

USAR Center, Louisiana Hall
Fort Myer, Arlington 8, Virginia
8 March 1961

Dear Lee:

I have now become quite settled down here at Fort Myer, and it looks very much like this will be one of the best assignments that I have had, Korea being far in the distance now.

One of the best things about this station is its nearness to the downtown Washington area. We are located just across the Memorial Bridge from DC, with Arlington National Cemetery being just behind us. In order to keep in better physical condition I have taken to walking in to the heart of the city and back each clear nite, it takes but 2 hours round trip.

The National Zoo has been examined from stem to stern, and I must say that while I still have certain misgivings about some aspects of the collection, overall the zoo is in fair shape. I say fair and not good since there remains a definite lack of a aggressive leadership. The animals are in good condition and the collection at the moment has several real rarities in all classes. Mammal wise there are several gems, some left over from years gone by, several now are establishing longevity records for their kind in captivity. As with any zoo however, attrition is taking its course of the older stock, holdovers from the old National Geographic expeditions. The 235 species and subspecies in the collection remain the highest in the United States to date. There are certain gaps in the collection, especially in the Ungulates, that need filling. Being a small mammal fan, I must admit to being surprsied to seeing several new Viverrids, helping to make this the best collection of Small Mammals in America.

As regards attrition, I wish to mention the death of several animals that established records for longevity for this zoo, and a few world-wide. Both Bongo and Pinkie the older pair of Hippos have died, after being sent in summer 1959 to ZOORAMA, in Virginia. These were loaned to that private enterprise, as are many other animals from National Zoo. Bongo having arrived at the Zoo 7 April 1914, was the oldest LIVING Hippo left in the US. His death on 4 December 1959, removed what I thought was a real competitor for Peter the Great. The fact that he died as a result of an injury, not properly attended to, is a real loss. The next oldest animal I know of is the 1925 born animal, or Bongo's son at Baltimore. Do you know if Ray Gray has any older and if so any dates of arrival. Yesterday I was to the US National Museum and talking with Dave Johnson and a visiting Zoologist from Africa a Mr Longstreet, who has shot, killed and measured the skulls and skins of some 500 Hippo in Africa. Mr Longstreet mentioned that the oldest Hippo he ever shot in the wild was not over 25 years of age.

A Bush Dog Speothos which arrived 8 April 1952 died 13 June 1959, or 7 years and over 2 months. This is a record. The animal currently exhibited at ~~NEWYORK~~ Philadelphia arrived in the summer of 1954 and was born at San Diego on January 7 of that year. He was still alive and doing well on the 5th of March, so that means he has to live until next Monday and he will be the new record holder.

A female Black-fronted Duiker Cephalophus nigrifrons, which arrived with a mate from the 1940 African Expedition, on the 7th of August that year, died on 20 April 1960. This is a record for the species, and for Duikers in general. Unfortunately the zoo records being quite fouled up at the moment, it took some investigation to ascertain this, the zoo having claimed this female from 1950 having died several years ago. Not so.

The Saiga that arrived on 26 August 1955 and died on 14 September 1959 is the best record for this delicate animal I have to date.

The female Kordofan Giraffe which died 2 December 1959, was the last of the original animals brought back by Bill Man from Sudan in 1937, with date of arrival at the zoo effective October 17, 1937. This time in excess of 22 years is the record for this race in America.

The Short-tailed Shrew Blarina brevicauda kirtlandi which arrived 27 December 1957, died on the 28th March 1960, or 2 years and 3 months, about one year longer than any previous captive shrew.

The zoo received in 1958, a large shipment of animals from the US Navy research team in Cairo, Egypt. These animals were never correctly identified, unless the dead animals were sent to the museum for identification. One of the animals was a Hedgehog, which was definitely of the Hemiechinus type. This animal has now been identified as Hemiechinus auritus aegyptius. It arrived 14 May 1958 and died 1 Jan 1961. The zoo having disagreed with Dave Johnson and myself as to correct identity, insist on calling it a European Hedgehog Erinaceus europaeus and it will no doubt be mentioned as such in the annual report for 1961. They will no doubt claim it is a record for the type.

Another case of mistaken identification is the Otter which arrived 29 May 1957 from Liberia and was called the Asian Otter Lutra cinerea. My observations on the living animal and subsequent investigation yesterday with Dave lead us to the conclusion that it was Lutra maculicollis the Spotted-necked Otter, a form previously never seen in America and rare in collections. Its untimely death on 29 Jan 1961, while quite short remains a record for the species.

Lear Grimmer brought back several Three-toed Sloths from British Guiana in 1960 which were destroyed after death. The longest one lived 4 months and 19 days, a record for the USA, tho not for the animal. They had a baby born 24 September of 1960, which survived for 14 days. This was a wild conceived animal.

