

# ZOO NEWSLETTER



**DECEMBER  
2025**

**VOL II  
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**ARIGNAR ANNA ZOOLOGICAL PARK  
VANDALUR, CHENNAI - 600 048**

## Message from PCCF & CWLW

Warm wishes to Arignar Anna Zoological Park for its continuous efforts and consistent improvements in enhancing visitor amenities and the overall experience. The park has made commendable progress by introducing special attractions like the 7D Theatre and Elephant Feeding Programme, which have significantly enriched visitor engagement. Notably, December alone saw a substantial increase in footfall, reflecting growing public interest and the park's commitment to innovation and quality services. The new Internship Programme offers valuable hands-on exposure for young students, enabling them to contribute to research and deepen their understanding of wildlife conservation. These initiatives collectively strengthen the park's role as a leading ex-situ conservation center. I extend my best wishes for its continued success

**Thiru. Rakesh Kumar Dogra I.F.S.,**

**PCCF & CWLW**

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Cover page : Leopard Shakthi

## DIRECTORS CORNER

Arignar Anna Zoological Park continues to work with unwavering dedication to enhance visitor amenities, ensure animal welfare, and strengthen conservation education.

A particularly emotional moment for our team was when Sheru, the lion, stepped out to explore the safari and did not return to his enclosure for two nights. It was a period of great concern and sleeplessness for the staff, and we were immensely relieved when Sheru safely returned on his own. We also fondly remember Lion Raghav and Lioness Bhuvana, whose presence and contribution to the zoo remain unforgettable.

Demonstrating innovation and resource efficiency, the park successfully developed a zoo nursery at zero cost, and over 3000 saplings have already been planted across various locations in zoo. Zoo visitor facilities have been upgraded, and the zoo welcomed over 1.3 lakh visitors in December, reflecting its growing appeal among youngsters. Monsoon preparedness measures have been implemented across enclosures. Tiger MDT-37 Finds a Safe Haven in AAZP. veterinary care continues to be prioritized, and rescued star tortoises and many other animals have been rehabilitated and released into the wild, reinforcing our conservation commitment.

Zoo education remains a key focus area, with programmes designed to engage Gen Z learners. The Zoo Venture Programme has received overwhelming appreciation from teachers and students. Zoo Orientation Programme for visiting schools, Zoo Ambassador Winter Camps , and celebrations on important conservation related days are creating indelible marks in the minds of future citizens which would definitely lead to better environmental security of our country. After a long gap, the Zoo Internship Programme has also been revived, offering students valuable practical exposure.

With sustained commitment and progressive initiatives, Arignar Anna Zoological Park continues to evolve as a vibrant hub for animal conservation, education, and visitor engagement.

**Thiru. T.Ritto Cyriac I.F.S.,**

**Director**

**Arignar Anna Zoological Park**

# ZAT

## *21<sup>st</sup> Governing board meeting*

### **GB Meeting – Key Highlights**

The Governing board meeting of the Zoo Authority of Tamil Nadu (ZAT) was held on 06.10.2025 under the esteemed chairmanship of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. All members including the Hon'ble Minister for Forests and Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) attended the meeting and reviewed the functioning of zoos under ZAT.

During the session, Member secretary ZAT/ Director, Arignar Anna Zoological Park (AAZP) highlighted several significant achievements and initiatives undertaken by the zoos under ZAT. The Guindy Children's Nature Park (GCNP) has been remodelled to meet international standards, enhancing its role as a premier environmental education destination. AAZP has also been proudly ranked No. 1 in the Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) under the large zoo category, reflecting its commitment to excellence in animal care, conservation, and visitor services.

Infrastructure initiatives such as the rejuvenation of Otteri Lake, the upgradation of Kurubapatti Zoo, and the procurement of safari vehicles were also presented. Various measures taken to enhance visitor satisfaction, awareness value, sustainability and steps taken to improve accessibility and inclusivity was appreciated by the members of GB. The budget for the financial years (2022–2025) was also approved during the meeting.

