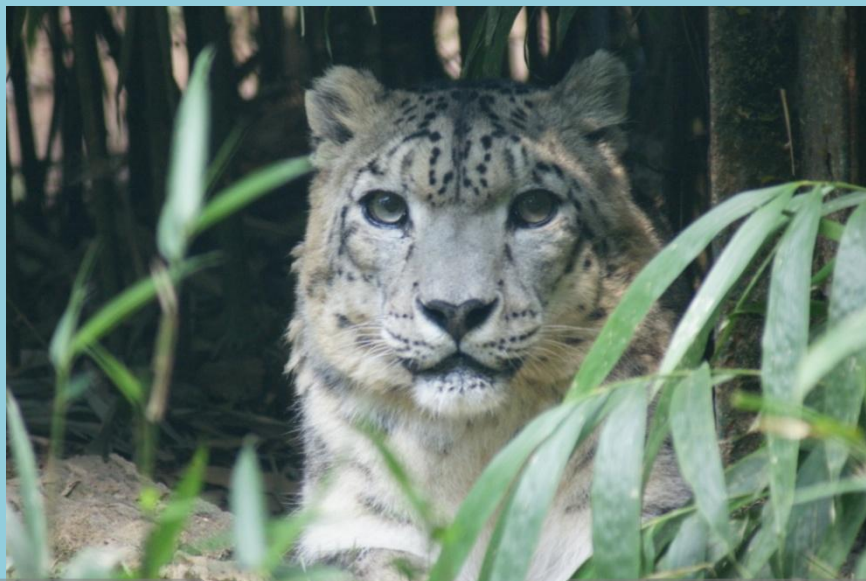




# PADMAJA NAIDU HIMALAYAN ZOOLOGICAL PARK DARJEELING, WEST BENGAL NEWS LETTER January-March 2015

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## From the Director's Desk .....



I joined Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling as Director on 15.01.2015 and I am happy to take up this responsibility as the post is upgraded to the level of Chief Conservator of Forests.

Darjeeling Zoo has earned laurels in the Conservation Breeding programme of endangered species, Research and Education, scientific management of captive animals, visitor's facilities, exchange programmes etc. It is my earnest responsibility to further, improve the zoo.

My immediate priorities are to provide natural environment to the animals, enrichment, health care, visitor's facilities, staff welfare, up gradation of the breeding centers to ensure successful conservation breeding programmes etc. My responsibility is also to provide good administration and better Zoo management to further enhance the reputation of Darjeeling Zoo. Essential developmental works for the better upkeep of animals shall also be my priority.

Since my joining I have conducted an IFS training programme with the help of my staffs and shall also be organizing a Zoo Keeper's training programme during the month of May. Initiated the construction of enclosures for the Red Panda at the new Conservation Breeding Centre at Topkedara, 3<sup>rd</sup> Mile including the remaining works at the museum which I intend to complete it by August so that it can be made open for the public.

**Mr. Piar Chand, IFS**

**Director,**

**PNHZ Park.**

## ACQUISITION AND TRANSFER OF ANIMALS

Following are the transfer and acquisition of animals during the quarter:

Date	Animal	Name of Zoo
<b>Transfer</b>		
23/02/2015	Common Langur (1:1) ( <i>Seminopithecus entellus</i> )	Lucknow Zoo
23/02/2015	Markhor (1:1) ( <i>Capra falconeri</i> )	Nainital Zoo
<b>Acquisition</b>		
02/03/2015	Rock Python (1:1) ( <i>Python molurus</i> )	Lucknow Zoo
02/03/2015	Russell's Viper (1:1) ( <i>Daboia russelii</i> )	Lucknow Zoo
02/03/2015	Sand Boa (1:1) ( <i>Eryx johnii</i> )	Lucknow Zoo
02/03/2015	Kalij Pheasant (1:1) ( <i>Lophura leucomelanos</i> )	Nainital Zoo



Transfer of Markhor



Acquisition of Kalij Pheasant

## Mr. PIAR CHAND, IFS JOINED AS DIRECTOR OF THE PARK

Mr Piar Chand , IFS 1991 batch IFS officer of West Bengal cadre joined as Director of the park on 15th of January 2015. He has served as registrar at the prestigious Forest Research Institute, Dehradun and was also Principal of Eastern Forest Ranger College, Kurseong.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Research Articles

**Bhupen Roka, A.K. Jha & Upashna Rai:** Breeding Behaviour of Red Panda (*Ailurus fulgens fulgens*) in Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling, West Bengal. *ZOO's PRINT, Volume XXX, Number 1*, January 2015.

