Metrozoo, Martha was assigned to the quarantine area. This section of the zoo is very challenging not only because it serves as a "revolving door" for a variety of animals arriving at or leaving the zoo, it also serves as a vital behind-the-scenes breeding area for animals including the rhinos and tapirs. Following a great learning experience in quarantine, Martha moved to the African exhibit area where she

was the primary keeper responsible for black rhinos, bongos, and several other animals. In 1989, she came full circle and returned to quarantine, where she was promoted to Lead Keeper. Not only does she

supervise quarantine, she is also responsible for most of the reptiles in the zoo, including the crocodiles and tortoises.

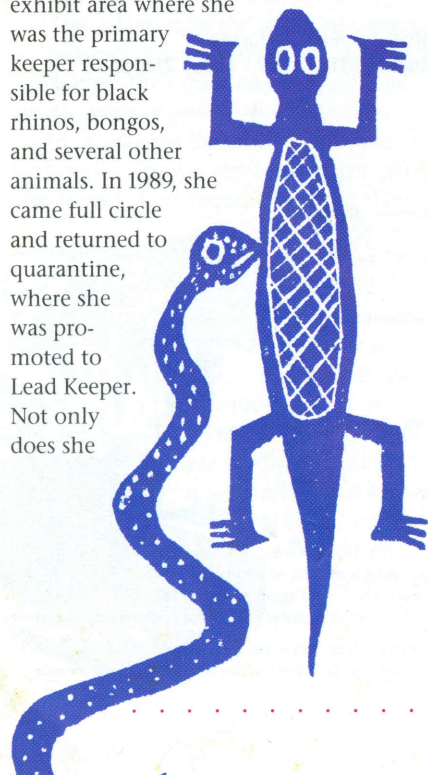
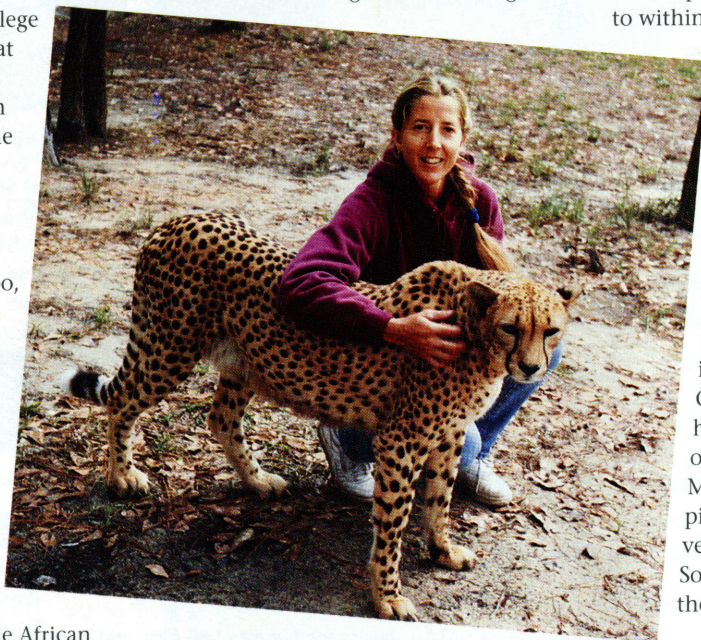
Martha's greatest asset is her "animal sense." This is her unique ability to work around the most unpredictable and delicate animals while being able to anticipate their reactions. This rare quality cannot be taught and is part of what makes her contributions to Metrozoo invaluable.

Martha feels her greatest challenge

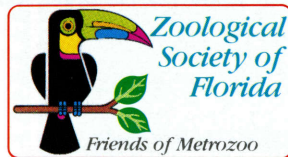
(after finding a good rake) is maintaining and improving the rhino and tapir breeding program in her area. She has already done a great job — both a rhino and tapir were born this past season, and more are on the way! Martha is so in touch with the animals in her care, she was able to predict the birth of the last tapir to within one day! A tapir gestation

period can be over 400 days and no one else on staff had as close a guess. That prediction (which was not luck but meticulous observation) says a lot about this very special keeper.

Martha's favorite animals are rhinos, as evidenced by her personalized license tag which reads "RHINOZ." Her favorite individual animal at the zoo is Cora, a female black rhino who has given birth to several offspring at Crandon Park and Metrozoo. "She has spunk and pizzaz and she is so clever. I'm very lucky to work with her." Sorry Martha, we all feel Cora is the lucky one.



Toucan Talk is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Zoological Society of Florida, a non-profit organization supporting Miami Metrozoo. Executive Vice President: Glenn W. Ekey • Publications Coordinator: Silvia Gonzalez-Conn • Editor: Louise Mercurio • Design: Shank Design



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

Printed on recycled paper 

Contributors:
Melanie Calvo, Marjorie Marie Gross,
Marlene Hawkins, Judy Jones,
Karen Maciag, Margaret Whitehead

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 4358
Miami, Florida

Become a volunteer at Metrozoo! Call 255-5551 for details