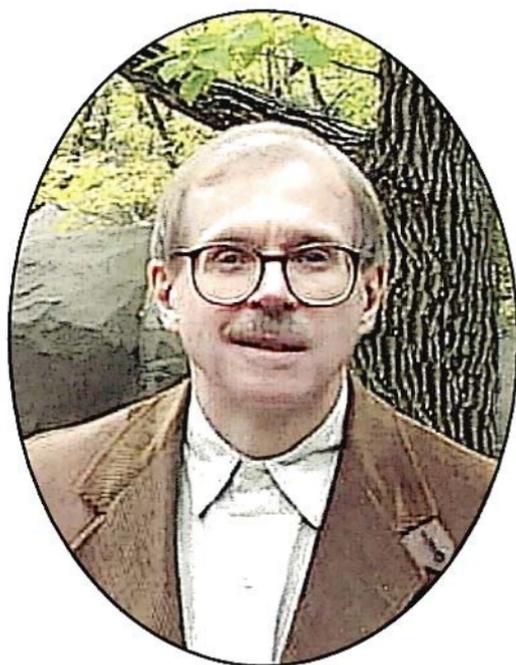


Thomas J. Foose



1945 - 2006



With great sadness, the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) announces the loss of its most beloved ambassador for rhino conservation. Dr. Thomas J. Foose, 61, IRF Program Director, died on May 18th at his home in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. Tom was one of the founders of IRF, an organization which embodies his lifelong passion for rhino conservation, both in zoos and in nature. He dedicated his life to bridging gaps among people with diverse interests and perspectives, as well as using science to foster national and global collaborations for threatened species management.

Author of numerous scientific publications, Tom received a BA from Princeton University in 1969 and was awarded a Ph.D. in biology from the University of Chicago in 1982. He served as the Conservation Director for the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) from 1981 to 1990, and along with Dr. Ulie Seal developed the very first Species Survival Plan program, for Siberian tigers, in 1983. Species Survival Plans are now a cornerstone for captive species management for the AZA as well as other regional zoo associations. From 1990 to 1992, Tom served as Executive Officer of the IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, shaping its programs and focus to include using computer simulated modeling to examine the risks for species extinction, as well as global risk assessments of broad taxonomic groups, including identifying species management and research recommendations.

Over the past 20 years, Tom's tireless efforts to facilitate cross-organizational and international conservation efforts resulted in integrated action plans for species groups ranging from primates to rhinos to tigers, involving zoo experts and field biologists from around the world.

Throughout stints as Program Officer of the IUCN Asian Rhino Specialist Group and the International Black Rhino Foundation, as well as through his work with AZA, CBSG and IRF, Tom touched people across the world and inspired them to set aside their personal, national and institutional agendas to focus on preventing species extinctions. Over the past ten years, his primary focus was leading development and implementation of global and national conservation strategies and action plans for rhinoceros in Asia and Africa.

Most recently, Tom initiated the North American Save the Rhinos Campaign with the goal of doubling the number of critically-endangered rhino populations in select protected habitats in the wild within ten years.

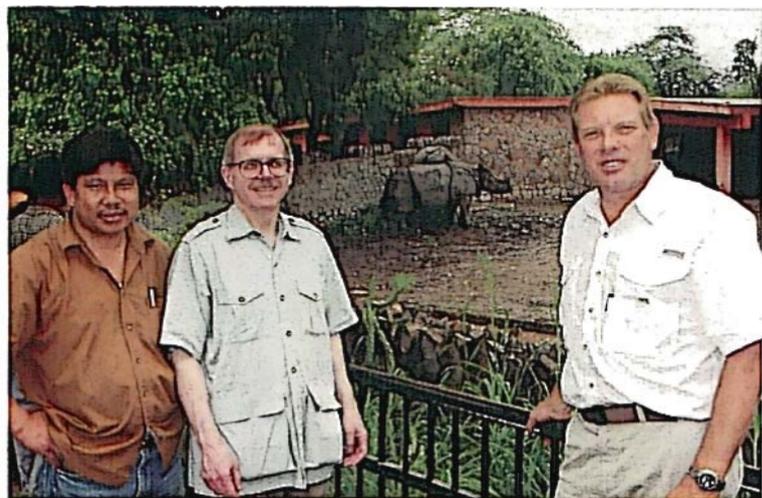
We will miss Tom's many unforgettable characteristics – his sporty safari attire, his penchant for bow ties, his mischievous smile and the twinkle in his eye whenever a rhino came into view. We will miss his dry sense of humor, and his love for the smelly-but-delectable durian fruit (which got him politely ejected from many Asian hotels), as well as many other things. Memories abound – many long-time colleagues can't see a Coca-Cola can without remembering the early days (before globalization) when Tom brought several suitcases filled with Coke whenever he traveled overseas.

