

TOUCAN TALK

A TRIP TO THE ZOO THAT COMES TO YOU!

MEERKATS
ARE COMING!



**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!**

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ZEBRA ON EARTH**

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Cover: Grevy's zebra
Photo by: Ron Magill

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Toucan Talk

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CELEBRATING POPS:

Oldest Grevy's Zebra on Earth!

Story and Photos by
Ron Magill



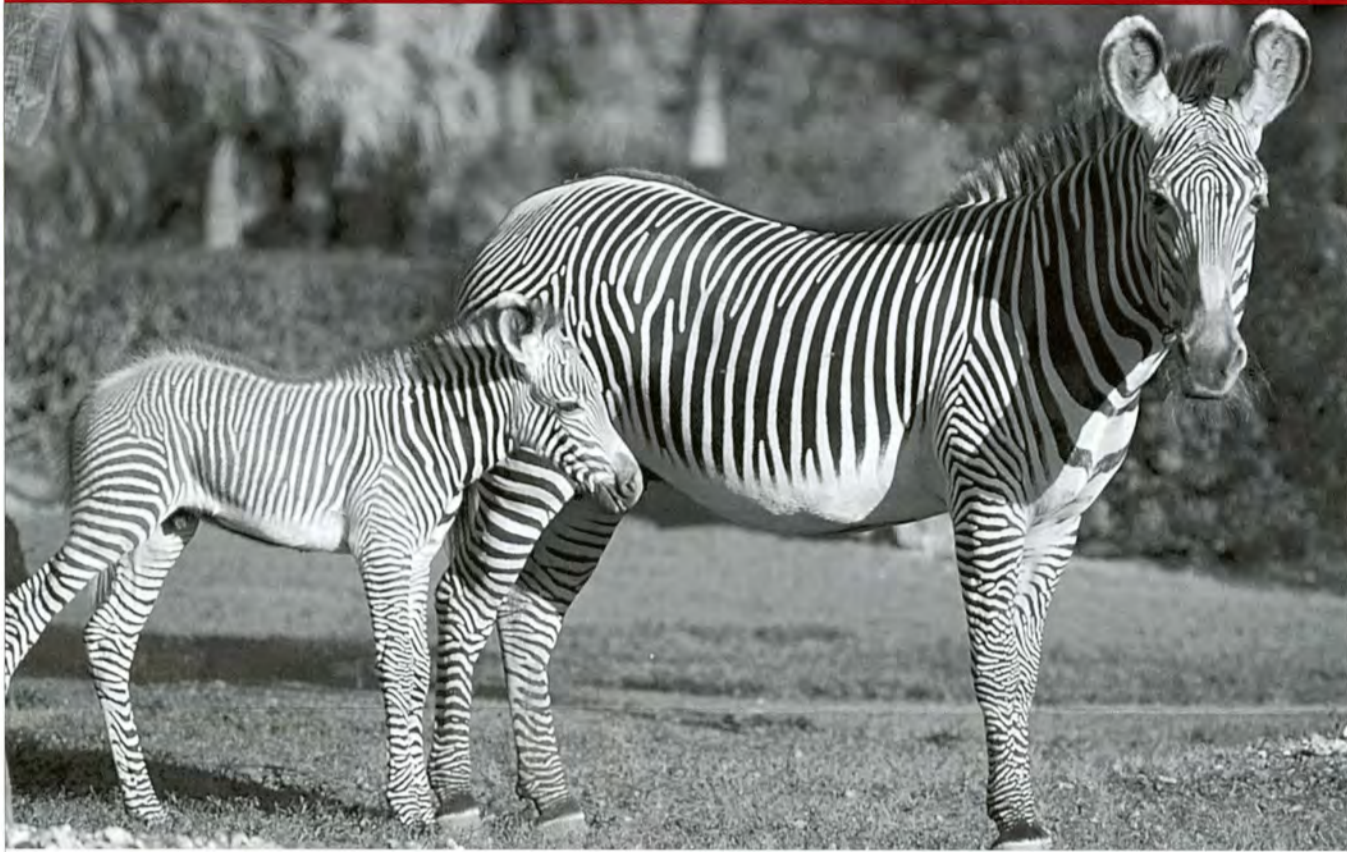
Most people may not realize that the majority of animals in today's zoos (well over 90% of all mammals) were born in captivity. These animals are the products of carefully monitored captive breeding programs managed with the cooperation of zoos around the world. In rare instances, "founder" animals, which represent an enduring key to the overall health of a captive population, still remain in zoo collections. Simply put, founder animals were usually born in the wild, and their bloodlines serve as the foundation to the captive gene pool of that particular species.