**Aditya Mitra, Pranita Gupta, Bhupen Roka, Upashna Rai & A.K. Jha:** A case on Gynandry in the Lady Amherst's Pheasants. *ZOO's PRINT, Volume XXX, Number 2*, February 2015.

**P. Gupta, A.K. Jha:** Study of feeding pattern and total feeding time of captive Red Pandas (*Ailurus fulgens fulgens*). *ZOO's PRINT, Volume XXX, Number 3*, 2015.

### Books & Project Report

1. **Alankar Jha:** Working Manual of Red Panda Conservation Breeding Programme 2014
2. **Alankar Jha:** Working Manual of Snow Leopard Conservation Breeding Programme 2014
3. **Master (Layout) Plan & First Management Plan 2014-2015 to 2024-2025.**
4. **Bhupen Roka:** Study of Red Panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) in ex-situ facilities in co-relation with in-situ facilities for Conservation Breeding.

## OUTREACH PROGRAMME

The outreach programme of the Park involves students of all levels including trainees. The students are taken for a tour around the park and then interaction sessions are conducted. The session includes discussions on Role of modern Zoo, Conservation Breeding Programmes, how a zoo functions, what are rare and endangered species, environmental issues, what are the efforts taken up by the Park towards saving these species etc. The session also includes question and answer round where the queries of the students are attended to. At the end books related to animals, conservation breeding programmes, biodiversity of the Park and notebooks are distributed to the students.

During this quarter the education wing of the Park attended eleven different groups from seven institutes which are as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name of School/Training Institute/Colleges/Universities</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>	<b>Educational Incentives</b>
10/01/2015	West Bengal Forest School	15	2	Visit to Zoo and interaction
14/01/2015	Jubilant Elite Academy, Ilam, Nepal	10	4	Visit to Zoo and interaction
17/02/2015	Madhabpur P.S. Vidyapith High School	44	16	Visit to Zoo and interaction
25/02/2015	Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun	20	2	Visit to Zoo and interaction
14/03/2015	Delhi Institute of Rural Development, Delhi	19	3	Visit to Zoo and interaction
15/03/2015	Yogoda Satsanga Palpara Mahavidyalaya, Midnapur	25	4	Visit to Zoo and interaction
23/03/2015	Carmel High School, Giddha Pahar Kurseong (Class VII)	20	3	Visit to Zoo and interaction
25/03/2015	Carmel High School, Giddha Pahar Kurseong (Class VIII)	21	4	Visit to Zoo and interaction
27/03/2015	Carmel High School, Giddha Pahar Kurseong (Class IV & V)	31	3	Visit to Zoo and interaction
30/03/2015	Carmel High School, Giddha	28	3	Visit to Zoo and

	Pahar Kurseong (Class II & III)			interaction
31/03/2015	Carmel High School, Giddha Pahar Kurseong (Class VI)	22	3	Visit to Zoo and interaction



**Educational Tour of Carmel School, Kurseong**



**Trainees from Wildlife Institute of India**



**Educational Tour of Madhabpur High School**

### **VISIT TO CENTRAL ZOO AUTHORITY**

Mr. Aditya Mitra, Research Scholar and Miss Pranita Gupta, Research Scholar visited CZA on 9th March 2015 and gave presentation on “Studies on biology, breeding behaviour and aviary practices for improved performance of captive himalayan pheasants” by Aditya Mitra and on “Red Panda Nutrition: An Approach towards Integration” by Miss Pranita Gupta.

The abstract of the presentations are as follows:

### **Red Panda Nutrition: An Approach towards Integration**

**Miss Pranita Gupta, Research Scholar**

Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park has been involved in the Conservation Breeding of Red Pandas (*Ailurus fulgens fulgens*) from the 1990's. It is the Coordinating zoo for the breeding program while Sikkim and Nainital zoo are the Participating zoos. The first successful breeding took place in 20<sup>th</sup> June 1994 followed by successful reintroduction of the captive Red pandas in the wild on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2003.

