While this edition of the ARC may be a bit late, I am happy that we are able to fill you in on the summer’s events that were topped by the opening of the Dao Tien Endangered Species Rescue Centre in Vietnam. Already the centre is making a difference to 10 new arrivals and we are now planning for Phase II – the semi-wild enclosures. Each step we take towards getting the gibbons back to the wild is very exciting! I am also working hard on two more international rescues. One, which you may remember is Coco from Mexico. We are in touch with the government authorities and are now just waiting for her paperwork to arrive before she is given a new home with others of her own kind at Monkey World.

Over the past few months many people have helped with our rescue and rehabilitation work by donating goods such as fruit, vegetables, herbs, nuts, dried fruit, seeds, garlic, bread, fresh leafy tree branches, vitamins, blankets, sheets, towels, curtains, hessian sacks, baskets, heavy dog toys, fire hose, un-used stamps, biscuits for the Primate Care Staff, supermarket vouchers, medical supplies, and hand made cards to be sold in the shop. We also receive many excellent photos that adoptive parents and/or visitors take at the park and send to us to use.

We have gratefully received several donations and some have raised money by organising collection tins, cake stalls, boot sales, card and poem sales, talent competitions, dress down days at work, dress up days at school, donations instead of birthday, wedding, or anniversary presents, and sponsored dinner parties, weight loss competitions, balls, as well as a monkey bar hanging competition and a sponsored abseil. All of your donations are put to use – thank you so much. In particular we would like to thank the Greggs Trust for matching funds from a payroll giving scheme, Sue Calendar for a poly tunnel, Lucy Walker for completing the 24 Peak Challenge for Tracy and Kai.

This has been a difficult year for so many people who have lost loved ones. Monkey World has also had another very sad lose of our own. Liam Kebane, who was a member of the Primate Care Staff for several years, will be greatly missed. Liam had a very caring nature and was an integral member of the Pavillion team. Our condolences also go out to Liam’s family and friends as well as those of Jennifer Wisskey, Anthony Topping, Peggy Barker, Charlotte Collins, Hazel Beasley, Muriel Crane, Pete Martin, Derrick Norton, Kathy Buckley, Betty Aye, Dorothy Lee, Carole Mealing, Lilian Whitehead, Robert Cotton, Alan Penny, Constance Bryant, Roy Scutchings, Richard Ryan, John Clark, Jean Dolamore, Kathleen Wheeler, and Maureen Hughes. They will be greatly missed.

**Shop Talk** by Jen Ferndell

The holiday season is fast approaching and it will soon be time again for presents under the tree! Stumped for gift ideas? This year we introduced cotton hooded tops in a selection of colours: fuchsia & baby pink for the ladies and black and olive green for the men. Sizes small to XXL, they are very reasonably priced at £24.99 each.

Charlie is featured on a new chunky mug & coaster set and is shown with his tongue poking out, a lovable rogue! Hsiao-ning is also featured on her own range, showing off her vivacious character, enough to put a smile on anyone's face. Great gifts for those with a passion for our primates; with prices starting from as little as £2.99. The 2009 calendar was launched in August & has proven to be very popular with our visitors. It features some striking images of the Park’s characters, including Bryan, Jerry and Lulu to name just a few. There are dates for your diary, primate birthday listings, and information about the Park, the Jim Cronin Memorial Fund & Monkey World’s work in Vietnam. This is a must have for all Monkey World supporters; thirteen months of pure bliss & at £8.99. Please call the gift shop on 01929 462537 (option 5) for help with any of these products or further information. We look forward to assisting you.

**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 – NO ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS ARE REMOVED. Monkey World is not a registered charity but we have just established a charity, FAST (the Endangered Asian Species Trust, Charity No.1115350) and we have now applied for charitable status for the Jim Cronin Memorial Fund (JCMF).

Please help us to continue our rescue and rehabilitation work and to keep Jim's memory alive. We are also continuing our efforts to raise money for the Pavilion team. Our condolences also go out to Liam’s family and friends as well as those of Jennifer Wisskey, Anthony Topping, Peggy Barker, Charlotte Collins, Hazel Beasley, Muriel Crane, Pete Martin, Derrick Norton, Kathy Buckley, Betty Aye, Dorothy Lee, Carole Mealing, Lilian Whitehead, Robert Cotton, Alan Penny, Constance Bryant, Roy Scutchings, Richard Ryan, John Clark, Jean Dolamore, Kathleen Wheeler, and Maureen Hughes. They will be greatly missed.

