

Historical species list for Jersey Zoo:

some additional notes

Introduction

This is a work-in-progress. Undoubtedly there are other species which have been kept at Jersey Zoo in the past, of which I am presently unaware and which will be added to these lists as my research continues, but I am confident that I have found details - albeit not always complete - for nearly all the species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians which have been maintained in the collection since it first opened to the public on 26 March 1959. A very incomplete list is that for the fishes. There have been many more species of fish kept than are recorded here. In the early 1960s Jersey Zoo had a small, short-lived, and now almost completely forgotten, aquarium in the manor house (the present staff kitchen). The 3rd International Zoo Year Book gives a figure of 27 species of fish at Jersey Zoo for 1961. But discovering exactly what these species were has proved difficult.

The trends in the animal collection at Jersey have changed over time, but certain themes have emerged. These can best be summarised as follows:

1959 and Early 1960s

The original nucleus of the collection at Jersey Zoo consisted of animals that founder Gerald Durrell had brought back with him from his third animal-collecting expedition to the then British Cameroons in central Africa in 1957, along with others purchased from dealers' lists and surplus stock lists from other zoos in order to make the embryonic collection more cosmopolitan and interesting to the general public. Few of the animals from the Cameroons expedition were what one might term "box-office". Most were small, obscure species and many were nocturnal. Undoubtedly the most unusual were the Hairy Frogs – of great interest to scientists but of little concern to the average visitor. The only animals in the Cameroons collection which could be certain to pull in the visitors were the primates. Realising that the collection needed to be considerably broadened to appeal to the paying public, even before the zoo was open Gerald Durrell journeyed to Argentina on an expedition to collect a contingent of South American animals to pad out the ones he had brought back earlier from the Cameroons. This was how the first Tapir and the original pair of Peccaries were obtained. Also on this expedition a number of wild cats was obtained. Meanwhile, back in Jersey, new animals continued to arrive almost weekly. Having precious little time before the zoo's scheduled opening at Easter 1959, the newly appointed Superintendent, Kenneth Smith, was reliant on whatever animals were being offered for sale at the time and usually this meant purchasing species common to many other zoos at that time, but he did his best to make the collection as broad and representative as possible, even if sometimes his choices didn't meet with the wholehearted approval from Gerald Durrell, who, from the outset, saw his zoo as having been set up as a haven for endangered species. Animals particularly sought after were those which could be relied upon to appeal to the general

public. Examples were Leo the African Lion, Peter the Cheetah, Frisky the Mandrill, a Himalayan Bear called Chico, the Gorilla N'Pongo, and the Penguins, Dilly and Dally. It may come as a surprise to some people to learn that in the early days there was even a well-stocked (but short-lived) Aquarium and a Pets' Corner with the usual array of pet and farm animals. Occasionally some very rare or unusual animals would arrive, such as Gharial, Goliath Frogs and, later, even a Marine Iguana. From the start, there was an emphasis on primates because both Gerald Durrell and Kenneth Smith were very keen on them, as was Jeremy Mallinson, a young keeper who, in 1963, was appointed as Durrell's Deputy. This bias has continued ever since. Squirrels, too, were a speciality in the early days, a quirk explained by the fact they were a favourite of Gerald Durrell's first wife, Jacquie. Among the birds was an emphasis on pheasants, waterfowl and corvids - all three groups being favourites of John (Shep) Mallet, the Curator of Birds.

