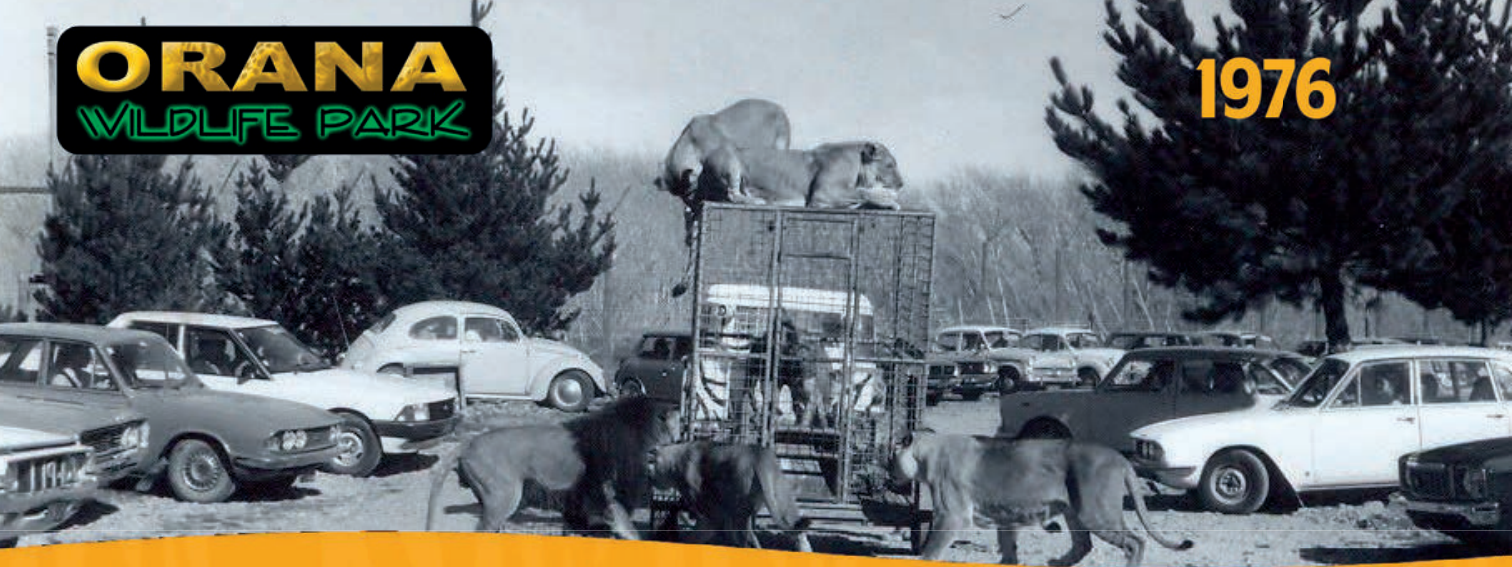


**ORANA**  
WILDLIFE PARK

**1976**



**CELEBRATING 40 YEARS**

**2016**





# 40 YEARS IN REVIEW

**Welcome to this souvenir newsletter that celebrates Orana Wildlife Park's 40th anniversary. The Park has become an internationally respected zoo and owes much of its success to strong community support.**

Orana Wildlife Park is New Zealand's only open range zoo. It is owned and operated by Orana Wildlife Trust, a registered charity, which aims to: provide quality recreational opportunities for local people and visitors to Christchurch; conserve endangered native and exotic wildlife; educate visitors (especially children) about environmental and conservation issues; and support research relating to endangered animals. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers work together to achieve the Park's mission. The team regularly demonstrate "kiwi ingenuity" through achieving great things at moderate cost.

Orana is the only large New Zealand zoo that is not owned and operated by local government. It generates over 95% of its income through gate takings and other trading activities. Fundraising is an essential focus; Orana must separately raise 100% of funds for all capital projects, improvements and animal transfers. Funds have been donated from a variety of sources, including philanthropic trusts, private donors and bequests. To date, over \$15M has been raised to develop the Park. All buildings and enclosures have been built in-house (except the Great Ape Centre). Many local businesses have assisted in the Park's construction by donating materials, consultancy and equipment. We are extremely grateful for such wonderful support.

