THE LAST BEACH CHIMP COMES TO MONKEY WORLD

On February 19th Jim and Alison Cronin returned to Monkey World from Spain with the last beach photographer’s chimp. His name is Alberto and we estimate that he was smuggled into Spain, as an infant, during 1988 or 89. His first owner was a beach photographer who used Alberto as a prop to entice tourists to have their photo taken with the cute baby. As it happened, however, Monkey World had just started a proactive campaign with the Spanish authorities and Simon and Peggy Templar, an ex-patriot couple that had started rescuing chimps many years prior. So it was not long before the Guardia Civil went after Alberto’s owner and told him that he would have to stop working the chimp or be arrested. Alberto’s owner promised that he would not use the chimp for photography, or any other financial purpose, but he wanted to keep the young chimp as a pet. The authorities agreed and Alberto lived with the photographer and his wife for another eight years until the day the photographer died. Not knowing what to do, the wife took Alberto to a dog and cat shelter outside of Barcelona and here he has stayed, living on his own for six years.

Monkey World first learned about Alberto a few months ago when an organisation called Depana contacted us, as they were concerned about the welfare of the adult male chimpanzee. While the animal shelter cared for Alberto, the conditions in which he was kept were not suitable and he had no companionship of his own kind. Depana asked if we could give him a home with other chimps as they had already talked to Madrid and permission had been granted to move the chimp to a new home. Thus, it was just a case of organising the correct permits from the British Ministry of Agriculture for Alberto to come to Britain.

Prior to moving, Jim and Alison Cronin had made an initial trip to Spain to meet Alberto and assess his character. They wanted to find out if the male chimp was overly aggressive, if he exhibited extreme abnormal behaviour, or if he had any physical problems. The chimp they met turned out to be very friendly, enjoyed playing with people, and appeared to be quite well adjusted considering his spartan living conditions. The next step was to organise a medical check to ensure Alberto was healthy. Monkey World contacted Barcelona Zoo to see if their veterinarian, Jesus Fernandez, could visit Alberto and conduct all of the relevant tests. Over the years, Barcelona Zoo has been instrumental in organizing all of the paper work and veterinary expertise to move 29 chimps from Spain to Monkey World. With the tests all clear and the work complete, Alberto was ready to move.

Once at the park, Alberto was settled into several of the bedrooms in the pavilions. The keepers had specially prepared the rooms with extra shelving, hammocks, fire hoses, and toys to keep the newcomer occupied. Alberto was over the moon, not only did he have more room to move about in, he had ropes to swing on and hammocks to lie in. Even so the most interesting aspect of his new home was the strangely familiar voices calling out to him from inside the same building! The bachelor group

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to get along with the other chimps straight away. We started by introducing him to Butch through the dividing mesh in the back bedrooms. Butch was scared as he had been separated from the nine other bachelors and was not feeling so confident on his own. Alberto, on the other hand, was very confident and with every hair standing on end he tried to attack Butch through the protective mesh. It was clear that while Alberto was very nice and gentle with people he was going to prove to be a thug and bully with the other chimps. We decided to try the introductions again but this time with only an 18-inch panel of mesh so that Alberto would have to sit calmly in one place to see the chimps next door. For the next introduction we put Rocky and Mogo alongside the newcomer. While Mogo was scared to death, Rocky was very interested and wanted to make contact with Alberto. Still, Alberto tried to be aggressive but it was not so easy with just a tiny window to fight through.

Alberto was moved into the paddocks where he could see other chimps. This was the first time he had seen the new boxes being carried into the building and they were as excited as Alberto was. But the introductions would have to wait until another day as Alberto had a broken finger on his right hand. The skin was the only thing that held the end of his finger in place but when meeting and playing with the other chimps, it could have been torn off. After a couple of days to settle in, our veterinarian, John Lewis, came to the park to give Alberto a second health check and to amputate his broken finger. The operation went well and after a couple of days recovery it would be time for Alberto's first meeting with other chimpanzees.

Over the past couple of weeks we have decided that Sammy is the best individual to start off with Alberto. Day after day we have been limiting the two boys to alongside each other for a few hours and Alberto's behaviour has gone calmer. After seeing Sammy for days the novelty and excitement has worn off and now Alberto is starting to think about and observe the hairy stranger next door. Alberto's rehabilitation is going to take a long time but this much we expected. Although his initial introductions have not been the most glorious, we are confident that he has a very nice and friendly character and that soon he will be as friendly to chimps as he is with humans.

As Alberto reached out to hold Allin's hand, we noticed his broken 'ring' finger.

On my last visit to Taiwan I had discussed with Pingtung's head keeper, Chantz, about the possibility of me returning to Taiwan to undertake various welding jobs to make the lives of the keepers both safer and easier. When I told Jim and Alison about this idea they got excited about making it all happen. Accompanied with a bag of tools, some materials, 20 galvanised water bowls, and a toothbrush, off I went to do my bit for the Pingtung Rescue Centre in Southern Taiwan.

