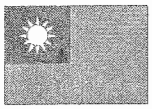

WILDLIFE RESCUE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF PINGTUNG RESCUE CENTER IN TAIWAN ROC

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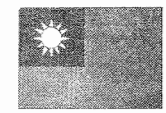

The Pingtung Rescue Center for Endangered Wild Animals was established during 1993 to provide temporary and long-term care for confiscated and abandoned endangered wild animals in Taiwan. This project has been funded by the ROC's Council of Agriculture and the Center is located within the campus of the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology. At present, the Center houses 225 individuals of wild animals including orangutans, gibbons, macaques, bears, tigers, raptors, snakes and monitor lizards. All animals receive balanced diet, proper veterinary care and hygiene. Veterinary health tests are done on a bi-annual basis for all animals. All staffs use masks and gloves while preparing and serving food for animals to avoid contamination and transfer of diseases. All visitors are asked to use masks and disinfect shoes before entering the rescue center to restrict the spread of contagious diseases. Educational programs have been developed to teach visiting school children, university students and general public about the problems of wild animal pets, local pet trade and wildlife conservation in Taiwan. We have resocialized captive Formosan macaques which are endemic to Taiwan and a group of 15 animals will be relocated to a natural islet in the Penghu Archipelago next year. Several individual of raptors endemic to Taiwan have been rescued, treated, rehabilitated and released back into the wild. The rescue center has established a network of national and regional wildlife rescue centers to promote communication and strengthen wildlife conservation and education programs. The center involves actively in the conservation breeding programs of endangered species in Asia.

Introduction

The government of the Republic of China in Taiwan passed a law in 1989 prohibiting trade in rare, threatened and endangered species of wildlife (WCL, 1989), and also initiated major wildlife conservation projects (Hsu & Agoramoorthy, 1997). The Pingtung Rescue Center was started in 1993 with the financial support from the Council of Agriculture. The main objective of the center is to provide a temporary home to confiscated wild animals. Attempts are made to provide naturalistic housing for all animals while they are kept at the rescue center (Agoramoorthy, 1998). Currently, the center houses 186 animals including carnivores, primates, birds and reptiles (Table 1). Macaques and orangutans are kept in social groups. Civet, mongoose and monitor lizard are housed together in a mixed out-door exhibit. Each month, the center receives about 10-20 animals. The predominant animals are the endemic Formosan macaques (*Macaca cyclopis*). The center has a full-time director, veterinarian, office manager and seven animal keepers who are responsible for the management of the center. Veterinary students, consulting veterinarians and student volunteers periodically assist the staffs for carrying out routine tests, treatment and record keeping. All staffs who work at the center use latex hand gloves, rubber boots and masks covering mouth and nose to avoid contact with animals, and to reduce contamination while preparing food and handling animals. Before entering animal cages, staffs and visitors are asked to disinfect their boots. Staffs are not allowed to touch any animals until and unless it is essential for treatment purposes.

Examination and housing

Once an animal arrives at the center, it is kept in a quarantine building where screening tests for diseases are done. Blood samples are collected for hematological and serological tests and feces samples are analyzed for parasites. Primates and carnivores are tested for tuberculosis using mammalian old tuberculin (MOT). Tests for viral hepatitis (A and B) are also done. Tigers are tested for FIV and vaccination are given against feline distemper. Bears (Sun bears and formosan black bears) are given Vaccinations against canine distemper and rabies. Diseases-free animals are moved into either small (3.5mx4m), medium (6mx6m) or large (12mx9m) enclosures, and each enclosure has an in-door and out-door facility with a maximum height of 4m. The center has 20 small, 16 medium and 4 large enclosurers in addition to a veterinary hospital and an aquarium.

Macaques

Macaques are social animals and the center presently has three groups of 21, 24 and 52 Formosan macaques and a group of 24 long-tail macaques (*M. fascicularis*). Resocializing the macaques is not an easy task since each individual has an unique background. While grouping macaques fights do occur and seriously wounded animals are removed for treatment. They are resocialized in a new group at a later stage. Adult males are vasectomized to avoid breeding. Preparations are underway to release a group of 21 Formosan macaques on an uninhabited islet in the Penghu (Pescadores) Archipelago, Penghu County, Taiwan. The group will receive supplement food daily in addition to the available natural food on the islet. This project would promote wildlife conservation education, research and domestic tourism.

Orangutans

Prior to 1989, orangutans were seen as occasional house pets throughout Taiwan. The wildlife conservation law and public education certainly played a major role in bringing down the number of smuggled orangutans to Taiwan. Our center did not receive any confiscated orangutans over the last two years and it appears that the pet trade in orangutans have ceased in Taiwan. Moreover, the Orangutans Foundation International, a non-governmental organization dedicated to the conservation of orangutans had closed down their office in Taiwan last year stating that the smuggling of orangutans to Taiwan has ceased. At present, our center houses 16 orangutans (13.3) and has been working with the Wanariset Orangutan Rehabilitation Project in East Kalimantan to repatriate orangutans for eventual release (Agoramoorthy, 1996, 1997, 1998, in press). The center has also relocated orangutans to zoological parks (0.1. to Thailand; 1.2 to Malaysia) for conservation breeding and education purposes.