Tom is survived by his children; Rebecca Foose Nesmith, Thomas John Foose, III and their mother Virginia Foose; Susan Foose and Michael Foose and their mother, Ellen Foose, and by his grandson Daniel Nesmith.

The IRF sends its most profound condolences to the family of our beloved colleague, and know that all of his colleagues and friends around the world share in our sadness. Tom's dedication and integrity, his love for his family and colleagues, and his beloved rhinos – as well, his unabashed appreciation for the contributions of all people with a love for wild species – will live on through all of our future endeavors.

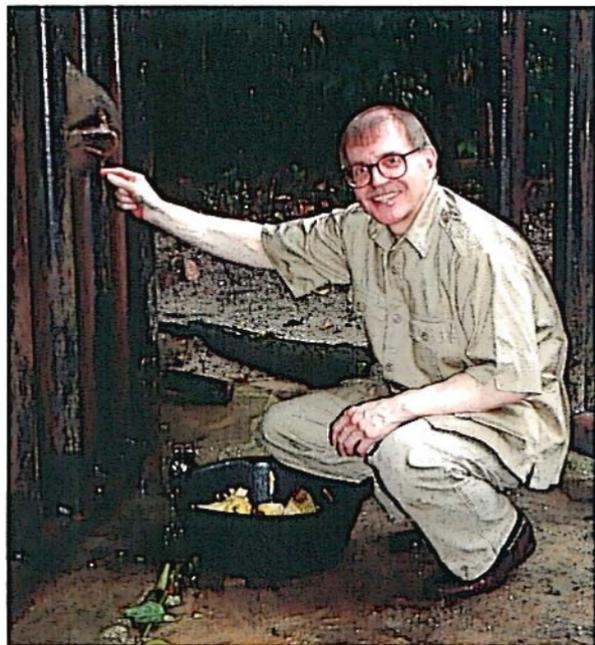
*International Rhino Foundation
Board of Directors*

Rick Barongi	Don Farst	John Lukas	Beth Stevens
Lee Bass	Mike Fouraker	Ann Petric	Harry Tennison
Evan Blumer	Peter Hall	Randy Rieches	Bill Warren
Guy Cooper	Jim Jackson	Terri Roth	
Mark Davis	John Knowles	Dee Steer	



"I first met Tom in Zimbabwe in 1989 and have continued to admire him ever since. His calm and soothing demeanor brought dignity to many discussions. His tireless efforts produced results for all to share."

*Nicholas Duncan
President,
Save Foundation
Australia*





"Tom - there are few like you in our profession. You devoted your life to rhino conservation in ways most of us likely could not. You cared so deeply about what I cannot describe as merely your 'work' but about that which would perhaps be better described as your 'purpose', that you set a standard that is hard if not impossible for others to meet. Every success revitalized you...every failure or set-back gnawed at your soul...I don't think any of us envisioned a world without you to lead these fights.

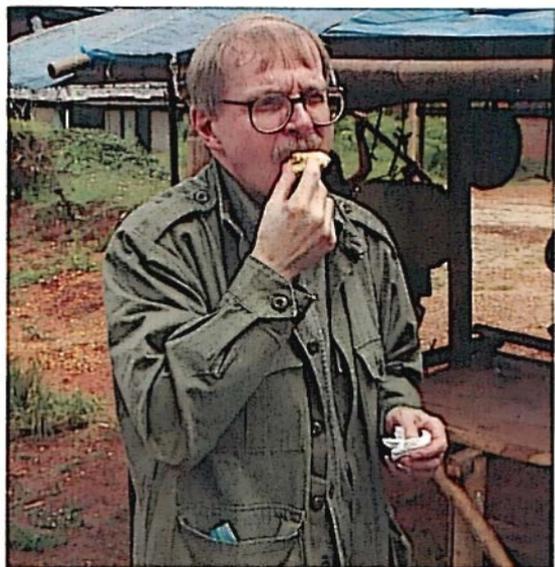
Yet here we are...

