



To promote and establish good relationships among professional zoo keepers.

To promote and establish a means to stimulate incentive and greater interest in the zoo keeping profession.

To support deserving conservation projects that include educating the general public about the need for preserving our natural resources and animal life through these worthwhile efforts.

To establish materials beneficial to zoo keeper education.

AAZK San Diego Board Members

*Ann Knutson – San Diego Zoo
President*

*Maureen Duryee – San Diego Zoo
Vice President*

*Hali O'Connor – San Diego Zoo
Treasurer*

*Kym Janke – Safari Park
Secretary*

*Ann Knutson – San Diego Zoo
Fundraising Officer*

*Linda Henry - SeaWorld
Public Relations Officer*

*Robbie Clark – San Diego Zoo
Social Media Officer*

*Grace Porreca - SeaWorld
Conservation Partner Officer*

*Ashley Roberts – San Diego Zoo
Professional Development
Officer*

*Yvette Kemp – San Diego Zoo
Chapter Liaison*

Content:	PG
President's Message	1
Philippine Biodiversity 2	4
CCF at SeaWorld	4
Flamingo Symposium	5
Marathon	5
Antipoaching Ranger	6
Lions & Leopards	8
AAZK & AZCARM	9
Red Panda Network	10
BFR 2015	10
Open Positions	12
Meet A Member	12
2015 Calendar	14

The Keeper

American Association of Zoo Keepers San Diego Chapter Quarterly Newsletter - Winter 2014

President's Message

By Ann Knutson, AAZK San Diego President

As the year winds down, AAZK San Diego has been looking towards next year and discussing our plans for the future. During the last couple of years, we have worked at fulfilling all aspects of our mission statement. Each year we focused on improving one facet or another. Last year we began our workshop series to develop our professional development role. We are excited that there has been positive feedback, so our goal for 2015 is to continue offering these professional development workshops, making a few minor adjustments here and there to improve them.

Another professional development opportunity we will continue to offer is the ability to apply for our Shirley Busch Professional Development Grant (SBPDG), which awards up to \$1,000 every year to one or more individuals. This grant is available to members who are both local and national members and can be used to attend any professional conference or workshop or participation in conservation projects. The deadline to apply is January 31st, so be sure to visit our website for details.

We will also continue to give our members the chance to raise money and awareness for causes that they are passionate about. Through fundraising events such as Pints for Preservation, Bowling for Rhinos, and Croctober Fest, we have been able to help members and supporters bring light to conservation issues around the world. AAZK San Diego is a platform our members can use to highlight conservation organizations that they are involved in. The Pints for Preservation events help bring much needed funding at a larger scale than if done by one person alone.

We realize that raising awareness and funding is important to support the many conservation organizations out there. Fundraising is something we have done for many years which is why we have decided that 2015 will bring a new focus to our group. 2015 will be the year we spotlight our members' needs. Our goal: to have fun and get to know each other better.

AAZK San Diego is hoping to plan more events that get our members and supporters together. Some of the ideas that are in the works are day trips to other institutions, birding trips, happy hours, and more. These events will help all of us to get to know each other a little better, providing a professional network as well as a fun outlet at the end of our work day.

It is during our chapter meetings that we discuss our plans for the year. As we review the current year, we are again reminded of what is at the core of AAZK San Diego... we are an outlet for animal care professionals to share their passion and a place to facilitate the realization of what each of us is capable of achieving.

If you have an idea or would like to get more involved, please feel free to contact me at annknutsn@yahoo.com.

And be sure to visit our website to learn about all the activities we have planned so far.

Biodiversity Survey in the Philippines : Herpin' for conservation

By Joseph Brown, San Diego Zoo Reptile Keeper

This summer, I was fortunate enough to join a team of international biologists and participate in a four-week biodiversity study on the island of Samar in the southeastern Philippines. This expedition was funded by an NSF RAPID grant and lead by the University of Oklahoma (OU) and the University of Kansas (my alma mater), both of which have a long-standing research program focused in the Philippines. Luckily for me, this was my second opportunity to team up with the University of Kansas (KU) for fieldwork in the Philippines. After graduating in 2008, I spent five months with a team of herpetologists, mammalogists, and ornithologists from KU surveying local biodiversity on several islands throughout the Philippine archipelago. When they reached out to me this past year to collaborate on another trip, I was elated to join them once again.



related to catastrophic natural events.

In late 2013, typhoon Hainan, one of the strongest tropical cyclones ever recorded killed nearly 10,000 people making it the Philippines' deadliest typhoon on record. The main purpose of the expedition this summer was to quickly evaluate the impact of typhoon Hainan on regional biodiversity. The Philippines is one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, and it is crucial to have a better understanding of conservation issues



After 7,600 miles and a 15-hour flight, I arrived in Manila with no worries, except that my luggage was left at LAX. This caused a brief one-day delay before we could depart from the overpopulated, smog-filled city of Manila and head down to the lush, green jungles on the island of Samar. This also gave us one more day to relish a few of the greatest luxuries we have in life: running water for a shower, a mattress for a bed and, last but not least, a toilet. These common amenities are pretty much nonexistent once down on the islands. After a month in the jungle, you truly realize how much you take these simple comforts for granted.