“Red Panda Nutrition – An approach towards Integration”, is a short term Research project for 2 years funded by the Central Zoo Authority. The objectives of this project involve the non invasive dietary and nutritional analysis in both in situ and ex situ facilities, study of feeding behavior (preferences, dominance, consumption), providing nutritional support for all stages of life of the captive Red pandas, improving animal husbandry involving food presentation methods, behavioral and environmental enrichment, involving food, feeding and foraging techniques resulting in a standardized diet for global captive population of Red pandas . The work accomplished so far during the first year includes quarterly weighing of captive red pandas, monitoring daily feed, behavioral analysis regarding feeding behavior, analysis of CCTV footage for feeding behavior, modification of captive diet, experiments to study feeding behavior and consumption, seasonal collection of sample (in situ and ex situ), sample analysis, preparation of reference slides of fodder plants and publications. A MoU was also signed between the Park and G.B. Pant Institute, Sikkim unit for Dietary analysis. In the remaining months the study will include dietary and nutritional analysis of feed and scat samples collected from both in situ and ex situ facilities and compilation of the final project report.

### **“Studies on biology, breeding behaviour and aviary practices for improved performance of captive Himalayan pheasants”**

**Mr Aditya Mitra, Research Scholar**

Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park has been the **Coordinating Zoo** for breeding Satyr Tragopan (*Tragopan satyra*) and the **Participating Zoo** for breeding Grey Peacock Pheasant (*Polyplectron bicalcaratum*), Himalayan Monal (*Lophophorus impejanus*) and Blood Pheasant (*Ithaginis cruentus*). The other Himalayan species the park is involved in breeding are Red Jungle Fowl (*Gallus gallus*), Kalij Pheasant (*Lophura leucomelanos*), Cheer Pheasant (*Catreus wallichii*) and

Temminck's Tragopan (*Tragopan temminckii*). The short term research grant, titled "Studies on Biology, Breeding Behaviour and Aviary Practices for Improved Performance of Captive Himalayan Pheasants" is entirely being funded by The Central Zoo Authority (CZA). The project aims at studying the behaviour of captive Himalayan pheasants, standardizing the exhibit design, the captive diet, finding causes and remedial measures to different problems in captivity and also to provide better captive management of the pheasants. The presentation is a brief report on the work accomplished so far in the project in the behavioural observation of all species at the Park and the number of publications made. It also sheds light on the broad aspects of pheasant management that the study makes an effort to delve into, viz. husbandry, enrichments, veterinary issues, diet and behaviour. During the past one year of the project, nine ex-situ facilities housing pheasants has been visited to become versed with the captive management of these species and the various hurdles encountered therein. In the successive months the study will include the visiting of two other ex-situ facilities as well as behavioural observation followed by compilation of data into a final report.

### FAREWELL TO MR. A.K. JHA, IFS

On 15-01-2015, Mr. A.K. Jha, IFS, Director got transferred to Forest Conservation Act Cell, Kolkata after serving the park for a period of nine years. His contribution towards the park is commendable.







Farewell to Mr. A.K. Jha. IFS

## WORKSHOP ON ZOO-FOREST DEPARTMENT LINKAGES FOR BIODIVERSITY GAINS.

Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling, conducted a two days training programme from 5<sup>th</sup> February to 6<sup>th</sup> February 2015 for IFS officers on “**Zoo Forest Department Linkages for Biodiversity Gains**”. The training programme was funded by Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, Government of India. Twenty four participants from 14 states of India in the programme were senior and middle level officers from diverse educational and work backgrounds.

The programme coordinators were Mr. Piar Chand IFS Director, Ms. Upashna Zoo Biologist and Mr. Bhupen Roka, Education Officer of the Park. The Chief Guest of the programme was Mr. P.T. Bhutia IFS. Other officials included Mr. M.R. Baloch IFS and Mr. Kamalakant IFS. The inaugural function began with a welcome address by the Director of the Park followed by a keynote address by the chief guest, lightning of the diya and declaring the training workshop open.

The technical session included two lectures from Mr. Sitendu Goswami, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. Mr. Goswami in his presentation highlighted about the “**Importance of Zoo Forest Linkages and the one plan approach**”. The second presentation gave an insight on “**Enclosure design and enrichment**”. A tour of the Park and the Conservation Breeding Centre was done in the afternoon.

The participants were taken round the zoo where they were explained about the animal collection plan and the enclosures. The queries of the participants during the tour were well attended by the Research and Education wing of the Park.