During the meeting, the board approved to establishment of a Zoo Library that will integrate digital and physical resources. This facility aims to benefit students, researchers, and the public by promoting knowledge, learning, and awareness about wildlife and conservation.

The meeting reflected Tamil Nadu's continued dedication to strengthening zoo management, conservation efforts, and visitor engagement

# CONSERVATION BREEDING PROGRAMME

## Coordinating Zoo

Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Chennai serves as a conservation breeding centre designated by the Central Zoo Authority of India. This article highlights its role and progress as a coordinating zoo for two primates—Lion-tailed macaque (*Macaca silenus*) and Nilgiri langur (*Semnopithecus johnii*). AAZP is also participating zoo for conservation breeding of four mammals: Malabar giant squirrel (*Ratufa indica*), Indian wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*), Indian gaur (*Bos gaurus*), and Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris*). Although populations suitable for wild release have not yet been achieved, captive-bred individuals have been exchanged with other zoos



**Founder population**  
1:3:0:4

**Present Population**  
9:11:1:21



**Founder population**  
1:3:0:4

**Present Population**  
8:10:3:21

### Lion tailed macaques (*Macaca silenus*)

The programme began in 1983 with animals sourced from the Anamalai Hills. The off-exhibit breeding enclosures are planted with native tree species and kept away from disturbance.

- Total births: 75
- Exchanges: Individuals shared with several Indian zoos
- Current population: 21

Breeding continues successfully, and improvements are underway to enable future rewilding once a viable population is achieved.



### **Nilgiri Langurs (*Trachypithecus johnii*)**

AAZP currently maintains a healthy population in the display enclosure, with recent births indicating positive breeding outcomes. A dedicated off-exhibit enclosure is planned under the zoo's masterplan, and permissions have been sought to acquire individuals from the wild to strengthen genetic diversity. Collaboration with other zoos is also proposed.

Currently, a population of 8:10:3: 21 is maintained in the display enclosure and the latest birth of three offsprings happened last year.

### **Nilgiri Tahr (*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*)**

The Nilgiri Tahr is also one of the species identified for conservation breeding at Arignar Anna Zoological Park. However, considering the specific ecological requirements of this high-altitude dwelling specialist species, the Government of Tamil Nadu has launched Project Nilgiri Tahr to ensure conservation of this species in-situ and re-introduction to landscapes where this species existed before



Currently, the population of some species remains in a buffering stage. Once a viable number of appropriately aged male and female Lion-tailed macaques and Nilgiri langurs is established, a phased plan for soft release and post-release monitoring will be implemented. However, key challenges such as forming socially compatible troops, identifying suitable natural habitats, and effectively monitoring of released individuals must be addressed. Developing strategies to overcome these challenges will be essential before initiating rewilding efforts, ensuring the long-term success of conservation breeding programmes.

# AAZP Ticketing system

**100% CASHLESS TRANSACTION**

## Ticketing facilities



Scan the QR code at the entrance to book your tickets via WhatsApp chat



Use Our Self-Ticket Booking Kiosks – 5 Available for Quick and Easy Ticketing



Book your tickets in advance! Visit [tickets.aazp.in](https://tickets.aazp.in) for quick and easy online booking



Book tickets through the Vandalur Zoo Mobile App

Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur has achieved a major milestone by successfully implementing a 100% digital and cashless ticketing system, reinforcing its commitment to innovation, efficiency, and visitor convenience.

The cashless ticketing system has been fully operational since the second week of November 2025 and is supported through multiple platforms, including the official website, WhatsApp ticketing, self-service kiosks, QR code-based entry, and POS machines. This multi-channel approach has significantly reduced queue times and improved ease of access for visitors.

The effectiveness of the system was clearly demonstrated during the Pongal holiday season, one of the busiest periods for the zoo. Despite welcoming over 1.2 lakh visitors, the park ensured smooth entry and crowd flow without disruption. To further support visitors during peak hours, free Wi-Fi services were extended across the zoo, enabling seamless access to digital tickets and preventing mobile network congestion and signal-related issues.