The first job I undertook was to free and renovate a sliding door on one of the tiger enclosures. This door had been left unused in the open position for some time and needed cleaning, repositioning, lubricating, the handle welded, and a locking mechanism fitted. That was my first day gone!

One of the top priorities was to create a longer quarantine home for a female orangutan (Pongo pygmaeus) who had arrived at the centre not long before. When new individuals arrive at the centre it is critical that they are kept separate for quarantine until the veterinarians are able to run all the tests and get all the results to ensure that the new monkey or ape is healthy. Monkey World veterinarians, Dr John Lewis, has assisted the centre in setting up their quarantine protocol and I hope that we could create a new, larger and more interesting, environment for the short time that the new orangutan would be kept isolated. The quickest most practical option was to weld two large stainless steel cages together in a manner that would fit in the quarantine building. Second job done and Mac the orangutan appeared happy with the results!

Then it was time to tackle the main aim of my visit - to make certain areas safer for the keepers where adult male orangutans and tigers could reach through the cage and potentially grab unsuspecting keepers, vets, or visitors. After, some welding done and doors, steps needed to be upgraded to make them more secure and safe. This task occupied the majority of my stay.

I have now visited the Pingtung Rescue Centre on several occasions and each visit I am more and more impressed with the improvements that have been made at the centre. Pingtung Rescue Centre now has some of the best environments for captive gibbons and orangutans anywhere in the world. I wish that I could have spent more time in Taiwan as the keepers and I accomplished so much in a short time. And as always their hospitality was unparalleled.

Before (above) and after repairs (below)
More Atrocities from the British Pet Trade

Most of you will be aware that over the years Monkey World has been campaigning to stop the trade in primates as pets in the UK. All present hundreds of monkeys are kept in private homes across Britain and many suffer in terrible conditions while being kept in solitary confinement. Just so that someone can have an exotic pet. Every year Monkey World are called upon to rescue tiny number of individual monkeys (Saimiri sciureus), capuchin monkeys (Cebus apella), and common marmosets (Callithrix jacchus) from this hideous and unnecessary trade. This past winter has been no different with over the cold winter months, Monkey World was able to offer a new home and family for two very sad monkeys.

Our first story begins in January when we were contacted by a family that had not separated and was now home their young male capuchin monkey. TJ the monkey had been purchased from a small zoo in Kent where they were only six months old and had been lying on its mother. Zoo staff thought the baby and took the baby from her for $200.00. The zoo told the bewildered parents that “TJ would not get any bigger that was all right for him to live on her, and that he would only live for 10 years. All of this information was in a strange, marmoset-like voice. At six months old, more than double that age. The parents felt this information was far from the truth and that they knew it too. They built him an outside cage with a small house, of course. And then they wrote to us. This important story is one of the last chance this primate to find a new family and a new life. On January 19th Jim and Alicea Cramer went to visit a local TJ. It did not take long to listen to the story of the little monkey and get into his traveling box ready to move to his new home. TJ was staying with another family at the time and the family had already made arrangements to take him. They were very grateful for the help as they had been trying to find a new home for TJ for some time. They had already contacted several animal shelters and were told that they could not take him due to his size and behavior. They were very happy with the new family and the way they were taking care of TJ. They were also very grateful for the support and the help they had received from the local community.

A couple of weeks later we arrived at a small family home with a large garden and a big cage. The family was happy to have a new pet and was very grateful for our help. They had been trying to find a new home for their primate for some time and were very pleased with the new family. The monkey was now living in a large cage with a lot of space to move and play. The family was very happy with the change and the way the primate was being taken care of. They were also very grateful for the support and the help they had received from the local community.

Cercopan Rescue Centre, Nigeria

For many years, Monkey World keepers have been working overseas to help animals in need. This year, we had the opportunity to visit the Cercopan Rescue Centre in Nigeria to see the work that is being done there. The centre is located in the heart of the Cercopan forest, which is home to many species of primates, including the red colobus monkey. The staff at the centre work very hard to provide a safe and comfortable environment for the animals in their care.

During my recent visit, I had the opportunity to travel to the centre and see the work that is being done. The staff were very welcoming and helpful, and I was able to see the animals up close and learn more about the work they do. The centre is doing excellent work, and I was very impressed with the dedication and commitment of the staff. I would definitely recommend a visit to the Cercopan Rescue Centre to anyone who is interested in learning more about the work that is being done to protect and conserve these amazing animals. The centre is open to visitors and volunteers and I would encourage anyone interested in conservation to get in touch and see what they can do to help.

During my visit, I had the opportunity to meet some of the staff and volunteers working at the centre. They were all very knowledgeable and passionate about the work they do, and it was clear that they were dedicated to protecting these amazing animals.

