

MARCH  
2024



The British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) Elephant Audit was conducted on 26th March, with a report to be received in due course.

# ZOO



An animal escape drill was conducted with a reindeer 'escaping' into neighbouring farm land following the practice exercise in February.



The Lead Keeper of Primate Section attended the Association of British and Irish Wild Animal Keepers (ABWAK) Annual Symposium in their position on the committee. They will present to the Team Leaders in due course.

A second Team Leader of Primate Section attended the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) Primate Nutrition Workshop.

The Team Leader and Deputy of the Sea Lion Section attended the BIAZA Pinniped Conference.

The Team Leader and Senior Keeper of the Reptile Section attended the BHS Reptile Husbandry and Breeding Conference at Drayton Manor.

# ZOO



Female Geoffroy's marmoset, Poppy, transferred to Blackpool Zoo on 7th March.

One of the female white-lipped tamarins, who arrived in February, transferred out to Brent Lodge and a male arrived to join our remaining female from the same collection. They are still currently held off show until the pied tamarins leave the collection in April.

Four male and four female rainbow lorikeets, and three Trinidad stream frogs transferred to Northumberland College on 27th March.

A meeting was held with the Reptile Section to look at their progress on working towards the workload set for them in the section inspections and to discuss further priorities.

An internal team leader meeting was delivered by the Research Coordinator, demonstrating various research programmes for animal sections to utilise.

The Manager of Living Collections and the Director of Science, Education and Training presented an internal team leader meeting looking at staff appraisals and setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) targets.

A meeting was held, delivered by the Primate Section Lead Keeper, about the progress with the Quality of Life Assessments to date.



# CONSERVATION

Runthrough visited to discuss the upcoming Zoo 10km Stampede run on 28th April.



Three female and one male warhog offspring were born on 5th March.

A Ruppell's griffon vulture hatched on 2nd March and is being cared for attentively by its parents, Jekyll and Morticia.

A male Kirk's dik dik was born on 21st March.



Airlock work was completed at Tiger Taiga to improve the habitat.

Work was also conducted on the elephant paddock, improving enrichment provision. This will continue again in April.

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# EDUCATION



5,784 pupils visited from 138 schools in March



12 additional outreach and group sessions for 1,222 participants

So far during the 2023/24 school academic year, we have educated

**16,525** participants in formal education sessions.



# VOLUNTEERS



22 active animal ambassadors



1,002 ambassador interactions in March  
(these are individual interactions and not a total of people)



65 **Prop Parade sessions**  
(sharing skins, skulls, etc.)



30 **Enclosure Experts sessions**  
(at enclosures talking about the animals and how we care for them)

97 **Activities** (vet checks on plush toys, classification game, etc.)

A few volunteers have withdrawn from the programme over the past month leaving Wednesdays and Sundays with no volunteers. We have a couple of new starters that have started training and shadowing, and recruitment is still open all the time.

If you would like to apply to be a volunteer at Colchester Zoo, please click [HERE](#)

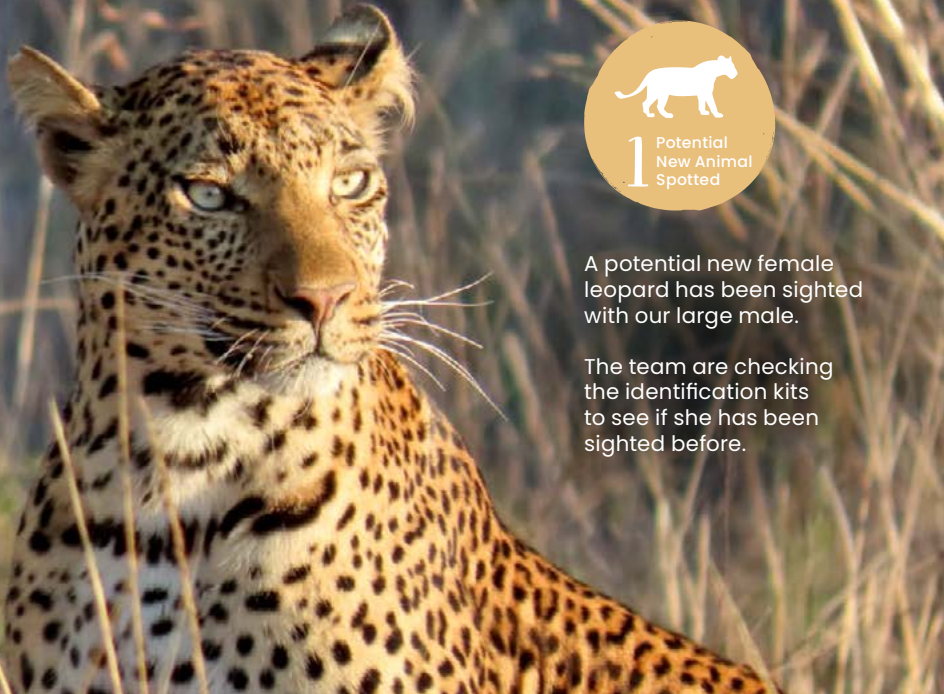
Across March, volunteers have given us around