Travel within the Philippines is rather difficult and uncomfortable due to outdated, unorganized and severely overcrowded modes of transportation. And by overcrowded, I mean long bus rides with standing room only, four people in a two person seat, a random baby on your lap, and entire families riding on the roof. Our total journey from Manila to our first campsite on Samar would entail a 28-hour bus ride, four hours on a ferry, six hours in the back of a jeepney, another six hours on a bus, and a



three-hour hike. For a majority of that 28-hour bus ride, they were blasting Miley Cyrus, Journey, and Christian rock. I had a 12 inch subwoofer directly above my head on the bus; it was awful, but awesome at the same time.

After almost a week of travel and having to gather all of our food and supplies for the next few weeks, we finally arrived at our camp. Our new home was nestled directly in the most lush, dense jungle you can imagine. It was beautiful. 60 foot trees, hosting hundreds of ferns, vines, and cycads of various species, towered above our camp acting as a roof. From here on out, I'd be sleeping in a hammock (which I love), roaming the undergrowth to relieve various bodily functions while trying to avoid any thorns or biting/stinging toxic insects, and



traversing a 40 foot mud slide to bathe in the stream below our camp. Gotta love it! The price of beauty for this unimaginable primary forest was definitely the climate and bugs. It was either about 100 degrees with 99% humidity, or about 90 degrees with torrential, down pouring of rain (for several days in a row). When it wasn't raining, the bugs were extremely dreadful. Besides your normal mosquitoes, they have 'nik niks', which are like a microscopic-super-chigger/mosquito. These little suckers were just about invincible to any bug spray, deet, net or clothing. There was also these assassin bugs that would excrete toxins

on your skin and leave a nice lil' burning rash for a couple days. I also managed to get bit by a venomous centipede; yes, I was possibly attempting to catch it. That set in a good amount of pain for several days. Oh yeah, there are leeches too. One time, I awoke in my hammock in the middle of the night to find a leech lodged all the way up my nostril. It took several tugs and a gushing bloody nose to get him out. That was fun.

In a tropical region, the lush jungle, hot and humid climate, and lots of rain usually make for the most productive herpetological field surveys, or the best "herping" (searching for reptiles and amphibians). Some people go fishing in their free time, but us "crazy" reptile people go herpin'. And some times, as in this case, you're lucky enough to travel across the world and get paid to do it. I was like a kid in a candy shop in Samar. Since a majority of the herps are nocturnal, night time is when you get to work and venture out into the jungle. But first, you get a nice, hearty Filipino dinner, which usually includes about 9 cups of white rice with some combo of pork adobo, fish, canned tuna or corn beef. Once dinner is over and the sun is set, the 9 million cicadas that are screaming though bullhorns will slowly conclude their concert and the jungle settles to nearly pitch black. This is when the real fun begins. We strap on headlamps, grab a snake hook and our trusty machetes (there's no pampered, premade trails in this forest), and start hiking. The jungle really does come alive at night. It's amazing. You're surrounded by a chorus of frogs: hundreds, if not thousands of them all calling from their own little microhabitat. Each species has their own distinct call, so you learn to recognize each one in an attempt to distinguish which frog is calling from where and whether it's on the leaves of banana trees three to five meters high, in the holes of tree trunks, on rocks near a stream, or hiding under leaf litter on the forest floor. As we hike, we are scanning our spotlights on every single branch, leaf, and trunk of every tree or plant in our close proximity. Occasionally, we get lucky and find a mangrove snake out cruising for dinner, or a stunning, coiled-up pit viper perched up in a tree, or even a sail-finned lizard sleeping perfectly on a tree branch overhanging a waterfall. Some nights we hit the jackpot, where we can't walk five feet without seeing eight different frog species, a gecko or crested lizard, or even a couple of snakes. Some nights we're out for four hours, hiking and scaling cliffs, falling in streams, getting cut up by thorny cycads, and we return back to camp without seeing more than 20 to 30 frogs.

This thrilling experience is repeated every night for the entire trip. Occasionally, every week or so, we'll set up a new base camp in a different region of the jungle. Whether it's at an elevation a couple hundred meters higher, or maybe on the west side of the mountain as opposed to the south side, each move brings a new ecosystem and a whole new diversity of fauna and flora.

In conclusion, I think it is absolutely imperative to emphasize the importance of the Philippine rainforest and the sad fate its future may hold. As reported by Conservation International, "this country is one of the few nations that is, in its entirety, both a biodiversity hotspot and a megadiversity country, placing it among the top priority hotspots for global conservation." Aside from evaluating the impact of typhoon Hainan, the underlying main purpose of this research expedition and other related biodiversity surveys is the protection and conservation of the Philippine forests. Forest cover throughout the country has drastically decreased from around 70% in 1900 to nearly 3% in

The Keeper – Winter 2014



2010. Yes, only 3% remains! This mass deforestation results largely from illegal logging and agriculture, but it's also due to government corruption and non-regulated logging concessions. In order to create more national parks to protect this biodiversity hotspot, *in situ* research and expeditions such as this one are desperately needed to support these conservation efforts.