Metrozoo is fortunate to have several founder animals in its collection including "Pops," our stallion Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*).

He is one of only three remaining founder Grevy's zebras listed in the AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP) inventory that includes 204 animals. In January of 2000, Pops will be 30 years old making him the oldest Grevy's zebra in captivity, along with a female from Tucson, Arizona. Taking into consideration that animals such as zebras live longer in captivity than in the wild, it is fairly safe to assume that Pops is the oldest living Grevy's zebra on earth!

The Grevy's zebra is one of several species of zebras – all of which are found on the African continent. This type of zebra differs physically from other species by having very thin stripes that stop short of the all-white belly. The Grevy's zebra also has a rather large

Continued on page 3



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head with disproportionately large ears, giving this species an almost mule-like appearance. With these characteristic features in mind, Metrozoo visitors can distinguish between our Grevy's zebras and our Grant's zebras (*Equus burchelli*). Behaviorally, the Grevy's differs from other zebras in that they tend to be more solitary in the wild and somewhat calmer in captivity. They are found in the more arid regions of northern Kenya and are classified as endangered due, in part, to hunting for their striking coat.

The SSP is a cooperative population management and conservation program for selected species or rare, threatened, and endangered animals in North American zoos and aquariums. Each SSP manages the breeding of a species in order to maintain a healthy

and self-sustaining captive population that is genetically diverse and demographically stable. In simple terms, it is a computer dating service designed to produce the healthiest babies for a long-term captive population. Maintaining a healthy captive population is essential to the survival of any species facing the threat of extinction.

Pops has played a major role in the success of the Grevy's zebra SSP throughout his lifetime. At Metrozoo, he has sired 15 offspring – many of which have gone on to produce babies of their own. Even at his very advanced age, he has been observed breeding on a regular basis. Pops is an inspiration to us all, and gives credence to the old saying, "Age is mind over matter – if you don't mind, it don't matter!"

STAFF PROFILE

Chico Vazquez Keeper of the Year

Chico Vazquez, elected the "Keeper of the Year" by his co-workers, has been working at Metrozoo since 1992. He works in the Lion-Sable Antelope area and is responsible for the care of lions, onagers, Cape hunting dogs, Himalayan black bears, Sable antelope, and Grevy's zebras.

When asked to identify a favorite animal among those in his care, he responds, "I have no favorite animal, but I like the lions a lot because they are very playful, like domestic cats, yet they are very dangerous to work with." Taking care of young animals that have been rejected by their mothers is also of great interest to Chico. He says it is an extremely rewarding experience.

Chico gained early hands-on experience with animals as a child in Cuba. At a very young age, Chico enjoyed looking for wild animals including snakes, raccoons, and opossums in the woods near his home.

When not working at the zoo or spending time with his wife and four children, Chico enjoys the great outdoors. He loves camping, fishing, SCUBA diving, and, if he has the opportunity, skiing in the winter.

If you would like to meet Chico, he is available to answer your questions at 2:00 p.m. in front of the Himalayan black bear exhibit, where the bears eagerly await him everyday.