The Kiang which arrived in 1934 as a young stallion from Hagenbeck, finally passed on 17 August 1960, the last Kiang in America, and now a really rare animal, although Lindemann is reputed to have some.

The 1960 report, which you have already received from Washington, noted 3 specimens of Dinomys branicki. This is incorrect. The animals are Agouti's brought from British Guiana by Lear in 1959, and probably of the aguti type. However Lear calls them Red Agouti's and somewhere dug up Dinomys and the scientific name.

As you will have noted I disagree with the zoo on identification of certain animals. Yesterday in a talk with Dave Johnson, it was decided that I should try as my spare time project to get the zoo records in shape. The records and card catalogs are in such a mess now, that often the museum is receiving rare specimens with the notation, arrived "Unknown". This is of course of no value then to the museum for their records, and also ~~reflects~~ reflects poorly on the zoo. Dave is tied up head and foot as is all of his helpers, and no time can be had for a day at the zoo. This is unfortunate. About all he can do is to check the animal lists as sent down to see if a name given is valid, whether that particular animal is that for which the name says he does not know but relies on Ted and Lear, hence these several mis-identifications. The skins of course can tell the story, but since the animal is dropped when dead, this means little to the living collection.

The living collections today have several record setters continuing on. The old Crane from 1903 being the oldest resident of the zoo. In the Mammal field their remains the female Blue Sheep, *Pseudhois* that arrived 13 October 1937. This form is now very rare in zoos, in fact as far as I can determine there are no other specimens on exhibit in any zoo of the Western world. There was a specimen from China at London until a few years ago, but that one has since died. This animal, is now therefore at least 22 years old.

The Gaurs remain quite mixed up. According to zoo cards the present female is listed as being born in 1938, however a search reveals no young born in 1938. The head-keeper thinks it is the original female. If so it also is over 22 yrs of age.

The zoo two years ago dropped the trinomial system of scientific animal names. At this time the Roloway Monkeys were then dropped as subspecies and added to the Dianas. Since then a few Dianas have died, and the old Roloway from 1931 supposedly has died. However she is very much alive and kicking. This is the oldest Cercopithecine in the collection, and one of the few members of the genus *Cercopithecus* ever to live 30 years in a zoo.

Several of the Monkeys received in 1937 and 1940 are still alive also.

The oldest Bear in the collection is a Sitka Bear that arrived in 1929.

One of the real wonders of the collection, at least scientifically is the male Toque Macaque, which was received July 1939. This animal in 1958 after 19 yrs in the collection mated with a female Bonnet Macaque, producing a male hybrid, which has the features of both parents. This old male still survives.

OK DAVID
JOHNSON WAS
CURATOR OF
MAMMALS AT
THE U.S.
NATIONAL MUSEUM

I saw Ernest Walker several weeks ago and must say he looked fine. At that time his wife was improving. Yesterday on a routine friendly call I find that she is falling fast, going to Washington Hospital Center for daily X Ray treatment, and under constant sedation. From the tone of Ernest's voice I gather that he really is in the dumps.

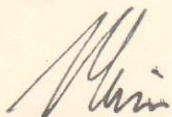
I mentioned on my visit in January that London received a large collection in late December from Madagascar, which included several Tenrecs, of both the typical type and also two varieties of Setifer, neither of which had previously been seen at London. One of these has since produced a litter of young, the subspecies nigrescens of Setifer setosus. Since we are so deficient on knowledge of Tenrecs, and especially breeding I thought you might be interested. The parents arrived at London 22 December, and the litter of 2 was born on the 6th February.

You might tell Bill Conway, if he is interested that London has this year so far received 2 male Hawaiian Geese from the Wildfowl Trust, another Christmas Island Frigate Bird Fregata andrewsi, and two weeks ago received two rather seldom exhibited forms Irena puella turcosa and Leucopsar rothschildi from the zoo at Surabaya, Indonesia. Also as a deposit that rare form ~~is~~ of Sulphur-crested Cockatoo K. galerita ophthalmica. In early January AA Prestwich presented the zoo with several Fruit Pigeons Ducula aenea and bicolor, as well as one Henicophaps albifrons.

I hope to be able to get a few days off (unfortunately on the weekend) in April at which time I would like to go over the Mammal cards to bring my data up to date, however will give Joe a line first.

As soon as some last minute data is received from London, San Diego and Joe Davis, I will have the first section of Mammals in Captivity ready. This will cover up to the Chiroptera.

Hope my rambling on has produced some data for you, and with kindest regards to all



SFC Marvin L. Jones