Other animals

A total of 13 gibbons belong to four species such as *Hylobates lar*, *H. concolor*, *H. moloch* and *H. muelleri* are kept at the center. We will relocate the lar gibbons to the Wildlife Rescue Foundation in Thailand where they have a rehabilitation project (Morin, 1994). Rare species such as the silvery gibbon and golden-cheeked gibbon will be sent to the international conservation breeding programs. There are 3.3 tigers, 2.4 sun bears and 1.1 Formosan black bears are kept at the center. The tigers are subspecific hybrids and not suitable for breeding purposes. A pair of tigers were relocated to the Jungle Kingdom, a private conservation park in Pakistan to be used in display to promote conservation awareness, public education and wild animal welfare. The sun bears will be relocated to zoos in India (Chennai and Hyderabad) for use in conservation breeding and education. The

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Formosan black bears are endemic to Taiwan and are kept at our center for conservation breeding. Wild bear habitats are threatened and there is a desperate need for the breeding of this species in captivity. Raptors such the crested serpent eagle, crested goshawk and honey buzzard are housed in an aviary and all these species are endemic to Taiwan. Disease-free animals are being released in their original habitat.

Conclusion

The rescue center will continue its effort to provide humane care for the confiscated and abandoned wild animals. It will also play a leading role in developing public educational programs to discourage pet trade and promote captive wild animal welfare in Taiwan. Rescue and rehabilitation centers in Thailand and Indonesia are collaborating with our center to rehabilitate confiscated gibbons and orangutans. The center also promotes wildlife conservation for local public through public education programs including specialized tours for high school and university students. Our center will co-ordinate with all rescue centers in South and Southeast Asia to promote captive wild animal welfare, wildlife conservation, research, management and public education.

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Table 1. List of mammals housed at Pingtung Rescue Center for Endangered Wild Animals, Taiwan ROC (Agoramoorthy, 1998).

Common name	Species name	Sex
Pygmy loris	Nycticebus pygmaeus	1.0
Formosan macaque	Macaca cyclopis	48.33
Long-tailed macaque	Macaca fascicularis	19.10
Pig-tailed macaque	Macaca nemestrina	1.0
White-handed gibbons	Hylobates lar	2.3
Silvery Javan gibbon	Hylobates moloch	0.1
Mueller's Bornean gray gibbon	Hylobates muelleri	2.2
Golden-cheeked gibbon	Hylobates gabriella	1.2
Borneo orangutan	Pongo pygmaeus	12.3
Tiger	Panthera tigris	3.3
Malayan sun bear	Helarctos malayanus	2.4
Chinese lesser civet	Viverricula indica pallida	1.1
Crab-eating mongoose	Herpestes urva	1.1

MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTER AND PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH MAINTAINING CONFISCATED WILD ANIMALS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

The Wildlife Rescue Center is part of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Government of Philippines. It is located within the Ninoy Aquino Park and Wildlife Nature Center in Quezon City. It was established during the early 1970's as a mini-zoo, primarily serving as an attraction to local visitors in 1992, it was developed as a wildlife rescue center in accordance with requirements of the regulations of the CITES convention.

The rescue center is divided into display/ holding facility, quarantine facility and enclosures. There are 51 holding cages, three quarantine units and two large enclosures capable of housing deer and other larger mammals. It presently houses 775 individuals of wild fauna, of which 315 are endemic and 460 are exotic species. Part of the Center's management protocol includes quarantining of newly confiscated and donated wild fauna, health monitoring, maintenance of sanitation, provision of proper diet, observance of feeding regime, and maintenance of individual records. The problems associated with maintaining confiscated animals include insufficient facilities, manpower, equipments, and national policy on wildlife conservation.

Introduction

The Wildlife Rescue Center is located within the Ninoy Aquino Park and Wildlife Nature Center, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines and is directed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau. The Center occupys an area of about 3,000 sq. m. It was established in 1969, initially as a Mini-Zoo, serving as an attraction for Park visitors.

In 1992, it was established as a Wildlife Rescue Center in pursuit of the Philippine Government's international commitment to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). As a Wildlife Rescue Center, it currently serves as a repository for confiscated and donated wild faunal species and as a training ground for students on veterinary care and management. Ultimately, the WRC aims to serve not only as a Model Wildlife Rescue Center, equipped with adequate trained personnel and necessary facilities for rescue and rehabilitation of injured, confiscated and donated wild fauna but as an education and research facility for academic and scientific communities in the Philippines.

Current Facilities, Manpower and Budget

The DENR-PAWB Wildlife Rescue Center features a quarantine area, a display area, a laboratory and an administrative office. The display

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