Mid 1960s to Mid 1970s

During this period the animal collection was rationalised, with the number of mammal species being reduced by about half. The zoo was concentrating on small mammals ("small brown jobs", as they are often referred to in zoological circles) and birds, with a smaller number of reptile species. The Aquarium was gone; there were few amphibians and even fewer invertebrates (and no amphibians or invertebrates at all through the 1970s). After Gerald Durrell launched the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust (now the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust) in 1963 to take over the zoo, the emphasis shifted to animal species in danger of extinction in the wild state. Some of the earliest threatened species to arrive were Ring-tailed and Mongoose Lemurs, Celebesian (now Sulawesi) Crested Black Macaques, Bornean and Sumatran Orang-utans, a Spectacled Bear called Pedro, White Eared Pheasants, and a pair of Tuataras (believed to be the only true pair outside New Zealand at that time). Many animals, particularly single and non-breeding specimens, were replaced by endangered species. The idea of maintaining "model" species can be traced back to this period: whenever it was able, the zoo obtained species from Orders and Families hitherto unrepresented in the collection – examples being the Tenrecs and Echidnas – which were not necessarily endangered in the wild state but could be used to perfect methods of husbandry in the hope that skills acquired might be applied later to related, but much rarer, species. The bird collection was still burgeoning, but many avian species maintained at that time were common or non-breeding. The waterfowl collection was considerably increased following the fencing of the large water meadow, which created an attractive area for them and formed a focal point for the whole zoo. The Trust struck up an informal deal with an aviculturist in Angola. In exchange for surplus waterfowl and pheasants bred by the Trust, he would send over native Angolan birds of various species, and in this way the Trust's bird collection was bolstered by the arrival of many southern African species, especially common seed-eaters - attractive aviary-fillers but of little conservation significance. In 1965 Gerald Durrell organised a major animal-collecting trip to Sierra Leone in West Africa which formed the basis of a BBC television series, *Catch Me a Colobus*, and a book of the same name. He followed this with an expedition to Mexico in 1968 to obtain more rare species.

Mid 1970s to Mid 1990s

With the opening of a large new Reptile House in 1976, the collection of reptiles was enlarged. Amphibians rejoined the collection in the early 1980s, slowly at first but with gathering momentum. Invertebrates also made a reappearance in the collection, initially in the form of several taxa of Partula Snails on the verge of extinction. The mammal collection stabilised at around 30 species, over half of which were primates, especially Lemurs, Callitrichids and Anthropoid Apes. By this time almost every mammal species held at the zoo was on the "Red" list. From about a hundred species of birds in 1975, the bird collection had, by the mid 1990s, been reduced to about 35. By now the bird collection was composed almost entirely of threatened species with only a few exceptions. Over half of the bird species were waterfowl of various kinds. The Trust started working closely with governments around the world. The idea of Accords dates from this period: formal agreements signed by the government of the animals' country of origin permitting the Trust to hold and breed certain endangered species on carefully structured breeding loan arrangements. This heralded a radical shift from simple captive breeding to a more holistic approach, with, increasingly, resources being directed at in-situ conservation. Then, as now, many of the species in the Trust's collection were island fauna. This was deliberate policy, as these are often the animals in most need of help; islands are also regions where a small organisation with limited resources can have the most impact.

1995 onwards

With Gerald Durrell's death in January 1995 at the age of 70, the Trust and zoo lost not only its figurehead, but its chief source of publicity. This coincided with a sharp decline in the number of tourists visiting Jersey: a sort of double "whammy". Attendance figures at the zoo dropped. It became imperative to explore new income streams, as well as curb expenditure whenever possible and to become more commercial. It was generally agreed that the zoo had become too specialised and so the pendulum started to swing the other way with the arrival of animals that were not necessarily the rarest of their kind, but were added to the collection primarily because of their enduring popularity with the public. Some of these may be thought of as "model" species for endangered ones on the zoo's wish-list. Among the new species chosen for their popularity were Meerkats, Asian Short-clawed Otters, Ring-tailed/Brown-nosed Coatis, and Lar Gibbons. In the Reptile House, venomous snakes (always popular with zoo visitors) were added after a twenty-year hiatus. A survey showed that visitors to the Reptile House were disappointed with the lack of crocodilians, and so Cuvier's Dwarf Caiman were brought in for a time and even bred. In some cases, species which had been maintained at the zoo many years earlier were brought back. Examples are the Gibbons, Coatis, Emperor Tamarins and Red-billed Choughs, among others. A few kinds of fish were added, the first time the zoo had kept tropical fish since the early 1960s. The Trust announced it would continue to concentrate its resources on a few carefully chosen areas of the world, principally highlands (such as cloud forests) and islands. In recent years the zoo has brought in many species of passerines, a group which was barely represented at all during the 1980s. Asian songbirds are now among its avian specialities.