The successful rollout of this initiative was made possible through the active cooperation of visitors, who readily adapted to the digital ticketing process. The park also extends heartfelt appreciation to its frontline staff, whose dedication, adaptability, and teamwork ensured efficient operations and visitor assistance throughout the transition.

This achievement reflects the spirit of excellence that drives Arignar Anna Zoological Park in its mission to integrate digital innovation with quality public service, setting a strong foundation for future technological advancements.

## Sheru's Day Out – An exploration into wild



Sheru, a six-year-old young and vibrant lion, stepped into the safari area for the very first time on 3rd October at 9.30 a.m. He was opened up from his enclosure into the expansive 20-hectare safari landscape, a natural bush forest designed to encourage instinctive movement and territorial exploration. As he started actively exploring his territory the crown prince gained confidence

As the day progressed, he ventured boldly to new territories and moved deep into the woods. The prince was excitedly feeling his kingdom. The park started sensing danger. When he did not return to the enclosure by evening, concern increased. Understanding the importance of animal safety and sensation that may create the zoo authorities immediately initiated a search and monitoring operation.

A 20-member search team was swiftly formed, headed by Forest Range Officer Ms. M. Pradeepa, co-piloted by Forester Mr. Vasantha Priyan, and with technical support from Veterinarians and Biologists. Night patrolling was intensified, and special attention was given to inspecting and strengthening the compound walls to ensure complete security night vision drone were also deploy. After thorough checks, it was confirmed that Sheru remained well within the safari area.

## Panic in Vandalur as lion goes out of sight from zoo

T.SUDHEESH,  
P.A. JEBARAJ / DC  
CHENNAI, OCT. 5



On Sunday, pugmarks were found near the compound wall within the safari area, and the rake marks on its movement path. This indicated that the lion is currently exploring the environment, which is normal and expected behaviour for a young lion, the zoo authorities said.

The southern and western suburbs of Chennai were plunged into panic after a five-and-a-half-year-old male lion, Sheru, went missing from the lion safari area of Vandalur Zoo, forcing the officials to close the

area on Sunday.

According to the zoo officials, the lion has been out of their radar for the past three days.

The zoo authorities said in a release that the lion was released into the safari

area on a routine exercise on Friday but it did not return as usual. On Saturday, a search team sighted the lion inside the safari area. On Sunday, pugmarks were found near the compound wall within

the safari area, and the rake marks on its movement path. This indicated that the lion is currently exploring the environment, which is normal and expected behaviour for a young lion, the release

said.

The zoo authorities installed 10 more camera traps and formed five teams to search for the lion. Search is being carried out with the help of drones during day time and thermal imaging drones during night in the safari area, 90 per cent of which has thick vegetation.

"Such instances (of lions going missing) have occurred in the past as well. Young lions, by nature, tend to wander and explore their surroundings when newly introduced. In earlier occurrences, such lions have safely returned to their night shelters within two to three days," the statement said. ■ P4



By the next morning on 4th oct, the situation drew public and media attention, with reports suggesting that a lion was "missing" from the zoo.

Despite the sensational headlines, the ground teams continued their work with professionalism and calm precision.

Advanced monitoring methods were deployed on 4th October. A thermal drone camera was used to scan the dense vegetation, and selective bush clearing was carried out using a JCB to improve visibility. During this operation, Sheru was successfully spotted, calm and healthy, resting within the safari landscape.

On 5th October, 10 camera traps were installed at strategic locations inside the safari area. Finally, on the following day 6.10.2025 at around 4.00 p.m., Sheru on his own accord returned to the night shelter, marking the peaceful conclusion of his first safari experience.



Sheru's behaviour was natural and expected—young lions often take time to explore and familiarize themselves with new territories. His brief adventure was not a cause for alarm, but rather a joyous milestone in his development. Sheru was safe, content, and clearly enjoying his newfound freedom.



Search operation team



Sheru back to enclosure

This episode stands as a fine example of effective wildlife management, teamwork, and scientific monitoring, ensuring animal welfare while allowing natural behaviour to unfold.

Sheru is happy – and his first safari exploration will remain a memorable moment for both the lion and Zoo members.



