

**OCTOBER
2024**



ZOO



On the 7th October, male Fiji Banded Iguana, Koro, moved from the exhibit at Heart of the Amazon to the first area in Worlds Apart and a female black tree monitor moved into his vacated home in Heart of the Amazon.

Two new female pygmy goats, Minnie and Frida, moved to Colenso Village after completing their quarantine period on the 23rd October.

On the 2nd October, female green iguana, Arianna (pictured left), mixed with our current pair in Iguana Forest; all went well with the mixing.

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ZOO



Our 2 new female ostrich, Daphne and Daisy, continue to be mixed with the other species within the Kingdom of the Wild habitat and have settled in well.



On 29th October, squirrel monkey, Milu, gave birth to a single offspring. Milu is an experienced mother; both are doing well and can be seen in their habitat at Heart of the Amazon.



Within the Zoo, work is continuing on the yellow-breasted capuchin habitat near the entrance. Winches were fitted in the elephant and Komodo dragon habitats for promoting naturalistic feeding and adaptations were made to the elephant cow paddock waterfall. Work was also carried out on the filtration system and pool in Bears of the Rising Sun and additional shelter was provided for the goats and sheep at Colenso Village.



On 24th October, a female rhinoceros iguana, Carmen, arrived from Shepreth Wildlife Park, she moved straight into Worlds Apart. Our resident male rhinoceros iguana, Rico, has moved off show temporarily whilst the female gets used to her new habitat.



The Curator of Living Collections attended the annual EAZA conference in Leipzig.



Our formal zoo inspection was held on the 17th and 18th October. A team leader meeting was held following the inspection to report back on the inspectors' comments from their two-day visit.



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UMPHAFA WAS OFFICIALLY DECLARED A PROTECTED NATURE RESERVE OF SOUTH AFRICA

This month, UmPhafa was officially declared a Protected Nature Reserve of South Africa. This highlights that UmPhafa has significant biodiversity value, with unique characteristics and landscape features. This is very important for the conservation of threatened biodiversity; threatened and endemic plant and animal species, and is an important area for Protected Area expansion for KwaZulu-Natal (KZN).

In addition, parts of the area are also classified as a Critical Biodiversity Area for KZN. Being a Protected Nature Reserve means we have long-term legal security (99 years) for the Reserve for conservation use.

The process started back in September 2021 and has taken 3 years, with management plans, planning, and site visits, to get to this stage.



CONSERVATION PROJECT SUPPORTED BY COLCHESTER ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

OCTOBER

UMPHAFA



Hard Working
Interns

This month, our interns have been busy on the Reserve. Work projects have focused on fence patrols, painting fence posts, bush encroachment clearance work, camera trapping, bird surveys, feeding the buffalo, putting up new vegetation site plaques, fixing roads, cutting down poplars for a hide and alien plant eradication.



10
Newly-registered
Security Officers

Eight field rangers and two management staff went to Durban to register as Security Officers for UmPhafa at the PSIRA office which regulates the Private Security Industry in South Africa.



Supplementary
Feeds
Stopped

This month, the team stopped supplementary feeding the buffalo. With the grass starting to grow and green up, the buffalo will be able to fend for themselves

The team finally received the permits to have cheetah on the Reserve and are now just waiting for the permits to transport the cheetah.



1
New
Cheetah
Permit



1
Large Burn

A large burn was carried out this month. It started by cutting and clearing an old road to get the tractor up and down it to avoid any wildfires resulting from the burn. The team had already carried out a perimeter burn to ensure it wouldn't jump the neighbour's fence.

With 2 teams split, they lit the fire on both sides. In total, 27% of the Reserve was burnt (the last time this was done was a wildfire in 2017).

Fire is recognised as a natural factor of the environment and is one of the most important factors influencing the composition and structure of savanna vegetation. Systematic controlled burning provides palatable, nutritious grazing for wildlife and maintains an optimal balance between grass and bush vegetation. With rain arriving, the dams are refilling and the vegetation is already regrowing.

OCTOBER

UMPHAFA



6 Re-employed
Local Ladies

With rain and increased temperatures, the invasive plant species on the Reserve have started to grow again. Six ladies from the local community have been re-employed to continue their work from the first quarter of the year to eradicate these plants.



1 New Baler
and Rake

This month, a new baler and rake were delivered. This piece of kit will be used to bale grass ready for the winter next year, so the team can give supplementary feed to the animals, alongside the licks they put out.



1 Fencing
Donation

A neighbour donated some old fencing which will be used to make gabions – these are cages full of rocks that are built into eroded areas to slow down the water and reduce erosion when it rains.



1 Local School
Visit

Our student intern coordinator visited a local school for a week during October and took the interns with her – her topic was on environmental science, with the final day, an athletics day.