Adrian Wills, Peter Marlow, Sarah Pascoe, Liz Mandy, David Dancey-Wood and David Lewis, Liam’s friends as well as those of John Clark, Jean Dolamore, Kathleen Wheeler, and Maureen Hughes. They will be greatly missed.

Sue Calendar for a poly tunnel, Lucy Walker for completing the 24 Peak Challenge for Tracy and Kai.

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On July 12th the Dao Tien Rescue Centre for endangered primates was officially opened. It had been 7 years in the planning to get to this point but finally Jim’s dream was a reality – a rescue, rehabilitation, and release centre for endangered primates in Southern Vietnam. On the day, the ribbon was cut by the Directors of Monkey World, Pingtung Rescue Centre, Cat Tien National Park, and the Forestry Protection Department, reflecting the collaboration in this conservation project.

The center is located on a 68 hectare island, Dao Tien, that sits at the entrance to Cat Tien National Park CTNP on the Dong Nai river. At Dao Tien there is a 800m walk through the forest before you reach the centre which was designed to have low impact upon the surrounding environment. The centre has accommodation for permanent staff, an animal kitchen, a veterinary room, as well as 10 large cages; each of which is designed to house either a pair of gibbons or a small group of langurs. When gibbons or monkeys are confiscated, they are placed in rehabilitation cages while their condition is assessed, both physically and mentally. Specialist wildlife veterinarians have come from Pingtung Rescue Centre to give new arrivals health checks while training Vietnamese vets. All animals are checked to make sure they are fit for release and DNA tested to confirm species and the area from which they originated (ie central or southern Vietnam or Cambodia). The gibbons are paired with a suitable mate and introduced to forest foods while in the introduction cages.

Once the gibbons have become stronger and are paired with a mate we are planning to introduce the pairs into semi-wild enclosures on the island. This is Phase II of Dao Tien! The first semi-wild area is planned for the end of 2008 and will be for a nursery group.

This is a huge commitment and Monkey World’s first insitu conservation project, that is to say our first project in the country where the primates come from. Jim’s dream to conserve an endangered species before it faces extinction has come true and this is largely due to an amazing group of people. From Monkey World, Dr. Marina Kenyon is heading the team on Dao Tien and has finished her definitive study on the ecology of golden-cheeked gibbons in CTNP. Jez Hermer has been in charge of the agreements and construction of the centre, George Henderson did an amazing job supplying Dao Tien with essential utilities (and lost 3 stone while doing it!), and Wendy Dertam has cared for every new arrival on the island from the start. Prof Dr Kurtis Pei and his team from Pingtung Rescue Centre have conducted numerous field studies in CTNP, provided veterinary care for the confiscated gibbons, and have trained Vietnamese staff in husbandry and veterinary care, both in Vietnam and Taiwan. Of course none of this would have ever been possible without the support of the Vietnamese Government, the Forestry Protection Department, and the Kiem Lam.

The support of Cat Tien National Park has been solid from the beginning seven years ago. In particular Jim and I would like to thank the two Directors of this spectacular national park that we have worked with over the years, Mr Tran Van Thanh and Mr Tran Van Mui.

When I arrived at Dao Tien, the Vietnamese contractors had nearly completed the 800-meter concrete road from the dock to the centre, which curved its way through the trees and bamboo. We had hoped that the centre was going to be ready for handover from the building contractors but several issues needed our input regarding design of the cages, the main buildings, and site services such as electric, water, and communications. The detail of the primate cages needed to be finalized:

• Extra secure fixings were needed due to the size of the nopes being used inside the large playrooms and smaller bedrooms, but what fittings should be used?
• How was the bamboo roofing over the bedrooms to be held in place? The weather can be severe with high winds and lots of rain.
• How was the building going to be insulated? To what extent should the building be double skin?
• How was the bamboo roofing over the bedrooms to be held in place? The weather can be severe with high winds and lots of rain.

There was also some work to be done on the vet room and store building. All of these issues were clearly not going to be resolved in one trip lasting two weeks. Taking on such a large, serious project in a foreign country was never going to be easy and of course Vietnamese builders and contractors work with different materials, in a different climate, in a very different language, and of course under the rules of their communist government. The Vietnamese way of life is very different to ours. For example, working hours are 7am to 11am then 2pm to 7pm because of the midday heat. Even so, this 6’2” Scot managed to work with the guys and explain what we required based upon the animals and keeper’s needs. We arranged to return in four weeks to handover and move in to the centre.