## Establishment of 'Zero' cost nursery

The zoo nursery, which was earlier focused only on plants for the Butterfly Garden and ornamental landscaping, has now expanded its vision. Arignar Anna Zoological Park introduced the concept of raising forest and fruit-bearing tree species to strengthen ecological balance and support animal nutrition, using only in-house resources.

Marking a significant step towards self-sustainability, Range-III, responsible for feed and fodder management, established a zero-cost nursery. Seeds collected locally, cuttings from existing trees, manure from the Solid Waste Management Unit, and nutrient-rich topsoil collected during percolation pond desilting were utilized.



# Enhancing visitor experience

Visitor  
amenities



## UPGRADING AMENITIES

### Modern toilets

Arignar Anna Zoological Park has constructed four new toilet complexes, including two toilets exclusively designed for differently-abled visitors. In addition, two new toilet facilities and two existing toilet blocks are currently under renovation to further enhance hygiene, accessibility, and visitor comfort



### Baby care rooms

The baby care rooms have been completely renovated, with proper seating arrangements, improved interiors, and child-friendly wall décor, ensuring a comfortable environment for parents and infants.



### Rest sheds

A total of nine rest sheds have been renovated with enhanced seating arrangements and provision of power points, improving visitor comfort and convenience across the park



## New Arrival at AAZP- Tiger MDT-37 Finds a Safe Haven



We welcomed Tiger MDT-37, a majestic male tiger, at our Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. The tiger was safely captured by Mudumalai Tiger Reserve authorities in Masinagudi, Nilgiris, following NTCA guidelines. Upon examination, our veterinary team found that MDT-37 had lost a canine tooth, crucial for hunting in the wild. Given the risks, he'll stay with us for care and treatment. Our team is providing top-notch management and welfare support.

## Monsoon preparedness and management

Arignar Anna Zoological Park, spread over 602 hectares, faces hot summers and heavy monsoon rains, often intensified by cyclonic conditions.



Open enclosures have been fitted with shade nets to reduce rainwater entry, while drainage systems, moats, and trenches have been cleared and desilted to ensure smooth water flow. Enclosures with large ponds, such as those for crocodiles and hippopotamuses, are equipped to handle surplus water effectively.

Closed reptile enclosures have been provided with light bulbs to maintain warmth during cold and low-sunlight days. Loose tree branches have been pruned to prevent damage during storms, and portable pumps are kept ready to remove stagnant water, reducing health risks to animals. Emergency materials, including sandbags and fencing, are stocked, electrical lines are insulated, and animal diets are adjusted for the season. With adequate feed storage in place, the zoo remains fully prepared to manage the challenges of the monsoon and protect both its animals and landscape.

## In Memory of a Pride Leader “Lion Raghav”



Arignar Anna Zoological Park mourns the loss of Lion Raghav, a smart and handsome male lion of the AAZP Safari who left a lasting impression on visitors and staff.

Born on 26.12.2002 to Ramesh and Jaya, along with his siblings Kavitha, Sasi, and Ragul, Raghav grew into a majestic and confident lion. He played an important role in engaging safari visitors and was later shifted to the zoo moat.

Raghav sired offspring with Kavitha, including Jhansi, Veera, Kala, Neela, and Mala, significantly contributing to the genetic legacy of AAZP. Known for his calm temperament and obedience, he shared a strong bond with his keepers. Among his simple joys, chicken remained his most favourite food. He will be remembered for his majestic presence and invaluable contribution to the zoo

## In Memory of “Lioness Bhuvana” – A Powerful Hunter of AAZP

Bhuvana, a 16-year-old lioness, was born on 24 March 2009 to Ramesh and Kavitha, along with her siblings Padmanabhan and Shiva. She was truly the Pride Queen of the Zoo Safari, admired by visitors and staff alike.

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Renowned for her exceptional hunting skills, Bhuvana displayed the true spirit of the wild even within the safari landscape. While chicken and liver were her most preferred diet, she instinctively hunted pigeons, peacocks, and hares that entered her safari area reflecting her sharp instincts and natural wisdom.

