

ZOOHOOPER

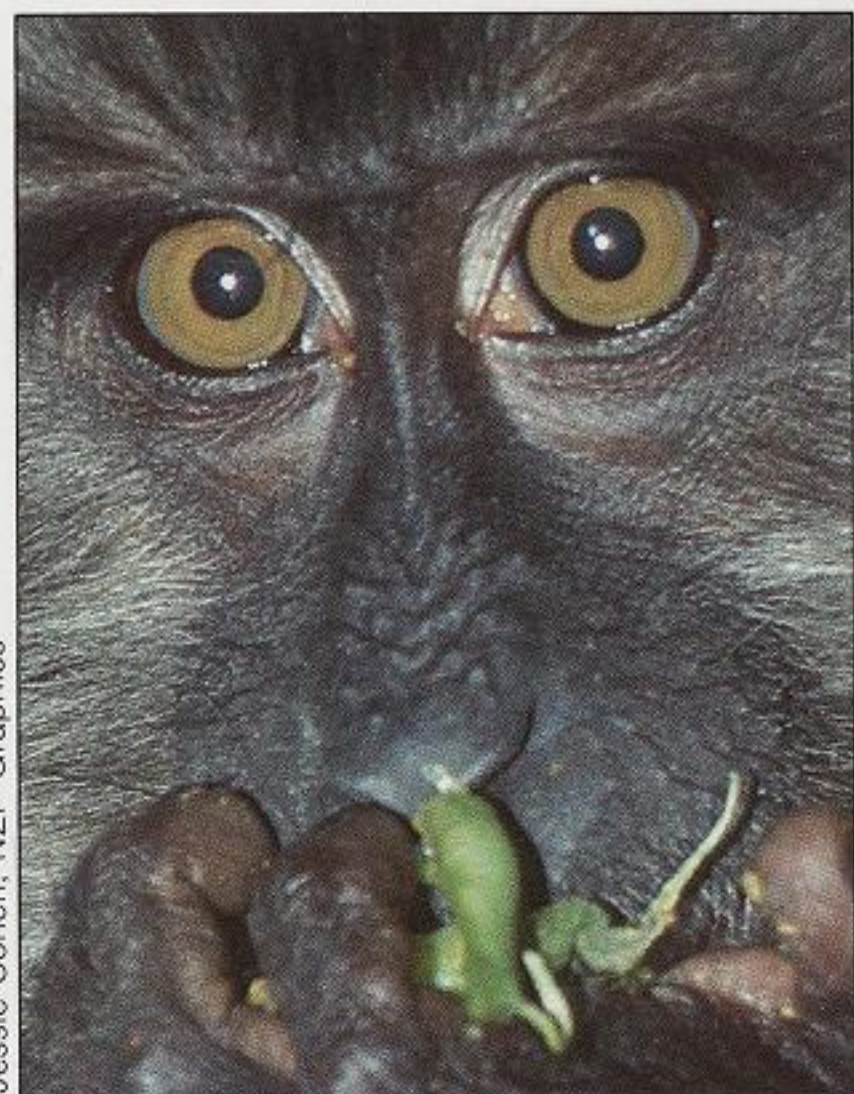
September-October 1987



Species
Survival
(p. 4)

ZOOGOER

Volume 16, Number 5, September-October 1987



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Lion-tailed macaque (p. 4)



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Red panda (p. 4)



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Lubber grasshopper (p. 14)



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Giant panda (p. 16)



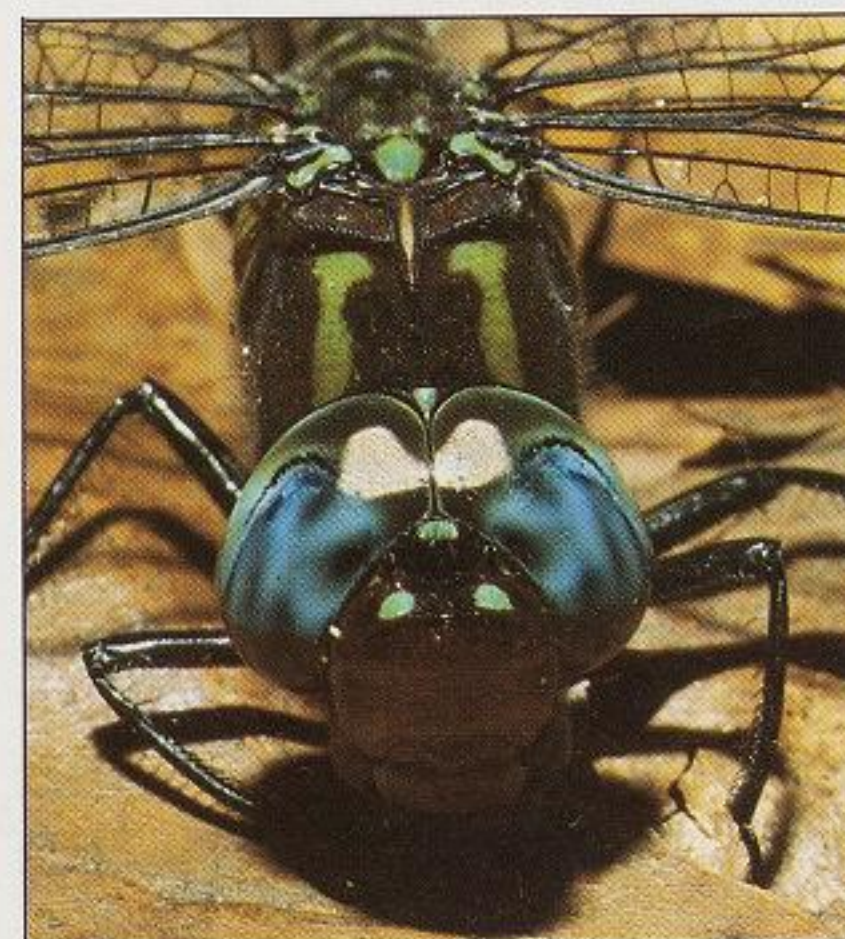
Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Keeper-volunteer (p. 18)