Everything was ready when we returned, but now we had to figure out how to get all furniture and equipment from Saigon, to the banks of the Dong Nai River, across the river via a vehicle ferry, and then up the 800m road to the centre. It was at this point that we found out we had no electricity and therefore no water, as this was via a borehole and two electric pumps up to a 10ft water tower. Our colleagues from Cat Tien National Park supplied us with temporary power cables but as they were 1.5km across the river we still only had intermittent power.

This problem was compounded by the fact that it was dry season and the national electricity company, which is a hydro-electric power supply in Dong Nai province, routinely switches off electricity to rural towns and villages when water levels are low. The problem was solved with a large generator! It has been incredibly hard work but I have had an experience of a lifetime. I will never forget my time helping establish Dao Tien, it has given me a different outlook on life, and a few more friends.
We have 10 cages at the end of Phase I, and already within 2 months we have 10 rescued gibbons on site – females named Noi, Lat, Mei Lee and males named Ha, Da, Nha, Dao, Lee Lee, Sa Mee, and Tau. The centre will soon be full and the need to move on with the semi-free areas is pressing. I remember Jim considering at one stage that we may be building a centre that was not necessary. Was the trade in gibbons such a problem, as primates could no longer be easily found on street corners in and around Saigon? The answer to this is yes and it has not taken long to find this out. I am sad to report that the illegal trade is huge; many gibbons from the pet trade I documented 3 years ago have been replaced by new gibbons. We are finding more and more individuals that need our help, the trade is ongoing but behind closed doors.

Confiscation

A good example of the trade we are trying to stop occurred in Vung Tau seaside resort. In 2004 I found 2 gibbons here, now in 2008 we have found 9. What makes it so different this time round is that not only do we have a centre the gibbons can go to, but also the team I survey with, the Provincial Forestry Protection Department (FPD) of Vietnam. No longer am I alone on the back of a motorbike following up reports from tourists, now it is a team effort with the FPD Cat Tien National Park, Monkey World, and Pingtung Rescue Centre all working together.

So far in Vung Tau we have rescued 2 gibbons from terrible conditions. Sa Mee is an adult male who was found in a small cage 1m x 1.5m wearing a collar, with a cauliflower ear, presumably from being hit over and over again. Confined in his small cage, he shook like a leaf when our confiscation team approached (6 Kien Lam, police and our rescue team). After the police had won their battle over confiscation they moved away allowing the Vietnamese vet to gently hand sedate Sa Mee ready for his move to Dao Tien.

Rehabilitation

On arrival at Dao Tien it was late at night, so we left Sa Mee in his small secure cage overnight in the house, ready for release into his new home the following morning. All was well until the other residents of Dao Tien started their morning chorus, especially Lee Lee and Nha, two single males, calling whole heartedly to try and impress Mei Lee, a newly arrived female. Sa Mee was clearly shaken by the unfamiliar gibbons calling. He has been with us 1 week now and although makes happy eating noises, has not dared sing a note.

We hope all gibbons that come to Dao Tien can be released back into the wild but realistically this is not going to be the case. We do have a one pair Da and Lat who have already passed health checks, they have been genetically confirmed to this region, and show all behavioural signs that they are suitable for release. Within the next two months, at the start of the dry season, the plan is to get them into the trees for their next phase of rehabilitation, living in semi-wild, forested areas on Dao Tien.

Semi-Wild Enclosures

Any terrestrial animal, living in a Vietnamese forest, is in danger of being snared. Over the years I have seen stump-tailed macaques and douc monkeys caught in ground snares, yet luckily never a gibbon. Their totally arboreal lifestyle generally keeps them out of reach of the snares. When preparing the gibbons for life in the wild we have to discourage them from having any interest in humans or even coming to the ground as well as educating them about forest foods. We are working on a specially designed semi-wild area that will hopefully keep the gibbons up in the trees, encouraging them to lead more natural lives and thus significantly increasing their chances of survival in the wild.

Some individuals may not be suitable for release

Sa Mee’s biggest problem is his teeth. He has 2 broken canines that could cause him problems in the future. In the wild he will have to crack through the tough, outer skins of many forest fruits. Soon Arren, the vet from Pingtung Rescue Centre, will come to work on his teeth and only then will we have a better idea as to what Sa Mee’s future holds. Even if Sa Mee only makes it back to a semi-wild enclosure, he will still be very important to our work here at Dao Tien with education and awareness. The hunting of gibbons for tourism and the pet trade is one of the main threats to the survival of golden-cheeked gibbons in the wild.