The second day included visit to Senchal Wildlife Sanctuary to know about the biodiversity and the in-situ managerial practices of the sanctuary. The second visit was made to the Conservation Breeding Centre for Red Panda and Snow leopard at Topkeydara 3<sup>rd</sup> Mile. The participants were made aware of the need of off display facilities for any conservation breeding programme, criteria for selection of suitable sites, developing husbandry practices through scientific interventions and the need of intensive research in all aspects of ex-situ management of these endangered species. Mr. Bhupen Roka, Educational Officer of the Park after lunch in his deliberation highlighted **the Conservation Breeding Programme of Red Panda in Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (1990-2014)**. A discussion followed concerning the two days programme that ended with a valedictory function.

The training programme was very much appreciated by the participants and assesses the course to be structured. The participants found the training to be useful in their jobs or shall be useful whenever given an opportunity to work for wildlife or conservation works. The participants also felt that they had benefitted considerably from the interaction that they had with the fellow participants during the course. The participants also rated the resource persons delivering lectures, sessions and demonstrations that ranged from excellent to very good to good to fair.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India vide its memo **No. 19-6/2012-RT/T dated 13.03.2015** intimidated the office of the park an evaluation report of the training course which is as follows.

Structure & Org. of the course	Training faculty	B/L	Usefulness of training	Overall impression of the course	Quality of reading material	Extent to which guidelines issued by MoEF &CC have been followed	Weighted Average
89%	83%	B: 79% L: 81%	81%	89%	89%	100%	88%



Lightning of Diya by Mr Piar Chand, IFS Director



Keynote address by Mr . P.T. Bhutia, IFS



Technical Session



Group Photo

## SITE INSPECTION FOR RED PANDA

On 28th February 2015 a new site was selected for the construction of enclosures for Red Panda at the Conservation Breeding Centre for Red Panda and Snow Leopard at Topkadara. The site was selected on the basis of topography, vegetation and security. The site is near to the newly constructed water tank.



## Site Inspection for Red Panda Enclosure

## APPROVAL OF DIFFERENT RESEARCH PROJECT

The research proposal as detailed below were submitted by Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park and was approved in the 10th Meeting of the Governing body of the West Bengal Zoo Authority held on 28th January 2015 vide reference no: 539/WBZA/C1-10th/14-15 dated 24/02/2015 for taking necessary action:

Sl. No.	Description	Amounts
1	Study of soil micro-flora and micro fauna of the animal enclosures in Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling, Dowhill and Topkeydara.	Rs. 1,84,000.00
2	Study of population and Behavioural Ecology of Red Panda ( <i>Ailurus fulgens fulgens</i> ) in Singhalila National Park and Neora Valley National Park, West Bengal with special reference to	Rs. 7,24,200.00

	conservation.	
3	Rechecking of genetic makeup of the captive stock of Red Panda ( <i>Ailurus fulgens fulgens</i> ) in Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling by Aranyak, Gauhati.	Rs. 2,94,125.00

## FLOWERS IN PADMAJA NAIDU HIMALAYAN ZOOLOGICAL PARK



*Bergenia ciliata*



*Rhododendron arboreum*

## REVIEW OF THE PARK -FROM TRIPADVISOR COMMUNITY

### “Little Jungle”

Reviewed 25th March 2015

By-Sweetievino, Hyderabad

The one feature which differentiates this zoo is the environment where these animals are placed, it represents a jungle-like environment and most of the carnivores animals like tiger, leopard are kept alone, as it like to live in the forest. The zoo has two sections, after you enter, if you take a right turn you can find all birds, red panda, cat, monkey, on the opposite direction you can find Bengal tiger,

different type of leopard, jackals, lambs etc. Before every chamber, facts about that particular animal is placed, which is informative.

**“Fantastic Place”**

Reviewed-24th March 2015

By- Dhurjati, Kolkata

Lovely experience! A must visit place in Darjeeling. It is by far the best maintained zoo. Children are surely going to enjoy the visit to the zoo. There are some rare species of animals to be seen.

**“Superb-Must Visit”**

Reviewed- 24th March 2015

By- Shivaram S., Bangalore

One of the best maintained Zoo I have personally visited. Also attached is the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute.

**“Another great Darjeeling experience”**

Reviewed 23rd March 2015

By- Rana Laha, Kolkata

The Zoo here is so different from other zoos in India. It is cleaner and the animals here are very unique. Snow Leopard and Red Panda wow.