Photo: Ricardo Stamos

RECENT ARRIVALS

July, August 1999

BIRTHS

- 1.0 Impala
- 0.2 Gerenuk
- 4.1 Greater kudu

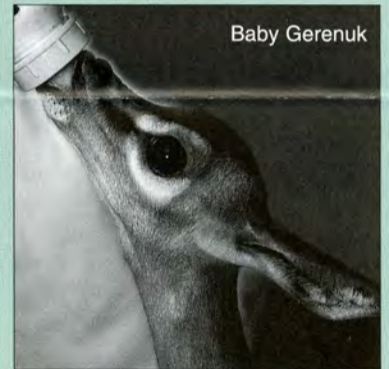
ACQUISITIONS

- 1.0 Grant's zebra
- 0.0.4 Wood ducks

HATCHINGS

- 0.0.3 Crowned cranes
- 0.0.10 African spurred tortoises
- 1.0.5 Red-footed tortoises

- *1.0 = Male
- 0.1 = Female
- 0.0.1 = Unknown gender



Baby Gerenuk

Photo: Ron Magill

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!

SAVE THE DATE!...
MEMBER HOLIDAY BREAKFAST

Celebrate the holidays with your ZSF Family. Come join us for a holiday breakfast before the zoo opens.

December 18th
8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
RSVP to the Membership Department
305-255-5551

WISH LIST

Thanks to all of you who have responded to our previous Wish List. Your gifts are greatly appreciated!

- Mowers
- Weed-eaters
- Flight kennels
- Pole saws
- Chain saws
- Long-handled dip nets, or pool skimmer nets
- Long pieces of heavy-duty PVC pipe, 12" in diameter
- Hemp rope
- Hand tools – drills, hammers, etc.
- New or used softballs (for use in animal enrichment activities)

Please bring donations to the ZSF front desk or call (305) 255-5551 to arrange for a pick-up.

REPTILEMANIA

Ages 7 & up

Are reptiles really cold-blooded? Do all lizards have legs? To find out the answers to these and many other interesting questions, join us for a hands-on experience with these slithery, scaly creatures.

Date: Saturday, November 13, 1999
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Cost: Adult Members \$8.00
 Adult Non-Members \$10.00
 Child Members \$4.00
 Child Non-Members \$6.00

MONKEYS IN THE MIRROR

Ages 7 & up

Animals come in many different shapes and sizes. In this unique program you will learn just how similar we are to our non-human relatives. So join us for an exciting morning, refreshments included.

Date: Saturday, November 20, 1999
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Cost: Adult Members \$8.00
 Adult Non-Members \$10.00
 Child Members \$4.00
 Child Non-Members \$6.00

WINTER BREAK CAMP

Ages 4-12

School is out for winter break, so why not spend your time off with us? Our mini Zoofari Camp is full of wildlife adventures that are sure to please even the most curious of young minds.

SESSION A
Date: December 20-22, 1999

SESSION B
Date: December 27-29, 1999

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Cost: Members \$130.00
 (for sessions A & B)
 Non-Members \$150.00
 (for sessions A & B)

TEACHER WORK DAYS

SCHOOL'S OUT... ZOO'S IN

Mini Camp Adventure Passport Series

Our mini-day camps are full of excitement and wonder! Don't miss our passport to the world of the wild. We have a series of scheduled stops to discover animals from around the world.