**“ We are proud of what Orana Wildlife Park has become and what it has achieved and thank you most sincerely for your input. Our team is determined to ensure that Orana thrives in the future ... so, watch this space! ”**



**Kerry Nolan**  
*Chair, Orana Wildlife Trust*



**Lynn Anderson**  
*CEO, Orana Wildlife Trust*



# FROM DREAM TO REALITY

**In 1970, the South Island Zoological Society was formed with a vision to create a major wildlife park in Christchurch.**

Naturally such an ambitious project captured the imagination of Canterbury people. However, it took a further six years of planning, fundraising and hard work before the zoo opened.

The Society set out to develop an open range, drive-through, zoo. Starting with almost unusable land - a dry, stony riverbed - volunteers cleared the site, initially with just hand tools. As fundraising results increased, second hand equipment was purchased resulting in significant development progress.

On 10 September 1976, Orana's first animals arrived from Australia. The 'Noah's Ark' consisted of 18 lions (including 6 cubs), 2 tiger cubs, 2 donkeys, 2 camels, 2 water buffalo and 2 Shetland ponies.

The dream of the South Island Zoological Society became a reality at 10am on 25 September 1976, when Orana Park (now Orana Wildlife Park) officially opened. By 2pm that day, a queue of cars stretched 7km along McLeans Island. The last vehicles came through the Park in the dark!

Orana Wildlife Trust was formed later to run and manage the zoo. The Society have contributed to capital projects over the years. Today, Christchurch has an international quality zoo that is testament to the amazing foresight of the founders.

