

# Animal Papa Tour

■ Taipei Zoo | Dong-Jun Chang

Beginning April 2009, on the third Sunday of every month from 10:30~11:30am, is the regular guided tour presented by the zoo director himself. Upon the deadline for this article, a total of 6 tours were held, and what I derived from attending all 6 is that "the zoo director secretly crammed at home!"

This activity was inspired by the Tennoji Zoo in Osaka, Japan. In Fall 2008, when the Taipei Zoo director Jason Yeh attended a conference in Japan and met with Tennoji Zoo director Dr. Mayashita, he learned about Dr. Mayashita's monthly "Walk with the Zoo Director" activity, occasionally even conducted in English. Director Yeh then has the thought "to be on the front line to interact with visitors" (this is my guess). But Dr. Mayashita is a veterinarian and has

worked all year round at the zoo; our Director Yeh does not have a biology background, thus it's a challenge for him to take on the "tour guide" job... From April to September the "Animal Papa Tour" will guide the Formosan Animal Area, starting October the Tropical Rainforests Animal Area. For those interested, don't forget to join as an observer every third Sunday morning of every month because registration has been filled months ago!



## 2009 the Year of the Gorilla

The Year of the Gorilla ( YoG 2009 )

■ Taipei Zoo | Xin-Yi Hsieh

The scene of movie in which King Kong rampage New York's Empire State Building to save the beautiful actress has left a deep impression in everyone! Not only gorillas have high IQ and abilities to use tools and symbols to communicate, their genetic similarity with human is as high as 98.4%. Although gorillas are the largest of all primates, they have drastically reduced in mean minimum number due to habitat loss, poaching, diseases, military conflicts, etc. Currently all 4 subspecies are listed in the IUCN Red Data Book as "endangered" and "critically endangered", and to retard their continued reduction in number, maintain biodiversity in the rainforests, the CMS, GRASP and WAZA has jointly announced 2009 as the Year of the Gorilla (YoG).



TAIPEI ZOO

# 抱動物園報



**Digest From Taipei Zoo Quarterly Vol.116**  
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 Sentiments through Flowers and Plants - Plant Conversations at the Taipei Zoo

Read more about "Great Apes" special coverage in the No.116 issue of the Taipei Zoo Magazine!

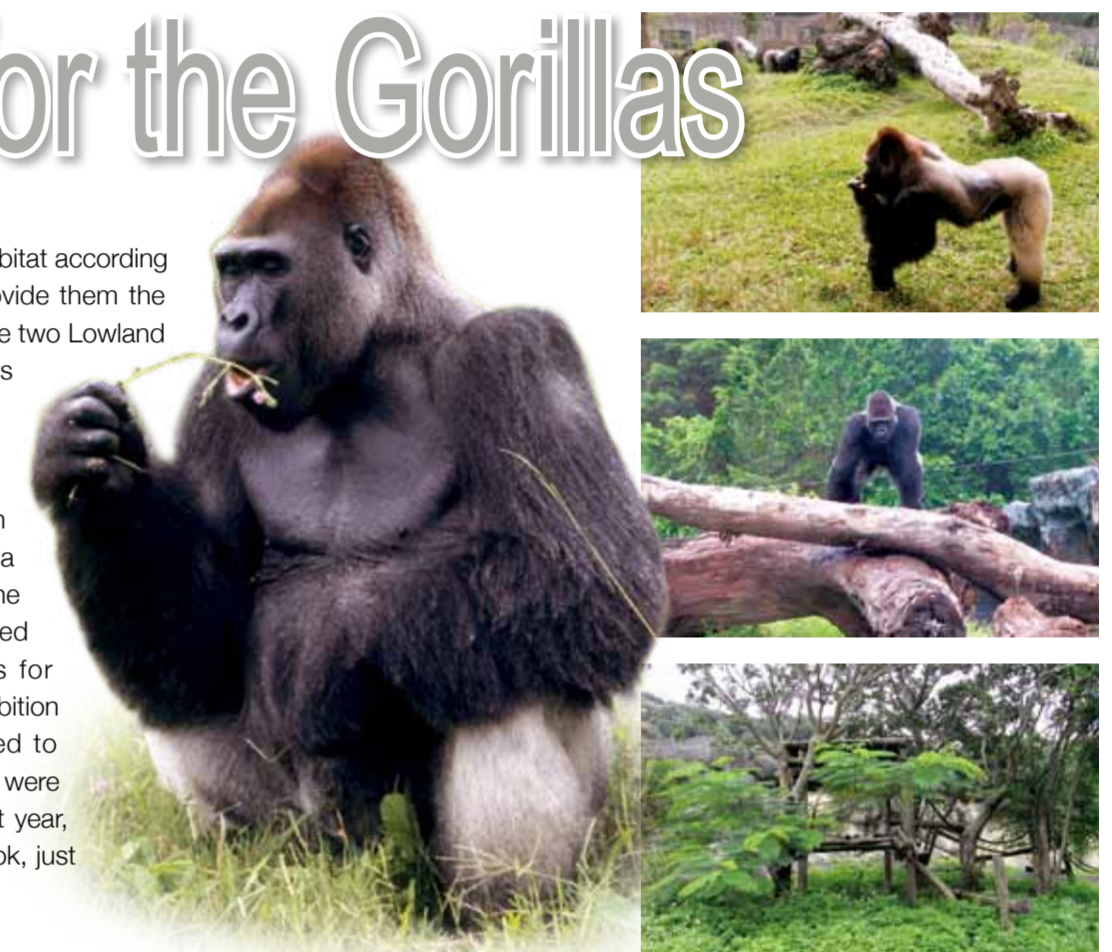
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## ZOO PAPER 《2009-3》