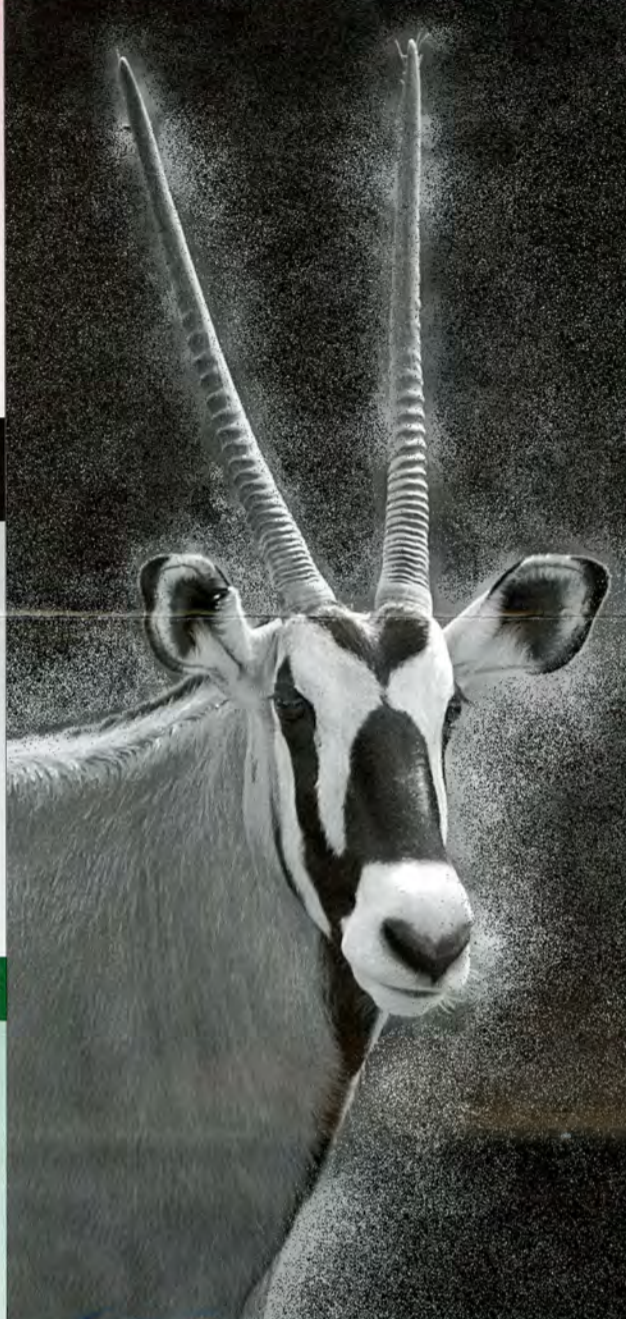
DEPARTURE DATES:	TIMES:
November 11, 1999	9:00a.m.-4:30p.m.
January 28, 1999	9:00a.m.-4:30p.m.
March 31, 1999	9:00a.m.-4:30p.m.
April 21, 1999	9:00a.m.-4:30p.m.

COST:
Individual departure dates
 Members \$45.00
 Non-Members \$55.00

TOUCAN TALK'S ANIMAL SERIES CONTEST

GEMSBOK

(Oryx gazella)
Status: Endangered



We are happy to present the sixth issue of "Toucan Talk's Animal Series" in which we feature the Gemsbok. In each of the past five issues we presented information on a different animal. Read and collect all six issues, and make sure to answer the contest questions in our upcoming edition. The winner will enjoy a special "Behind-the-Scenes Tour" with Metrozoo's Ron Magill.

The very long, straight horns of both sexes mark the gemsbok silhouette across the African landscape. Measuring two to five feet in length, the horns are used for defense when the head is lowered, making the sharp tips point forward. Gemsbok range throughout Africa and exploit a wide variety of habitat types including arid plains, desert, rocky hillsides, and thick brush.

Weighing in at 220 to 450 pounds, the gemsbok is one of the larger antelopes. Its color ranges from cream and brown to gray, with striking markings of black and brown, and a mane extending from the head to the shoulders. The tail is tufted, and males also have a tuft of hair on the throat. The young are brown, with markings only on the tail and knees.

Gemsbok feed on grasses and shrubs and, under conditions of inadequate rain, can obtain sufficient moisture from sources such as melons and succulent bulbs.

Females of this species give birth to one calf between September and January after a gestation period of approximately 290 days. Weaning takes place after 4 and a half months. Their lifespan has been estimated at 20 years in the wild.

