

Let's get behind Norwich Fashion Week

The return of Norwich Fashion Week for a fourth term is set to give the whole city a boost.

It will be especially welcomed by retailers who have had a tough few years with recession, high rent and rates, and a lack of consumer spending cited as some of the reasons for many shop closures.

Shoppers and fashion lovers from outside of Norwich are expected to flock to the city for the event.

And it's also a chance to help celebrate Norwich as a top-10 place to shop and as a centre of creativity.

The week also aims to raise the profile of Norwich's growing fashion design industry.

Integral to this is the increasing number of up and coming fashion designers studying fashion and textiles at City College Norwich and the fashion degree at Norwich University of the Arts.

The founder of Norwich Fashion Week, Louise Lace, believes that the diversity of fashion in Norwich and Norfolk is the reason why the week is such a success, and retailers are being urged to decorate their shop windows with a fashion edge to make the most of the occasion.

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It's a stock take

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From counting thousands of cockroaches and hundreds of millipedes to recording two baby tamarins, 40 flamingos and a pride of lions – it is not a job for the every day bean counter.

But at two Norfolk and Suffolk zoos animal experts have become stock-list takers as they catalogue how many creatures they have in their enclosures and tanks.

Banham Zoo, near Diss, and Africa Alive at Kessingland, near Lowestoft, are taking part in a stock take, which means trying to count thousands of insects, work out how many birds are in aviaries and see how many curious meerkats there are in their enclosure.

Both zoos have embarked on their annual survey of the 62 different species they keep at the sites, which are owned by Martin Goymour.

From giraffes, lions, camels, rhinos and Siberian tigers, to individual snails, cockroaches and spiders, every creature must be accounted for in order to renew the zoo licences for both sites.

The data is also sent to the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the

Monkey business: Clare Collins of Banham Zoo checks the White Faced Saki Monkeys during the annual stock take. PHOTOS: SIMON PARKER AND NICK BUTCHER



International Species Inventory System, in order to help track conservation programmes.

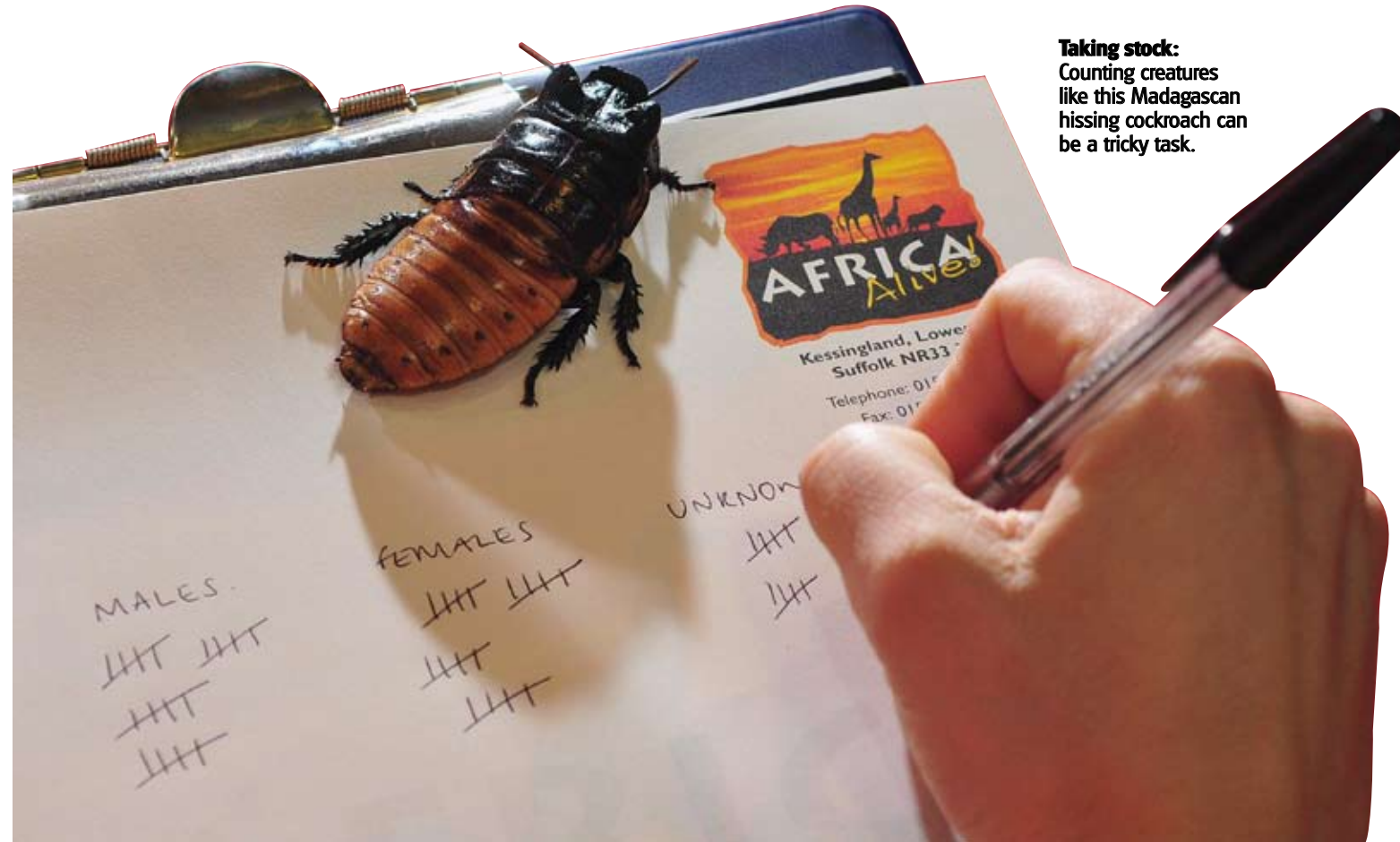
Zoo animal record keeper at Banham Zoo, Clare Collins,