I wish you peace, Tom. And I wish you were still here so I could tell you how much the world needs you. I am sure I said, one or more times, "I am very glad you do what you do, Tom." But I am sure I did not say it often or loudly enough. In short, I'll miss you."

Steve Osofsky, WCS

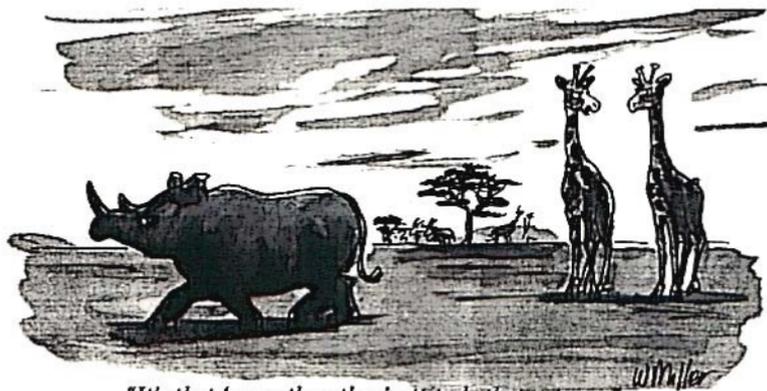
"...They absolutely pigged out on this stuff (durian fruit) and it was almost scary watching them go at it - they were crazy over it. Bloody fruit, I thought, but Tom and Nico were mad on it..."

*Kerry Crosbie
Asian Rhino Project*



"Tom was one of my closest friends and for many years we have had almost daily contact about the rhino programs that we were both involved with. We met in person several times a year either in Asia or in the U.S.; exchanged many emails every day and almost daily we spoke over the phone. Our lives became more and more entwined through the common interests and Tom became part of my family...His untimely death is a tremendous loss for me as for everyone that knew and worked with Tom. He was a remarkable person, with quite a few special traits in his character, methods and likings, and he was a true and warm friend..."

*Nico Van Strien, IRF
Asian Field Programs Director*



"It's that 'rarer than thou' attitude that gets me."

"We have gone through good and bad times, overcome challenges that seemed insurmountable and persevered for the success and achievements that we most desired. The survival of the Indian, Javan and Sumatran rhinos and the successful breeding of the Sumatran rhino have inspired us all. We need to move forward together to do much more as Tom would want us to do."
In grateful thanks and deep sorrow,

*MOHD KHAN MOMIN KHAN
Asian Rhino Specialist Group*

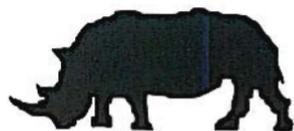


"We always feel close with Dr. Foose, despite that we are actually so far away in Way Kambas. His enthusiasm, warm personality, his passionate to ask, support and help to do the best activities and works, are still 'fighting' us and will never be forgotten. He touched so many kinds of our living and dedication."

*The Field Staff, Personnel, Students and the Rhinos
Torgamba, Bina, Rosa and Ratu
at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary,
Way Kambas National Park, Indonesia*

*"...I am convinced that his dedication
to rhino conservation was so unique that
it cannot be ever replaced..."*

*Kristina Tomasova
White Rhino EEP Coordinator
300 Duor Kralove*



"What we did and the progress we made through the 80's and 90's will most likely never be duplicated. Tom's contributions and impact on the way we view and implement conservation initiatives will be his lasting legacy in the zoological profession."

Bill Ziegler



"I will always maintain the greatest admiration and deepest respect for Tom. In my mind he will forever be remembered as the champion of Sumatran rhino conservation. The world has lost a true hero for rhinos, and I have lost a very dear friend."

*Dr. Terri Roth
Cincinnati Zoo*

"Meeting up with Tom was always a pleasure and I have fond memories of the man of many safari suits. He was the only Coca-Cola-holic I have ever met... It is sad to think that I will never again pick up the phone to hear the conversation start with his long drawn out "Riiichaaaaarrrrrddd". Above all, the rhinos have lost a good friend who did alot for 'the cause'."