### New Home for the Gorillas

■ Taipei Zoo | Zhi-Jing Shi

One most important task of zoo staff is to timely modify habitat according to animal's age and physical and mental conditions to provide them the most suitable living environment. Bao-bao and Hei-pei are the two Lowland gorilla (Gorilla gorilla) living at the Taipei Zoo; the 24 years old Bao-bao grew up at the zoo, while the 45 years old Hei-pei arrived the zoo at his prime of age 26. As 2009 is the Year of Gorilla, Bao-bao and Hei-pei have represented Taiwan (they are the only two gorillas in Taiwan), and taken on the responsibility to promote the protection of gorilla and other primates. Aside from paying close attention to the conservation of wild gorillas, the zoo has also re-examined Bao-bao and Hei-pei's living ground, assessing areas for improvement. The plan is to integrate existing mandrill exhibition to expand gorilla's area; trees and platforms will be used to increase 3D activity space, and also make use of areas that were originally separation ditches. When the plan completes next year, Bao-bao and Hei-pei's home will take on an entirely new look, just in time to welcome their "new bride" from England!



### Primates' Classification, Distribution, Diversity and Conservation

■ Taipei Zoo | Si-Long Chen

World's primates today are divided into 2 suborder, 17 family, 75 genus and 415 species. Primates are characterized by their large brains, especially evident in human, and aside from apes and human, all other species have tails. Excluding human, the first digit of primate's hind limbs and thumb are opposable, thus both hand and foot make excellent grasping organ, conducive in climbing. Most species have flat nails or claws, and have a reduced snout, attribute to reliance on vision, touch and hearing at the expense of olfaction. Primate's head are usually round, the eye socket and eyeballs onward. Typically one young per pregnancy, with few exceptions, the young grows slowly and requires a longer mature period. There's a wide gap in primate's size, range from the Mouse Lemur with body length less than 10cm to the biggest Gorilla. Except for ring-tailed lemurs, baboons and humans, most primate species are arboreal to an extent, and usually move in clans or groups. They have a varied diet, some with partiality for fruits, leaves or insects. According to IUCN, there are 11 threats the primates face today, including clearing for agriculture, bio-resource utilization, residential and economical developments and changes in natural environment. Over two-thirds are threatened by agricultural cultivation and poaching.



# The 20 Century Three Female King Kongs — Jane Goodal, Dian Fossey and Birute Galdikas

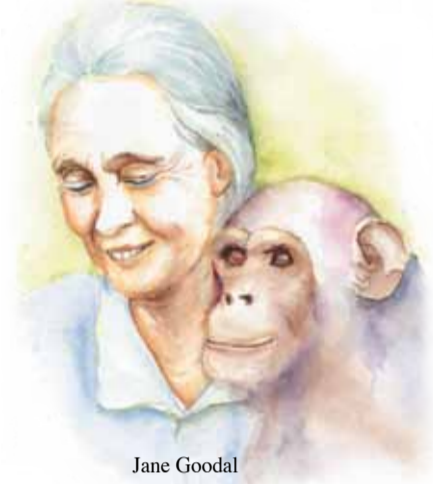
■ Taipei Zoo | Wei-Ling Yang

The 3 female scientists, Jane Goodal, Dian Fossey and Birute Galdikas, each of leading position in primate researches, how did they obtain such achievements? What important effect did they or their area of research have on others? They were all protégées of the well-

