

# Lorikeet Aviary: Protocols and Messaging

## Mission in Action

When guests visit the Lorikeet Aviary, they will:

<b>Feel:</b>	<b>Safe</b> while visiting our parks
	A sense of <b>belonging</b> - developing a sense of community
	An <b>emotional connection</b> and <b>empathy</b> for wildlife
<b>Learn:</b>	The stories of individual animals in our care (e.g., name, age, personality, etc.)
	<b>Excellent animal wellbeing</b> is a top priority
<b>Act:</b>	<b>Connect with, and appreciate nature</b> – be a respectful wildlife observer

We will meet these outcomes by:

- Welcoming guests to the Lorikeet Aviary (**belonging**) and setting up expectations using positive language, so guests know what to expect during their visit and what is expected of them (**safe and respectful wildlife viewing**).
- Observing throughout the habitat to ensure guests are behaving appropriately and the lorikeets are comfortable (**safety and respectful wildlife viewing**).
- Demonstrating for guests how to be a respectful wildlife observer and modeling appropriate behavior (**respectful wildlife viewing**).
- Learning about the guests through observation and asking them questions. Sharing stories of our animals that are likely to be relevant or of interest to them (**belonging and empathy**).
- Observe that guests are utilizing the double-door vestibule system correctly – only one vestibule door should be open at a time. You do not need to open and close these doors for the guests, unless the area is overly crowded, and you need to limit the number of guests entering the space (**Safe**).
- Thank the guests for visiting and being respectful of the lorikeets and their habitat (**belonging and respectful wildlife viewing**).

Meeting these objectives supports our mission: **Empowering People. Saving Wildlife.**

## Hours of Operation

Intended hours of operation are below and are subject to change.

Australia Contact Areas								
	Jan 5-31	Feb	Mar	Apr	May 1-22	May 23-31	Jun	Jul
Aviary Hours	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-6:00	10:00-6:00	10:00-6:00
Kangaroo Hours	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-6:00	10:00-6:00	10:00-6:00

  

	Aug 1-16	Aug 17-31	Sep	Oct	Boo Dates:	Nov 1-19	Nov 20-30	Dec
Aviary Hours	10:00-6:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	12:00-4:00	12:00-4:00
Kangaroo Hours	10:00-6:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	10:00-4:00	12:00-4:00	12:00-4:00

## Procedures and Protocols

General Protocols:

- Permitted items: wheelchairs and other mobility devices
- Items not permitted for animal wellbeing: strollers, wagons, open food or drinks; open umbrellas
- Stroller parking is outside the Aviary, near the Kangaroo Walkabout.
- Touching the lorikeets is not permitted.
- Respectful wildlife viewing should be demonstrated by walking, staying on the path, and avoiding loud noises.

## Protocols for Education Volunteers and Staff:

- Two Education volunteers or interpreters are required inside the Aviary to open to ensure the safety of our animals and guests. One Education team member must be stationed at the inside entry door, and one Education team member must be stationed at the inside exit door.
- ZooAides can be stationed at the outer entrance door only in the Greeter role, unless they have received additional training. ZooAides with additional training will be indicated on the schedule and can fill any role.
- Opening shift:
  - Bring Lorikeet Aviary radio and clicker.
  - Turn on the radio and ensure it is on channel 8.
  - An Animal Care team will unlock the Aviary at the designated opening time.
- Radio should remain on channel 8. If assistance is needed regarding the animals, call the Australia Animal Care Team on channel 2, then switch back to channel 8.
- Bags and other team members' items, including water bottles, should be placed inside the vestibule.
- Closing shift:
  - Let guests know that the Aviary is closing at 4pm.
  - If a guest would like to enter the aviary or purchase nectar close to closing time, the Education team member will let them know that the habitat closes at 4pm, but they are welcome to purchase nectar or enter the aviary up until 4pm. Let them know that the front doors will be locked, but they can stay for about 15 minutes to feed the birds.
    - At 4pm, Australia team will lock the front doors.
    - Once the front doors are locked, Education team members can leave.
    - The Australia team member would be responsible for staying in the habitat with the guests until they leave and then locking the exit doors once they're done.
  - If all of the guests are finished in the aviary, then help clear the area of guests. Australia Animal Care will lock the doors.
- The Australia team will be in charge of changing the sign from open to closed or vice versa when they lock or unlock the doors.

## Feeding Protocols:

- Australia Animal Care staff will make and provide nectar to be sold by the Rides team member. Animal Care will provide the nectar dispenser and are responsible for disinfecting it daily.
- When nectar is being sold, sales begin when the Aviary opens and stop at a designated time. If the Aviary is open until 4pm, the nectar sales stop at 4pm. If the Aviary is open until 6pm, the nectar sales stop at 5pm.
- An Education team member at the Aviary entry will instruct guests on how to hold the nectar cup.
- Nectar should not be collected and shared with other guests. The nectar has a time limit for lorikeet wellbeing.
- The Rides Team Member is responsible for keeping the counter in the vestibule clean and removing trash at the end of the day.