REGISTRATION FORM

Space is limited for all our education programs...so call (305) 255-5551 and register early to secure your spot.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____
 I'm a Member: Membership # _____ I'm not a Member _____
For children's programs, complete the following:
 Parent's or Guardian's Name: _____
 Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____
Method of Payment (Please do NOT send cash):
 Credit card holders may register by phone.
 Check American Express MasterCard VISA
 Card _____ Expiration Date: _____
 Customer Signature: _____

Program/Session	Name of Participant	Age/Grade	Fee

Mail this completed form with your payment to:
 Education Department / Zoological Society of Florida
 12400 SW 152nd Street
 Miami, FL 33177-1499

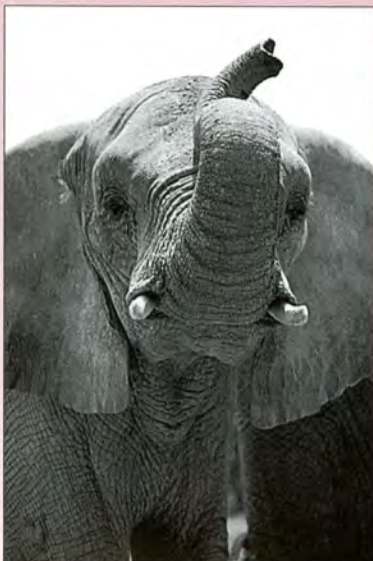
TOTAL: \$

All program registrations subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Photo: Ricardo Stanoss

ASK PEGGY!

ZSF



Dear Peggy:
Why do people keep hunting the ivory tusks of elephants?
 -Joshua, 8 years old

Dear Joshua:
 For many years, humans have used the ivory from elephant tusks to make fine jewelry and works of art. For this reason, ivory is considered very valuable, and many people who lack alternative means of supporting themselves have made money by selling ivory. Some people hunt elephants and, unfortunately, many of my relatives have given their lives to become someone's jewelry. What I need my friends to remember is that the most valuable work of art is an elephant roaming Africa, proudly displaying its tusks.

Your friend, Peggy

Dear Peggy:
If I come to see you, will you take me for a ride on your back, or is it another elephant that does that job?

-Your friend, Lauren

Dear Lauren:
 Here at Metrozoo my job as an exhibit elephant is to educate and entertain the public. Occasionally, my keepers will show off my many talents to the visitors. Although not at the present time, in the past Metrozoo had guest elephants stay with us and give rides to the public. I really do enjoy having people come and see me. I hope to have many more friends like you write to me.

Your friend, Peggy

Twenty-two-year-old Peggy, one of our African elephants, is answering any animal questions our young readers may have. Peggy will select the two best questions to be printed in the next *Toucan Talk*, and the children will receive a photo of Peggy herself, along with an autographed copy of her answer.

Questions may be sent by mail to: Ask Peggy • c/o Zoological Society of Florida • 12400 SW 152 ST. • Miami, Florida 33177

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Members' Photo Corner

Thank you for submitting the excellent pictures! Keep them coming. You may send up to five of your best shots (slides or prints no larger than 8" x 10") along with your name, address, and phone number clearly printed on the back of each picture. Submission grants the Zoological Society of Florida the right to publish selected photographs in the *Toucan Talk* newsletter. Pictures will not be returned, so please do not send originals. Just ask for an entry form at the Zoological Society of Florida building when you come to the zoo!



Wonderful sloth bear family shot by Richard Arnold

We thank Richard Arnold for contributing additional photos to our animal card collection.

MetroBOOOOOOO!

October 30 and 31
 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

MetroBoo! is back with fun and safe trick-or-treating for kids. There will be face-painting, a costume contest, activities and candy, the Magic of David Darkstone, music by Billy Bones, and more. Don't miss it!



JUNGLE JOG

RETURNS TO METROZOO

Get your running or walking shoes ready! After a long hiatus, Jungle Jog returns on February 20, 2000. Join us next year for a 5-K run and fun walk benefiting the Coral Gables Rotary Club, Miami Metrozoo, and the Zoological Society of Florida.

Look for more information in our January/February issue.



Pokémon League at Miami Metrozoo



POKÉMON LEAGUE AT METROZOO

Every Sunday from September 19, 1999 through December 12, from 2 - 4 p.m. Trade, play, and earn points with scavenger hunts searching for Pokémons.

For more information call 305-255-5551.

