



**JULY
2024**

ZOO



Two female ostrich joined the collection on the 2nd July. They are currently held off show but will join the main collection after their quarantine period.

On the 6th July, a male great grey owl joined the collection from Noah's Ark Zoo Farm. He was mixed with the female off show at the end of the month and all went well for them to return on show at the start of August.

Following completion of the off show reptile facility, we have imported a number of new species this month which will serve quarantine and then move on show.

- Two black tree monitors joined the collection from Cotswolds Wildlife Park and Crocodiles of the World on the 6th July.
- Four Philippine tree skinks joined the collection from Chessington Zoo on the 6th July. A male and a female are housed off show and a male and a female are on show in the giraffe building
- A male giant Madagascar day gecko joined the collection from Chester Zoo on the 10th July.

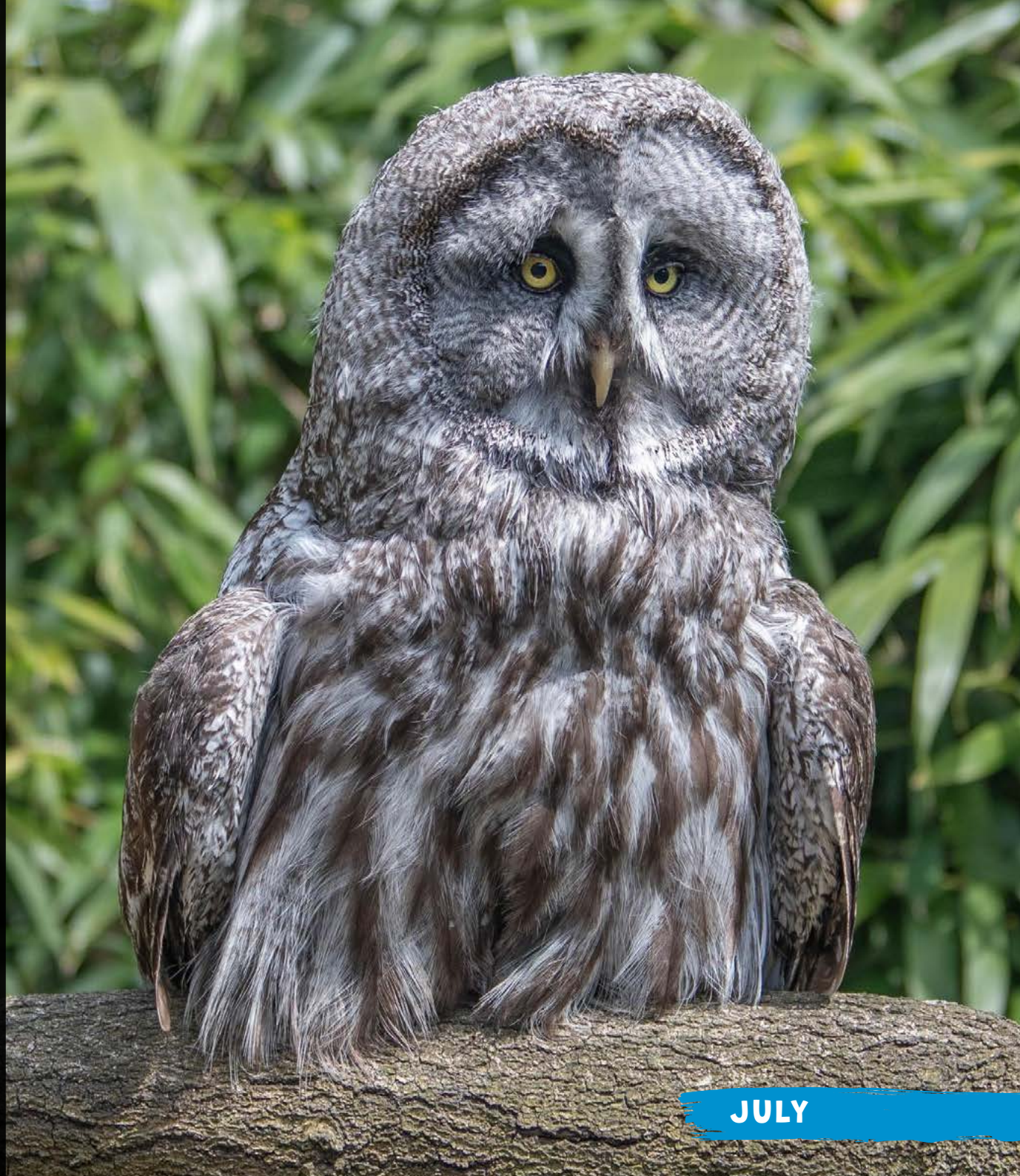
On the 23rd July, two female squirrel monkeys left the collection for Exmoor Zoo, and three male Kirk's dik diks left the collection for Dartmoor Zoo.



A further two rainbow lorikeet chicks hatched this month, bringing the group total up to 41 individuals.

Twin rock hyrax were born on the 3rd July.

A king vulture chick hatched on the 8th July; female Midas is being an attentive mother.