## Lorikeet Bite Protocol:

- Check on the guest:
  - If they would like to have Zoo EMS look at the bite, call EMS on channel 1.
  - If the guest does not wish to have the bite checked by Zoo EMS, ask them to wash the area thoroughly and offer a Band-Aid. (A first aid kit is located under the counter in the nectar sales vestibule.)
- In all bite situations call Animal Care to visit the Aviary so you can report the bite in person; the Animal Care team member will document all bites.
  - Australia staff will document in ZIMS (only if a Security report is filed).
  - Please notify Australia Animal Care staff if you need additional Band-Aids or any First-Aid supplies.

### **Lorikeet Containment Protocols:**

- If a lorikeet is in the vestibule area, DO NOT open any doors. No guests should enter the Aviary until the situation is resolved.
- Keep your eye on the bird. Education Team Members should not interact with the bird.
- Call Australia Animal Care (Channel 2). State where the bird is located and wait for further instruction. Animal Care staff will respond to address the situation.

### **Cold Weather Policy**

- For the wellbeing of our team members, the Lorikeet Aviary will not be open if the temperature is below 40 degrees.
- Closures of the Aviary will be communicated on the Visitor Engagement Portal.

### **Hot Weather Policy:**

- The Aviary will remain open during hot weather with the following accommodations:
  - Fan mounted in the Aviary
  - Portable personal fans available in the Education Building
  - Water cooler for hydration
  - Shade
- If these accommodations do not meet your needs, or you have health concerns regarding the heat, please contact us to cancel your shift as early as possible

### **Emergency Weather Response:**

If potentially dangerous weather conditions are imminent, a Level 2 weather emergency will be announced on all radio channels as a Security Alert, and the Lorikeet Aviary will close until the alert is cleared. Australia Animal Care staff will close and lock the Aviary.

### **ZooAides:**

- For thunder and lightning: seek shelter inside the Nocturnal Building or return to the Education Building
- For tornadoes or severe weather: immediately seek shelter in the Nocturnal Building bathrooms
- Once in a safe space: call or text 614-724-3420 to let the ZooAide Supervisor know your location.

### **Adults (volunteers or interpreters):**

- Clear the aviary of guests and encourage them to seek shelter, if appropriate.
- Stay until Animal Care staff has locked the habitat.
- Seek shelter inside the Nocturnal Building for thunder and lightning, or the Nocturnal Building bathrooms for tornadoes or severe weather.
- Once in a safe space: call or text 614-724-3483 (or radio on channel 8) to alert the Daily Contact of your location and the team members who are with you.

**Emergency Response:** Refer to Safety and Security Training

### **Service Animal Policy:**

- Service animals are permitted to enter anywhere that guests have access inside of the Lorikeet Aviary.
- If you notice a concerning response from the lorikeets, contact the Australia Animal Care staff.

### **Volunteer and Staff Roles:**

- **All Team Members:**
  - Engage and educate guests by introducing the animals and providing interpretive messaging. Let the

moment guide the message and gauge the interest of the guest.

- o Demonstrate and encourage guests on how to be a respectful wildlife observer by walking, staying on the path, and using a quiet voice.
- o Encourage guests to be respectful of the habitat by storing food and drink out of sight and disposing of trash and recyclables appropriately.
- o If a guest is uncomfortable with a bird landing on them, you can remove a bird from a guest with a gentle sweeping motion of your arm, to be demonstrated in training.
- o If a guest drops their nectar accidentally, you may offer them a replacement.
- o Pick up dropped cups in the habitat if you can reach them from the public pathway. If you are unable to reach them, inform the Animal Care team member.

- **Entry Door:**

- o Monitor the entrance doors to ensure guests are utilizing the four-door system for animal safety. Only one door should be opened at a time.
  - Ensure the door is clear of birds before opening it. Ensure the door is closed after the guests have entered.
  - The capacity for this area is between 20 and 30, depending on the guest activity level. If the capacity is reached, wait for guests to leave before inviting more to enter.
  - The maximum number can fluctuate depending on the types of groups and energy of the guests in the habitat. It can go up to about 30 if there groups are smaller and the guests are calmer. But when there are school groups, a max of 20 makes it a better experience.
- o This team member must be stationed inside the Aviary at the entry door.
- o Welcome guests and set positive expectations of staying on the pathway and remaining calm.
  - Guests should not reach out and touch the birds. If a guest needs help with a bird, they should find a team member.
  - Ensure guests have sanitized their hands before entering.
  - If a guest has purchased nectar, give the guest instructions on how to hold the nectar cup.
- o If a guest in the Aviary needs assistance and it is necessary to walk away from the entry door, the Education team member should use the bolt to latch the door so guests cannot enter while the door is not attended.
- o If there are many guests entering, encourage guests to move into the Aviary to allow more people to enter.
- o When guests are not actively entering the Aviary, keep an eye on guests inside the Aviary to see if they need assistance with a bird or a nectar spill. You can engage with guests in the Aviary at this time, but keep a close eye on the entrance.