**230** hours in time.



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# UMPHAFA



A potential new female leopard has been sighted with our large male.

The team are checking the identification kits to see if she has been sighted before.



At the start of the month, a 2–3-year-old giraffe managed to get into the wild dog boma (enclosure) damaging the fence and electrics. Luckily, the dogs remained sleeping under a tree and were enticed into the secondary boma with a warthog bait. Once they were out the way, the team shepherded the giraffe out of the hole it came through. Having made a temporary fix for the weekend, including detangling the electrics, the Maintenance Team fully repaired the damage.



On Friday 15th March, two female dogs were delivered from the Waterberg area to bond with the two males we currently have in the boma. We will let them settle for a few weeks before introducing them to the males and, eventually, when they are all together, they shall be on their way to their new home at Zimanga Reserve in Zululand.



Several puff adders were seen this month; three on the Reserve and one at the intern accommodation.



Free Me Wildlife delivered three spotted eagle owls and two large spotted genets for release onto the Reserve. The eagle owls were initially housed for two weeks in a large aviary near the old Elworthy House which was refurbished especially. The spotted genets were delivered in their log home which was then placed quite high up in a tree in an area with water and trees to climb.

Being nocturnal, the team set up a camera trap to try to capture them coming in and out of their new home. The genets and owls have since both left for freedom.



# UMPHAFA



1 Intern  
Joined the  
Reserve

A new intern joined for 2 months and got stuck in with frogging, fixing roads, game drives, vegetation surveys, supplementary feeding and species data capture, as well as helping to brush pack, carry out freshwater ecology studies, paint fence posts and spray alien plants.



Security Exams  
and Performance  
Reviews  
Undertaken

The field rangers continued with their security exams which they all passed.

Performance reviews were also completed this month for all staff.



3 Fence  
Holes  
Found

Security found three holes along one fence line with blood at one of the holes, as well as a car driving up and down the road on our fence line, and the passengers even coming to ask the staff if we had lion on the Reserve that would hurt them! The team increased security patrols in this area.



Solar Panels  
In Use

Following the installation of the solar panels, we have turned off our first electric switch to Eskom, which is great news, and we are hoping to have three more electric lines switched off very shortly.



Maps  
Signed Off

Maps were signed off for the Reserve which forms part of our Protected Area application, so this is progressing along smoothly.



First Aid Training  
Completed

At the end of the month, the team completed their 3-yearly basic first aid training - a legal requirement when you have a big team and you have interns working on the Reserve. All the field rangers took part, as well as the Management Team.



Fire-breaks  
Formed

With hardly any rain since the end of January, the grass is turning brown and the Reserve is looking like it does usually in May. They have started prepping fire breaks early to avoid any fires jumping into the Reserve or being caused by others wanting to damage the Reserve. Focus has been on cutting roads and burning trees close to the road. This work will continue for the next few weeks.



1 Action Plan  
Created

With little rain, the dams are starting to dry up and there will be a distinct lack of food for the animals. The team are putting together action plans for this next month to try and ease the hardship.



Fire-fighting  
Equipment  
Improved

A new hydraulic water pump was plumbed in this month, which is attached to the tractor and is part of our improved fire-fighting equipment.

Towards the end of March, the Reserve received an average of 50mms of rain in one week, so, thankfully, the bush has greened up again.



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