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Tree kangaroo (p. 18)



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Dragonfly (p. 24)



Jessie Cohen, NZP Graphics

Camels (p. 27)

CONTENTS

Species Survival Plans: Blueprints for the Future 4

by Jake Page

A network of American zoos holds out a lifeline to some fast-disappearing animal species.

Scarce Resources and Endangered Species 13

by Dr. Michael Soulé

Questioning the conservation "caste system."

Inside Panda Watch 1987: A Behind-the-Scenes Report 16

by Nell Ball

Hopes for the first successful rearing of an NZP-born panda cub were dashed this summer, but clues uncovered by medical detective work may point the way to future success.

A Day in the Life of a Keeper- Volunteer 18

by Susan Weinberg

At the National Zoo's rural Conservation and Research Center, FONZ volunteers try their hands at the zoo keeper's life.

Keepers' Corner 21

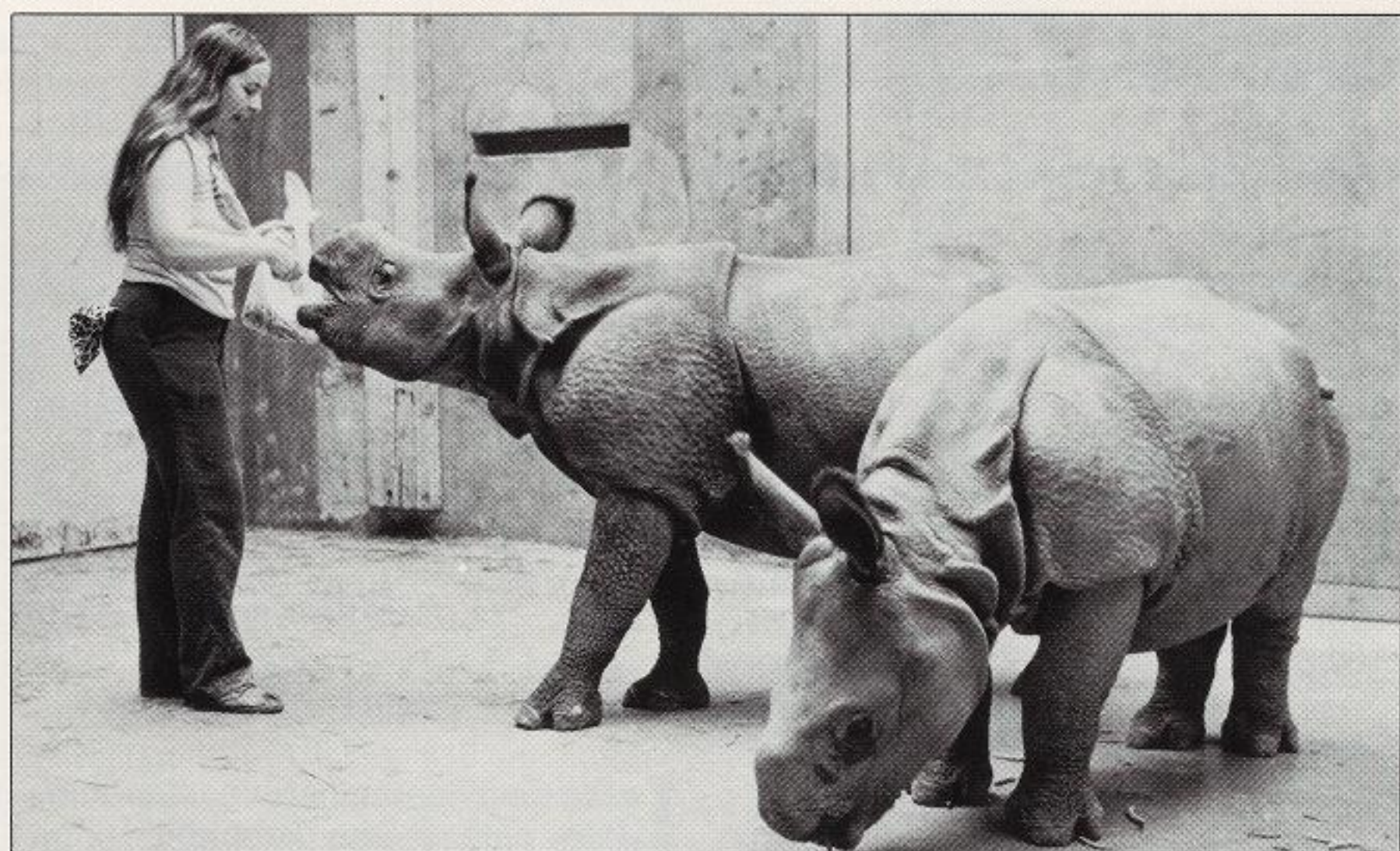
True tales from NZP keepers and other Zoo insiders.