Her majestic presence, confidence, and grace left an unforgettable impression. Though she is no longer with us, the memory of Bhuvana—the Pride Queen—will remain etched in our hearts forever.

## Synchronized wetland bird census



A statewide synchronized bird census was conducted on 27th and 28th December 2025. A nine-member team from the Zoo surveyed the Otteri Lake area within the zoo premises using the point count method. Covering about 1 km on foot and observing from lake bund vantage points, birds were recorded over two hours (06:30–08:30 AM) using binoculars and cameras. A total of 472 birds belonging to 35 species were recorded. Commonly observed species included Black-headed (White) Ibis, Eurasian Spoonbill, and Little Cormorant. Rare and seasonal migrants such as the Gull-billed Tern and Bronze-winged Jacana were also sighted. Forest birds like the Paradise Flycatcher, Rose-ringed Parakeet, and White-browed Wagtail were recorded, with nesting activity observed in Darters and Spoonbills.



### Endemic to the Western Ghats

The Nilgiri tahr is native to the southern Western Ghats and it is a unique symbol of the region's rich biodiversity.

### Indicator of rich biodiversity

It represents the ecological richness of Tamil Nadu's mountain ecosystems.

### Cultural significance

Featured in 2,000-year-old Sangam literature, the Nilgiri tahr reflects a deep bond with Tamil heritage.

### Ecological role

The species is crucial for maintaining processes in the fragile shola–grassland ecosystem, one of the world's most threatened habitats.

### Conservation importance

An endangered species, its status as the state animal strengthens conservation and awareness efforts

### Official recognition

Due to its ecological and cultural value, Tamil Nadu declared the Nilgiri tahr as its state animal in 1988

## INTRODUCTION OF 7D THEATRE



With over 200 shows conducted, the 7D theatre continues to attract visitors.



## Elephant feeding

@4 PM every day



# ZOO VETERINARY CORNER

## Management of an extensive excavating neck wound in a Northern Grey Langur

Northern grey langurs (*Semnopithecus entellus*) are highly social, troop-living primates and are prone to infighting during territorial disputes, establishment and maintenance of dominance hierarchies, competition for food and mates and due to certain external stressors under captive conditions. Such aggressive encounters can result in varying degrees of injury, which could be fatal. Post-surgical wound management in non-human primates poses a significant challenge, as these animals frequently interfere with sutures, leading to wound dehiscence and subsequent tissue ablations.

An adult male Grey langur was reported with an extensive neck wound following an infighting incident. Initially, the animal was isolated in a night cell and assessed remotely. The wound appeared excavating in nature, involving the cervical region with exposure of major blood vessels, airway structures, oesophagus and cervical musculature, thereby posing a serious risk to the animal's survival. Considering the potential risks associated with handling stress, anaesthesia, anaerobic infection, abscess formation, suture tensioning and the animal's tendency to disrupt sutures, the wound was left open without surgical closure and managed by healing through secondary intention.



Excavating wound on the neck of Grey langur



Langur with scar on its neck after complete healing

The treatment protocol consisted of parenteral long-acting antibiotics, anti-inflammatory and antiparasitic medications administered under physical restraint in a squeeze cage during the initial phase, followed by a course of oral antibiotics. The wound was lavaged daily with povidone iodine diluted in normal saline to reduce microbial load and facilitate healing. Over a period of one month of intensive care, the animal showed progressive wound contraction and epithelialization, resulting in complete healing. The animal recovered uneventfully and is in the process of socialization with the troop.

## Management of an Upper Eyelid Tear in an Asiatic Dhole

The Asiatic dhole (*Cuon alpinus*), commonly known as the “whistling dog” or “red dog,” is an endangered canid native to Asia. Socially complex and highly cooperative, dholes often experience intra pack aggression, particularly during estrus. Such conflicts can occasionally result in traumatic injuries requiring veterinary intervention. An adult female dhole presented with a tear in the upper right eyelid, sustained during infighting within the pack during estrus. The injury was characterized by lacerated tissue requiring surgical repair.