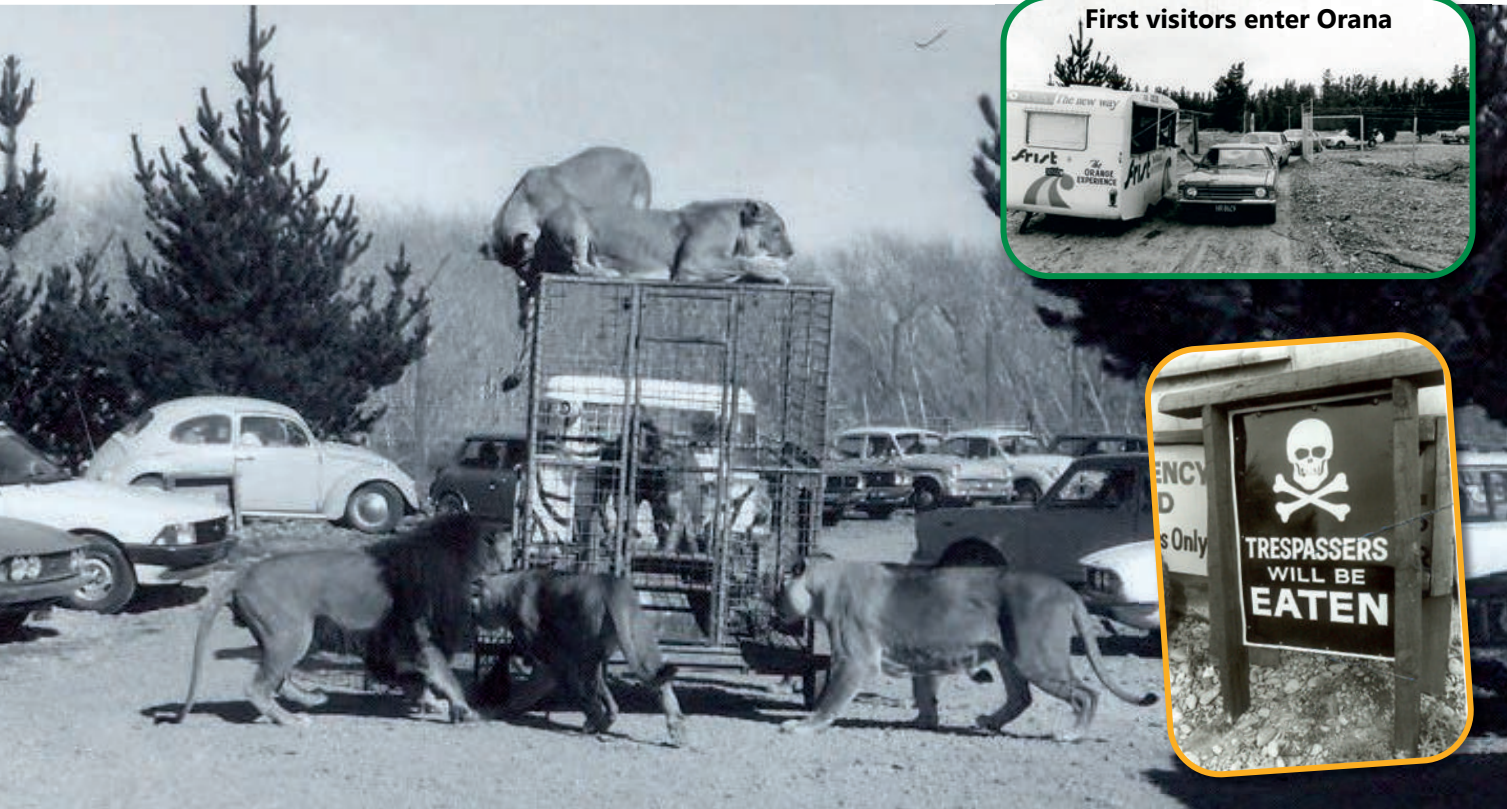


# YEARS 1 TO 10

**The Park opened with 28 animals from six species. During the first ten years of operation, new animals were regularly added and Stage One of the African Plains, a major expansion, was completed.**

Upon opening, Orana's main drawcard was the fabulous drive-through Lion Reserve, the first and only one of its type in New Zealand. This amazing experience set the tone for the zoo. Orana has continued to establish clear points of difference, providing memorable animal encounters to enthuse people about wildlife.

The drive-through Lion Reserve operated from 1976 until 1995. Today, Orana operates a special Lion Encounter and the experience is an 'historical nod' to the drive-through days.



**First visitors enter Orana**





# 1976 TO 1985



In 1977, Timber Wolves (1) arrived and the Farmyard was also created. Wolves were a visitor favourite for many years and the interactive Farmyard continues to be an integral part of the visitor experience. In 1978, an island home was created for spider monkeys (2), the zoo's first species of primate.



Two pairs of rare Scimitar-horned oryx (3) were transferred in 1979. Oryx symbolise what the Park's founders hoped for when Orana was formed. Oryx were declared extinct in the wild in 1984 but captive breeding programmes resulted in the species being re-established in protected areas. Orana was the first institution in the world to breed oryx by artificial insemination and over 80 oryx have been bred here.



In 1981 Stage One of the African Plains (4) opened. This provided a new dimension in animal display for Orana - visitors could view African savannah species, such as zebra and oryx, across water moats.



Giraffes were added in 1982 and a special encounter was introduced enabling visitors to hand feed the gentle giants (5). This experience remains one of the highlights of a Park visit. Orana has made an important contribution to the managed zoo-based programme. Over 15 giraffes have been bred, most of which were transferred to other zoos.



The South Island's first kiwi house was created in 1984. Today, Orana plays an important role in the captive component of the recovery programme. Over 20 kiwi from Orana have been released to the wild and chicks have also been transferred to other captive centres. We are committed to further contributing to kiwi conservation.

## YEARS 11 TO 20

**Orana's second decade of operation resulted in the steady arrival of new species and ongoing development. The direction of the zoo significantly altered with the closing of the drive-through Lion Reserve in 1995.**

White rhinos were transferred to Orana in 1986. They continue to be a popular species. The addition of tuatara (1) in 1987 commenced a focus on native reptiles that continued the following year with the creation of a new Reptile House. Orana presently maintains one of the most comprehensive public collections of native geckos, such as the rough gecko (2).

The Park continued to expand with the opening of Stage Two of the African Plains in 1988. This expansion included a new Giraffe House (background). In 1990, a restaurant was added.

The world's fastest land mammal, the cheetah, arrived in 1988 and since that time Orana has been involved in the zoo-based breeding programme for these swift cats. Cheetah have become one of Orana's flagship conservation species and over 24 cats have been raised to adulthood. Cheetah are a notoriously difficult species to breed in captivity and Orana is internationally respected for its success. In 1991, a 'Cheetah Chase' was introduced. This public presentation gave visitors the opportunity to witness the blistering speed of cheetah.