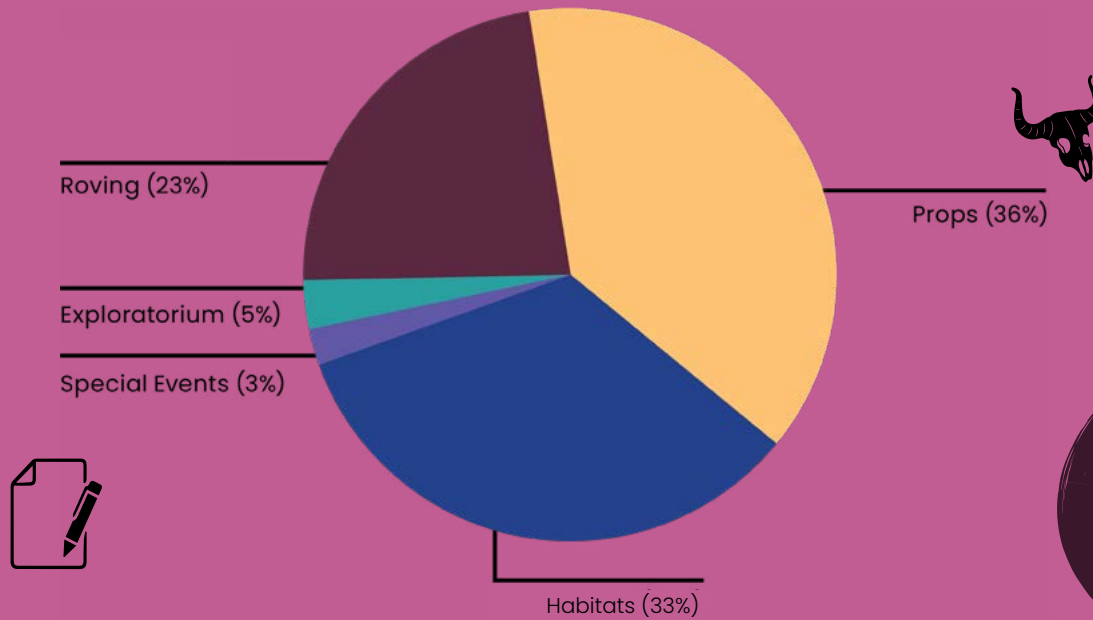


15 New water
Tanks
Delivered

15 new water tanks were delivered this month, which will be placed across the Reserve to help harvest rainwater and store borehole water. Due to the extreme effects of climate change around the world, last winter the Reserve experienced extreme loss of ground moisture and slow recovery of grass and plants. In anticipation of these climatic changes, the team are preparing to store more of this vital resource. Firstly, the team had to lay cement slabs to avoid the bottom of the tanks being punctured by sharp rocks. They also put a tank up at the security outpost on the top of the highest hill for the field rangers to use when they are on patrol.

OCTOBER

VOLUNTEERS



1,709

Exploratorium
Participants

1,416

Exploratorium
Boxes Explored



Up to **3**
volunteers attend
the Zoo per day



EDUCATION



In October 2024, we had **50** schools visit,
bringing in **3,143** students
and running **61** school sessions at the Zoo.

In addition to the school sessions, the Education Team ran

- 10 Home education sessions (for 297 participants)
- 2 Community outreach sessions (for 80 participants)
- 12 Formal outreach sessions (for 350 participants)
- 7 Event outreach reaching a further 3,159 participants

OCTOBER

ZOO KEEPER WEEKEND

SATURDAY 5TH – SUNDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2024

The event was very successful, with visitors engaging and getting involved in activities. This weekend was laid out differently to previous events this year, with pop-up stalls, stage activities and extra encounters at set times.

THE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

POP-UP STALL AT CHIMPANZEES LOOKOUT



Animal Training
This stall was set up at 12pm for 2 hours.

Environmental Enrichment
This stall was set up from 2pm to 3:45pm, with various enrichment items to show visitors.



KEEPER ON THE STAGE WITH A PRIMATE KEEPER



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EXPLORATORIUM

The Education Team ran the Exploratorium inside Kingdom of the Wild with Zoo keeping themed boxes.

The footage and photos taken by the Elephant Team (of the Elephant's night-time activities) was made into a video and played on repeat throughout the area during the weekend.

This encouraged conversations with visitors about our elephants and how zoo keeping is not just a 9 to 5 job.

ENCOUNTERS

The keepers themed their encounters to cover different aspects/topics relating to zoo keeping (husbandry, dietary requirements, environmental enrichment). Additional reptile encounters also took place:



- Rhino Iguana Training session at 10.30am (Saturday)
- Caroline the Slender-snouted Crocodile Feed at 1.30pm (Sunday)

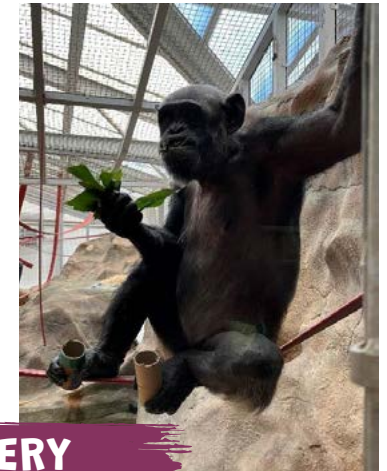
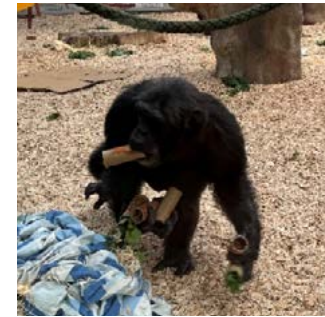


PHOTO GALLERY



OCTOBER

CONSERVATION

COLCHESTER ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED THIS MONTH

with updated conservation sections highlighting our project support.



The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species website also received an update with ex-situ populations now being listed on the Red List; highlighting the important role zoo populations can play in contributing to conservation numbers for a species.



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