We will eventually allow limited and controlled visits for school groups and tourists in order to educate people about the wildlife in the forests of Cat Tien and what they can do to help protect it. It is important however that the gibbons have limited access or interest in humans and therefore the paths for visitors are clearly marked out and limited. In the coming months the team on Dao Tien will also start a school outreach program where we will go out to schools in the area and have conservation and English lessons. It is a very exciting time for people and gibbons alike.

Caption goes here

Wild Life Monitoring Team

To succeed in our goal to release captive gibbons back to the wild, we have to be sure the forests are well protected and that we have a well trained monitoring team to follow the gibbons after release. We are putting this team together at the moment and working out what equipment they will need such as GPS handsets, binoculars, and uniforms. The monitoring team will need equipment and skills to follow the gibbons we release as well as following and monitoring neighbouring groups of wild gibbons.

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Caption goes here

EAST

The Endangered Asian Species Trust (UK Charity No.1115350) was established as a UK charity in 2006 in order to support the conservation of endangered Asian species. EAST has been supporting much of the wildlife monitoring in Cat Tien National Park as well as the building of the centre on Dao Tien. With your continued support we will be able to start on Phase II, the semi-wild enclosures, which is the next step towards the forest for the rescued gibbons of Dao Tien.
We are asking a lot from the gibbons at Dao Tien – they need to leave their previous lives in human hands behind and embrace a natural, free life in the forests of Vietnam. We need the gibbons to change the habits of a lifetime and to help them do this we need to change our ways of primate husbandry. This is why the way we work here is so different to that at Monkey World.

In their previous lives, most of the gibbons ate the same food as their previous owners. One of our females, Mai, has a taste for boiled pork and sweet milk, so much so that at first she would eat little else. Obviously this will be a problem and if she is to stay healthy in the wild Mai, and all the others, need to eat what the food providers know and start eating what the forests provide. A couple of our Vietnamese keepers have a good knowledge of forest foods and are able to collect leaves and fruit from the trees on the island to feed our growing number of rescued gibbons. We still have to buy food from the local market but when doing so we try to pick things that have a wild counterpart such as rambutans, longans and jack fruit. By doing so we hope the gibbons recognise their natural diet when they are introduced to forest areas.

Gibbons in the wild eat little and often, going from tree to tree picking ripe fruits – on Dao Tien we feed 5 times a day. First breakfast is a 7am banana feed – each gibbon gets three, which sets them up for the day. At 8am we start cleaning leaves and second breakfast. This meal has the really good stuff – on Dao Tien we feed 5 times a day. First breakfast is a 7am banana feed – each gibbon gets three, which sets them up for the day. At 8am we start cleaning leaves and second breakfast. This meal has the really good stuff: fruits, leaves and bananas after which everyone falls asleep.

Humans alike take a well earned rest to avoid the heat. Next on the menu is lunch and this is the most important meal of the day. Gibbons in the wild eat little and often, going from tree to tree picking ripe fruits – on Dao Tien we feed 5 times a day. First breakfast is a 7am banana feed – each gibbon gets three, which sets them up for the day. At 8am we start cleaning leaves and second breakfast. This meal has the really good stuff: fruits, leaves and bananas after which everyone falls asleep.

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At Monkey World the Primate Care Staff work hard to build a good relationship with each monkey or ape in their care, but on Dao Tien we do not want the gibbons to have this type of relationship with us. Our goal is to get the gibbons back into the forest and for them to stay high in the trees and be self-sufficient. For new arrivals we have to take things slowly and offer them reassurance as we withdraw from them. All contact with the gibbons is stopped – we do not hand out food, if they beg it is ignored, we swap keepers so no one person is a regular face, and we barely speak to the gibbons as we work. No relationship between non-human and human primates can form here on Dao Tien.

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At first but it is not too long before you realise that running out of detergent or food means an hour of your time to replace stocks as the nearest market is across the river and a long walk away. You soon come to think a month in advance about the supplies of disinfectant, gloves and other essential kit can only be found in the city which is a two day journey round trip. Careful planning and careful use of equipment soon becomes second nature. It may appear small, but the care of these rescued gibbons is very different than that of their Monkey World cousins.

Having been at the Park for nearly 18 months now, I thought it high time to give a general update on the Park and to let you all know about some of the projects we have planned for the next year and beyond.