Notes and News 22

Rhino calves, Zoo newborns, insect appreciation, tamarins released in the wilds of Brazil and Beaver Valley, and more.

PawPrints 25

A special section for young zoogoers, featuring a look at the Zoo's new camel pair.



Jessie Cohen, N.Z.P. Graphics

Keeper Morna Holden with new rhino calves

RHINO CALVES

It was the perfect gift for the country that has everything: At 11 a.m. on the third of June, His Royal Highness Prince Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah of the Kingdom of Nepal presented two female greater one-horned rhino calves to the people of the United States c/o the National Zoo. "Kali" and "Mechi," aged 10 and 14 months respectively at the time of presentation, can now be seen together in the Elephant House, along with adult male "Pandau," their neighbor and prospective mate in years to come. Throughout the long, hot summer, a water jet sprayed a cooling mist through their enclosure; a mud wallow provided outdoor relief; and keepers supplied the young rhinos with several "toys"—trash baskets and bowling balls—on which to vent their youthful energy.

The rhinos have been named for two rivers that border Nepal—names which Prince Gyanendra said "symbolize the joining together of Nepal and the United States in friendship and cooperative conservation efforts."

The gifts are intended to draw attention to the crisis faced by rhinos in the wild. Rhino populations of all species have declined 84 percent worldwide since 1970, and the number of the greater one-horned variety rests somewhere close to 1500. Royal Chitwan National Park, from whence the rhinos came, is one of only two places in the world where populations of more than 50 greater one-horned

rhinos exist. The drastic declines can be attributed chiefly to poaching and habitat destruction. But there is reason for hope. The population of Royal Chitwan's greater one-horned species has quadrupled since 1969, soaring from an all-time low of 108 animals to upwards of 360, thanks to increasingly aggressive research and conservation efforts. One such effort is the Terai Ecology Project, a joint program of the Smithsonian Institution and the Government of Nepal. Coordinated state-side by N.Z.P. Assistant Director for Conservation Chris Wemmer, and in Nepal by Hemanta Mishra, much of the Project's research is currently focused on rhinos and their relationship to Chitwan's lowland plant community.

The timely gift of the rhinos will enable the National Zoo to cooperate with other zoos and Nepal in an international captive breeding program that may serve as a hedge against the species' extinction since its fate in the wild is still uncertain. —Heidi Hall

NEW AT THE ZOO

In addition to the one-horned rhinos, recent arrivals include a pair of Bactrian camels housed in the front yard of the Panda House; a mara—a hare-like South American rodent—in the Hardy Hoofed Stock area; snake-necked turtles in the Reptile House; and giant clams and sea nettles in the Invertebrate Exhibit.

New births during the spring and

summer include a colobus monkey and a lion-tailed macaque in the Monkey House; a bongo, a blesbok, dorcas gazelles, and Reeve's muntjacs in the Hoofed Stock area; bobcats in the North American Vertebrate area; a Masai giraffe in the Elephant House; a red panda in one of the Panda House yards; golden-headed and golden lion tamarins in the Small Mammal House and Beaver Valley; and arrow poison frogs hatched in the Reptile House.

RETURN TO THE WILD

Though they came from the West Coast, the East Coast, the Midwest, and even from an island in the English Channel, they all had one destination: the forests in and around the Poco das Antas Reserve in Brazil. The travelers, 22 golden lion tamarins, came to the National Zoo in August to be examined by veterinarians and prepared for their release into the wild in September. The eight males and 14 females composed the third group of zoo-born monkeys shipped to Brazil by N.Z.P. in four years.

The shipment of the squirrel-sized tamarins on September 8 and their release in the Poco das Antas area between September 9 and 11 marked another milestone in the Golden Lion Tamarin Conservation Program, an international effort to save the species and its habitat. The Program is administered by Devra Kleiman, N.Z.P. Assistant Director for Research, who began work on the project in 1972 when only 70 golden lion tamarins were living in zoos and a few hundred survived in the wild. The monkeys did not breed well in zoos and their future in the wild appeared dismal, since their unique forest habitat was being destroyed. Kleiman launched a major research effort that led to the development of successful methods for breeding, feeding, and housing golden lion tamarins in zoos. By the late 1970's N.Z.P. had become the principal breeder of the species and sent many monkeys to other zoos that wished to participate in the captive propagation project. In 1984 golden lion tamarins in zoos around the world numbered 371; their survival in captivity was assured.

The situation in the wild, however, was anything but secure, for deforestation had continued at a rapid rate.