said: "There tend to be really easy animals, like the giraffes and seals, but with things like the cockroaches, we've counted 1,458, so to count them every

day would be quite a big challenge. Doing it once a year means we can keep a handle on what we've got.

"It's also good for us to keep

Taking stock:
Counting creatures like this Madagascan hissing cockroach can be a tricky task.



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with a difference

Young Norfolk politicians set to have a say



Tall order: Sarah Kelly counting the Giraffes at Africa Alive as part of the annual stock take.

Three young Norfolk politicians will meet their senior counterparts at County Hall today to present the findings of a national poll aiming to discover which issues most concern young people.

Members of the UK Youth Parliament (MYPs) Billie Bell, representing Norwich North, Annie Baldwin, for Broadland, and Jess Barnard, for North West Norfolk, will be discussing the recent Make Your Mark ballot with members of Norfolk County Council's ruling cabinet. The MYPs will be making recommendations based on their findings.

A total of 2,737 young people from across Norfolk voted in last year's national poll, which gave those aged 11-18 the chance to choose the top five issues they consider to be the most important to them.

Making public transport cheaper, better and accessible for all topped the poll with 469 votes, followed by getting ready for work in second place, with 408 votes, an equal minimum wage for all, with 345 votes, marriage for all with 236 votes and better 16-19 bursaries, with 218 votes.

Cheaper bus travel was also a high priority for the Norfolk MYPs, who assisted the county council in persuading bus companies to offer reduced fares to young people aged 16-19. This was implemented in September last year. A delegation of Norfolk's MYPs travelled to Westminster in November to debate the top five national issues in a special House of Commons sitting chaired by MP John Bercow.

an eye on other species like the red squirrels because they don't tend to come and see us, so we'll get some tasty treats and wait until a warmer day and try to lure them out.

"It's good for the animals who might not come out and who we don't see because we can check on them and check their weight and things like that."

Since its last audit, notable highlights have included breeding successes for the zoo's Pallas' cats, which raised four kittens in April, while the last additions to the stock count were twin emperor tamarin babies, born on Christmas Eve.

Among the 28 species and animals Africa Alive staff had to count were 800 Madagascan hissing cockroaches, a small army of Tanzanian red-legged millipedes, about 50 spiny mice, seven royal pythons, 40 greater flamingos, 19 ring tailed lemurs, 21 meerkats, seven lions and five giraffes,

Among the new additions in this year's survey were three fennec foxes, born in June, and a

Exotic: The black-cheeked lovebirds at Africa Alive. Right, a spiny mouse.



porcupine born in August.

Sarah Kelly, lead qualified keeper at Africa Alive, said: "The count is important as we get to know exactly how many animals we

have. Of course we know everyday how many large animals we have, such as lions, giraffes and the meerkats. But it lets us know how many cockroaches, millipedes and mice we have in captivity and it also gives us the opportunity to

weigh them and sex them."

Keeping the records up to date is not only key to the annual inventory, but also to conservation as together the zoos hold 62 different species which are part of managed breeding programmes.

The coordinators of the programmes, who include zoo experts from around the world, will then contact the animal record keeper for their annual inventories and, based on this, can advise on where best to send animals and which ones should breed in the coming year.



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