

## Central Zoo takes the Lead

### Sally Walker

After I had been working in Mysore Zoo for awhile I was asked to be a member of India's National Zoo Advisory Board. This enabled me to travel within India and I got an impression that there were many more zoos there than the 44 listed in government publications. I contacted Forest Departments, animal welfare organizations and Conservation NGO's. Soon I could publish a list of 187 zoos, mini zoos, deer parks which work the Ministry of Environment, Government of India ... up!

Nepal had many animal facilities which might have been called zoos, or at least should have been documented. Zoo Outreach Organisation sent R. Marimuthu, our Education Officer, who did a "quick and dirty" survey of Nepal's possible zoos, using contacts he made in Nepal over the years. In visits, conversations and email we documented 26 animal holding places which did not call themselves zoos, yet were open to the public and had many wild animals. We published this result also in ZOOS' PRINT along with a suggestion the best zoo in Nepal, the Central Zoo, should take the lead and see that the concerned departments dealt with these facilities.

Sarita Jnawali and her colleague Shivraj Bhatta from the Wildlife Department attended the 8th SAZARC meeting which featured training on zoo legislation and introduced the relatively new WAZA Assessment Tool. This gave them all the instruments they needed to do the work of surveying their "not-zoos." Since our suggestion had been in print it was not as difficult to enable permission and a grant for the survey.

A Central Zoo team was convened and carried out a detailed survey with a report with action steps.



The Report included

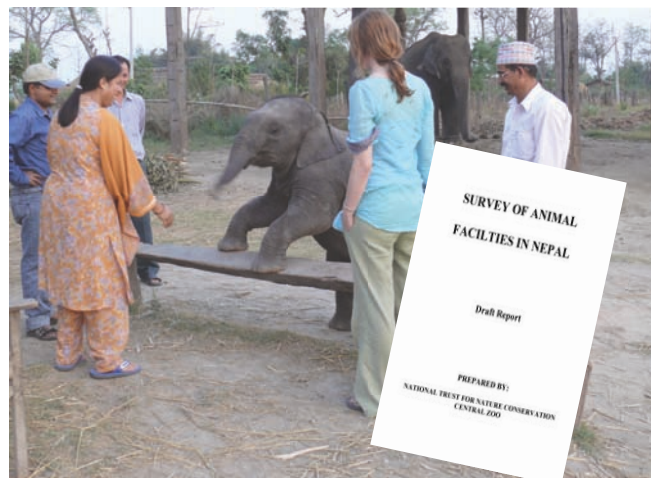
#### Objectives of the Survey

- To list out all existing animal facilities in Nepal.
- To make detailed inventory of animals displayed.
- To assess management and operational mechanisms at the facilities.
- To assess conservation education and research initiatives (if any) conducted by individual facilities.

#### Expectation of the survey

- To establish baseline information about animal facilities established and operational in Nepal.

- To design a strategy, management plan and guidelines to meet the criteria set by WAZA.
- To catalyse zoo legislation.



#### List of the Zoo and Facilities surveyed

- Sahid Smarak Park, Hetauda
- Fulbari Resort, Pokhara
- Mani Mukunda Sen Park, Butwal
- Nepalgunj Zoo
- Yalambar Park, Dharan
- Hariyali Community Forest, Dharan

#### Breeding Centre

Gharial Breeding Centre, Kasara, Chitwan  
Elephant Breeding Centre, Khorshor, Chitwan

#### Other facilities

Mrigasthali Deer Park, Kathmandu





## Recommendations of Inspection Team

- Initiate preparation of zoo legislation and lobby for official endorsement.
- Prepare Zoo Management Guideline from Legislation.
- Establish network for facilities with Central Zoo as custodian of all.
- Help other facilities lobby to come within the legal framework.
- Develop mechanism to upgrade information of all zoos in Nepal.
- Find out all privately owned zoos Establish good animal hospital at Central Zoo for health services to other Nepal zoos.
- Assist facilities to upgrade existing established zoo based on criteria set by WAZA.
- Regularly organize technical interaction sessions for all facilities.
- Make efforts to expand zoo areas.

Now, just a few years later, there is a Nepal Zoo Act completed and just awaiting the last looks of government before approval. There is, as if this month, a Nepal Zoo Network that had its first and founding meeting at the Central Zoo, Kathmandu. They are already planning the next meeting and how to go about generating communication, cooperation and collaboration among the zoos.

Good job ! NTNC, Wildlife Department, Sarita, and all who helped.

## Sample survey form

### Nepalgunj Zoo, Nepalgunj

**Location:** This zoo is situated at the centre of Nepalgunj city which is 450 km west of Kathmandu.

**Area:** 1.36 hector

**Establishment:** The Park was established in 1964 and the animal exhibit started in 1997 by bringing few pairs of Spotted Deer and Black Buck from the Central Zoo, Kathmandu.

**Staff:** One full time staff. He was trained at the Central Zoo.

**Management:** The zoo is run by municipality. Until last year municipality used to lease the park to private parties each year through open tender.

**Condition of enclosure and enrichment:** Spotted Deer and Black Buck enclosures are overcrowded. Aviaries are in good condition but enrichment arrangement is poor.

**Animal Care/ Veterinary care:** Food preparation and formulation is done in a similar way as at the Central Zoo.

**Record keeping:** Records of individual animals are not kept and the system of recording information is not suitable for ready examination. Records are kept at municipality head office rather than at the park. The facility is not under the supervision of veterinarian. Veterinary facility is provided by District Livestock Service Office upon the request from park authority but the supervision and care is not adequate.

**Signage:** The animals are not properly identified and interpreted for the visiting public.

**Educational Program:** None

**Additional attraction:** This animal facility is a part of a beautiful Park and a popular picnic spot.

**Annual Visitor:** 100,000/-

**Entry Fee:** Adult Rs: 5/-  
Children/ Student: Rs 2/-

### Animal Inventory

S.N	English Name	Scientific Name	Number			
			Male	Female	unknown	Total
1	Spotted Deer	<i>Axis axis</i>	5	8	0	13
2	Black Buck	<i>Antelope cervicapra</i>	8	12	0	20
3	Peafowl	<i>Parvo cristatus</i>	1	1	0	2
4	Guinea Fowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	1	1	0	2
5	Budgeriger	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>	0	0	20	20
6	Rabbits	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	2	3	0	5
7	Guinea pig	<i>Cavia aperea</i>	2	2	0	4
8	Red collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia tranquebarica</i>	0	0	7	7
9	Japanese Bantam		0	0	12	12
Grand Total						85