The thrill and enjoyment of going herpin' has been a hobby of mine since I was a little kid, but herpin' for conservation has and always will be a life-long passion.



Cheetah Conservation Fund Visits SeaWorld San Diego

By Grace Porreca, AAZK San Diego Chapter Conservation Officer

This past September, Dr. Laurie Marker, founder of The Cheetah Conservation Fund, spoke at SeaWorld's Hubbs Center. CCF is one of the SeaWorld & Bush Gardens Conservation Fund recipients. Dr. Marker was there to explain how CCF programming is rooted in scientific research and that it maintains a research program on the biology, ecology, and genetics of cheetahs. Through this research, CCF has created programs that address the threats to both the cheetah and its ecosystem.



CCF also participates in Human-Wildlife Conflict programs. One of these programs is the Livestock Guarding Dog Program. CCF breeds Anatolian shepherds and Kangal dogs. These breeds have guarded small livestock flocks against wolves and bears in Turkey. CCF has been placing dogs with livestock owners since 1994 and research shows that the dogs are highly effective in reducing livestock loss by 80 to 100 percent.

In the 1980's, CCF studied many aspects of cheetah biology, including genetics, reproductive physiology, and virology. With the help of CCF collaborators, they identified the cheetah's limited genetic variation. CCF has a world class research facility that is very unique to Africa, which helps the organization collaborate with scientists around the globe on studies that benefit cheetahs, their ecosystems, and other big cats and predators.

Dr. Marker concluded her presentation by answering questions from the public. She thanked everyone for their time, their continued support, and the support of SeaWorld and Bush Gardens Conservation Fund.

If you find yourself interested in CCF, be sure to visit their website at www.cheetah.org. You can also become involved with their local chapter at <http://ccfsandiego.weebly.com>.

3rd International Flamingo Symposium

By Grace Porreca, AAZK San Diego Chapter Conservation Officer



The symposium took place this past October at the Bahia Resort on Mission Bay. The event kicked off with an ice breaker on the Bahia Belle where participants from all over the world met and mingled. The 1st Symposium was held back in the 70's. The 2nd Symposium was not held again until 1998. Now, almost 20 years later, researchers, scientists, and keepers got together to discuss all things flamingo.

Topics included "Greater flamingos and their new range in central Mediterranean," "Soda ash threat to the survival of East Africa's Lesser Flamingos at Lake Natron, Tanzania," and "Results of banding program of the High Andean flamingos," just to name a few presentations.

There were two days of papers and a day of informative workshops. This was followed by tours of various SeaWorld programs and a banquet dinner. Prior to the conference, the delegates were able to visit the San Diego Zoo. For the post conference trip, delegates had the opportunity to visit the Safari Park.

Here's hoping that the 4th International Flamingo Symposium is held in less than 20 years!

2015 Running for Wildlife

By Ann Knutson, AAZK San Diego President

AAZK San Diego is once again an official charity of the Tri-City Medical Center Carlsbad Marathon and Half. Each year we use this opportunity to raise money to fund the many projects and events we host each year and to raise awareness for different conservation issues.



One of the most fun parts of being an official charity is volunteering to cheer the runners the day of the race! Not many runners expect to see a rhino on the race course and once they see our crash and the fun signs, we are sure they are inspired to keep going. We can never have too many volunteers, so please consider joining us on 18 January 2015 as we cheer on the runners!

We will also have monthly training runs to get together and have fun and beginning in December. We'll be hosting a carbo-load spaghetti dinner the evening before the race.

Visit our website at www.sdaazk.org for more information on each of these events.

If you have any questions about the training runs or race please contact Aknutson@sandiegozoo.org.



Zookeeper to Anti Poaching Ranger – On the front line of South Africa’s rhino poaching crisis

By Michael Veal, San Diego Zoo’s Safari Park Mammal Keeper

In early November, I was able to share the movements, procedures, and clandestine operations of Specialized Rhino Protection to the heavy hitting science and conservation world. It was an opportunity to learn what is effective and what is myth within the rhino poaching crisis.

During March of 2014, I had left the South African field exhibits of the San Diego Zoo’s Safari Park and walked into the bush of South Africa’s Kruger National Park. My life was packed up into a small storage unit in Escondido, Ca. and my new adventure began as I was issued a camouflage uniform, bush hat, and 1980s leather combat boots. I handed in my first world possessions and left behind the only reminders of home.

Ranger selection began abruptly, it was a challenge of physical and mental strength, only the tough survive truly living in the bush. Due to the intensity of the current rhino and elephant poaching crisis, the new age of anti-poaching rangers are special operative combat trained investigators and guardians of those who cannot wield a gun to fight off greed. With a GoPro strap to my chest, a machete on my back, a can of beans in my battle jacket, and a semi automatic weapon, I felt I could handle all obstacles thrown at me in the darkness of the thorny acacia trees.

While on patrol, I became a specialist at clandestine movements and operations, tracking criminals who were pursuing rhinos for their horns. Yet still, I found myself at several rhino crime scenes and tracing the movements and methods of the murderers who had chased down, shot, and stole the horns of their victims. Threats of fines, jail time, poisoned or removed horns, or shootouts do not stop the determined who have dollar signs in their eyes. Anti-poaching rangers are the only threat slowing down the movement of poachers. It’s up to other groups and governments to convince cultures that their false beliefs are causing extinction across the globe.

