

WAZA endorses World Environment Day – Celebrating the environment



Letter from Peter Dollinger, Director, WAZA

Dear Members:

Every year on 5 June, the world celebrates World Environment Day under the auspices of the United Nations. It is a day when we are asked to think about the importance of the environment and to take action to keep this planet safe and sound. Around the world, governments, organizations and citizens come together and organize a cacophony of activities, ranging from scientific lectures and clean-up actions, to political lobbying and celebrations of diversity. For more information about World Environment Day, please visit <http://www.unep.org/wed/2005/english/>

This year, the theme for World Environment Day is **Green Cities: Plan for the Planet!** People everywhere are migrating from rural areas into the big cities in search of new opportunities. But the gathering of so many people in such small areas also brings the risk of unemployment, poverty, and subsequent environmental degradation. Fortunately, cities also offer us a chance to act and conserve the environment. Recycling is more efficient in a village or a city than in dispersed human habitats. Rivers and lakes close to major cities in North America and Europe are much cleaner today thanks to pollution reduction. Protected areas and forests close to cities are often better managed than those further away, and definitely zoos and similar institutions play an important role in bringing the urbanized populations into closer contact with nature.

Therefore: take the opportunity to make your local community aware of the important role your institution plays for the conservation of nature and for the wellbeing of people!

Yours sincerely
Peter Dollinger

Executive Director, **WAZA - The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums**
More about WAZA ? Have a look at <http://www.waza.org> !



211 leading zoological institutions, 22 regional or national zoo and aquarium associations representing another 1000 institutions, and 9 zoo-related organisations are UNITED FOR CONSERVATION through WAZA

Letter from Zoo Outreach Organisation

Dear Members in all countries :

We are planning a new education initiative in ZOO for all our educators in zoos, forest divisions, ngo's schools, etc. We have beautiful posters of tree trunks ! Yes tree trunks which you fold into a cylinder as a stand alone, or, wrap around round poles, or, put up on the wall, or ... any number of things. It is celebration of plants ! The posters represent the "trunks" or "stems" of the following plants, *Pilosocereus royerii* – a cactus; *Betula albosinensis* – a silver birch; *Cocos nucifera* – a coconut palm; *Calamus hookerianus* – a rattan; *Taiwania cryptomerioides* – the 'coffin tree'. Of course, not all of these occur in India or even Asia, but they are still varied examples of different kinds of plants which are useful to man.

We are going to accompany the set of posters with attractive but simple folders for "kids of all ages" with our routine stuff . . . tree rakhis, trunk and stem masks, booklets, handouts, games, etc. And a t-shirt series as well for young kids primarily but also some for adults.

Currently our posters are being held hostage by Chennai Customs but we are hoping to get them released without ransom ! If we do, you get your educational material . . . if not, well it will be on their heads.

You know the drill. Write to us describing a programme for 50 people or less (2 programmes for 25 people each or some such configuration is also acceptable) in which you use the material we send you to teach your participants about trees. We will offer these materials for World Environment Day, Vana Mahotsava and Wildlife Week ... and even in between.

Many many thanks to the **Botanical Gardens Conservation International, BGCI** and **Chester Zoological and Botanical Gardens** for making this possible.