

Special Feature Series : Zoos of South Asia

LAHORE ZOO, PAKISTAN

Zoos in Pakistan are in transition, much like the Indian zoos were in the 1980s when there was not even a complete list of zoos. There is no sense of a zoo community, no zoo association and no zoo legislation. The zoos in Pakistan are primarily for recreation, with public conservation awareness and education as occasional by-products. However, the wildlife departments of Pakistan are associated administratively with the zoos and may ultimately focus the aims of zoos more and more towards conservation. In Lahore Zoo there are already indications of this, both in terms of animal conservation as well as education.

Pakistan does not have specific Zoo Legislation as yet; there is Wildlife Legislation formulated by the Wildlife Department, Government of Punjab, for the management of the wildlife of Pakistan and this applies also to the zoos. This legislation is different for each province. Zoos can capture animals from the wild in Pakistan, but only for research purposes and only with special permission (a permit) from the head of the Wildlife Department. It is relatively easy for the zoos to get this permission.

There are three government zoos in Pakistan, two of which are under the Punjab Wildlife Department, e.g. Bahawalpur Zoo and Lahore Zoo. Karachi Zoo is located in Sindh and it is under KDA (Karachi Development Authority). There are some private facilities as well.

History of Lahore Zoological Gardens

Lahore city, located in the northeastern part of Pakistan, is an educational and cultural mecca accommodating universities and research centres, important monuments dating back to the Mughal Empire as part of the city's heritage.

The Lahore Zoo is a landmark, having been constructed in the nineteenth century. Founded in 1872 under the administrative control of the Punjab Government and supported by a government grant and subsidy from the municipality, it is the oldest zoo in Pakistan and one of the oldest in the subcontinent. It is a perfect example of colonial architecture (Flower, 1913). The zoo was passed to the Deputy Commissioner, Lahore in 1923, to the Livestock and Dairy Development Department in 1962 and to the Wildlife Department in 1982 (Toosy, 1997). This is not an untypical tradition in old South Asian zoos.

S. S. Flower (1913) visited Lahore Zoological Garden which occupied the west end of what was then called the "Lawrence Gardens". The entire garden area covered 112 acres (45.32 hectares). The zoo, open free to the public, was then managed by a paid Curator, Mr. A. W. Pinto. It was divided into three different sections. There was an inner section for office, primate and carnivore cages, aviaries, reptile house and goldfish tanks. A waterfowl pond visited by wild Night Herons was the second section. There was an outer part with large paddocks for ungulates and poultry.

This section also contained securely fenced and vegetated enclosures with a pond in which a "bear" specimen of the Frontier Wolf, *Canis lupus* lived.

Flower relates that the garden was "celebrated" for formerly been the home of the tiger "Moti" from J. L. Kipling's book *Beast and Man in India* in which the adventure stories of Moti on pages 356 and 357. Flower visited, the zoo had no tiger, however. Other animals he saw were a tahr (*Hemitragus jemlaicus*), monal pheasant (*Lophophorus refulgens*). Flower the Jubilee Museum at Lahore was patronised and by J. L. Kipling, CIE and Rudyard Kipling who acted Curator (Flower, 1913).

In this period the zoo covered an area of 10 ha with 2.5 ha under lawns and roads, .8 ha under reservoir, .7 built up area, 6 ha enclosures for and had facilities of reptile house, aquarium (perhaps construction) veterinary hospital, taxidermist, rest a workshop. Some of the most interesting animals in Lahore Zoo during Flower's time were Snow Leopard, Caracal, Lynx, Urial, Ibex, Chinkara in mammals; Pheasant, Koklas, Cher and Kaleej Pheasants, Houbara Bustard; W.H. Tragopan in birds. Its reptiles Ghavial, Marsh Crocodile, Python, Cobra and other had a good selection of exotic species also (Flower, 1991).