Chemical restraint was employed to safely handle the animal. The tear tissue was sutured to restore eyelid integrity. Parenteral antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs were administered immediately post procedure. A course of oral antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication was continued to prevent infection and reduce inflammation. The wound healed successfully, with complete apposition of the tear tissue achieved uneventfully after three weeks.



Dhole with tear in the upper eyelid



Sutured wound

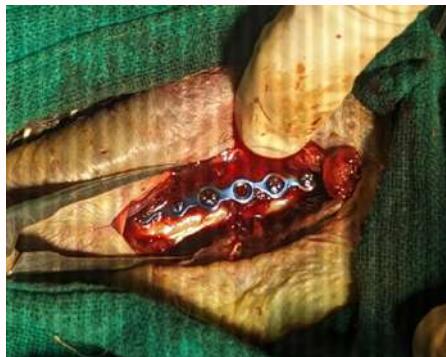


After complete healing

## Titanium Plate and Nail for Surgical Fixation of Wing fracture in a free range Pea hen

Arignar Anna Zoological Park not only cater the veterinary needs of captive animals but also plays considerable role in the care and well-being of free range wild animals. A pea hen was rescued by Chennai circle staff with inability to fly. On examination it

Intra-operative picture showing Ulnar fracture fixed with titanium plate was diagnosed for complete fracture of left radius ulna and the same was confirmed with radiography. Under injection anesthetic induction and gaseous anesthesia maintenance, the fracture was fixed with nailing with 2 mm K-wire and titanium plating. This is one the rigid plate and is used as the pea fowls are large and heavy birds.



Intra-operative picture showing  
Ulnar fracture fixed with titanium plate

A wing bandage was applied and the bird was housed in a enclosure with restricted height and flight space. The K-wire was removed after 2 months. Then gradually allowed to flap the wing over three months of time. A wing bandage was applied and the bird was housed in a enclosure with restricted height and flight space. The K-wire was removed after 2 months.

Then gradually allowed to flap the wing over three months of time. A bird without wing cannot live as a bird. Timely rescue, prompt intervention and appropriate care made it possible to give another chance in its habitat.



Radiograph showing healed fracture  
of Ulna fixed with plate and rod

## Releasing of rescued Indian Star Tortoise

The Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*), a threatened species native to India and Sri Lanka, inhabits diverse ecosystems such as deciduous forests, grasslands, and semi-desert regions. In September 2024, confiscated tortoises received from Chennai International Airport were stabilized and rehabilitated at Arignar Anna Zoological Park.

During the stabilization period, they were closely monitored for health conditions and feeding behavior. Some animals became lethargic and subsequently died. All animals were administered parenteral fluids, multivitamins and prophylactic antibiotics.

During rehabilitation, minerals and vitamins supplements were administered primarily to support overall health and promote strong shell growth through diet. Plants such as prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia spp.*), Coatbuttons (*Tridax procumbens*), Hibiscus and Veldt grape (*Cissus quadrangularis*) were provided to the tortoises to mimic their natural diet within the enclosure. Following successful rehabilitation, required permissions were acquired as per the existing rules and regulations, to release into suitable natural habitat. Animals were released with temporary markings in the Pulikundram forest range, which had multiple water bodies and suitable vegetation such as Prickly pear cactus, Coatbuttons, veldt grape, conkerberry (*Carisa spinarum*) and Puncture Vine (*Tribulus terrestris*) which are plants species available in the forest.

# ZOO SCHOOL

## Winter Zoo Ambassador programme

The AAZP Zoo Ambassador Programme is a flagship initiative in India's zoo education sector, designed to inspire and empower young conservation advocates. The Winter Zoo Ambassador Camp, conducted during the month of December, was organized across three camps and witnessed the enthusiastic participation of over 170 students from more than 50 schools and colleges. Students ranging from Class V to college level took part in this comprehensive zoo education and awareness programme.

The two-day fast-track Zoo Ambassador course provided participants with in-depth exposure to wild animal knowledge, conservation awareness, ecological significance, and the importance of each species within the ecosystem. The programme emphasized building a strong conservation foundation among students, using zoo animals as living representatives of their wild counterparts to strengthen understanding and emotional connection to wildlife conservation.



