

GERALD DURRELL MEMORIAL ISSUE - LETTERS TO EDITOR

Editor:

I am very happy about the special February issue on Sir Gerald Durrell and had finished reading at a single stretch all the articles in this issue. I am sorry that we have lost a grandfather of zoo management whose works will always be remembered and implemented by we young people throughout our country.

Prakash S. Netalker, M.Sc. Forestry
D.C.F. Chickmaglur



Editor :

I just returned from France to find the stack of ZOOS' PRINT you sent. This special issue remembering Gerry, moved me tremendously. All the fond reminiscences, glowing comments and inspired visions expressed by the contributors were all the more important to me because of the fact they were made by Indians, so many of whom are our graduates.

The zoo/conservation movement in India is now extremely impressive. It clearly owes something to Gerry's influence but more importantly, it is due to the strength of character and determination of the Indian people themselves. If he could have seen this issue of ZOOS' PRINT, Gerry would have been enormously proud of this particular group of his followers.

Many, many thanks to the whole team at ZOOS' PRINT for putting together this issue. I shall distribute it far and wide.

Lee Durrell, Hon. Director, JWPT

Editor:

I just received my copy of ZOOS' PRINT, February 1996 - the special Gerald Durrell edition. I was most moved when I flipped through it and have just started to read, having finished the editorial and the GD unpublished autobiography, when I wanted to write to you. I am personally very touched that you have produced this issue and I think I know what lengths you have gone to contact people and gather the material. It is tremendous and I'm looking forward to reading the rest. I noticed Arminder and Samarjit have done a bit on the Jersey stamps. I am also looking forward to reading about some of the Indian people who have been to Jersey and finding out about what they are doing now. The photo of Mr. Mugadur with Cristina and Denise made laugh as did the one of Rajashree, Manoj and Benarjee. These both brought back happy memories of the times we spent together in Jersey. I don't want to say anything else at the moment as the happiness that your ZOOS' PRINT has evoked in me is so complete.

Mr. Phillip Coffeey, Education Officer
Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust.

Editor:

I have received my copy of your memorial issue of ZOOS' PRINT. No one reading it could fail to be moved by so much work and effort that has gone into creating such a testimony to the founder of this Trust, who inspired so many people working around the world to save animals from extinction. The Trust and its mission owes so much to you and the 40 or so graduates of our training centre who have taken Gerald Durrell's vision home and have carried on his work.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to the ZOO for maintaining contact with Jersey trainees. We hope to repay this soon by creating an International Training Centre network to build on this link with information and support, both from Jersey and between all ITC graduates in their many countries around the world. As Trust Secretary, perhaps I may allow myself to thank everyone on behalf of the membership of the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust for this wonderful tribute from our 'brothers and sisters' (and other animals) who represent Gerry Durrell's family in India.

Simon Hicks, Trust Secretary
Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust

Editor:

To write about Mr. Durrell is to try and fit a life time of superlative achievement into a page of black and white prose. Yet, it was this prose, flowing from the magical pen of Gerald Durrell which was my first introduction to the man. His books opened up a world which was wonderfully alive, full of strange and familiar animals. His books carried his vision across the continents into the hearts of every animal lover and even to those who would not be called so.

The marvel that was his vision was transformed into the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust. As I have been to Jersey to do the training, I must say that according to me the zoo at Jersey is the most perfect zoo. From the basic care of animals to their planned breeding, nutrition and rehabilitation programmes, all tasks are done after scientific research, with managerial precision and a great deal of love. The Trust has a good public education programme and a superlative training programme for zoo personnel. Truly, here the task of zoo-keeping has been raised to its pinnacle.



What more can anyone add to his work and vision. His name is synonymous with conservation and his personal contribution to conservation is one of the greatest, because it covers such a vast area of progress. Gerald Durrell will be a hero for zoo keepers and animal lovers all over the world for generation to come.

Vijaraj Jadeja, Curator
Shri Sayaji Baug Zoo
Graduate, JWPT

Editor

Since the days, when I was a student at the college of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, I was very much interested to become a Zoo Veterinarian. My dream came true about eight years back, when I got an appointment as a Veterinarian under forest department of Gujarat State. Later I became a fan of Mr. Durrell's books. I have become a fan of Gerry. I have gone through many books written by him and every book was interesting, informative and enjoyable. It gave me confidence and a directive to my endeavour to contribute in the field of wildlife conservation.

In the year 1990, an international symposium on the role of zoos in wildlife management was organised at Sakkarbaug Zoo, Junagadh to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the Sakkarbaug zoo. I was lucky to have an interaction with the Director, Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust. I applied to JWPT for training and got a slot which provided me with broad and varied training.

Gerald Durrell was a true naturalist and great conservationist. He has given us true direction and an insight to appreciate and concern for the natural world. Soldiers of Gerry's conservation army, are working all over the world. With an imprint of his characters and values on us, we are sure to play an important role in our mission to achieve the goal of nature conservation. I would like to list some of my work. What I could do after my training and what I attribute to a new vision, that I could get after my visit to Jersey.

300 hours of behavioral study of two groups of Indian Wild ass. Kept at Sakkarbaug Zoo. (Part of Diploma in endangered species management project). Feed consumption and diet analysis of Indian wild ass. (Part of Diploma in endangered species management project).

Successful anesthesia of about 250 animal with detail scientific record keeping of the same.

Study on reproductive behaviour and growth rate characteristic of Indian lion, Four horn antelope, Indian wild ass etc.

Through postmortem examination of every animal which die at this zoo or brought to this zoo for post mortem from other part. This includes bacterial isolation, drug sensitivity, parasitological and histopathological examination of healthy and sick individuals whenever opportunity arises.

More scientific record keeping with studbook information on lions, wild ass etc.

Actively involved in educational activities like wildlife management training for the field veterinarians of the State Government and nature education activities for school children.

Ramesh Sabapara
Veterinary Officer
Sakkarbaug Zoo