JULY

ZOO



Following construction work on the bull elephant paddock, Tembo has been enjoying the warmer evenings outside.

Work was carried out in the lion tailed macaque habitat with improvements made to visitor viewing and a new climbing frame for the macaques. In due course, we will expand the group of macaques at Colchester Zoo.

Demolition work commenced on the yellow-breasted capuchin habitat near the main entrance to improve the habitat for this species.



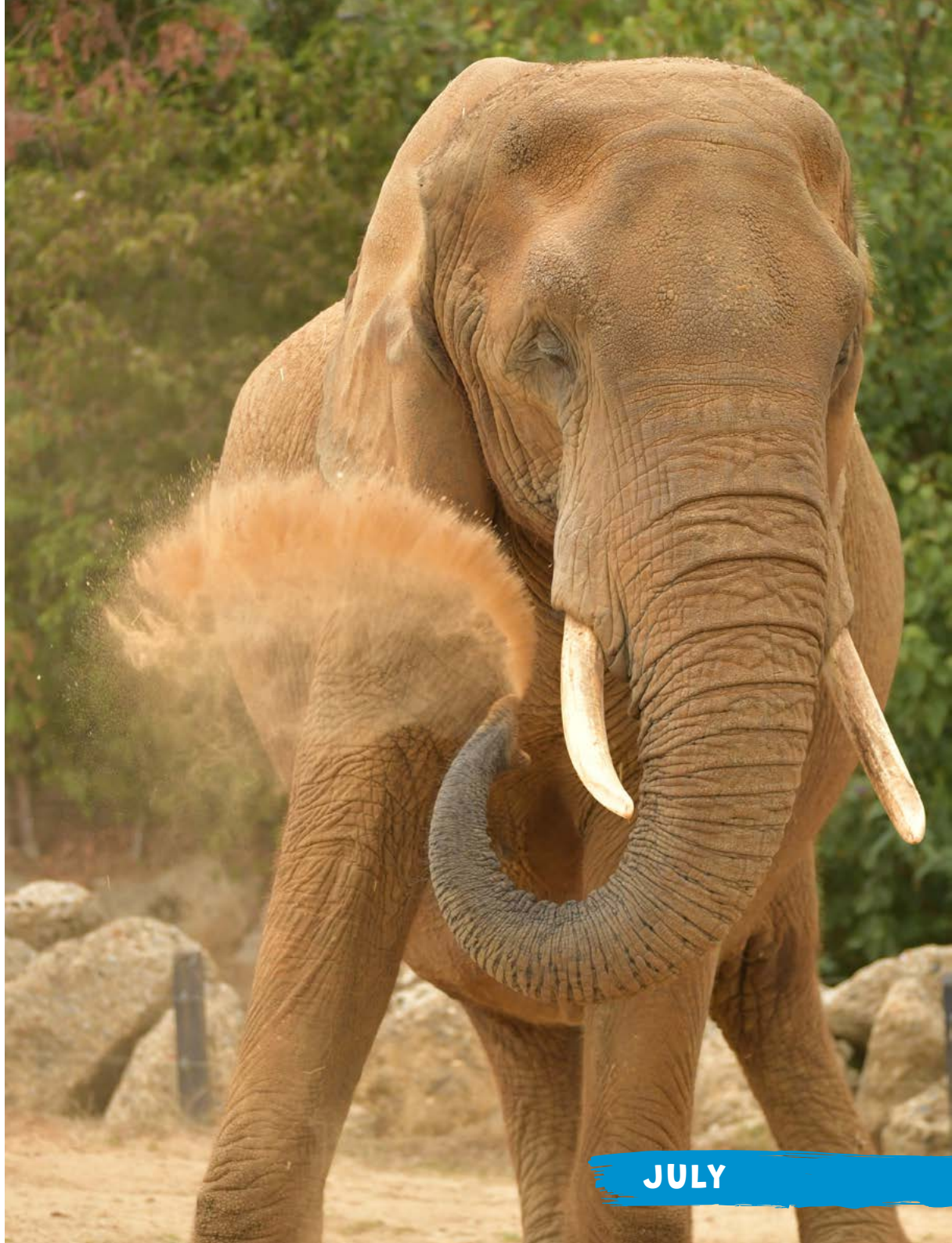
A promotional video was published this month celebrating the plans for the development of a new lion habitat. This new development will see the construction of an approximate 3000m² naturalistic lion habitat, complete with scrubland planting areas, mature tree cover, rocky outcrops, dens and water bodies, all of which will encourage the animals' natural behaviours.



Colchester Zoo signed a letter from BIAZA for the new government calling for a united front for the zoo sector on the issues of resolving animal transfer issues. The letter spells out the constructive changes the new government can make to ease the challenges around animal transfers.



Two section inspections were carried out this month. A team leader internal meeting was delivered by Rebecca, Zoological Director, presenting on information gathered from the BIAZA AGM and updates on the upcoming Zoo Licence Inspection.



JULY

CONSERVATION

A £10,000 donation was sent over to the Elephant Orphanage Project in Zambia. The Elephant Orphanage Project (EOP) was established in southern Kafue National Park (KNP) in 2007, with the mission to rescue, rehabilitate and release orphaned elephants back into the wild.