Through this approach, the Zoo Ambassador Programme fosters responsibility, empathy, and long-term commitment toward the protection and conservation of wildlife and natural ecosystems. Each participant received a programme kit, a Zoo Ambassador certificate, an official Zoo Ambassador badge, and a Zoo Passport offering 10 free visits to the zoo.

The programme received an overwhelming response from both students and parents, reflecting its impact and success.



## Zoo Orientation Programme

The zoo has revamped its Zoo Orientation Programme for visiting school groups to enhance learning, awareness, and responsible visitation. The programme introduces students to the role of modern zoos in wildlife conservation, education, and animal welfare. Through interactive sessions, students learn about animal behaviour, habitats and the importance of species conservation. Students were given an on-the-spot quiz to check their knowledge of wildlife and were appreciated with medals



## **Zoo Venture Programme- Government school**

Since its inception, 25 batches of the Zoo Venture Programme have been successfully conducted over the last six months. Students from 28 different schools, including those from remote areas travelling 50-70 km, have participated in the programme. In total, over 1,250 students from various government schools and government homes have benefited from this initiative.

The sessions have proved to be eye-opening awareness programmes for both students and teachers, and the programme has received overwhelming appreciation from teachers and parents.

The programme does not conclude with awareness creation alone; at the end of each session, students' levels of understanding are assessed through interactive questions, and reward prizes are distributed. This approach motivates students to listen attentively during class hours and helps them understand the core Knowledge about wildlife and its essential of its conservation.



**AAZP Zoo School aims to connect people with nature, foster learning and understanding of wildlife, help it to thrive, and promote responsible, educated human-animal interactions.**



## Wildlife Week Celebration

On the occasion of wildlife week 2025 AAZP ,Zooschool organised series of engaging events and contests aimed at spreading awareness about wildlife conservation. The celebration includes awareness for school children, outreach activities, an online poetry contest, morning bird identification and tree walk, animal keeper talk series, drawing and poster making contest. Over 1200 participants enthusiastically took part in wildlife week events organised in zoo.



## Internship Programme for Science graduates

Arignar Anna Zoological Park (AAZP) has introduced an Internship Programme for science graduates after a long interval. This programme aims to bridge research gaps and promote scientific studies and findings related to wildlife, conservation, and biodiversity.

Students from disciplines such as Zoology, Wildlife Biology, and Botany will particularly benefit from this programme. Interested students are required to submit an official request letter addressed to the Director, AAZP, along with a detailed proposal outlining their area of interest and proposed work.

The internship will be permitted only after obtaining the approval of the Director, AAZP, and with proper permission from the PCCF & CWLW. Applicants must submit their request at least one month prior to the proposed internship period for necessary processing and approvals.

### Student activity

#### IDENTIFY WHO'S EYE ?



# ZOO KEEPER STORY



I am Ramamoorthy, an Animal Caretaker who has been part of the zoo since 1982, joining as a daily wage worker when the park itself was just beginning. Over the years, the zoo became more than a workplace—it became a part of my life.

My journey took me through many sections of the park, from the entrance and veterinary hospital to fodder plots, crocodile enclosures, the Vedanthangal aviary, and the deer safari. In recent years, I have been serving as a gate watchman at the Lion Safari, one of the most loved areas of Arignar Anna Zoological Park.

Over the years, my work took me through many corners of the park. I served at the entrance, in the store section, the veterinary hospital, transit facilities, fodder plots, crocodile enclosures, the Vedanthangal aviary, and the deer safari. Each place taught me something new, and each animal left a memory. In recent years, my responsibility has been as a gate watchman at the Lion Safari, one of the most cherished areas of Arignar Anna Zoological Park.

The Lion Safari has always held a special place in my heart. During the 1990s, nearly 20 lions lived there as a single pride, roaming freely across the vast safari landscape. The area was carefully looked after by Mr. Kuppan and Mr. Bhuvaneshwari, animal keepers now retired whose long years of service and dedication ensured the animals were healthy, calm, and well cared for.