Richard Emslie, Scientific Officer,

MEN SSC African Rhino Specialist Group.

"... He was a gyroscopic force of stability within the rhino conservation community... Despite working behind the scenes, Tom certainly showed how someone such as himself can build an international reputation as a champion of global conservation efforts. As one of the wise men who have guided us, he will be truly missed in our rhino conservation efforts in Zimbabwe, in Africa and in the world as a whole."

*Raoul du Toit
WWF-SARPO
Zimbabwe*

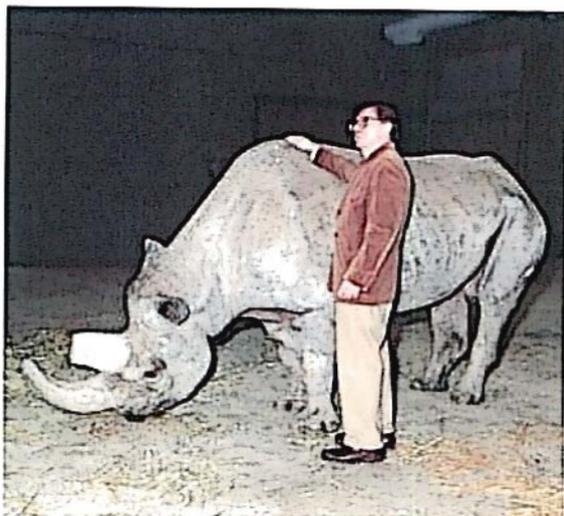
"Tom will be sorely missed, as he was a wonderful mentor and the epitome of rhino conservation."

*The Rhino Keepers Association
Adam Felts, Christine Bobko,
Dave Clawson, Vickie Steele,
Brooke Squires, Becky Grieser,
Randy Pairan, Lance Aubery,
and Derek Weatherford*



"I cannot remember when I first met Tom. I only know that he has been part of the zoo and conservation world in which I work for a very long time. It is now going to be very hard to adjust to the fact that his calm reasoned view will no longer be available to myself and a very large number of like-minded colleagues around the world."

*John Knowles, Honorary Director,
Marwell Preservation Trust*



"It is with deep sorrow that we learn about Tom's early departure and we at SANParks will miss his influence and input with all our rhino related work."

*Dr. Markus Hofmeyr
Head: Veterinary
Wildlife Services
SANParks*

"...The rhinos he loved so well knew nothing of his life, nor of his dying and their great loss. But for we, who knew and loved Tom, their future must be our memorial to his great spirit. Tom gave freely of himself and asked so little in return and our tribute to him must be to see that the magnificent beasts for whom he worked so hard and so long do not go extinct."

*Anna Merz
Lewa Downs Conservancy
Kenya*

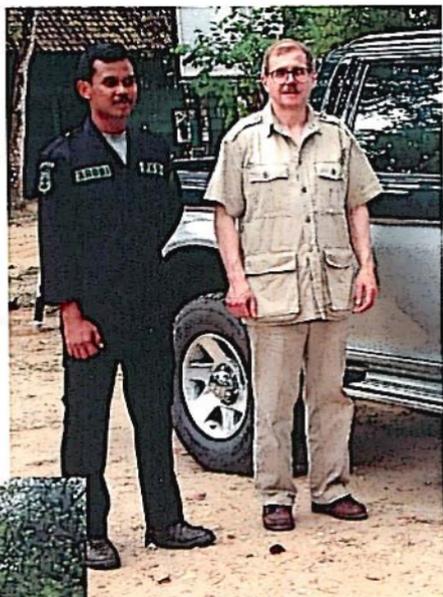
"His spirit remains not only in the hearts of many of us who were fortunate to know him but in the African grasslands where he worked so hard to help the rhinos."

Karen Allen

The Communications Office, Inc.

"Conservation is a life time battle, for Tom it goes beyond. Before quitting us, Tom has built a legacy of dedication, honesty and kindness to deal with Rhino conservation around the world. We will try to follow in his steps to save the rhinos from extinction."