# 1986 TO 1995



One of the most popular additions to the zoo occurred in 1991 with the arrival of meerkats. Due to a Telecom advertising campaign featuring these energetic animals, visitors raced to the Park when the animals arrived. Visitation for the exhibit opening was one of the biggest days on record. These animals moved into a new exhibit named Kopje Rock which now also features porcupines. Orana has regularly bred meerkats. These endearing animals continue to be immensely popular with visitors.

A fantastic walk-through native bird aviary, complete with waterfall, was opened in 1994. This was built by the South Island Zoological Society. The aviary is home to a wide range of forest birds such as tui (3), kereru, kakariki and bellbird. Recently, tuatara and freshwater crayfish have been added to the aviary.

A significant shift in direction occurred in 1995. The present administration building (4), and large carpark, was opened. This resulted in the entrance of the zoo moving to middle of the Park. Visitors could no longer drive their cars through Orana. Rather, they walked or utilised the safari shuttle (5) (first introduced in 1986). Scheduled animal feeds occur throughout the day, helping to break up the walking distance for visitors.

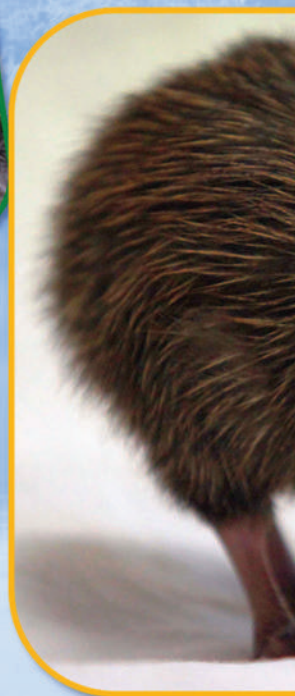
Closing the Park to cars also meant the drive-through Lion Reserve ended. To this day, visitors recall stories of their experience in the iconic encounter. The lion pride was relocated to a new habitat close to the new office building. Later, they were moved back to their current location.





40 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

1976



Orana is a member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), the Zoo Aquarium Association, and participates in breeding programmes for the species we hold. **Native fauna breeding success** - Orana contributes to the release of 80 pukeko, 50 whio and 23 kiwi from Orana have been released to the wild. Additionally, the Park also runs conservation initiatives. **Exotic species success** - Orana participates in 23 zoo-based breeding programmes for endangered species including the giraffe. Orana provides conservation education to all visitors to convey specific "take home messages",

Baby animal images (left to right): spider monkey, scimitar-horned oryx, white rhinoceros, ringtailed lemur, lion, Northland green gecko, brown teal



## CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2016



Association of Australasia (ZAA) and ZAA NZ. Through these memberships, Orana participates in managed breed for release recovery programmes for kiwi, blue duck (whio) and brown teal (pateke). To date, over attracts over 25 native species to live in the Park grounds (such as bellbird) through habitat restoration endangered species. Notable success has been achieved with cheetah, scimitar-horned oryx, white rhino and such as keeping a dog on a leash to help kiwi, to raising awareness on issues surrounding palm oil.

al (pateke), kiwi, blue duck (whio), kea, porcupine, waterbuck, cheetah, sable antelope, tuatara, morepork, springbok, siamang gibbon, meerkat, giraffe.

## YEARS 21 TO 30



**Some significant changes took place including exciting new experiences, the creation of a formal education programme and the acquisition of another attraction.**

In 1996 New Zealand whio (blue duck) were added. Whio (1) have become one of the Park's most important conservation species. Orana has regularly bred these highly threatened native birds for release to the wild in various locations in the North Island.

African wild dogs (2) arrived in 1998. These colourful animals are one of the most threatened African carnivores. Initially Orana held a group of three males and then a pack of seven females.

In 1999, two new animal encounters were added. The amazing Lion Encounter (3) is one of Orana's most unique points of difference and it is used to promote the Park to local people and tourists. The experience travels through the Lion Reserve for immensely close views of the mighty lions. Worldwide media coverage of the encounter was achieved in 2013, creating renewed interest in the experience. The Rhino Encounter (4) gives visitors the opportunity to meet these immense animals 'face-to-face' and also provides a fantastic advocacy opportunity for staff.

Ibutho, New Zealand's first ever rhino calf, was born at Orana in 1999. This was a significant achievement as the reproductive rate of captive born rhinos in zoos is very low. To date, three rhino calves have been bred at Orana (the others in 2010 and 2014).





