

**DECEMBER
2024**

2024 ANNUAL COUNT

Annual animal census counts have been collected and finalised for 2024

| | SPECIES | INDIVIDUALS | COLONIES |
|---------------|---------|-------------|----------|
| MAMMALS | 64 | 304 | |
| BIRDS | 16 | 196 | |
| REPTILES | 26 | 66 | |
| AMPHIBIANS | 4 | 39 | |
| FISH | 37 | 418 | 8 |
| INVERTEBRATES | 5 | 7 | 2 |
| TOTAL | 152 | 1030 | 10 |





ZOO



On 6th December, Visayan Spotted Deer, Autumn gave birth to a single calf. Autumn is an experienced mother; this is her 5th calf since arriving in 2019 and pairing with male Bongat, who arrived in the same year.



Bush dog Nina passed away on the 8th December. The remaining individuals, bar one female, will transfer out of the collection in the near future and we will import a male to join the remaining female to hopefully return to a breeding situation.

Various golden lion tamarin transfers took place in December, with female Lily leaving us for Banham Zoo on the 3rd, and a new female Freia arriving in her place. A male, named Tree Trunks, arrived from Jersey, on the 4th to pair with Freia and both are settling well with the pygmy marmosets.

Harvey and Blondie, our pair of golden headed lion tamarins housed in the Rainforest Walkthrough habitat, moved to the vacated Goeldi's monkey habitat at the entrance to Worlds Apart.

Male and female rhinoceros iguanas, Carmen and Rico, swapped habitats, with male Rico returned to Worlds Apart on the 9th December. Introductions between the pair will start at a safe distance, when the zoo is closed, over the coming weeks.

37 rosy barbs arrived on 12th December; these are currently unavailable to be seen due to quarantine.



On the 3rd December, the Curator and Elephant Team Leader, attended an online Elephant Subgroup meeting to discuss the elephant healthcare and behaviour/welfare monitoring tools.



A team leader internal meeting was held focusing on animal escape drills, with a trio of gelada baboons 'escaping' from their habitat.

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EDUCATION & VOLUNTEERS

In total, in December 2024, we had **43** School visits,
bringing in **1,526** students and running **57** school sessions at the Zoo.
93% of visiting students attended a session this month.



Most of the teaching focused on the newly developed Christmas reindeer session with **30 sessions delivered across the month.**

1,083
Visitors engaged with
at the Exploratorium, using
833
boxes

The team also ran **10**
Home Education sessions
for **250** participants.

The team also attended one outreach event for a further
180 participants.



This December, our volunteers had a great turn out.

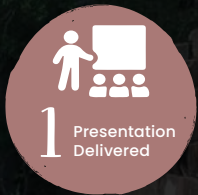
Up to
4
volunteers attended
per day

175
Volunteer Hours

2,721
Visitors were
engaged with

DECEMBER

UMPHAFA



Following her visit to UmPhafa in November, the Zoological Director delivered a presentation to the Zoo's Senior Leadership Team, on the outcomes of the rangeland vegetation assessments conducted on the reserve, and the plans for future reserve management to improve the status of the vegetation condition.



With little rain since 15th November, the dams are again drying up and the grass is turning brown.

There have been a few odd showers, which were hard enough to wash away two fences. However, this time last year we had already had 214mm of rain compared to just 105mm this year. More rain is forecast over the next few weeks, so hopefully this will refill the dams.



The last 3 interns for 2024 left for year end. Overall, 56 Interns joined us this year.

The team hosted 10 teachers from the M L Sultan school. They were taken on a drive for over an hour and for many, this was their first time seeing a giraffe.



A binoculars distributor donated 12 pairs of Vortex triumph binos. We are over the moon by their generosity and the Rangers were very excited to receive this new kit.

We also had a Fuji camera donated so we are hoping to improve the reporting of poachers and incidents.



Finally this month, we turned off our connection to Eskom, the electricity suppliers; we are now completely self-sufficient.