*Feeling the loss,
Alain Compost*

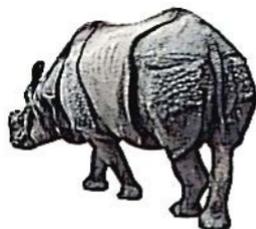


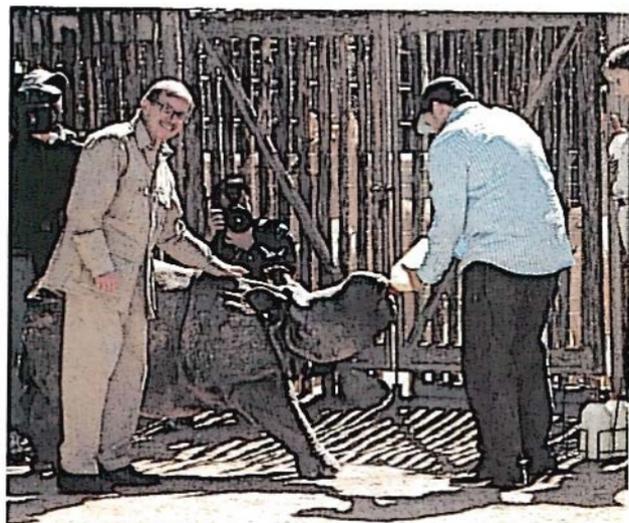
"I am never gonna find a teacher, mentor and a friend like him. I am sad. Very sad. And at a loss for words."

*Tariq Aziz
WWF, India*

"In his quiet way he achieved an immense amount..."

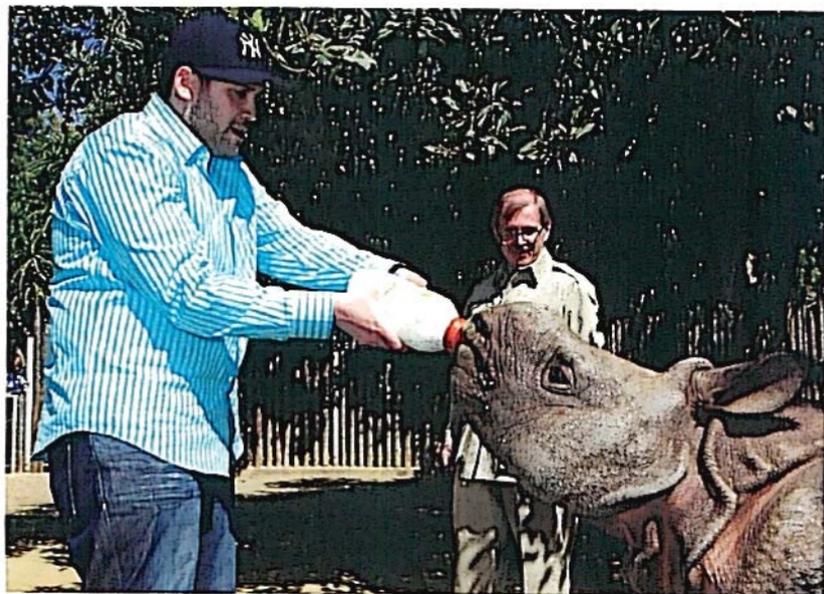
*Kes and Fraser Smith
Conservation Action Trust/Kenya
Selous Rhino Trust/Tanzania*





"I do not know anyone who was more committed to rhino conservation than Tom... rhino conservation has lost one of its strongest and greatest supporters."

*Esmond
Bradley
Martin*



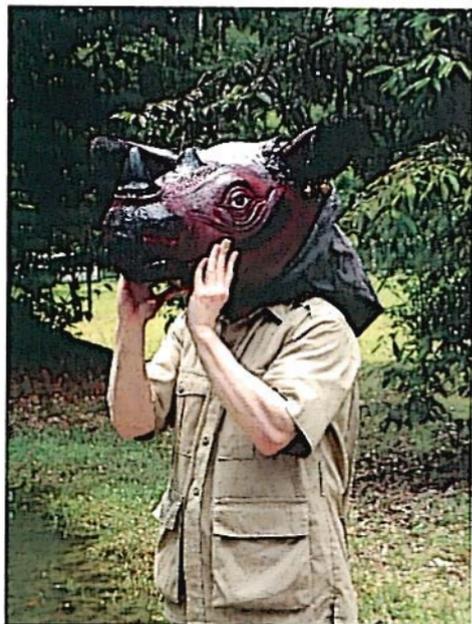
"Tom was a very good friend to me and probably the most supportive person I knew for the various work I conducted on behalf of the IRF. I will miss his guidance and friendship in many ways."