GIVE A GIFT THAT LASTS A WHOLE YEAR AND SAVE 50%!*

During this holiday season, the Zoological Society of Florida is offering Members a special reduced price on Gift Memberships when you share the magic of Metrozoo with family and friends. To save, simply purchase the first Gift Membership at the regular price, and buy a second Gift Membership of equal or lesser value at half-price.

Our special price offer ends December 31, 1999, so hurry and order your Gift Membership today. We'll send the "Metrozoo Gift for You" card directly to you (or the gift recipient) with space to write a special message.

Why give an ordinary gift when you can give that special someone the entire Zoo?

GIFT MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Introduce someone NEW to Metrozoo! If you need additional Gift Membership Enrollment Forms, Contact the Zoological Society office at 305-255-5551.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: Annual membership for 2 adults and all children or grandchildren 18 and younger living at the same address.

DUAL MEMBERSHIP: Annual membership for two persons living at the same address.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: Annual membership for one adult.

FIRST GIFT MEMBERSHIP-PAY FULL PRICE:

FAMILY \$45 DUAL \$40 INDIVIDUAL \$29

MEMBERS

NAME (ADULT #1): _____

NAME (SELECT ADULT #2 OR GUEST): _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ PHONE: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

GIFT CARD MESSAGE: _____

BUY A SECOND GIFT MEMBERSHIP OF EQUAL OR LESSER VALUE AT HALF PRICE:

FAMILY \$22.50 DUAL \$20.00 INDIVIDUAL \$14.50

NAME (ADULT #1): _____

NAME (SELECT ADULT #2 OR GUEST): _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ PHONE: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

GIFT CARD MESSAGE: _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIP _____

CHECK (PAYABLE TO THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF FLORIDA) AMERICAN EXPRESS MASTERCARD VISA

CARD NUMBER: _____ EXPIRATION DATE: _____

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE: _____ PRINT CARDHOLDER NAME: _____
(Not valid without signature)

MEMBERSHIP(S) GIVEN BY:

MEMBER I.D. #: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

STREET: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

MAIL OR FAX TO:
MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT • ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF FLORIDA
12400 SW 152 STREET • MIAMI, FL 33177 • (FAX) 305-255-7126

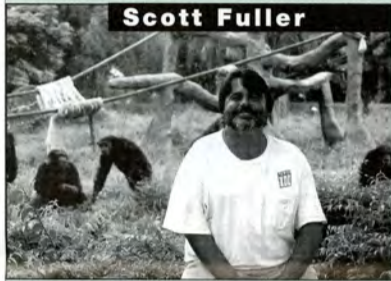
*NOTE: Please allow two weeks for processing. May not be combined with any other promotional offers. MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE.

Behind-the-Scenes Keeper Series

Story and Photos by Carmen T. Fernandez

Primates

Among the many mammals on exhibit here at Metrozoo, we are proud to provide a home to a diversity of primate species. Members of our non-human primate community include apes, monkeys, and prosimians. Of course, their human observers and caretakers are primates too! Scott Fuller,



Scott Fuller

Kurt Manchenn, and Ariel Owens are members of a zoo-keeping team devoted to the care and well-being of their non-human primate counterparts.

In order to insure good health, the

behavior and activity of each animal is monitored on a daily basis. The primate keepers begin their day with a survey of all the animals in their care. Since Metrozoo is home to a large primate population, this is a great responsibility. Metrozoo's primate collection includes 4 white-handed gibbons, 3 siamangs, 6 ringtail lemurs, 2 black lemurs, 2 red-ruffed lemurs, 5 orangutans, 4 gorillas, 11 chimpanzees, and 6 colobus monkeys. With the exception of the orangutans, all of these animals spend the day in their outdoor enclosures. Two separate groups of orangutans take turns alternating days between indoor and outdoor exhibits. After the animals move into their outdoor enclosures for the day, their night-houses must be thoroughly cleaned. The lemur island is also raked on a routine basis, and all moats are regularly cleaned.

