

Peshwe Park Zoological Garden*

Peshwe Park Zoological Garden was established in 1953 by the Pune Municipal Corporation and has come a long way since then. It is situated on an area of seven acres at the foot of the Parvati Hill where originally Madavrao Narayan Peshwa had his private menagerie in 1780. The year 1999-2000 was a difficult year for the zoo as it attracted a lot of negative publicity from the media. Efforts are on to create a positive image of the zoo with the help of the press via information and educational articles.



CAGE YOUR ANIMAL INSTINCTS
DO NOT HURT OR TEASE THE ANIMALS

to avoid stereotypic behaviour and vices. New nesting boxes and natural perches were put in all bird cages. Ropes were added to the monkey enclosures for them to swing on and an artificial termite mound was constructed in the orangutan cage.

Educational and Research Activities:

The Pune City Municipal Corporation authorities are striving to promote the zoo as a centre of captive breeding, conservation and education and no longer as just a place for family recreation. The Additional Municipal Commissioner headed the first Zoo Advisory Board Meeting in which it was

decided to ban the entry of eatables, to put new educational sign boards and educate the children of municipal schools about zoo animals and conservation. All the decisions taken above were implemented.

Educational trips were taken by the Snake Park personnel to Hampi in Karnataka and the Academy of Developmental Science at Kasheli, Maharashtra. At Hampi, by means of slide shows, video films, lectures, and demonstrations approximately 6000 people [60% of which were students] from various villages were educated on snakes. Distribution of pamphlets and stickers in their local languages was also carried out with the help of the Kishkinda Trust. In the same manner another 5000 school children were educated at Kasheli over a period of three days.

A booklet was brought out in Marathi by the Director of the Snake Park which aims at educating the lay person about the various kinds of snakes, their habits and importance and the necessary action to be taken in case of a snake bite. Snake demonstrations were conducted at nature camps organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature, Nisargvedh and Yuvashakti groups. With the help of volunteers aluminium cans were collected from banks of the Mula-Mutha river, drainage pipes and open sewers as aluminium cans are non biodegradable and can act as death traps for snakes.

Personnel:

The post of Deputy Garden Superintendent [Zoo] which was lying vacant for the past one-and-a-half years was filled in. Eight new people were employed as keepers and a training programme for them has been initiated in the form of a series of lectures and demonstrations on various topics, viz. handling and restraint of animals, animal behaviour, visitor education, personal hygiene habits and drug and alcohol abuse. A keeper was promoted to the post of Assistant Head Animal Keeper and the entire staff were sent for a complete health checkup, tested for zoonotic diseases and given new uniforms.

Animal News:

Six newborns and twenty one acquisitions from the Forest Department boosted the total strength of animals in the zoo, for in the former part of the year the zoo lost 15 animals including species such as Bengal Tiger, Indian Elephant and Blackbuck. The zoo witnessed the birth of four leopard cubs, however none survived.

Zoo Management:

Regular cleaning, disinfection and maintenance of the cages was carried out during the year. Faecal samples of animals were routinely checked and animals dewormed at three monthly intervals. Deer were tested for tuberculosis by veterinarians from the Regional Disease Investigation Laboratory, Pune. All birds were vaccinated against the deadly Ranikhet Disease and veterinary aid was administered to the in and out patients of the zoo hospital.

Efforts are on to make the enclosures stimulating for the animals so as

* Information abstracted from Annual Report

Pune Municipal Corporation / Pune Zoo seeks candidates for posts

Pune Municipal Corporation

The Pune Municipal Corporation for their new zoo at Katraj invites applications for the following posts:

- 1) **Curator**- Preferably a degree in wildlife management with 5 years experience on the job. Age not above 35, pay scale (2000-60-2300-75-3200-100-3700+allowances and motor allowance)
- 2) **Veterinary Officer**- BVSc with 5 years experience in a zoo. Age not above 35, pay scale(2000-60-2300-75-3200-100-3700+allowances and motor allowance)
- 3) **Educational officer**- B.Sc.degree in zoology, ecology or environmental sciences with 5 years experience in the field of environment education; pay scale 1400 to 2910 with allowances. Age not above 35.

Applicants working in the govt./semi govt./public sector undertaking should apply through the proper channel, and the application should have the relevant certificates attached along with two testimonials. Interested candidates may send their applications to:

The Chief Garden Superintendent (PCMC)
Sambhaji Park, J. M. Road
Shivajinagar, Pune 411005

During wildlife week, free entry was given to all school children who came to the park and during the festival of Nagpanchami, essay and drawing competitions were held at various schools and prizes distributed.

Research on the Gastrointestinal parasites of wild carnivores is being carried out by a student of the Bombay Veterinary College for his Masters thesis and Peshwe Park is one of the four study centres where he is working.

Avanti Mallapur, a researcher working on the behaviour of captive primates and carnivores from the Wildlife Institute of India also visited Peshwe Park and collected data on the Lion-tailed macaque kept on exhibit. Students from the Institute of Management Development and Research interviewed 1000 visitors with the help of questionnaires and conducted a survey on the attitudes and expectations of zoo visitors, as part of their social project.