- **Exit Door:**

- o Monitor the entrance doors to ensure guests are utilizing the double-door system for animal safety. Ensure the door is clear of birds before opening it. Ensure the door is closed after the guests have entered.
- o This team member must be stationed inside the Aviary at the exit door.
- o Thank the guests for visiting, let them know where to wash their hands, and where to recycle nectar cups as needed.

- **Greeter:**

- o When a third team member is scheduled, they will serve as the greeter. They will be positioned inside the vestibule to greet guests, welcome them, and set up expectations.
  - If there is no Greeter, then these responsibilities move to the Entry Door team member.
- o Welcome guests to the Aviary.
  - Direct guests where to park strollers and wagons, which are not permitted in the Aviary.
  - Direct guests where to leave food and beverages that are not secured inside a bag.
  - Show guests where to purchase nectar if desired, but let them know they are welcome to walk through the Aviary if they would like to view the birds without feeding them.

- Ask guests to sanitize their hands and wait for the person at the entry door to give them further instructions.
- **Floater:**
  - Can position themselves anywhere along the path based on the guest and lorikeet location.
  - Assist guests with feeding, answer questions, and engage them with information about the lorikeets.
  - When needed, remind guests to walk, stay on the pathway, and be respectful of the birds and their habitat.
- **Animal Care Staff:**
  - Unlock and lock the Lorikeet Aviary each day
    - The contact area will be unlocked at the designated opening time. Education team members should only call the animal care team if the doors haven't been unlocked at the designated time.
  - Monitor and enforce expectations for animal and human safety.
    - Respond in the event of a bite.
    - Clean up nectar spills.

## **Team Member Training**

**Education Team Members:** An online training session is required yearly, and new volunteers complete 3 trainee shifts in the area. The operations protocol is discussed in detail during training.

**Animal Care Team Members:** The Australia Region Animal Care staff receive training on all aspects of the Lorikeet Aviary, husbandry of animals, and animal wellbeing. Animal Care staff receive an initial training period upon hire and utilize department Animal Care Training check-off sheets to ensure they have full knowledge of the Aviary and the animals that are in this area.

## **Animal Engagement and Wellbeing**

Animals in the Lorikeet Aviary are allowed to occupy any area in their habitat. A portion of this habitat is the path that guests travel. Birds have the choice to land on guests, and nectar is sold for guests to hold to encourage positive interactions with the birds. Guests are given instructions on interacting with the birds before entering the Aviary. Any time the Aviary is open for guests, the lorikeets are monitored closely.

Animals in the Lorikeet Aviary are monitored for stress and always have access to their indoor area. They have ample areas to perch out of reach of guests.

## **Guest Engagement Examples**

### **Enrichment**

Mission-based Outcome: Learn that excellent animal wellbeing is a top priority.

- Lorikeets are curious and energetic birds. They spend a lot of time exploring their habitat and foraging for food. At the Zoo, enrichment is added to their habitat to enhance their senses— enrichment keeps their minds and bodies busy, just like they would be in their native range.
  - As you look around the Aviary today, can you spot some of the enrichment provided for them?
  - Watch the birds interacting with their enrichment. What are they doing? What part of their body are they using to interact?

### **Choice and Control**

Mission-based Outcome: Learn that excellent animal wellbeing is a top priority.

- Animals can roam freely throughout the habitat, but people must stay on the path. Lorikeets choose whether to interact with other lorikeets— or guests! They can choose where and with whom to spend their time. This ability to exercise choice and control is an important part of animal wellbeing at the zoo.
  - Think of it like when you have guests over at your house. Do you want everyone headed straight to your bedroom to hang out? That might be okay with some close friends, but our rooms are also places we might go to be alone and rest. We are in their habitat and want the lorikeets to be as comfortable as possible.
  - Like people, some of the lorikeets are more social and even have certain individuals that they like to hang out with (point out any lorikeets that tend to be together) but they also like to have plenty of space to be by themselves if they choose.

**Lorikeets are pollinators. You can support pollinators in your own backyard.**

Mission-based Outcome: Take action by helping wildlife – personally and in their communities.

- Did you know that lorikeets are pollinators? Lorikeets have brush-tipped tongues called papillae that are perfectly adapted for gathering nectar and pollen from flowers. They spread pollen from flower to flower as they feed, which helps keep habitats biodiverse.
- Pollinators play an important role in ecosystems, no matter what part of the world they live in. You can help pollinators, like insects and even some birds, in your own community.
- Link to learn more: <https://www.columbuszoo.org/blog/creating-critical-pollinator-habitats-home>