

ZOO

Summer 2008

DUBLIN



Matters



Rhino Calf charges in!

New Life at the Zoo



New Rhino Calf with mother Ashanti

Dublin Zoo is delighted to officially welcome its newest additions. A Californian sealion pup and a white rhino calf. Read on for more...

One of the most recent arrivals to charge into Dublin Zoo is a female Southern White Rhino calf. The birth occurred at approximately 10pm on Wednesday 28th May to mother Ashanti.

Keepers at Dublin Zoo discovered that Ashanti was pregnant, late last year after employing a novel way of monitoring her ovulation - by adding silver and blue glitter to her food which allowed them to distinguish between her faeces and those of her stable mate Zante.

The birth was completely natural and the calf is thriving. She weighed in at just over 70kg and managed to stand up just minutes after she was born. Speaking about the birth, Zoo Keeper, Helen Clarke said "We are absolutely delighted with our new arrival. It's a very significant birth as it's the first rhino born at Dublin Zoo in 14 years, so as you can imagine it has created huge excitement for everyone here. The calf is

really strong and she is suckling well, which is fantastic." This significant birth at Dublin Zoo is a result of the successful selection of the herd and many years of patience, plotting and planning.

Seal of Approval

Born on June 9 to mother Ciara an as yet unnamed female sealion pup, weighed in at a healthy 7kgs. Both mother and pup are thriving.



The pup joins her sister Leah, father Danny and mother Ciara and brings the total number of sealions in Dublin Zoo to five.

Eddie O'Brien, Team Leader at Dublin Zoo said, "We are delighted with yet another new arrival at Dublin Zoo. The sealion pup is making great progress. Ciara came to Dublin Zoo in 1997 from Rotterdam Zoo and has given birth to six pups since then."

Dublin Zoo's Elephant Calf Gets a Name

It's never easy choosing a name for a baby! The job is made a lot harder when the baby is rather large and extremely famous elephant calf. With all eyes on Dublin Zoo in anticipation of the naming of this high profile calf, who was born on February 17 – the team there decided to hand the enormous responsibility over to the public. Keepers were amazed at the enormous response to its nationwide competition.

Eventually Dublin Zoo officially announced that the name of the first bull elephant born in the Republic would be "Budi", meaning "Wise One" in Indonesian. Cian Cooke, aged 11 from Tallaght in Dublin came up with the clever name.

He said "My dad and I thought it was a good name as an elephant never forgets so

he would definitely be a 'wise one'." Cian and his family won a VIP Day Out in Dublin Zoo and an annual pass.

Paul O'Donoghue Assistant to the Director of Dublin Zoo said, "We were delighted with such a great response to the competition with over 1,000 entries received. It was clear that there was a lot of effort made to help us find a name for the calf and we were thrilled to have finally landed on the perfect name for him. All the keepers agree that the name Budi really suits him and it has as much relevance to his Asian roots."

Budi can be seen in the Kaziranga Forest Trail in Dublin Zoo, alongside mother Yasmin, 18, Bernhardine, 24, Anak, 4 and Asha, 11 months.



Diary of a Keeper in the Wild

*"In the end we will conserve only what we love,
We will only love what we understand
And we will understand only what we are taught"*
Baba Dioum – Environmentalist

Zoo Keepers tend to be dedicated and passionate people when it comes to the animals in their care. You might think therefore, that a full time job caring for animals would be enough. Not true. Many of them spend their spare time visiting other zoos, gaining knowledge from seeing their chosen species in the wild or offering needed help in sanctuaries around the world. Here Dublin Zoo Keeper Yvonne McCann describes her time in West Africa working in a sanctuary for chimpanzees.



I wanted to go home. I was used to travelling but nothing had prepared me for Cameroon. Rigorous passport and luggage checks did nothing to calm my nerves! Outside the terminal building I was met by Lynn Clifford, a Dublin woman who runs a sanctuary for orphaned chimpanzees in a remote area along the Sanaga River. We made our way to the village of Pongo-Songo by 'Bush-taxi'. Anyone who has been to Africa will be familiar with this uncomfortable mode of transport - 13 people squeezed into or on top of a family sized car!! The chimpanzee sanctuary was a 3 km trek into the forest. As darkness was falling we decided to wait with a local family until the following morning. That night I shared a room with rats and mosquitoes. I didn't get much sleep.

The next day we set off early for the camp. As I was a visitor I had to be introduced to the chief of the village (a widespread African custom) then a long, sweaty agonising trek led us to the chimps. I was both excited and nervous about meeting them. I'd worked with the chimps in the Zoo but this was different. Seven curious little faces peered out of the trees as we made our way through the thick vegetation.



I was greeted first by 'Che Guevara', a feisty three year old, not the biggest but definitely the boss of the group. 'Nunaphar', 'Patchouli', 'Etoile', 'Kiwi', 'Arthenis' and eventually little 'Masai' all came to investigate. My pockets were swiftly opened and the contents removed. Before I knew it they were gone and I felt like someone who'd just been mugged! Over the next few days we all became acquainted as Lynn showed me around the camp.

The cages were, without doubt, the worst I had ever seen. Seven young chimps sleep in two cages measuring no more than a combined area of 3 m². Due to a lack of on-going funding and support the sanctuary is barely ticking over. Food shortages and medical supplies are also an issue of grave concern.

With all the other centres in Cameroon full to capacity, these chimps have nowhere else to go. They've all had the worst starts in life but do thrive with caring people and good nutritious food.

Tragically most of them had seen their mothers slaughtered. They were then tied up or left in a cage to be sold to the highest bidder for either the bush meat or pet trade. Alone and frightened many of the youngsters still bare scars from abuse, both physical and psychological.

Some weeks later I left Cameroon with a heavy heart, not because I was going home but because I was ashamed of what my kind had done to theirs. In my two short months in their company those seven orphaned chimps had done more for me than I could ever hope to do for them.

For further information please visit:
www.pongochimps.org