New Site:

Last year on 14th March 1999, the first phase of the new zoo at Katraj was completed and opened to the public. The site for the new zoo is located opposite the Katraj Dairy on the Poona Satara Road and it encompasses an area of 165 acres including a waterbody at the centre. The zoo masterplan has been designed by Mr. Pushp Kumar. In the first phase, construction of the boundary wall, tree plantation, electrical supply, tar roads and five moated enclosures were completed. With the development of the new site, the mammals at Peshwe Park, the birds at Kothrud Bird Park and the reptiles at Katraj Snake Park will all come under one roof making their management easier. All the animals at the existing sites will be transferred to bigger, better and natural enclosures. The elephant, monkeys, sambar and chital were transferred last year and they are well settled in their new home.

This year, close observation cages which form a part of the veterinary complex were made ready and a pair of tigers and leopards have been shifted in them. Public amenities viz. toilets, restaurant, sitting areas have been provided for the comfort of visitors. An office building for the zoo director and other administrative staff has been built.

Work on the sloth bear and hog deer enclosures are soon to be completed and the animals will be transferred into them shortly. Work on the sangai enclosure has begun and next on the cards is the completion of the veterinary hospital, staff quarters, stores and kitchen. At Katraj, resting sheds have been constructed in the herbivore enclosures to shield them from the summer sun. A wallow pond has been provided for the sambars to cool off in during the hot days. Foraging behaviour has been encouraged in the monkey enclosure by hiding their food under logs and boulders.

Conservation Activities:

The authorities and staff of the Pune Municipal Corporation assisted the Forest Department in successfully tranquilising and releasing a leopard and a bison which strayed in the city at the Chandoli sanctuary in Kolhapur. The animal orphanage received 327 animals in all including mammals, reptiles and birds in the past year of which 200 animals were released into the nature, 30 died and 97 animals are currently in the orphanage convalescing or as permanent inhabitants.

The most common species brought to the orphanage are rat snakes, kites and barn owls. Of note was a Steppes eagle rescued from a fertilizer godown at Alandi which was later released at Sinhaghad. A bird egg incubator and a reptile egg incubator are in use to artificially incubate the eggs and the hatchlings obtained are released in the wild after rearing them for a period of five weeks.

To aid the rehabilitation and release of wild birds and animals the Central Government has sanctioned a grant in aid for the construction of new cages for deer, leopards, eagles, nocturnal animals and water birds. A new animal ambulance has been bought to aid the rescue and transfer of injured animals.

Stock Position as on 31/3/2000

<u>Mammals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Total</u>
Bengal Tiger	02	02	—	04
White Tiger	01	02	—	03
Leopard	04	02	—	06
Jackal	02	03	—	05
Bonnet Macaque	01	02	—	03
Rhesus Macaque	04	15	—	19
Stump-tailed Macaque	—	01	—	01
Sambar	05	04	—	09
Spotted Deer	03	02	—	05
Barking Deer	01	—	—	01
Chinkara	01	01	—	02
Black Buck	15	06	—	21
Nilgai	01	—	—	01
Porcupine	—	—	24	24
Orangutan	—	01	—	01
Lion-tailed Macaque	01	—	—	01
Chowsingha	01	01	—	02
			Total:	108

<u>Birds</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Total</u>
Blue Peafowl	05	03	—	08
White Peafowl	01	01	—	02
Parakeet Alexandrine	01	01	—	02
Parakeet Rose-ringed	10	10	—	20
Cassowary	01	—	—	01
Ring Necked Dove	—	—	14	14
Silver Pheasant	01	02	—	03
Nanday Conure	01	01	—	02
Red Rumped Parrot	01	—	—	01
Indian Pinkbreasted Parakeet	01	01	—	02
Koel	01	02	—	03
Moluccan Cockatoo	—	—	01	01
African Lovebird	04	11	—	15
Budgerigar	11	26	—	37
Crested Serpent Eagle	1	1	—	2
Bonell's Hawk Eagle 1	1	—	2	
			Total:	116

<u>Reptiles</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Unk</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cobra	05	10	—	15
Krait	01	02	—	03
Russell's Viper	02	03	—	05
Saw Scaled Viper	02	04	—	06
Rat Snake	03	11	—	14
Trinket	05	04	—	09
Red Sand Boa	02	04	—	06
Common Sand Boa	04	09	—	13
Wolf Snake	02	03	—	05
Green Keel-back	02	04	—	06
Banded Kukri	01	01	—	02
Common Cat Snake	01	01	—	02
Checkered Keel-back	30	48	—	78
Bronzeback Tree Snake	01	—	—	01
Striped Keel-back	01	01	—	02
Indian Rock Python	03	04	—	07
Banded Racer	02	03	—	05
Starred Tortoise	05	11	03	19
Soft Shelled Turtle	02	05	—	07
Red eared Terrapin	04	01	—	05
Monitor Lizard	02	02	—	04
Crocodile Marsh	02	01	03	06
Gharial	—	03	—	03
King Cobra	01	01	—	02
			Total:	225