All of the primates are fed twice daily. With each meal they receive high-protein diets and plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. The kitchen staff prepares and separates a specific amount of food according to the nutritional needs of each animal. During the preparation of each meal, dietary requirements related to individual health status and developmental stage are taken into account. For example, out of consideration for the infant gib-



Ariel Owens

bon and siamang, food must be cut into very small pieces. Taste preferences also play an important role in diet preparation. For example, the chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas clearly prefer mangos to other types of fruit. They also enjoy an occasional box of Cheerios or Wheaties.

Food-related enrichment is often provided and includes browse harvested from trees that grow on Metrozoo grounds. In an effort to prevent boredom, keepers like to hide food within all of the primate exhibits. Since in their natural habitats primates spend a great deal of time searching for food, this enrichment technique encourages the expression of natural behaviors in a captive environment. For example, many primates are given logs that have been drilled to create deep holes that are ideal for hiding raisins and other small food items for them to find. Treats for the white-handed gibbons are placed in a hanging basket to encourage them to "search" for their food. In addition to these foraging challenges, the primates are also provided with boxes, cardboard flats, pieces of burlap, empty grain bags, and ice treats on a regular basis.

"Orangutans are skilled tool-users," Ariel Owens says. "They like to 'fish' with burlap to bring otherwise inaccessible objects within reach." They even attempt to pick the locks that secure their gates. Sometimes they knock down trees and have been seen digging up water pipes. Working with orangutans demands a great deal of patience, even more than is required when working with chimpanzees and gorillas. According to Ariel, "You must realize that these animals are just about as intelligent as you are - they figure things out. And never underestimate their strength. They are very strong."

But, of course, primate-keeping isn't all fun and games. There are occasional animal injuries to report. When it is necessary to administer medications, the taste must be disguised in some way. Successful strategies include crushing pills and sprinkling the powdered medication on a favorite food, or mixing it with Cheesewhiz!

After a long day's work, Ariel, Scott, and Kurt fill out night reports and say goodnight to their primate friends.

KENNEL TRAINING BLACK DUIKERS

Story by Sandi Redlich, Zookeeper

Photo by Dolora Batchelor

Have you ever tried to teach a dog a new trick? Well, if you have, then you know that it can take time, patience, and lots of treats! Those are all things that zookeepers here at Metrozoo needed last December when trying to kennel train two black duikers (*Cephalophus niger*), a species of antelope commonly found throughout Africa. These are among the smallest species of duikers, averaging 20 inches in height and weighing 25-30 pounds.

The basic idea was to train two adult males to go inside a medium-sized air kennel in order to relocate them to the Bongo exhibit. In the past, the animals were tranquilized, netted, or hand-grabbed. However, these strategies proved to be difficult for the staff and animals, and we hoped kennel training would make the relocation a much less stressful event. Duikers often experience high levels of stress in new situations, and we knew that patience on the keepers' part would be a crucial factor for a successful move.

Luckily, the duikers were housed in separate holding areas making it easier for keepers to work with them individually and monitor their progress separately. Neither duiker had ever been inside a kennel and probably hadn't ever seen one. A kennel was placed in each holding pen, and the duikers were given several days to adjust to the new and foreign object. The kennel door was always left open, and keepers eventually began putting "bait" such as leaves, carrots, apples, and bananas inside. It took a few days for the duikers to respond, but soon the lure of food intensified their curiosity. Keepers were also making an effort to stand inside the holding pens with the animals several times each day so that they would adjust to the nearby presence of people. This was necessary because, once the duikers were comfortable enough to walk inside the kennels, a keeper would be required to close the door behind them. Transportation would have to take place immediately after capture, otherwise the animals might become too frightened inside of the carrier and never go near a kennel again. If this were to occur, all progress would be lost.

One of the duikers, Wyatt, eventually became comfortable enough to stand with his head and two front feet inside the kennel. Whenever keepers saw this, they would tap him slightly from behind, just firmly enough to get him all the way inside the kennel. This usually forced him in all the way, but he would immediately bolt back out. Three weeks after training had begun, Wyatt



actually walked inside the kennel on his own in an effort to obtain some treats. He remained inside for about 4 seconds, but as soon as the food was gone, he quickly bolted out. On one occasion a keeper saw the other duiker, Walter, standing inside the kennel, but as soon as Walter noticed the keeper, he ran out.