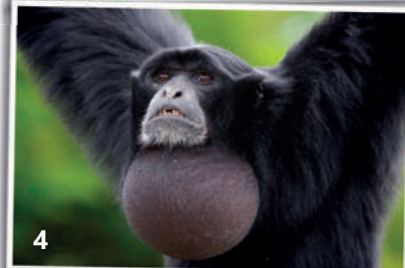


# 1996 TO 2005

In 2000, Orana took over the operation of Southern Encounter Aquarium (1) in Cathedral Square. A kiwi house was added in 2002, the only one of its kind located in the heart of a major city, resulting in increased visitation. Southern Encounter helped attract people to the city centre. The facility gave visitors a glimpse at the creatures found in our waterways and enabled people to see some of NZ's unique land animals. The attraction was a valuable educational facility hosting thousands of school children on education programmes. Sadly the facility was lost in the February 2011 earthquake.

Educating and inspiring visitors is a key focus (2). A contract with the Ministry of Education was secured in 2000 through the 'Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom' programme. Our teachers deliver custom written, curriculum linked, education programmes to over 7,000 Canterbury school children annually. The creation of 'Zoo School' resulted in a more strategic focus on conservation advocacy to all Park visitors. "Take home messages" are conveyed, through presentations and exhibit interpretation, to encourage visitors to adopt environmentally friendly attitudes in their daily lives (e.g. responsible purchasing/pet ownership etc).

Asian small clawed otters (3) arrived in 2000. A fantastic new habitat, near the meerkats, was created for these playful animals. Brown teal (pateke - top left), a threatened native species, were added in 2004 and have become a key conservation focus. Pateke ducklings reared at Orana have regularly been released to the wild. The singing Siamang gibbons (4), Orana's first species of ape, were added in 2004 and three youngsters have been raised. The siamang habitat won a zoo industry (ZAA) excellence in exhibit design award in 2006.



# YEARS 31 TO 38



**The return of tigers, a new kea aviary and another zoo to operate were positive changes. However, earthquakes and storms caused significant damage.**

A 6,000 square metre habitat for the critically endangered Sumatran tiger (1) was completed in 2006 and Orana joined 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger. This was a significant addition and the biggest development in many years. Orana's previous tigers died in 1999 and since that time, these majestic cats were one of the most requested animals visitors wanted to see added to the zoo. A behind-the-scenes experience enables visitors to feed a tiger.



In October 2008, Orana took over the operation of Nelson's Natureland Zoo (2). The facility was due to close earlier that year. Orana set out to rejuvenate the facility and provide a quality experience for Nelson families. In December 2008, a new meerkat exhibit was created and a porcupine habitat opened in December 2010. Orana ran Natureland until 2013 when new operators took over meaning Park staff could focus all resources on running Orana Wildlife Park following the Christchurch earthquakes.



A walk-through kea habitat opened in 2009 which gives visitors the chance to have a close encounter with these inquisitive, highly intelligent, parrots (3). The habitat simulates a regenerating beech forest. Visitors walk along a board-walk and exit through a musterer's hut, the main interpretation hub for the habitat. Four kea chicks have been bred in the aviary. This habitat was also recognised as an example of excellence in exhibit design by the regional zoo association (ZAA) in 2009.



# 2006 TO 2013



From 2010 until 2013, Orana was barraged by Mother Nature. In the space of three years, the zoo was closed for over 40 days (and on nine separate occasions!). Orana was fortunate to re-open after the devastating Christchurch earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 with little physical damage. The main impact of the earthquakes was significantly reduced visitation/income as typically 45% of the Park's visitors are from outside of Christchurch and this market vanished overnight. A wide ranging "get through plan" was implemented, as a non-negotiable aim was to ensure the zoo survived.

As if ongoing earthquakes weren't enough, Orana suffered from a range of further damaging events. These included two floods, three major snow storms (one of which occurred in the middle of a school holiday period) causing extensive exhibit damage and one of which included a massive power spike that blew many of the Park's switch boards! Additionally, four gale force wind events occurred, the most significant of which happened in September 2013 (inset) when a severe gale wreaked havoc across Christchurch. This event left the zoo without power, water and communications for 8 days and closed to the public for 10 days. Despite the setbacks, the Park's team carried on. Visitor numbers progressively started to recover to pre-quake levels and staff set about creating significant new additions.