DECEMBER

UMPHAFA

1

Flow Rate Test

Midlands Pumps came to test the flow rate of the boreholes and also to test the water – this will determine if it's safe to drink as well as the size of the pump we need to put into the borehole!



Young Leopard
Tortoses Spotted

Young leopard tortoses were spotted, which were likely born to those released a while ago.



Maintenance
Work Wrapped Up

Before their Christmas break, the maintenance team rounded off workload with work on the vacated intern accommodation, completed the electrics at the borehole and installed the pump, and undertook fence clearance.



1 Christmas
Party

The staff celebrated the end of the year with their Christmas party. Before the luncheon, the staff got a chance to choose from a variety of clothing and household items left behind from the Interns. They took it in turns to choose an item and with over 250 items, everybody left with at least 10 items each. They also took home 10kg maize meal, soup and samp and onions and potatoes from the garden for their families.



2 Buffalo
Return

Two of the buffalo that seemed to have disappeared since November 2023 rejoined the main herd over the Christmas period.

Christmas and New Year are usually a hot bed for poaching activity. This holiday period was thankfully quieter with three incursions before Christmas, however on at least one occasion an animal was taken. We remained vigilant over this holiday season so hopefully the low number of incursions will continue!

DECEMBER

CONSERVATION



The Zoological Director attended online meetings for Conservation Directors and the BIAZA Conservation Committee.

REVERSE THE RED

The Director for Science, Education and Training attended an online meeting on Reverse the Red to hear more about how the global zoo community can engage with Reverse the Red Day as well as the next steps following the WAZA Commitment to Biodiversity Conservation Declaration.

During the session, presentations were made by aquariums and zoos who have made species pledges and include examples of staff events, public events for visitors, as well as examples of storytelling that celebrate the conservation impact of zoos and aquariums.



Charity no. 1105621

The Zoological Director carried out a media interview focusing on the zoo's transition to a charity in early 2025.

CONSERVATION & RESEARCH

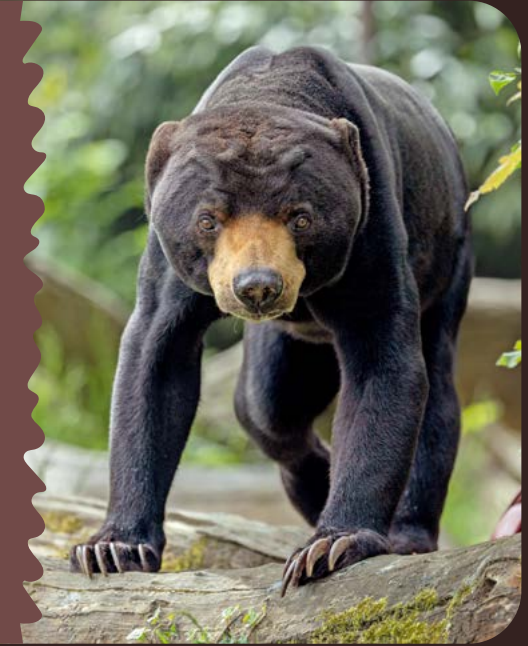


OUR FINAL CONSERVATION DONATION OF 2024 WAS SENT TO FREE THE BEARS.

Free the Bears requested a grant of £7,500.

£6000 for expansion of the Laos sanctuary's sun bear facilities as the team received another three sun bears this year (as well as 26 moon bears).

The other £1,500 will be put towards recruitment of a new Behavioural Research Assistant to integrate behavioural observations with hormonal monitoring to analyse the effects of contraceptive use on male sun bear social and reproductive behaviours. This approach aims to inform future contraceptive practices in captive bear populations.



Two new studies started this month looking at:

Investigating Chimpanzee Behaviour in Response to Visitor Activity.

Social Dynamics of Zoo-Housed Southern White Rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) and Other Taxa in a Mixed-Species Exhibit.

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