Awareness and education are just as important as hunting poachers down which is why I’ve created a doubled sided spear to fight for wildlife. If you would like to get involved and have access to current public and inside knowledge, I invite you to join the fight to save rhinos in South Africa at “Fight with Mike, Direct Anti-Poaching and Conservation.” My slogan is “Fight Poachers Fight Extinction.” Let’s bring San Diego to the global fight, by helping my fellow rangers as we do the footwork on the frontline.

I have created several funding streams to help keep the pressure on the poachers. Operation Rhino Shield will be released in mid October. By purchasing a “Rhino Shield” shirt, you are funding rangers with the much needed gear and comforts for a more efficient patrol. I have been able to team up with several local businesses, so that when it is time to purchase gear, we will be able to purchase it at wholesale price or as an in-kind donation. This is to ensure that those who join the fight make the biggest impact. The rangers will be receiving boot insoles, flashlight, lighters, bear mace (for dangerous animal encounters), tazers, and several sets of light weight bullet proof vests.

Along with supporting the rangers, I’ve set up several community support programs, mainly with the Zulu and Tsonga people who live on the edges of the reserves. I am purchasing large quantities of traditional jewelry, spears, bowls and woodcrafts as part of a continued agreement to support them to prevent them from going into the reserves to poach. On the ground in South Africa, I have left this up to two of my fellow rangers to continue improving the relationship between rangers and the rural impoverished communities.

As a final key to the fight against poaching, I was able to film as much as possible while in the bush and working as a ranger, to release short awareness videos and documentaries. This is to continue educating the western world on the crisis with a direct source. I obtained footage and interviews of topics, places, and people that had never been on camera, bringing true stories and real footage to the surface. South Africa cannot defeat this problem on their own, they need all the help they can get.

Join me in the fight against poachers! Join the “Fight with Mike, Direct Anti-Poaching” project and awareness campaign. Together we can all stop the current elephant and rhino-poaching crisis. For more information, email me at mvealesrp@gmail.com or mveale@sandiegozoo.org.

Mike Veale, Anti-Poaching Ranger and Zoologist



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Local Zoologist Takes the Fight for Wildlife to the Frontlines of Africa

SAN DIEGO, California (August 23, 2014) – San Diego Zoo and Safari Park Keeper and wildlife conservationist, Mike Veale, takes action on the encroachment of life to endangered species in Africa. On March 16th of this year, Mike left the comforts of San Diego to join a specialized anti-poaching unit in Africa, tasked with the protection of endangered species in Kruger National Park. This pursuit follows Mike's passion within the field of wildlife conservation, to protect numerous species from the dangers of extinction by poachers. Mike's willingness to place himself on the frontline, encountering imminent danger in hostile territory, stems from his pursuit to protect endangered animals and to advance the public's knowledge of the detriment occurring in Africa.

The damage is real: iconic African wildlife we've all grown up learning about and admiring are being driven to extinction; everything from lions, rhinos, giraffes, cheetahs and leopards are at risk. All major African species are facing major decline due to black market trade, superstitious medicine and short sighted profit, ultimately at the cost of a species. In the last three years, over one-hundred-thousand elephants have been lost to the ivory trade, alone. Mike elaborates on the issue in saying that, "Illegal wildlife trade needs to be stopped immediately, because negative consequences also include the funding of organized crime, the building of false economies in already unbalanced nations, and corruption within governments due to the massive instability."

In addition, and in accord with his first-hand experience, Mike corroborates that much of the funding sent to Africa for the protection of species is not reaching the ground level because of the governmental corruptness. Moreover, Mike asserts that many organizations are claiming to be forerunners in the fight against poachers, but their efforts are never seen, and wildlife rangers continue to be drastically underfunded. If this is allowed to continue, much of the economy's internal revenue, flowing from high-profile donors coming into Africa for safaris, will soon be depleted as the option will no longer be viable.

After returning from Africa on June 5th, Mike continued in his previously established awareness campaign, "Fight with Mike," to further inform the public and ultimately call to action those that hold the same passions for endangered wildlife. "The issue should be affecting the individual to his or her very core: do we, as a society, allow mass extinction to occur? As stewards of this earth, no matter our cultural or ethnic background, do we allow this to happen? The fact that they're being killed for greed and misconceived, non-scientifically based medicine, is morally offensive."

To learn more, please visit Mike's Facebook page at [Fight with Mike, Direct Anti-Poaching and Conservation](#), or email him at mvealesrp@gmail.com.

Mike Veale

Mike Veale

Lions & Leopards Game Reserve

By Ashley Roberts, San Diego Zoo Sr. Mammal Keeper

As zoo keepers, we have the opportunity to interact with some of the most amazing species on the planet on a daily basis. Many of us though, seldom get the opportunity to see them in their natural habitats. I was recently given the chance to do just that when I traveled to South Africa to participate in research and conservation work with Lions and Leopards at the Thanda Game Reserve.

