

but very few lived for more than a couple of years. Fortunately most orchids sold today have been propagated and grown in nurseries, so there is no longer a need to take them from the wild. Unfortunately, though, due to past exploitation and the continuing loss of habitat many are now endangered in the wild.

It is possible to visit and stay at the REGUA reserve as a tourist. For more information about this and the work being done there, see their website www.regua.co.uk.

Abridged from Mark Sparrow, Curator of Horticulture and Botany, in *Z Magazine* (Autumn 2010)

Colchester Zoo, U.K.

Illegal rhino horn confiscated at Manchester Airport in June 2009 has been identified as originating from Simba, an elderly white rhino at Colchester Zoo who had been euthanised due to medical issues relating to his age and had then been sent to an abattoir as the law dictates. When the horn, which had been hidden in a fake antique figure, was discovered, investigators contacted scientists from the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) and TRACE Wildlife Forensics Network, an NGO based at Edinburgh Zoo, to analyse fragments. The individual DNA profile generated from the horn was matched to a preserved sample of Simba's blood.

The smuggler pleaded guilty and received a one-year prison sentence at Manchester Crown Court on 5 October 2010. 'When we were approached to help with this case we were confident that we could provide investigators with the proof they needed,' said Dr Ross McEwing of TRACE. 'We are delighted that our work has helped lead to a conviction, and it proves once again that forensic genetics is an important weapon in the fight against wildlife crime.'

Adapted from a RZSS press release, 6 October 2010

Copenhagen Zoo, Denmark

In 2000 the zoo launched a research project on tapirs in Malaysia. The aim was to generate knowledge on the animals' life in order to bring about a better basis for decisions regarding their conservation. Initially the zoo had one radio transmitter, five camera traps, and tools for digging tapir traps in the Krau Wildlife Reserve. Today, ten years later, the equipment includes three radio collars (of which two are satellite-based), 50 camera traps, three mobile traps for catching tapirs, a car, and permanent headquarters within the reserve. The zoo is also active within the Taman Negara Reserve in order to be able to compare results from the two separate areas. Furthermore, the zoo has a close cooperation with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (UNDP) in Malaysia as well as with a local university, and serves as an advisor when decisions on future strategies concerning nature conservation in the area are to be made. Together with the UNDP, the zoo is planning to establish a field station in Taman Negara that will serve as a platform for research activities in general.

In the future the tapir project will be developed to include other species, for instance the flat-headed cat.

Abridged from the English summary of *Zoonyt* (Autumn 2010)

Galloway Wildlife Conservation Park, Scotland, U.K.

The park is set in 27 acres [11 hectares] of natural mixed woodland on the outskirts of Kirkcudbright, Scotland. The Denerley family moved there seven years ago from Staffordshire, where they had run a small wildlife sanctuary and nature reserve. They bought the park (formerly Kirkcudbright Wildlife Park, originally established in 1990) as one of south-west Scotland's leading visitor attractions, which welcomes more than 30,000 people a year.

The woodland has been tailored to provide imaginative enclosures for the animals. At nearly 160 specimens the collection includes a variety of mammals from around the world, such as maned wolf, Scottish wildcat, two species of lynx, lemmings, red panda, North American porcupine, South American tapir, small-clawed otter, collared peccary, corsac fox, Asian palm civet and slender-tailed meerkat. It also includes a selection of birds such as macaws, rheas, cranes, waterfowl, and several species of owls and pheasants.

There have been considerable improvements since the present owners took over. Future plans include taking part in breeding programmes and the formation of a structured education programme, linked to the national curriculum. Conservation is the ethos of the park, where profits are ploughed back into the expansion and development of the centre. Old enclosures are being continuously improved and replaced, such as the new South American mixed exhibit, the Asian palm civet enclosure, and a newly-refurbished caracal enclosure. There is also a free-flight aviary, which allows excellent viewing for all visitors. All these are built according to guidelines provided by specialists from other zoos and parks to ensure that they meet all the species' requirements. We have added new viewing panels to enclosures for children and disabled visitors, to enable them to see the animals at ground level. The park is constantly changing as new buildings, facilities and animals are added. Currently we are fundraising for the refurbishment of our wildcat enclosure and planning to establish a breeding programme in the near future.

Animals bred in 2009 included two red pandas, a female lowland anoa (the mother's third calf in five years), otters, tree porcupines, meerkats and Temminck's tragopan.

The park has selected a project in Nepal, the Red Panda Network, and we intend to tell our visitors about conservation in Nepal with a view to raising

funds for this important project (see www.redpandanetwork.org).

We are the only zoo in the country (possibly in Europe) to offer British Sign Language guided tours for deaf and hard-of-hearing people at all animal talks. The signer is also on hand to answer specific questions. This has proved a popular addition – a number of deaf groups have booked these tours and the feedback has been extremely positive. We also organize animal handling sessions (snakes, macaw, ferret and rabbit/guinea pigs) for people with various disabilities and special needs, particularly autism. Many, such as autistic children, never have an opportunity to get close to animals and therefore miss the unique experience of animal handling sessions. This service is available for people with various disabilities and special needs.

The Galloway Wildlife Conservation Park has an environmental policy in place and recognizes that its daily activities impact significantly on the environment, in its waste production and disposal, energy consumption, water usage and purchasing. The park considers the detrimental effects of its activities and tries to reduce the environmental impact of goods and services purchased whilst operating effectively. We do this by reusing and recycling materials, using recycled products and taking account of environmental costs and benefits when purchasing. When refurbishing enclosures, existing materials are recycled first, water is recirculated where possible, and staff are fully trained and encouraged to use environmentally-sound methods in their work and also in their personal lives.

The park has the potential to be a completely unique zoo, incorporating both local and exotic species of conservation importance. We have the opportunity to educate the public about the importance of habitats and the environment, both locally and internationally.

Abridged from John Denerley in *LifeLines* No. 110 (October 2010), the quarterly