It took an entire month before the duikers entered the kennels and allowed keepers to close the doors. They were quickly transferred to their new paddock where they now live with four African antelopes called bongos.

The next time you pass the Bongo exhibit be sure to stay on the lookout for Wyatt and Walter scurrying about the paddock. The most rewarding of it all is watching the animals resting under a tree, grazing on grass, and seeing black duikers and bongos standing side by side.

OUR GRATEFUL THANKS

•To Publix Super Markets Charities; Miami Jai Alai; Paul and Maxine Frohring Foundation; Dunsbaugh-Dalton Foundation; American Bankers Insurance Group; Weil, Gotshal & Manges; Union Planters Bank; Ryder System, Inc.; Cobb Family Foundation; and the Chingos Foundation for their generous support of the mission and work of the Zoological Society of Florida;

•To the American Express Philanthropic Program; SunTrust Banks of Florida; Peacock Foundation, Inc.; and Herbert W. Hoover Foundation for their kindness in providing funds for the Children's Zoo and ZSF's Volunteer Services Programs;

•To the W. George & Ethel Kennedy Family Foundation; Folke H. Peterson Charitable Foundation; Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs for graciously supporting ZSF's conservation education programs; and

•To the Sara H. Woodruff Foundation for a generous donation for Metrozoo's Aviary.



From left: Carmen Millares, Community Affairs Manager, Publix Super Markets, Inc. Miami Region; Glenn Ekey, ZSF Executive Director; Lee Brunson, Director of Community Affairs, Publix Super Markets, Inc.

ZOO BABIES UPDATE



Photo: Barbara Crutchfield

The littlest additions to the lesser ape families at Metrozoo include an infant siamang and an infant white-handed gibbon. We are happy to report that both are doing well and will be swinging through the trees in no time!

TOUCAN TRADER

REMEMBER US FOR YOUR HOLIDAY GIFTS!

- Buy unique gifts for the holidays
- Save 10%
- Support Metrozoo



As a ZSF member, you do all three when you purchase your holiday presents at the Toucan Trader gift shop. Start early. Start now. Come by and see us for your holiday shopping.

ADOPT-AN-ANIMAL

Receive a FREE T-shirt when you adopt "The Sloth Bear Family" or any other animal from Metrozoo's collection for only \$50.

Your adoption package includes:

- T-shirt with your adopted animal's photo on it (please indicate size)
- Adoption Certificate, suitable for framing
- Exciting facts on your animal
- Adopt-An-Animal auto decal

So don't delay!
Call Elizabeth Livingston at (305) 255-5551.

This offer ends December 17, 1999.



Call now at: (305) 255-5551 to order your adoption package.

METROZOO SCAVENGER HUNT



Thank you all very much for responding. Here is one more chance to win a great zoo prize! Find the answers by looking around the animals' exhibits. Mail or bring your answers to the ZSF reception desk no later than December 15. You may also mail your answers, properly numbered, to the Zoological Society of Florida: 12400 S.W. 152 St. Miami, FL 33177. Good luck!



Kimberly Berkley loves her prize!

- 1) What is the gorilla's extended family called?
- 2) What caused the number of anoa's to decrease in the wild?
- 3) Which primates are considered the aerial acrobats of the world?
- 4) How did the African spurred tortoise get its name?
- 5) What animal kneels down and uses its teeth to dig and locate food?
- 6) Metrozoo grows trees of _____ especially to feed the _____.
- 7) This young lizard is the world's largest, and hatched its egg at Metrozoo in 1998.
- 8) What is the main diet of the small-clawed river otters?
- 9) What Metrozoo exhibit resembles the African savanna with several species of animals sharing the same space?
- 10) Is the pygmy hippo a diurnal animal?

ANSWERS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

TOUCAN TALK



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