Thanda, in collaboration with the University of Natal, the African Lion Environmental Research Trust (ALERT), and African Impact, are collecting data on their resident lions' behavior. Thanda (including the recently added land of Mduna) has three prides and two solo males. ALERT is working towards reintroduction of lions into Southern Africa and the data collected on the Thanda lions will serve as a base line for expected behaviors for the soon to be released lions. If the lions that are to be released are exhibiting the same behaviors as their wild counterparts, then they will be considered ready for release.

It's no surprise to any of us that lions are endangered. We know that, like many species, if steps aren't taken to preserve them and their habitats, we will most likely lose many of them forever. Being able to witness and participate in front-line conservation work was something that I had dreamt of doing for as long as I can remember. Not only was this trip the fulfillment of a lifelong dream to go to Africa while seeing so many of the animals I love in their natural habitat, it was also a fantastic learning experience. One that will greatly augment my understanding of the animals I care for at the zoo and their role as ambassadors for their wild counterparts.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my colleagues and friends in our AAZK chapter for helping make this trip possible. The money I received from the Shirley Bush Professional Development Scholarship helped allay some of the cost associated with my room and board during my stay in South Africa. It is a great resource to any full or professional level chapter member to take part in projects that are both professionally and personally rewarding. The scholarship awards up to \$1,000 annually to AAZK members so they can attend conferences or other professionally developing events.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the Shirley Bush Scholarship please visit our website at www.sdaazk.org, or ask any board member the next time you see them. The deadline to request funding for the grant is January 31, 2015. We are always happy to help our fellow keepers!

Thank You To Our AAZK San Diego Sponsors & Supporters



AAZK & AZCARM Conferences

By Yvette Kemp, AAZK San Diego Chapter Liaison



Zoo keeping is an ever growing and changing career. What was the norm for the animal care field 10 or even 5 years ago, has changed. We are more involved in conservation, training, and enrichment, and actively participate in all types of in-situ programs.

So, how do we keep track of all the new information and keep up to date on the most current animal care techniques? The truth is much of it happens through sharing our knowledge at conferences, workshops, and symposiums. Animal care personnel have the same goals: to provide the best care to the animals they work with, educate the general public in conservation, and to raise funding for habitat loss. Actually, those are just a few of our goals, but pretty big ones.



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
of ZOO KEEPERS

I was fortunate enough to attend and participate at two conferences this year: the National AAZK Conference hosted by the Orlando AAZK Chapter, and the AZCARM Conference hosted by the Culiacan Zoo in Mexico. Both conferences highlighted various conservation and institutional activities and offered interesting workshops and lectures.

The AAZK conference welcomed over 300 attendees with over half of them being 1st time AAZK conference attendees! It was great to see how each generation of keepers and animal care personnel are dedicated to their job and the programs they are a part of. Between the presentations, workshops, and activities, AAZK conferences are definitely a great way to get up to date information about our field. And now that AAZK offers certification through workshops, there is yet another great resource for keepers. During this conference, certification was offered to those who attended and completed the Cores of Zookeeping and Hospital Quarantine Zookeeper workshops. The future of AAZK conferences will surely continue to grow as we are able to offer other professional development methods for the needs in our field.

The AZCARM conference was smaller with approximately 100 people in attendance. AZCARM (Asociacion de Zoologicos, Criaderos, y Acuarios de Mexico) is very similar to the Association of Zoo and Aquariums (AZA) in the U.S. Although the organization is relatively new (a little over 4 years), their goal is to provide Mexican zoos with standards and regulations similar to AZA. AZCARM now has 4 accredited facilities: Africam Safari in Puebla, Zoo Parque Loro also in Puebla, Zoofari Teacalco in Morelos, and Chapultepec Zoo in Mexico City. And Africam Safari and Parque Zoologico de Leon are also AZA accredited facilities.

Similar to AZA and AAZK conferences, there were presentations by various institutions highlighting the various projects their zoos are involved in. Some of the recent highlights for AZCARM and other Mexican zoos included the birth of 5 Mexican wolf pups at the San Juan de Aragon Zoo in Mexico City, the birth of snow leopards at the Yupendii Zoological Organization (a breeding center for endangered species), and the participation of Mexican Zoos in rhino conservation through involvement with International Rhino Foundation (IRF) programs. And just last week, Chapultepec Zoo also became part of the California condor project and received 2 condors to their facility.

Both conferences were informative with the right amount of fun mixed in. Of course we attend conferences for the knowledge, but we also go to see our friends from other institutions, meet new friends, and to network. Another reason of course, is to visit other facilities to see how others do it.

If you have never attended a conference, I recommend that you do so. If you don't do so on a regular basis, you should. As I mentioned, conferences fulfill many different purposes and are a great way to renew your interest in the field. There are many different conferences and you should look into what your biggest interests are. AAZK, AZA, IMATA, ABMA, ICEE, AZCARM, the conference possibilities are endless. No matter the topic, the opportunities to grow are all around us. Take advantage of AAZK San Diego's Shirley Busch Professional Development Grant, due in January and offered to AAZK members who are both local and national. Also find out what your facility offers for your professional growth. Visit our website to learn more about our grant.