The Lion Safari holds special memories for me. In the 1990s, around 20 lions lived as a single pride, roaming freely across the vast safari area under the dedicated care of Mr. Kuppan and Mrs. Bhuvaneshwari (retired).

A watchtower near the safari gate still reminds me of those days, when a huge bell guided the lions' daily routine. Every morning at 9:00 a.m., they entered the safari area. As the sun began to set, at the bell would ring. Hearing its sound, the entire pride would slowly and calmly return together to the holding yard, without fear or force.

These moments revealed a rare harmony between animals, caretakers, and nature—memories I carry with me every day at the Lion Safari gate.

## Visitor Trails: Reviews & Experiences

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**Mr. G. Kamraj, Dr. S. R. Chandramouli**

#### Range Team

**Mr. R. Vignesh Babu, Forester**  
**Mr. Chandramohan, FG**

We visited the vast Arignar Anna Zoological Park with family, and it turned out to be an absolutely wonderful day – filled with excitement, learning, and lots of wildlife magic.

The star of the visit was definitely the Bengal Tiger. Those sharp, piercing eyes and magnificent stripes left us speechless. Spotting the rare white tiger was another treat – truly a once-in-a-lifetime moment.

The lion enclosure was equally impressive; the kings of the jungle were seen relaxing under the sun, looking every bit as royal as expected.

The Indian bears were adorable and playful, entertaining everyone around. The giraffes, with their gentle eyes and towering grace, quickly became a family favorite. Watching them stroll around felt mesmerizing.

We also enjoyed the colorful charm of the peacocks, especially when they displayed their vibrant feathers – absolutely stunning! The cassowaries, with their unique helmets (casques), added an interesting twist to the visit.

The entire zoo is spread across a huge, green landscape with naturalistic enclosures that make the animals feel at home. It's clean, well-maintained, and perfect for families looking to spend a fun, educational day in nature.

Highly recommended for wildlife lovers, kids, and anyone wanting a refreshing break from the city!

### Yaduveer Singh

Arignar Anna Zoological Park (Vandalur Zoo) – a day well spent! I visited this sprawling zoo with my family, and we had a roaring time (pun intended).

The highlight was definitely the Bengal tiger – those piercing eyes and majestic stripes left us in awe. We also spotted a rare white tiger, which was a treat. The lion enclosure was impressive, with the kings of the savannah lazing in the sun.

The Indian bears were adorable, playing around. The giraffes were another favorite, with their long necks and gentle eyes. We enjoyed watching them roam.

The peacocks were a sight to behold, spreading their vibrant feathers in a stunning display. The cassowari, with their unique casques, were an interesting sight.

The zoo is spread over a vast area, with plenty of greenery and naturalistic enclosures. It's a great place to spend a day with family and learn about wildlife conservation.

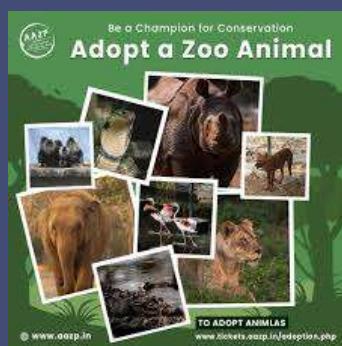
Overall, a fun and educational experience! 4.5/5 stars. Highly recommended for families and wildlife enthusiasts!

### Latha Ramachandran

Visited Arignar Anna Zoological Park (Vandalur Zoo) recently and it was an amazing experience! The zoo is huge, very well maintained, and has a great variety of animals. We really enjoyed the lion safari and deer safari totally worth it! 🐾 🐾

Yes, the ticket prices felt a bit on the higher side, but considering the size and upkeep of the zoo, it's completely justified. A perfect place to spend a day with family or friends. Full paisa wasool experience! 🌟

### Bikash



### Animal adoption

850+ adopters

Most adopted animal – Indian Cobra

Across 100 species

6.62 lakhs



### Visitor footfall 2025

10 lakhs adults, 2 lakh children

25000+ Government schools students

1500+ foreign visitors

13 lakhs visitors



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