One of the highlights of my visit was meeting the red colobus monkeys. These monkeys are beautiful and graceful creatures, and I was able to see them up close and learn more about their behavior and habits. The centre is doing excellent work to protect these animals and I was very impressed with the dedication of the staff.

I would definitely recommend a visit to the Cercopan Rescue Centre to anyone who is interested in conservation and I would encourage everyone to get involved and help protect these amazing animals.
Letter From the Editor

Over the past winter we have been very busy bringing in new monkeys and apes as well as ensuring that all the primates currently at the centre are given the best quality of life possible. As spring is here we are beginning to expand and redecorate many of the climbing frames in both the monkey and ape enclosures. Our remaining, elderly baboon macaques appeared a bit lost in their old enclosure so they have been moved down to the Macaque Rehabilitation Centre to live out their remaining days with three elderly stump-tailed macaques. This building has been a tremendous success and was instrumental in rehabilitating the 17 stump-tails that were rescued from a UK laboratory. We have just heard that the Macaque Rehabilitation Centre is the winner of the 2002 Animal Welfare Award from the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare.

Many thanks are in order for those who assisted with our monkey and ape rescue over the past couple of months. Depanna first alerted us to Alberto and asked if we would be able to give him a home. And to make it all happen, a very special thanks to Josep Ballus of the Generalitat and Maria Teresa Ablols of Barcelona Zoo for organizing all of the papers and cage arrangements in Spain. Josep and Maria Teresa have helped get 29 chimps to Monkey World and we are extremely grateful for their assistance. The zoo veterinarian, Jesus Fernandez, went out of his way to visit Alberto a couple of times and when it came time for the move it went like clockwork.

Many of our supporters have also been a great help over the winter months. We have received many generous donations including fruit, vegetables, bread, nuts, baby milk, vitamins, toys, blankets, and lession sacks. Several individuals have collected money in donation boxes while others have been very creative in their fund raising ideas. We have received donations instead of Christmas cards, birthday presents, or wedding anniversary presents, from smoking groups, from the sale of peacock feathers, from sponsored walks and biscuit sales, and from Christmas raffles. In particular we would like to thank James Stevenson who organised a sponsored bike ride to Italy, Ruth Turvitch who collected donations from sales of her paintings, Tasha Gibson who organised a cake sale, sweet challenge, and quiz to raise money to rescue more monkeys and apes, Neil Kermode and Debbie Mansfield who helped update our education signs, redecorate a marmoset enclosure, and put together fire-hose harnacks. Ryvita, Poole who donated a large batch of rice cakes (our gaze love them), The Square Fie, London who donates a percentage of their sales to Gordon, Joanne Ollier of MBNA who organised a community challenge, Riskstop Ltd who had a dress down day, The Royal Marines, Poole who donated cargo nets and rope, The Duke of Wellington’s Regiment, Stafford who donated fire hoses, and British American Tobacco and The Fellowship of Animal Lovers who gave generous donations. Over the past few months we have been saddened to learn of the loss of supporters such as Linda Fleming, Joan Taylor, Nellie Simpson, Joy Arnold, Lucy Hogan, AML Smith, Mary Parsons, Zoe Palmer, and Denise Upton. Our very best wishes are with their family and friends.

All of your help is greatly appreciated and we could not continue rescuing more of our closest living relatives without your assistance. I probably would not temp fate by making any announcements, however, we are all as happy here that I cannot stop myself. After a year of finger tapping and waiting patiently we are pleased to let you know that Rolo and Tuan are expecting! It is Rolo’s first baby so there are still some tense times to come, no doubt, but we have passed the first trimester and are expecting the new arrival at the end of August or the beginning of September. Fingers crossed!

Alison Cronin

How You Can Help

There are many ways in which you can help Monkey World – Ape Rescue Centre to rescue and rehabilitate more primates. All donations go into a 100% fund (we are not a registered charity) and...

NO ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS ARE REMOVED.

We are hoping to break ground on the new orangutan complex this summer so we are still trying to raise as much money as possible. There are several orangutans that were rescued by the Pingtung Rescue Centre that we would like to re-home, but we will not be able to bring them until the new complex is built. The new complex would be a state of the art ape building covering 8-acres. Please help us to make our dreams come true.

You can help by adopting a monkey or ape and you will receive a year’s pass to the park, a photo of your monkey or ape, a certificate, and the Ape Rescue Chronicle three times per year.

Help by donating goods such as fruit, vegetable, or bread. The primates also need vitamins and minerals such as Cod Liver Oil, Primrose Oil, Vitamin C, and Acidophilus. We can also use thick ropes and heavy-duty dog toys.

Establish a legacy for the long-term welfare of the primates and be remembered in our memorial garden.

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