

---

## Editorial

This issue of ZOOS' PRINT is *pourpouri* of subject matter including a predominance of material generated by the Editor for want of articles. This issue also includes two articles which were specifically turned down by our Scientific Editor.

This crisis of "article-drought" facing ZOOS' PRINT does not exist for want of articles. We receive plenty of articles. For the past two or three years we have requested assistance in reviewing articles for publication as a result of comments and criticism passed on by members who felt that contributors were taking advantage of ZOOS' PRINT liberal editorial policy. Also, some embarrassing events were taking place. A student who had published several articles in ZOOS' PRINT applied for a post and listed the articles as publications, only to be told that ZOOS' PRINT was "not a publication".

Zoo Outreach Organisation and ZOOS' PRINT were started to be helpful to zoos in whatever way possible. At the time of starting there was no regular communication between zoos or any publication to provide a forum for sharing information and expertise. For several years we just accepted anything that came in. We corrected mistakes and published as quickly as possible as a reinforcement to contributors of articles, news and notes. Our philosophy was that if an inexperienced writer was refused he may get discouraged and not write again, but if he saw his name and material in print he may be encouraged to continue sending material. This method worked but it was not at all scientific and we got brick bats for our efforts.

Now, we get all articles reviewed. Our Scientific Editor, Dr. N. V. K. Ashraf, puts his heart into his work and does an very good job of reviewing articles. He writes detailed commentary and even searches out references which we xerox and send to the writers. No publication will do this much. Nonetheless, we find that people are not correcting and returning their articles. Sometimes writers return them without making the recommended corrections, perhaps offended that anyone has dared comment unfavourably on their article. Sometimes they return them having corrected only a bit of what was asked.

The result is that, although the quality of articles we do publish is better, we are left -- quite often -- without sufficient material. On this day, we have 15 articles outstanding which were submitted and returned to the authors since October. There are dozens more which were sent in the last two or three years which have never come back. Not only are we suffering for want of material, but the zoo and wildlife community is missing badly needed input.

ZOOS' PRINT changed its name from ZOO's Print to reflect our desire that it NOT be the newsletter or magazine of Zoo Outreach Organisation but that of the ZOOS. We can fill a magazine with our activities but this is not what we want. We want ZOOS' PRINT to be a vehicle for dissemination of information with an over-riding objective of linking the zoo and wildlife community and providing technical material from readers and outside as well for making zoos more meaningful to conservation.

It is time for another "reality check". We did a Reader's Survey in 1993 and oriented ZOOS' PRINT to the results. We will be conducting another survey shortly.

As Editor of ZOOS' PRINT and Founder of Zoo Outreach Organisation, I am not really sure what the role of the organisation or its magazine is anymore. The major events which I felt were necessary to the improvement of zoos in the early years of my involvement have taken place -- the Indian Zoo Directors' Association and the Central Zoo Authority are operational. When these organisations came about we changed our focus away from the zoo management surveys and collection of single animal and births and hatching news so as not to conflict or duplicate any efforts by CZA and IZDA. We have leaned more toward networking between the *in situ* and *ex situ* community and promoting neglected animal groups (amphibians and invertebrates). Our primary purpose is still just to be helpful. There is no intention or ambition in Z.O.O. or its founder to create an institute or even a high quality scientific publication.

I personally would prefer that ZOOS' PRINT stay informal (and inexpensive) -- some information, some news, some articles, some fun ... on a variety of topics. What do readers want? You'll be asked to tell us in a survey form which will come to you in a few weeks. In the meantime, we welcome your comments, as well as your compliments and criticism.