

March 2020

The Columbus Zoo
and Aquarium
Volunteer Newsletter

ZooNews



ROTI ISLAND SNAKE-NECKED TURTLE

"BUDDY" HAWKSBILL SEATURTLE



COAHUILA BOX TURTLE

"GROUCHY" SULCATA TORTOISE



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The mission of ZooNews is to promote awareness, education, preservation and conservation of our natural world.

To join the staff or to submit an article, please email us at:

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this issue

Who's Who: Our Amur

Tigers.....9-10

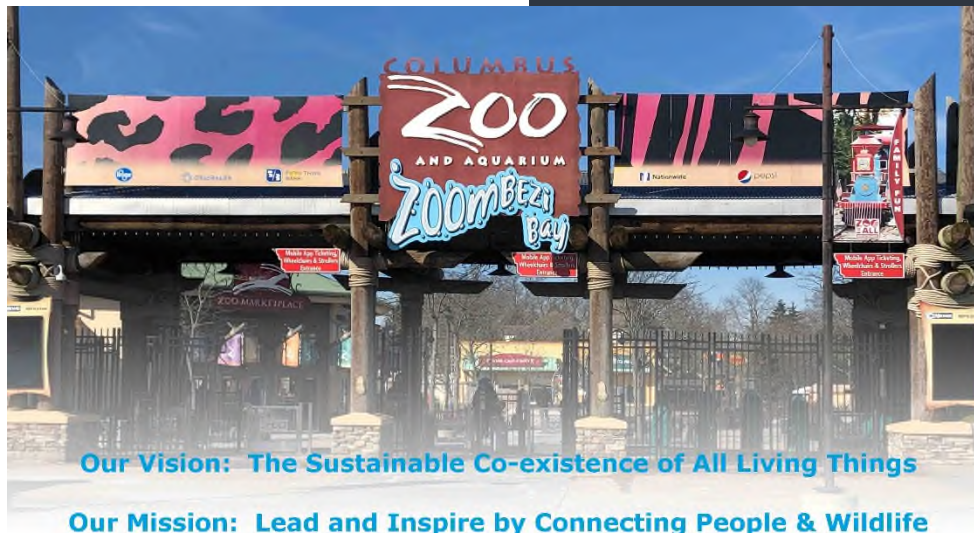
The Chevrotain.....11

Turtle-y Awesome!.....13-14

Zoo Turtles/Tortoises.....15

Region News.....16

Calendar.....20



Our Vision: The Sustainable Co-existence of All Living Things

Our Mission: Lead and Inspire by Connecting People & Wildlife

Communiqué

It seems that spring is right around the corner, and with that comes lots of excited visitors as well as brand new Adult Volunteers, Docents, Interpreters and Zoo Aides. We will all be happy to see familiar faces and old friends! Share stories, smile often, be kind and offer help to our guests as well as our new team members. Let's be sure to welcome everyone into our Zoo family!

Be sure to keep your eye on the portal for updates and news – think of it as your daily newspaper. It's going to be an exciting and busy year so you will want to be "in the know"!

March will be jam packed with training, enrichment workshops, the Chili Luncheon, and Tuesday night region meetings. We hope you will join us at the Volunteer Season Kick-off meeting on Tuesday, March 17 at 7:00 pm in the Lakeside Pavilion. Please sign up on Volgistics if you plan to attend.

We plan to continue the success of our "Appreciation Wall", which can be found right inside the door of the Education Building. We encourage you to fill out a star when you see a fellow volunteer go

above and beyond. Cutout stars can be found near the sign in computers – completed stars can be turned in to Carole. With all of the wonderful and amazing things that you do as volunteers, we are sure that the wall will soon be full of stories to inspire everyone on our volunteer team, as well as those walking through the Education Building.

As always, thank you for the meaningful work you do in helping us connect people and wildlife. We are all so proud of our Visitor Education and Engagement Team and the very important role you all play at our Zoo!

Your Volunteer Team,

Ginger, Carole, Kathy, Rachel, Mary



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

From the President

Spring is near and we are excited to see all of the Zoo improvements coming together. Our AZA application for accreditation is complete and we look forward to hosting the visiting team as they see all of the great work our zoo is accomplishing. We will have a very busy year and we will need your help.