known paleoanthropologist Louis Leakey, is that a coincidence or Dr. Leakey's remarkable insight? The legendary Dr. Leakey hoped to understand human's past by observing primate behaviors, and employed these 3 female students successively to help with

his research. Aside from Birute Galdikas, the other two do not have outstanding background, why wasn't Dr. Leakey afraid to employ them? And even sent them into the

wild in the conservative 20 century society to take on tasks even men are not competent for. How did he know these three students won't let him down? Jane Goodal said, "...to be a good mother, female evolved to be more patient, and has to understand the needs and behaviors of "living things that cannot talk", which is the reason why females have the characteristics most suitable to observe primates." This may also be why Dr. Leakey felt female will use a more warm and loving heart to observe other types of animals "that can't talk".



Jane Goodal



Dian Fossey



Birute Galdikas

## African Rainforests and Tropical Trees

■ Taipei Zoo | Yi-Ming Chen, Taipei Zoo

It is commonly known that tropical rainforests existed for a long time, but how long? The earliest tropical moist forest may stem after flowering plant obtained advantage (approximately 9600-9200 thousand years ago), at that time forests may be single-layered due to animal feeding effects. The Congo Basin makes up most of African rainforest, stretching across central and mid Africa all the way to the Atlantic. There's also a long and narrow strip on east coast of Madagascar, its low canopy rainforest is most similar to the ancient tropical moist rainforest. Forests in east Africa has shown fragmented distribution, rainforests in other locations were destroyed. When the Taipei Zoo relocated, tropical plants from Africa were planted to enhance animal exhibitions. 13 varieties of trees were brought in, and have close relations with the animals. Among which the thick trunk Monkey-bread tree has white flowers that bloom at night, bats serve as its pollinator, and its hollow trunk are livable. The Sausage tree also blooms at night, its sausage-shaped red flowers drop in the morning, in Africa they are food for large mammals like elephants, rhinos and baboons.



火焰牧群聚外觀

## The Story of Orangutan A-Yong

■ Taipei Zoo | Hua-Qing Lin

On November 24, 1998, an orangutan appeared on Taipei's busy Guang-Fu South Road, walking forward in orangutan-style waving both hands, and even pushed over an entire row of motorcycles. The commotions soon attracted fire fighters, but even these fire fighting heroes do not know where to begin facing this hundred kilo giant. Finally the zoo veterinarian was called on site to blow anesthesia arrow to put it down. The orangutan, a mature 10 year old male ape, was named A-Yong and sent to settle at the zoo. Why did A-Yong appear at the streets of Taipei? It turned out that in the 1980s, raising orangutans as pets was a trend, thus many not weaned baby orangutans were smuggled from Indonesia and Malaysia, thus Taiwan was once the country with highest density of orangutans in the world outside of its country of origin.

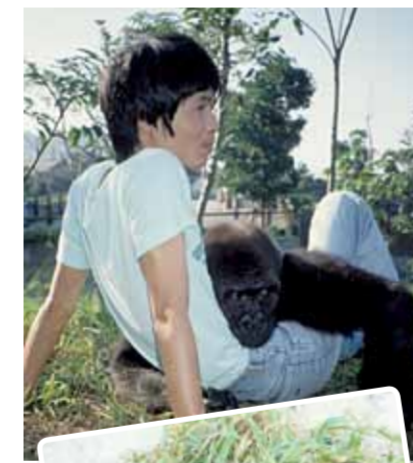


## Impressions from Visiting the Korean College of Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Hospital

■ Taipei Zoo | Li-Qian Wong

During attendance of the Conference of Asian Veterinary Medicine in August 2009, we visited Seoul National University Veterinary Hospital and Seoul Grand Park Veterinary Hospital. I hope my article will encourage my colleagues to use other's experience as stepping stones for reform to improve our competitiveness. "Dolly the cloned sheep at my house" is the curtain-raiser of our visit, Seoul National University College of Veterinary has reached world class, successfully cloned Afghan hounds move around visitors

for photos. The facilities here are complete and orderly with various advanced equipments available. Next we visited Seoul Grand Park Veterinary Hospital, introduced as "more like a motel than a veterinary hospital." Indeed, the hospital did not have the cold feeling of traditional veterinary hospitals; rather the humane and warm design holds an aura of professionalism. There's also a laboratory, pathological lab and molecular lab serving as logistic support for diagnosing diseases and related researches for the Grand Park zoo. "Look at others and think about ourselves", the Korean trip reminded us we have much areas for improvement!