Our donation assists in elephant rescue and rehabilitation costs and supports Deputy Head Elephant Keeper, Aaron who provides day-to-day care of the orphans and is directly involved in the rescues of new orphaned calves.



On Friday 19th four staff surveyed the Fisher's Estuarine Moth site at Copt Hall, Little Wigborough. It was hard work in the heat but a good outcome with about 50% of the plants showing feeding signs.

Three staff then visited Cudmore Grove, Mersea, on the 28th July to survey for signs of caterpillar feeding and habitat quality. There was some scrub encroachment on the site which the warden will remove.

Unfortunately, although still present, signs of the larval feeding were lower this year.



This month our
donation total was
£10,000
working towards
animal conservation.

JULY

UMPHAFA



Usually, we are sad to see the wild dogs go, but this month we were over the moon to see these four dogs leave us, as they mated on the 6th May and the team were worried the female would have puppies whilst still in the boma. Finally, on the 5th July, they were darted, boxed and started their 9 hour road trip to their new home on the Makalali Game Reserve near Limpopo. On inspection of the alpha female, she was indeed due to give birth in approximately 2 weeks, so we got her out of the boma in the nick of time!



Early in the month, the team were invited to go and see our new buffalo being tested for TB by the State Vet. Writtle University College were lucky enough to join as their students were currently on the reserve for their placements. We are receiving 8 females; already one has had a calf, and we are hoping a few more of them have calves in the next few weeks. They will be joining UmPhafa once all tests have been done, which should take 2-3 weeks.



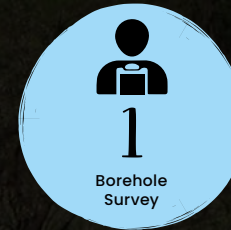
The perimeter burns have been going well but were not finished before a ban was placed on us and the neighbours for the next week as the winds were pumping at up to 40kph; too risky for carrying out burns. One burnt patch did reignite, but the team sprang into action and ensured that all edges were burnt and then left the middle section on the hill to burn itself out.



This month, we purchased 4 new trail camera traps for the Interns and a new WPS camera for security; this sends pictures to the managers' phones if poachers are near the reserve fence line.



After a successful placement, Writtle University College left and 3 new Interns joined us, who were lucky enough to spend time with the wild dogs, even if only for a few days before their departure. They also worked with the Field Rangers, put out fires and cleaned the boma.



The borehole surveyor came out to do a site inspection around Sully and identified some areas for the drillers to come in and start drilling for water. We are currently awaiting the report and then hopefully the drillers can get started.

UMPHAFA



The local historical society came for another look at a pile of rocks on Vertrek. This time they bought an expert who works for KZN Amafa Research Institute who look after all the historical sites in our area. Previously the stone erections were thought to be from the Iron Age, but the expert believes they date back to only the 16th – 17th century. It could have been a trading post, as well as a homestead years later. Further work needs to be done to establish what the site actually is. With the many Boer war sites on this section, it was interesting to hear the historians talking about our site and how potentially important it could be.



Free Me Wildlife contacted us previously regarding a release of an African wild cat. Following genetic testing to ensure he was a pure breed, he was released on the reserve this month. Coincidentally, despite not having seen a wild cat on the reserve previously, a second cat was spotted a week later!



Following last month's release of the two giraffe bulls, a third bull was released this month, originating from the same farm. We also took delivery of 3 new male red hartebeest.



Following several cold snaps, the fish in the dams on the top of Ithala (the reserve's highest hill) have died. It has happened in 2 of the dams so far – the Interns have been removing the dead fish, so the other animals can continue to drink clean water.



This month, we took delivery of the 2 cheetah collars ordered. We are hoping for an early September delivery, but the State vet requires a TB check as one of them is coming from Zululand. The female is from the Kalahari so will not require any testing.



Updating the boma for the cheetah delivery has been the priority for the end of the month; moving the JoJo tank so easier access for water, burning the long grass and raising the height of the boma fence line to ensure the cheetah don't jump out. The maintenance team have also been putting their new TLBs to good use, fixing the roads which are long overdue repair.

EDUCATION

We had **163** schools,
bringing **10,054** students,
running **127** sessions.

In addition to
the school numbers,
this year we also had
31
Educational Youth Groups,
bringing an extra
379
children.

Teaching has finished for the academic year.

For the year 2023-24 we had
40,010 PEOPLE EDUCATED,
which beats previous years' records by almost 10,000,
including 12,643 from outreach.

We have carried out a lot of outreach this year with
the career fairs, STEM virtual outreach, and some huge
numbers during a career virtual outreach.

JULY

RESEARCH



A number of new research studies commenced this month

- Validating a personality assessment in captive elephant zoo populations
- Environmental influences on prehensile-tailed skink behaviour: a comprehensive analysis using observational data and Zoo monitor technology
 - Correlation between visitor numbers and chimpanzee behaviour in a zoological collection
 - Seasonal behaviour of giraffes in captivity

Two placements also commenced this month looking at visitor effects on smooth coated otters and lemurs.



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