The next AAZK conference will be hosted by the St. Louis AAZK chapter September 27th through October 2nd, 2015. AZCARM's next conference is 19-23 October 2015 at Quintana Roo's Bel Air Animal Park. AZA, September 17-21, 2015 in Salt Lake City and hosted by Utah's Hogle Zoo. If you need help in deciding where to go, speak with one of the AAZK San Diego board members and we'll do our best to give you some ideas.

The Keeper – Winter 2014

Red Panda Network, In-situ conservation of red pandas

By Nicki Boyd, Red Panda Network President

Our vision is the conservation of wild red pandas and their natural habitat through education and empowerment of local communities. We are committed to ensure the survival of wild red pandas and their habitat for future generations to study, experience, and enjoy and are dedicated in protecting red pandas and their habitat through empowerment of local communities by adaptive community-based research, education and sustainable development.

Our immediate goal is the creation of Panchthar-Ilam-Taplejung Red Panda Protected Forest, located in Eastern Nepal, which will be the world's first protected area dedicated to red panda. We have already trained 54 Forest Guardians to help monitor the forests and red pandas, community based conservations efforts are a must for a successful program.

Our long term goals are:

- Protection of 40% of the range of red panda in Nepal by EOY 2015
- A survey of 40% of the red panda range in Nepal by EOY 2015
- The creation and implementation of the following by EOY 2015:
 - Panchthar-Ilam-Taplejung Corridor Protected Forest, the world's first protected area dedicated to red panda.
 - Panchthar-Ilam-Taplejung Community Forest Conservation Union
 - Panchthar-Ilam-Taplejung Community Eco-tourism Committee
 - Panchthar-Ilam-Taplejung Sustainable Business Forum
 - The First research center for ecological restoration of Eastern Himalayan Broadleaf and Conifer Forests

Thank you AAZK San Diego Chapter for your support!



Lions Tigers & Bears
24402 Martin Way
Alpine, CA 91901
P: (619) 659-8078 F: (619) 659-8841
www.liontigersandbears.org
Tax ID# 33-0938499

Dear SD AAZK,

As a recipient of the AAZK San Diego Shirley Busch Professional Development Award it was an honor to attend the National AAZK Conference in Orlando, Florida and spend a week expanding my knowledge on the field of exotic animal care. Being the Founder and Director of Lions, Tigers & Bears - a big cat and exotic animal rescue sanctuary in San Diego County, it has always been my objective to continue learning and implementing best practices for providing the highest level of care to all of the animals under my charge. Although sanctuaries and zoos may have different missions, at the end of the day the take away goal is to have happy, healthy and well cared for animals. Attending this conference was a great way to learn about the latest happenings in the field and take away working knowledge that can be applied immediately. I've been working with big cats, bears and various exotic animals for over twenty years. I have watched before my very eyes the great advances in standards of care for captive exotic animals, even in just the past decade, from enrichment and operant conditioning to proper quarantine protocols- all for the betterment of the animals. It is great to be a part of a network of concerned keepers who help care for some of the world's most majestic animals, that stand so dear to my heart. Thank you SD AAZK for granting me this professional development award.

Sincerely yours,

Bobbi Brink, Founder/Director
Lions, Tigers & Bears

Bowling for Rhinos 2015

By Yvette Kemp, AAZK San Diego Chapter Liaison

During the recent AAZK conference in Orlando, AAZK unveiled the new Bowling for Rhinos logo. 2015 will mark the events 25th anniversary.

2014 was a great year for BFR and AAZK chapters were able to raise \$484, 715.60 – a new record! Total funds raised to date are now at \$5,290,974.36.

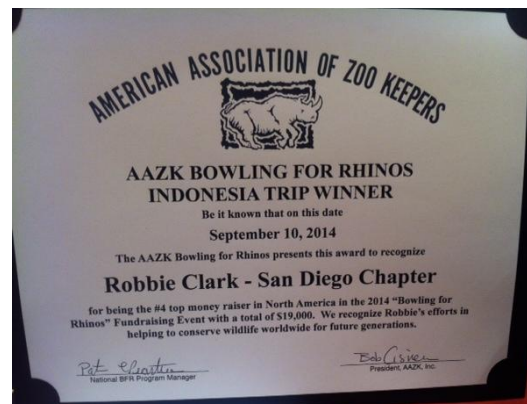
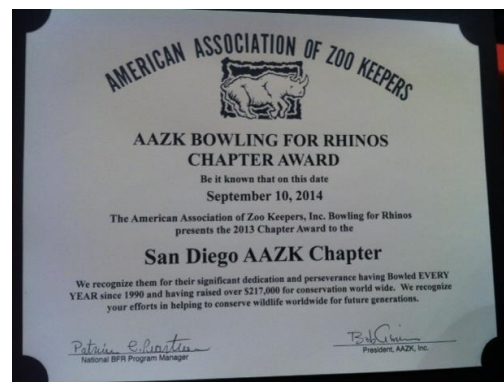


AAZK San Diego is especially proud of our chapter. At the conference, we were recognized for our participation in BFR since it began in 1990.

AAZK San Diego board member Robbie Clark was also recognized for being the 4th highest fundraiser for BFR 2014. Robbie will be joining the International Rhino Foundation on their trip to Indonesia in 2015. Congratulations to Robbie!

We are already planning BFR 2015 and would love for you to be involved!