*Dr. Robin Radcliffe
Fossil Rim Wildlife Center*

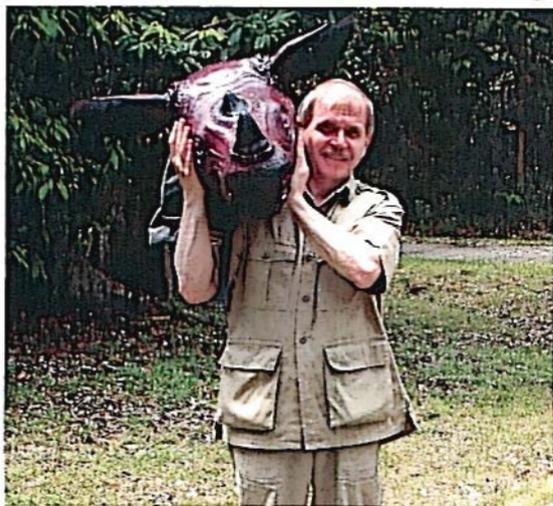
On behalf of Save the Rhino International, I'd like to say how very, very much we will miss Tom. During the four and a half years that I've been at Save the Rhino, our relationship with the International Rhino Foundation has grown and deepened. This is, of course, partly due to the strength and importance of the projects we have co-funded over the years: Garamba National Park in the DR Congo; the Chyulu Hills rhino project in Kenya; the rhino programme coordinated by Raoul du Toit in Zimbabwe; the Rhino Protection Unit programme in Sumatra, Indonesia; and, more recently, the Selous Rhino Trust in Tanzania and Indian Rhino Vision 2020. This strengthening of the relationship between SRI and the IRF has also been due to the value of and pleasure in working with Tom himself. I especially appreciated, and benefited from, his willingness to share information, to explain the issues involved to a newcomer to rhino conservation like me, and his putting so much time and energy into building networks of organisations that would provide financial and in-kind help for field projects. His communications and organisational skills were exceptional and have achieved so much. I will miss Tom's sense of humour. We had got into a habit of almost daily phone calls and emails, with some long-running jokes that often made me laugh out loud. One of the things Tom enjoyed was the difference between "American" and "English" English, and we had funny times trying to outwit each other with the peculiarities of our respective forms: "two nations divided by a common language", as Tom liked to quote. I actually met Tom just once, this time last year, when he came to London for a few days to meet members of the EAZA Rhino Campaign Core Group to give us his thoughts on which field projects might be selected to benefit from the Campaign, and to meet our Trustees to discuss a Memorandum of Understanding between our two charities. After three and a half years of email and phone contact, it was a joy to meet Tom in person and spend time with him. Tom's passing will not mean any less cooperation between SRI and the IRF. We shared information, ideas and ideals; we speak the same language. But I wish so very much that Tom was still here.

Cathy Dean - Save the Rhino International





"... He not only was the only delegate dressed in a khaki safari suit, complete with a leopard skin band around his hat, but it had a shine to it such that I had never seen before... Tom was a unique individual, quite different from anyone I have ever known and one whom I came to deeply respect, not only for his scientific expertise and networking skills, but because he was a true gentleman... The African rhino fraternity has lost a wonderful colleague and friend. I will miss him greatly for his calm



assuredness, his unswerving professionalism but, above all, for his friendship and the unique person he was."

*Dr. Martin Brooks
Chairman IUCN SSC
African Rhino
Specialist Group*

"... All of us involved in Rhino Conservation have much to thank Tom for; and to honor his life of dedication to Conservation, we at IRF are committed to working purposefully and with renewed focus to realize Tom's dreams of a world where all 5 species of Rhino are secure in the habitats they have occupied for millennia."

*John Lukas,
President, IRF*



Pity Rhino, to be warn,
Upon your snout (nose) a priceless horn
Once many, now a paltry few
Soon maybe only in the ^{zoo} ~~zoo~~
Poor Rhino we do you ^(thee) mourn

Tom Foose

Photo credits and special thanks to: Cincinnati Zoo, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Kerry Crosbie, Nico Van Strien, White Oak Conservation Center, Zoo Dvor Kralove, and Zoological Society of San Diego



Carry On!