Thank you all for volunteering. It was nice to see the large group of new Docents recently. I know there are many places to volunteer, thank you for choosing the Zoo!

Tom Stalf, President/CEO



Photo courtesy of Graham S. Jones

Join the Zoo Book Club

Date to be Announced (May)

Dreaming in Turtle is a compelling story of a stalwart animal prized from prehistory through to today – an animal threatened by human greed, pragmatism, and rationalization. It stars turtles and shady and heroic human characters both, in settings ranging from luxury redoubts to degraded habitats, during a time when the confluence of easy global trade, limited supply, and inexhaustible demand has accelerated the stress on species. The growth of the middle class in high-population regions like China, where the turtle is particularly valued, feeds this perfect storm into which the turtle finds itself lashed. This is a tale not just of endangered turtles but also one of overall human failings, frailties, and vulnerabilities – all punctuated by optimistic hope for change fueled by dedicated turtle champions.

If you are interested in joining the Zoo Book Club listserv, please email emilybethrapoport@gmail.com

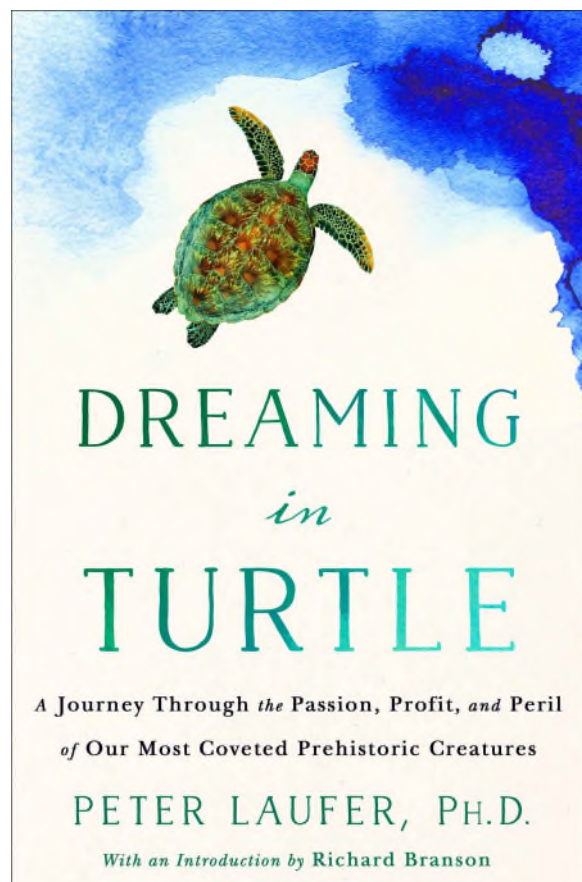




Photo courtesy of Graham S. Jones

Even our bears were caught celebrating International Polar Bear Day!

Enrichment Around the Zoo: Enhancing the Experiences of the Animals and Enriching the Guest Experience

Note - this is a continuation of the Enrichment series that began in the January/February 2020 issue of *ZooNews*

Providing enrichment is an important part of the role of animal care staff at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. Creatively designed and implemented enrichment can result in positive outcomes in several categories including cognitive, tactile and sensory (auditory, olfactory, visual, etc.) Other positive outcomes can relate to food, the physical habitat and/or social interaction (including human-animal interactions). Enrichment can be active, involving some interaction between the animals and the object, or it can be inactive, a part of the habitat and not involving an interaction with the animals. Enrichment encourages natural behaviors and is often effective in decreasing stereotypic behaviors such as pacing, pattern swimming and other repetitive behaviors. The staff strives to provide

enrichment activities and items that are diverse and well-suited to each of the animal species with which they work.

Ideas for new enrichment materials often come from animal care staff. They, too, are often the ones who select, design and/or build the enrichment materials and oversee implementation. In the end, they are responsible for determining the success or failure of any enrichment method. Enrichment schedules are maintained in each region in order to provide a variety of stimuli and experiences across time. In some cases, enrichment may be seasonal, timed to align with the seasonal changes in behavior of the animal species. Before an enrichment item can be added at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, an application must be completed and approved at several levels (such as animal health, curatorial staff, and animal nutrition).