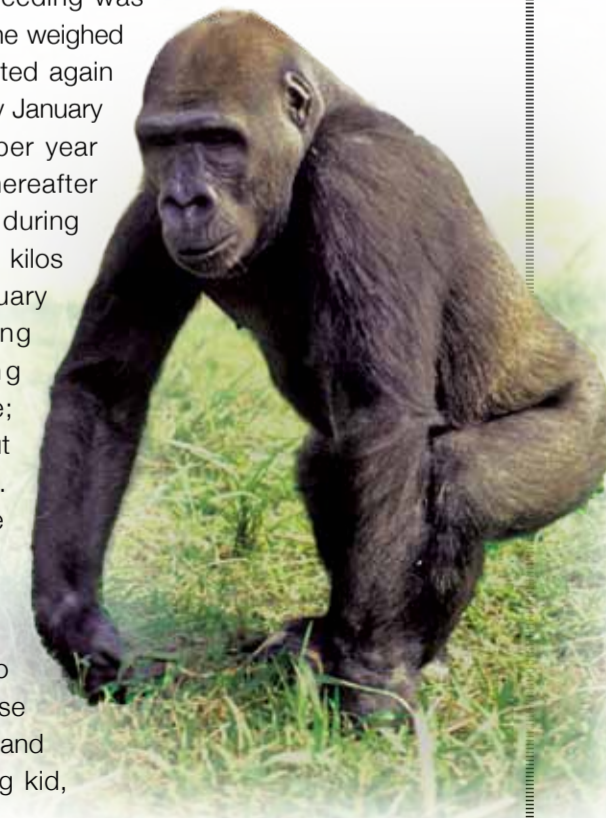


## The Growing Story of Gorilla Baby

■ Taipei Zoo | Wan-Xian Wang

The growing stories of Bao-bao for over 22 years will take more than a few three days and three nights to tell them all. I was very fortunate to be Bao-bao's nanny, my close contact and observation of his each and every move enable me to document my experiences to share with readers. The male gorilla Bao-bao arrived Taipei Zoo from Cameroon, Africa on January 6, 1987, and resides in the African Animal Area. At 2 years old, he weighed 10.1 kilos and was super cute! Upon arrival Bao-bao was bottle fed, yet not acclimatized, he had poor appetite, had colds, coughs and diarrhea. Under careful and loving care of zoo staff, Bao-bao gradually began to adapt, and started eating small amount of fruits. His weight increased from 10.1 kilos to 13 kilos, and reached

20 kilos in December. His feeding was adjusted, by June next year he weighed 26 kilos. Feeding was adjusted again for a total of 3 adjustments by January 1992. He gained 10 kilos per year for 5 consecutive years, thereafter his weight increased faster during growth period, reached 180 kilos in November 1999. In January 1989, the zoo tried raising chimpanzee Xiao-Qiang with Bao-bao as playmate; regretfully it did not work out as the two did not interact. Bao-bao continued to be close to his nanny, who played, climbed, rolled and chased with him every day. To get away, the nanny has to be fast like thunder, otherwise Bao-bao will sit at the door hand blocking the door...like a big kid, Bao-bao is very smart!



Read more about "Great Apes" special coverage in the No.116 issue of the Taipei Zoo Magazine!



## Primate's sexual skin

■ Taipei Zoo | Zhi-Hua Chang

The females of primate species such as gorilla, baboon, macaque and mandrill have a piece of hairless skin from the buttocks to groin called sexual skin, which will swell and turn red during sexual maturity. In some species, the red and swelling are not normally evident, yet

during breeding season in Fall and Winter, the sexual skin will engorge and swell, the entire bottom and tail turns red with creases, some even has bloodstains like menstrual period, transpiring particular scent to attract the males. Species like gorilla and baboon are in heat year round, usually in a 30~40 days cycle, and sexual skin will vary with hormonal changes. This article will use Olive Baboon (*Papio Anubis*) as example to introduce the relationship between sexual skin swelling, estrous cycle and changes in serum hormones level.