Ungulates

Jersey Zoo is unusual in that, unlike many other zoos, ungulates have never formed a major part of the collection. In over sixty years, only six species of non-domestic hoofed animals (plus some farm livestock kept mainly in the Pets' Corner) have been maintained. These are: Brazilian Tapir, Przewalski's Horse, Collared Peccary, Babirusa, Red River Hog, and Visayan Warty Pig. The reason for this is due in part to Jersey Zoo's avowed intention to specialise in the smaller mammals, birds and reptiles which are often ignored by other zoos. But there is another reason why not more species of ungulates have been kept. The States of Jersey (the government of the British Channel Islands) is extremely reluctant to sanction the import into the island of non-domestic hoofstock, and with good reason for Jersey's economy revolves, to a large extent, around dairy farming. The casual importation of ungulates would carry the risk of introducing diseases such as foot-and-mouth or bluetongue onto the island, which would have a devastating effect on the famous Jersey cow population.

General notes

These historical lists for Jersey Zoo have been compiled mainly by drawing upon the zoo's Annual Reports/Dodo Journals from 1964 to 2001 and unpublished animal stocklists from 1959 to 1970, with input from other sources to fill in some of the gaps. The information in Annual Reports and other journals and the unpublished stocklists is not always complete or as detailed as I should like and is sometimes ambiguous, hence the occasional vagueness especially with regard to the animal collection in the zoo's early years.

These lists include only those species maintained at the Zoo from the date of its official opening on 26th March 1959. Several species acquired during various early animal collecting expeditions did not become part of the zoo's collection, either because of death, escape, release or early sale, and are thus omitted from these lists. With some species collected on these expeditions, there is uncertainty whether they were added to the collection at Jersey Zoo or not. These include, amongst others:

- From Cameroon (1957) - Weaver-birds; African Common Toad.
- From southern Africa (1961/62) - African Comb Duck (*Sarkidiornis melanotos melanotos*).
- From Sierra Leone (1965) - African Giant Pouched Rat (*Cricetomys emini*); Nile Monitor (*Varanus niloticus*).
- From Guyana (1966) - The following animals are recorded as having been obtained by Jeremy Mallinson on a visit to that country, but there is no mention in the Annual Report for that year of their arrival at the zoo, leading me to wonder whether they were sold to other zoos: Grey-winged Trumpeter (*Psophia crepitans*); Tegu (*Tupinambis*); Green Anaconda (*Eunectes murinus*). However, in his book, *The Touch of Durrell*, Mr Mallinson writes that the Anacondas and Tegus did arrive at Jersey Zoo. Probably they did not stay at the zoo for long, which would explain why they are not mentioned in the Annual Report and stocklist for 1966.

The International Zoo News for January/February 1959 (vol. 6 no. 1) mentions some of the enclosures in the process of being erected in Jersey in readiness for the opening of the new zoo, including an enclosure for Lesser or Red Pandas (*Ailurus fulgens*), but I can find no evidence that Lesser Pandas ever arrived at the zoo and conclude they did not.

The vernacular and scientific names of animals change over time and sometimes I have been unable to identify an animal species by an archaic or little-used name. In these lists I have indicated which species I have, so far, been unable to identify.

It is possible that a few species, recorded in the lists as having first arrived in 1963, were actually acquired in the early part of 1964, as the arrivals section in the first (1964) Annual Report is ambiguous. For the same reason, it is also possible that one or two species, recorded in the lists as having first arrived in 1964, may have arrived in 1963.

In cases when the last individual of a species died or was sent to another collection and then fresh stock of the same species was acquired in the same year, no break is shown in the lists.

The first official animal inventory, containing full details of acquisitions, departures, breeding results and deaths, was published in the zoo's 16th annual report (1979) and then annually thereafter until 2001. Therefore, in most (but not all) cases, whenever the departure date is unknown and a question mark is used, one can assume that the species in question was gone from the collection by 1979 *at the latest*, and probably a lot earlier.