

Knowsley Safari Park



NEWS

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The seemingly incessant rain has made the last two summers the wettest that I can remember. This constant rain coupled with rocketing fuel prices and the ever gathering storm clouds of an approaching global recession have certainly made the last few months of this year a “challenge”, for want of a better word.

So when looking back on the past year to the early Easter that turned into a farcical “snow event” and then all the other factors just mentioned, it is amazing that we are still matching or even slightly ahead of last year’s record attendance, which was the best ever since 1972.

The sea lions with their new pool have been a huge success and this winter the grotto has linked the sea lions with Santa arriving during the show to give them their presents. The Santa Sealion Show and Grotto have been well received and all credit and thanks must go to those who have helped set it up. This winter’s major project is the construction of a new eland house. The sleek new state of the art living quarters should be completed by the end of 2008. The main car park is also getting several new planted islands and, with the new fencing in the Amusement Park, the whole area has a much improved appearance to the eye.

We were all much encouraged when the
Zoological
Society

of London included Knowsley in a list of the country’s top ten best zoos in summer 2008.

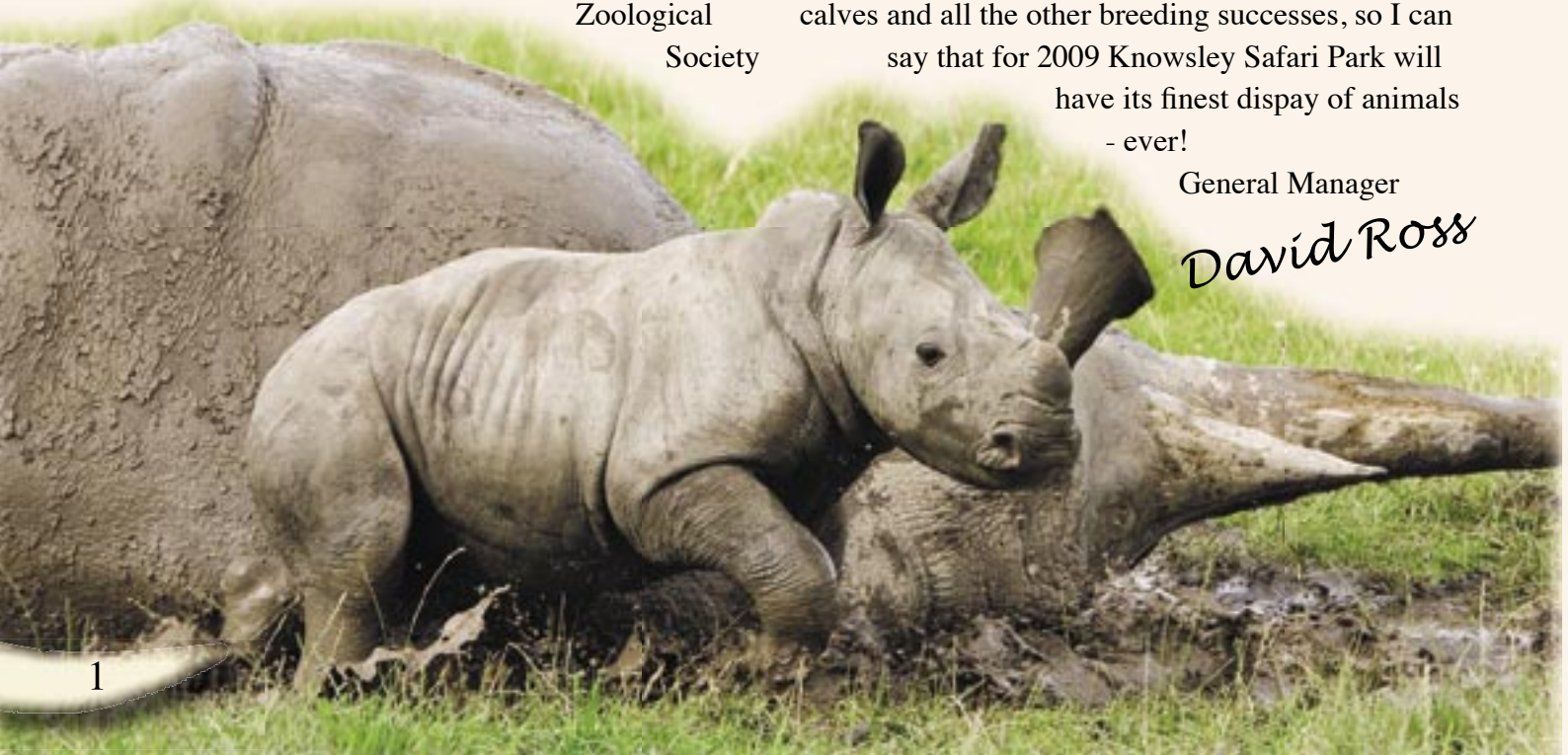
The Safari Park participated this summer in the worldwide “Year of The Frog” campaign, raising over £7000 for amphibian conservation projects around the world. We also supported the survival fund for threatened Asiatic otters, raising £2800 , and have continued with our support for African hunting dogs with a project in Botswana.

As a member of BIAZA we are providing financial support to help save the rainforests in South America. This has enabled the World Land Trust to purchase a huge area of Atlantic rainforest, which is a biodiversity hotspot, to form a reserve for the future.

Our animals have certainly been breeding very successfully in 2008, the lions with their extra ten cubs on display this year have been particularly spectacular. The white rhino have just produced three calves in five months! Quite an achievement and they must be currently one of the most successful captive groups in the world. The small group of free-ranging marmosets is now breeding well and building up numbers; and at last the meerkats are breeding again with the formation of a new group.

We have more lion cubs due, the three rhino calves and all the other breeding successes, so I can say that for 2009 Knowsley Safari Park will have its finest display of animals
- ever!

General Manager
David Ross



A Crash of Rhino

By Jason Doherty, Head Keeper.

It is often said that ‘all good things come to those who wait,’ but little did we realise that our patience would produce results that would make Knowsley the envy of the world’s rhino holding zoological exhibits, with three calves born all within the same season.

2008 has turned out to be our most successful season to date, and has become even



more memorable than 2005, which saw the birth of the first ever female white rhino at the park, Binta calved by Piglet in the November of that year.

The first of this season’s births took place in July, when Maru gave birth to a fit and healthy male calf named Flannery, who at once became a huge hit with the visitors to the park with his high energy antics around the section.

After a short time I began to feel that this may not be the last the stork would be visiting us this year, and it soon became quite evident as the two remaining females, Winnie and Piglet became bigger and bigger that more good news was on the way. The only question was when, and could we produce the perfect season by having all the adult females calving in the same

year?

With the prospect of two more long awaited additions to the family, we set about in preparation for a rather hectic end to the season. And

in October, Knowsley was delighted to welcome the birth of the park’s second female white rhino calf, Cara born to Winnie.

So with two down and one to go, it all depended upon Piglet. But with birth dates calculated between December 08’ and January 09’ and no sign of her calving, it seemed that we may have to be happy with two calves this year and celebrate a new birth in the New Year. So, in early December, I am sure you can imagine the joy I had upon entering the rhino’s winter housing to find that piglet had decided to give the park an early Christmas gift by giving birth to a strong and healthy male named Kimba, and all with just 20 days to go until the end of the 2008 season, making this year a perfect year on the rhino section.

Photos:
Top - Winnie and Cara
Centre- Piglet and Kimba
Bottom - Meru with Flannery