# YEARS 38 TO 40: 2014 - 2016



**Following the setbacks, Orana focussed on new developments. The most significant was the creation of a Great Ape Centre for New Zealand's only gorillas, Orana's biggest ever project.**

Gypsy horses (1) arrived in 2014. An outreach partnership was formed with Gypsy Royal Stud where Orana's horses are managed as part of the Stud's programme. The horses' arrival started a shift to rare/interesting breeds of domestic stock in the Farmyard. Orana opened New Zealand's biggest Tasmanian devil habitat in December 2014. The Park joined the Save the Tasmanian Devil (2) Programme raising awareness on these carnivorous marsupials that are threatened due to a contagious cancer.

On 31 July 2015, Orana opened the most ambitious project in its history - a \$6M habitat for New Zealand's only gorillas (3). The Centre is an immensely positive addition to the Canterbury region. It provides fantastic educational and recreational opportunities, enabling people to observe, enjoy and study one of the world's most impressive primates! Orana has joined the international programme for the critically endangered Western Lowland Gorilla, initially by holding bachelors and educating the public on threats to these animals. This project was a champion effort - raising 100% of funds was a massive task and significant consultation and research was carried out to ensure an innovative and sustainably focussed habitat was built to meet the complex care requirements of these magnificent animals. In 2016, the exhibit was awarded a regional zoo association (ZAA) Large Institution, Large Scale Exhibit Award being judged on: improved animal welfare, conservation, research and education outcomes, innovative features, sustainability and cost effectiveness. We are delighted with the addition of gorillas and the positive impact the habitat has made to Orana.



# LOOKING FORWARD



**We are committed to ensuring that Orana Wildlife Park has a bright future. Our team will continue to fundraise for a range of exciting new additions, so that Orana is the best possible attraction it can be.**

The Great Ape Centre was designed to hold two species in separate areas. We are excited to report that orang-utans are set for transfer in the near future. A Maud Island Frog Habitat is due to be completed and feature one of New Zealand's nationally endangered species. This will be something special for Orana to hold such precious fauna! The next major capital project is a New Zealand Native Centre to further extend our conservation efforts with native species.

**Over the past forty years, Orana Wildlife Park has grown significantly and achieved many milestones, including hosting over 6 million visitors. The zoo is an iconic Canterbury attraction and is an important city asset and contributor to economic recovery and growth. Orana will continue to evolve and develop into the future.**

# THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



Maud Island Frog



PO Box 5130, Christchurch 8542  
[www.oranawildlifepark.co.nz](http://www.oranawildlifepark.co.nz)



**Permit**

New Zealand  
Permit No. 58499



**CELEBRATING 40 YEARS**



# KIWI CONSERVATION AT ORANA

Orana Wildlife Park is proud to be involved in the captive component of the kiwi recovery programme. The Park is a significant contributor to the programme and has provided chicks for many other New Zealand facilities and supplemented wild release sites, thanks to the efforts of our specialised team. To date, 23 kiwi from Orana have been released to the wild. We are committed to making further contributions.

Wild kiwi populations (unmanaged) are declining at around 2% per annum. Dogs are the primary threat to adult kiwi; owners can assist by keeping their pet on a leash. Stoats are the main threat to kiwi chicks and without management only 10% of chicks reach 6 months of age. Captive centres, such as Orana, have an important role to play in kiwi conservation. Orana holds three genetically significant breeding pairs. Two males are presently sitting on eggs which is a positive sign for the season ahead.

As a charitable trust, it is a constant struggle to fund our conservation work. The approximate cost to raise one kiwi chick at Orana, for release to the wild, is \$3,000. Our team hope to raise at least five chicks this season.

*Your donation helps with our conservation efforts for New Zealand's national icon.*

**Lynn Anderson - Chief Executive**



## ORANA WILDLIFE PARK KIWI APPEAL

I wish to donate: ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$10 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Paid by: ☐ Cheque ☐ VISA ☐ VISA DEBIT ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ DIRECT CREDIT (please contact us)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ Post code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to receive information on the animal adoption programme.

☐ I want to learn how I can help Orana's work through a gift in my will.

### Card details:

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please post to: Freepost 1248, Orana Wildlife Trust, PO Box 5130, Christchurch 8542. Email to: [info@oranawildlifepark.co.nz](mailto:info@oranawildlifepark.co.nz)