The Website
Many of you will be familiar with our Monkey World website which is in need of a serious re-vamp. The re-design is under way but it is complex, costly, and time-consuming project. The new site will look fantastic and we should see the launch early in the New Year. Whilst a number of its new facilities the website will have a special forum for adoptive parents. We will also plan to capture as many of our supporter e-mail addresses as we can, so that we can send out focussed news bulletins etc. This will help keep every one up-to-date with developments at the Park. Don’t worry though... the ARC will continue and will always be designed specifically for our biggest supporters – our adoptive parents!

Orang-utan Nursery
Earlier this year we were very lucky to be approached by an incredibly generous benefactor who made a significant contribution to the building of a new orang-utan nursery building. The building work commenced in the second half of September and is scheduled to be complete before Easter. With our status as EAZA’s European orang-utan centre, we need to ensure that the level of care we provide for this species remains beyond compare. The existing building, though functional, is too small to continue to accept more orang-utans so the new nursery will have more bedrooms and a larger play area to provide orang-utans with a comfortable home where they can meet their new adopted family.

Jim’s Memorial and Vietnam
Jim’s Memorial is now complete. The official unveiling ceremony was on October 4th and the event marked a couple of important milestones for us. First, the completion of Steve Winterborne’s bronze statue of Jim and Charlie. The bronze now sits atop the beautiful Purbeck stones Alison had erected last year in Jim’s memorial garden. We’re sure you’ll all agree, the memorial is stunning. Secondly, the event also marked an important juncture in our overseas work. We were honoured to host Prof. Dr. Kurniadi Piai from Pangurang Raya Conservation Centre (Pahawang) and Mr. Thanh the Director of the Cat Tien National Park (Vietnam), as the two organisations working with Monkey World on the Dao Tien Endangered Species Rescue Centre. It was a poignant moment as we are planning for Phase 8 of the rescue, rehabilitation, and release program and also very apt to have it coinciding with the unveiling of Jim’s memorial. Dao Tien was Jim’s vision and his passion. What more fitting way to ensure his lasting legacy in that part of the world?

Other Park Developments
Alison, Jeremy and I have spent a great deal of time thinking about and planning the future of Monkey World. We must ensure that the Park is able to continue to respond as best it can to the ongoing needs of primates worldwide. There is an unending amount of work to do with regards to rescues and of course our rehabilitation and welfare commitments only grow as more needly primates arrive at the Park. But, whilst it’s important to concentrate on the here and now and the daily operational issues of running a primate rescue centre, we need to look forward. We are developing a short, medium and long term plan.

In the short term we need to continue to ensure that the primates receive the best possible care and be made to feel safe. We need to develop a series of new plans and strategies that will take them to the next 18 months, as we can afford. In the medium term we have to continue to develop the visitor aspects of the Park. We are drawing up plans for improving facilities for our disabled visitors and visitors with special needs. We are very fortunate to have Baroness Nicki Chapman assisting us in that respect, as she has a very real perspective on the issues that concern our disabled guests. We know we’re not perfect in this respect but we want to continue to improve. We are in the process of improving all of the signage around the Park. The new signs will be vibrant, informative and educational and will cater for visitors with impaired sight. This is a complex and costly task that will take many months to complete. We have plans to improve the visitor toilet facilities and also to re-vamp the catering and retail aspects of the Park. Our new retail manager, Jen Ferral, is working hard to source a more ethically produced range of product whilst our catering manager, Craig Tattersfield, is tasked with continuing to improve the menu and make it more organically oriented with an emphasis upon ethical, humanely reared, local produce. Again this is a costly business, and whilst absolutely the right things to do, we must ensure that we don’t have to pass on the additional costs to our customers, it will take some time.

In the long term we have to consider the future of Monkey World. We need to continue to develop the Park. The new signs will be vibrant, informative and educational and will cater for visitors with impaired sight. This is a complex and costly task that will take many months to complete. We have plans to improve the visitor toilet facilities and also to re-vamp the catering and retail aspects of the Park. Our new retail manager, Jen Ferral, is working hard to source a more ethically produced range of product whilst our catering manager, Craig Tattersfield, is tasked with continuing to improve the menu and make it more organically oriented with an emphasis upon ethical, humanely reared, local produce. Again this is a costly business, and whilst absolutely the right things to do, we must ensure that we don’t have to pass on the additional costs to our customers, it will take some time.

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The long term is the trickiest part of the equation. We recon that our primates have a long life expectancy: through… the ARC will continue and will always be designed specifically for our biggest supporters – our adoptive parents!

What's Happening at the Park? by Jez Hermer