The American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) San Diego Chapter is proud to be hosting our 25th annual **Bowling for Rhinos (BFR)** event. BFR is a national bowl-a-thon fundraising event geared to assisting rhino conservation in Kenya and Indonesia. 100% of all funds go directly to in situ conservation projects, conserving 4 species of rhinos, their habitats, and hundreds of other endangered plants and animals AND cheetah conservation in Kenya. AAZK San Diego has contributed over \$250,000 locally and nationally BFR has raised over \$5 million dollars! The event will feature a silent auction, drawings, a costume contest, most sponsorship raised contest, bake sale, and more. You don't have to bowl to participate!



WHEN: Saturday, June 6, 2015 from 5:15 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

WHERE: Kearny Mesa Bowl, 7585 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, San Diego, CA 92111
COST: \$50 per team to bowl, plus a recommended \$40 minimum individual sponsorship

TO LEARN MORE: about the AAZK San Diego's local **Bowling for Rhinos** event, sponsorship opportunities, and how you can help protect and become involved in rhino conservation, please contact Yvette Kemp at TheKeeperSDAAZK@cox.net

If you are interested in becoming involved in the organization of BFR, send me an email. Bowling for Rhinos is truly one of the core programs that AAZK is all about and our goal is to make each year even more successful than the last. With your help, we can make that happen!

If you didn't have a chance to donate to this year's BFR efforts, you can still do so at <https://www.aazk.org/bowling-for-rhinos/bfr-donation/>. You can be assured that 100% of your donation will go to a great cause!

Open Board Positions

By Ann Knutson, AAZK San Diego Chapter President

AAZK San Diego has a couple of interim board positions available for those looking to get more involved and would like a test run on our board. We are accepting letters of interest for board member positions that will be held until the official elections in February.

Being an AAZK San Diego Board Member is a great way to be a part of an organization that is involved in local and international conservation issues. It is also a great opportunity to learn skills that will benefit you in and outside of the animal conservation field as well as a great way to meet people that are as dedicated as you are.

We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to join the AAZK San Diego board.

Please send a short letter of interest to annkntsn@yahoo.com by Nov 23, 2014.

Meet AAZK San Diego Member – Jen Miller

I always had a love for the creatures of this great earth. However I did not realize what this meant until later on in my college years.

I wanted a good career. Not just any career, I wanted something that would make me happy in the long run. I entered college as a music major, playing the violin and piano, then later switching to philosophy and even political science. I eventually ended up in the biotech field, studying DNA and bent over a microscope examining different types of bacteria. I loved it and was very good at it. I spent two years in this major until I realized that it was not my true dream. It hit me one day as I was sitting in a biology lab class.

I began doing research, checking out different internships, everything from solar panel installation to graphic design until I stumbled upon a guest experience internship with a local organization known as the Living Coast Discovery Center. I knew I had the appropriate academics, I just needed the experience. So I applied and gained the intern spot working with San Diego's local animal species. After the internship ended I joined the volunteer team and continued working with various birds of prey and local marine species.

When I worked in the aquarium it was always wet! One of my favorite jobs was feeding the baby bat rays little chopped pieces of capelin. Other times I would siphon and work on tank maintenance so the fish had a suitable habitat. I soon realized that working with the animals is what made me truly happy every day. I would care for the birds by feeding them, presenting them to the general public, cleaning their enclosures and even spending time doing enrichment with some of them. I could literally feel the connection that we share with these precious animals. Through this I discovered my own passion for life and I understood it. My mission was to inspire care and exploration of the earth by connecting people with coastal animals, plants, and habitats. I was now fulfilled as a person and knew the road I needed to take to achieve my dreams. This volunteer opportunity opened many doors for me and gave me the insight I needed to passionately pursue my dreams of working in the animal care field. It gave me the chance to expand my horizons.

So what am I doing now? During my free time I volunteer with the San Diego Natural History Museum but am currently employed by the San Diego Zoo working in the gift shops and the restaurant business. In six months time I will apply for the Roar Corps program. This program allows qualifying employees to explore different departments within the animal care profession. It is not just a career path, but a philosophy, a vision, and a way of life. I am committed to saving species worldwide by uniting our expertise in animal care and conservation science with our dedication to inspiring passion for nature. This is the mission of San Diego Zoo Global.

I now know what I want out of life. I have the ambition I need to chase the dreams I believe in. They say there is no greater teacher than life itself.

The Keeper – Winter 2014



AAZK San Diego Membership Form

Check here if you are renewing

- | | |
|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional (must already be an AAZK National; adding local San Diego membership w/access to workshops) | \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full (must already be an AAZK National; adding local San Diego membership) | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter (local AAZK San Diego Membership Only) | \$15.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional (organizations/institutions; requires board approval) | \$50.00 |

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ Zip _____

Email _____

Zoo Affiliation _____ Job Title _____

Work area _____ Species you work with _____

Professional AAZK San Diego Member. Benefits include:

- Access to online animal professional courses offered through CollaborNation Collaborative Learning Environment
- Free admittance to all our hands-on workshops and events
- Opportunity to sign-up for hands-on workshops before it is offered to others
- One-year subscription to our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*
- Free admission to special presentations by guest speakers
- Support of local and international conservation projects
- Free admission to our annual AAZK SD photo caravan at the Safari Park
- Ability to participate in local board member elections
- All National AAZK membership benefits