Qureshi (1992) reports that the Zoo underwent modernization which was completed in 1988. It was to provide a natural habitat for the animals where and to arrange cages and enclosures to conform to specifications. Hillocks were added to make the varied and attractive and enjoyable for visitors. Waterfalls, sprinklers, fountains and a childrens playground added. Public amenities were provided — sitting dust-bins and water coolers, etc. A public address was installed for music, calling staff, announcing children, etc. (Qureshi, 1992).

Lahore Zoo Today

Today Lahore Zoo encompasses 24 acres of garden enclosures and is the largest as well as the oldest in the country. The collection comprises more than 1000 of 119 species. The Zoo has successful captive-breeding programmes for the following local species including Chinkara Gazelle, Blackbuck, Punjab Urial, Hog Deer, Spotted Deer and Blue Peacock. Lahore Zoo focuses on local species which it breeds and sends to other parts of Pakistan; about 200 animals in the last four years. Species that have been bred at the Zoo include White Tigers, lion, leopard, ostrich, zebra, langur and peacocks, etc.

The zoo area is covered by 100 years old trees and it is in the centre of the city on a main road.

Lahore Zoo Stock List

Mammals		Bar Headed Geese	2
Elephant	1	Barnacle Geese	1
White Tiger	5	Egyptian Geese	3
African Lion	6	Red Breasted Geese	1
Bengal Tiger	13	Emperor Geese	1
Leopard	1	Black Swan	9
Civet Cat	1	Royal Mute Swan	2
Jungle Cat	2	Turkey	15
Indian Wolf	3	Vulture	2
Hyena	1	Houbara Bustard	2
Jackal	1	Blue Pea fowl	17
Grass Monkey	2	Pied Peafowl	3
Rhinoceros (white ♀)	1	Black Shoulder Peafowl	14
Hippopotamus	1	Java Green Peafowl	11
Black Bear	4	White Peafowl	4
Brown Bear	1	Emerald Peafowl	3
Spider Monkey	1	Ring necked Pheasant	1
2-humped camel	3	Green Pheasant	2
Llama	5	Silver Pheasant	7
Hamydras baboon	1	Golden Pheasant	2
Chimpanzee	2	Yellow Pheasant	1
Olive Baboon	2	Hume Bar-tooled Pheasant	1
Languar	6	Lady Amherst	1
Mandrill	1	Reeve's Pheasant	1
Rhesus Monkey	7	Cheer Pheasant	2
Capuchin Monkey	4	Blue eared Pheasant	1
Zebra	5	Styrtragopan Pheasant	2
Wild Boar	3	Red Jungle Fowl	25
Porcupine	4	Rose ringed Parakeet	6
Nilgai	7	Blossom headed Parakeet	6
Spotted Deer	10	Alexander Parrot	7
Hog Deer	38	Grey Cocktail	2
Red Deer	2	Macaw	3
Chinkara Gazelle	11	Sulphur Cocktail	2
Arabian Camel	1	Grey Cocktail	5
Addax	2	Budgerigar	60
Wh. Handed Gibbon	2	Love birds	6
Urial	4	Pigeon	10
Mouflon	23	Crown Pigeon	2
Fallow Deer	3	Chakor	1
Rabbit	70	Black Partridge	2
Wallabies	8	Grey Partridge	2
Yak	5	Diamond Dove	15
Guinea Pig	110	Dove	4
		White Cocktail	7
		Pearl Cocktail	3
Birds		Argentina Geese	1
Cassowary	1	Mallard	1
Emu	4	Common Duck	11
Ostrich	3	Palawan Peacock	
Hawk	2	Pheasant	2
Common Crane	6	Collard Dove	8
Demoiselle Crane	21		
Flamingo	2	Reptiles	
Pelican	8	Gavial	3
Moor Hen	5	Crocodile	1
Coot	1	Tortoise	1
Ruddy Shelduck	2	Cobra	1
Wild Duck	6	Viper	2
Muskovy Duck	8	Misc. Snake	18
Common Geese	51	Total	841