Full AAZK San Diego Members. Benefits include:

- One-year subscription to our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*
- Free admission to special presentations by guest speakers
- Support of local and international conservation projects
- Free admission to our annual AAZK SD photo caravan at the Safari Park
- Ability to participate in local board member elections
- All National AAZK membership benefits

AAZK San Diego Supporter. Benefits include:

- One-year subscription to our quarterly newsletter, *The Keeper*
- Free admission to special presentations by guest speakers
- Support of local and international conservation projects

Please fill out form and send to:

**AAZK San Diego
Membership
P.O. Box 632984
San Diego, CA 92103**

AAZK San Diego
P.O. Box 632984
San Diego, CA
92103

Tel: (619) 231-1515 ext. 4672

Email: TheKeeperSDAAZK@cox.net

Web site: www.sdaazk.org

FaceBook: <http://www.facebook.com/sdaazk>



The Keeper is published quarterly by the American Association of Zoo Keepers San Diego Chapter, Inc. (AAZK SD), a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization with offices at P.O. Box 120551, San Diego, CA 92112; (619) 231-1515, ext. 4672. Address for editorial, advertising and membership inquiries—AAZK SD, P.O. Box 632984, Hillcrest Post Office San Diego, CA 92103. Reproduction or use without written permission of editorial or pictorial content in any manner is prohibited. Copyright © 1996 by AAZK SD. Subscriptions are included with the membership in AAZK SD or by paying \$15 per year, U.S. currency only. *The Keeper* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials. Manuscripts or artwork not accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope may not be returned. *The Keeper* makes every effort to ensure that the products and services advertised in our pages are consistent with the environmental ethic that we promote. Opinions expressed on these pages do not necessarily reflect the view of the AAZK SD, AAZK, Inc., or the board of either chapter or parent organization.

CALENDAR 2015 visit www.sdaazk.org for updates

- **January 17, 2015: Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser “Run for Wildlife.”** AAZK San Diego Chapter is excited to be an official charity of the Tri-City Medical Center Carlsbad Marathon and Half Marathon for a 3rd year in a row. AAZK San Diego

welcomes everyone to join us as we supporter our marathon participants who are “Running for Wildlife” in a carbo-load dinner and celebration at Café on Park at 5:30 p.m. The event includes a delicious pasta dinner, salad, dessert, and non-alcoholic beverage for \$15pp. All funds raised go to support AAZK San Diego conservation projects. **RESERVATIONS:** www.sdaazk.org

-
- **January 18, 2015: Tri-City Carlsbad Marathon & Half Marathon “Running for Wildlife.”** The American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) San Diego Chapter is excited to be an official charity of the Tri-City Medical Center Carlsbad Marathon and Half Marathon for a 3rd year in a row. AAZK San Diego invites runners interested in “Run for a Reason” to support our conservation projects by “**Running for Wildlife.**” **HOW:** Visit the marathon home page at <http://www.carlsbadmarathon.com/> then click on Charities. Select AAZK San Diego’s “Running For Wildlife” through the marathon’s “Run For A Reason” program. We are also looking for volunteers to help us cheer the runners on.
-
- **May 2015: I Golf for Wildlife.** Join the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) San Diego Chapter as we host our 2nd annual “**I Golf For Wildlife**” tournament, raising awareness and funds for endangered species. Mixing sports and wildlife has never been this fun! The 2nd annual “I Golf for Wildlife” is in full affect to help save, conserve, and shed light on the over 16,000 endangered animal and plants. Habitat loss, disease, and illegal wildlife trade have put many animals at risk of extinction. By participating in this event, every dollar raised will go to the support of our earths beautiful wildlife! More information available soon on our website.
-
- **June 6, 2015: Bowling for Rhinos. Celebrating BFRs 25th Anniversary.** The American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) San Diego Chapter is proud to be hosting our 25th annual **Bowling for Rhinos (BFR)** event. BFR is a national bowl-a-thon fundraising event geared to assisting rhino conservation in Kenya and Indonesia. 100% of all funds go directly to in situ conservation projects, conserving 4 species of rhinos, their habitats, and hundreds of other endangered plants and animals AND cheetah conservation in Kenya. AAZK San Diego has contributed over \$250,000 locally and nationally BFR has raised over \$5 million dollars! The event will feature a silent auction, drawings, a costume contest, most sponsorship raised contest, bake sale, and more. You don’t have to bowl to participate! **WHEN:** Saturday, June 6, 2015 from 5:15 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. **WHERE:** Kearny Mesa Bowl, 7585 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, San Diego, CA 92111 **COST:** \$50 per team to bowl, plus a recommended \$40 minimum individual sponsorship. **TO LEARN MORE:** about the AAZK San Diego’s local **Bowling for Rhinos** event, sponsorship opportunities, and how you can help protect and become involved in rhino conservation, please contact Yvette Kemp at TheKeeperSDAAZK@cox.net
-
-

Details about these and all our events available on our website at www.sdaazk.org!

Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sdaazk