- Sally Rudmann

The approval process for any enrichment idea is comprehensive and includes a thorough consideration of the impact of the proposed enrichment including:

- **Safety** – Is there a safety risk such as risk of entanglement, possibility of ingestion/choking, potential use for escape from habitat, risk for disease transmission, etc.?
- **Aesthetics** - Will the enrichment detract from the overall theme of the habitat?
- **Breeding and Other Behaviors** – Will the item interfere with other natural behaviors including breeding/nesting, social behavior, etc.?
- **Previous experience** – Has the item been used at this or other institutions and is there evidence of success?
- **Obstacles** – Is construction of the object feasible? Is the cost prohibitive?

Enrichment Around the Zoo: Focus on North America

The North America region provides a variety of examples of enrichment strategies, all with the goal of increasing natural behaviors and reducing unwanted behaviors.

Seasonal Patterns: When keepers plan the enrichment calendar, they take **seasons** into account. This is evident in North America. Jenn Trevis and Erin Bauer, animal care staff from North America, provided several examples of enrichment that is impacted by the time of the year or season. According to the keepers, our **moose**, Ojibwe (Oji) and Bertha, are not very responsive to enrichment except for browse that is spread or hung in their habitat - this simulates their natural feeding behaviors. An exception is in the fall rutting season when Oji is presented with several items such as logs, hanging branches and trees to encourage sparring behaviors associated with mating. Oji also enjoys his “Topsy Tom” toy with which he wages mock battles.

In the mid-to-late winter months, when **reindeer** are about to shed their antlers, keepers provide a variety of tactile items (logs, piles of branches, etc.) to encourage natural sparring behaviors and facilitate the shedding process. With the help of a little physical exertion, their antlers will drop to the ground. This shedding process happens a bit later in the year for female reindeer than for males.

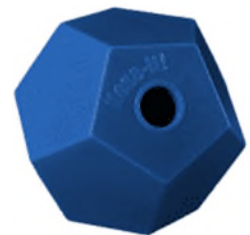


Snowflake sparring with a pile of branches provided by the keepers.

Rarely are items discarded. In this case, shed antlers are repurposed and become enrichment articles for other animals in North America, serving as a source of novel olfactory and tactile stimulation. Staff will add antlers to the habitats of other animals, such as the wolverines.

The **black bear** enrichment schedule is also impacted by the season. In the summer when the bears would be eating heavily (hyperphagia) food items are presented in a variety of ways (such as in paper bags, boxes, chopped into small pieces and scattered, or frozen) to encourage natural foraging behaviors and to provide cognitive stimulation. Puzzle feeders like *Nose-it Balls* for black bears (below) is an example of a novel method of presentation used for the black bears.

In winter when their metabolism slows and most of their time is spent sleeping, most enrichment is discontinued to encourage and support this natural low-activity season (known as torpor) unless some incentive is necessary to move them.



Enrichment not impacted by the season: Staff have discovered that tops of pineapples provide novel olfactory, tactile and cognitive stimulation for the **Canada lynx**. The lynx do not eat the pineapples; instead, they pounce on them and shred them apart, simulating their natural hunting behaviors.



Photo courtesy of Graham S. Jones

Although the terms are somewhat arbitrary, enrichment can be permanent or temporary/periodic. Enrichment may substitute for features that animals would have in their natural environment (such as trees for climbing or substrates to encourage digging and foraging). In the North America region, **Polar bears** are given a number of hard, floating articles such as disks and metal drums which mimic sea ice (temporary/periodic enrichment). So too, the bears are given open access to their dens and a variety of habitat features that allow them options to control their own activity

levels, their body temperature and their proximity and visibility to the public. Fish are provided in the pond, to provide an incentive for swimming and fishing. These are examples of more permanent enrichment features.

According to the NA animal care staff, the **sandhill cranes** benefit substantially from a variety of enrichment options. According to sources in the International Crane Foundation, enrichment can be used to keep food items novel and provide cranes with the opportunity to explore the environment and to make decisions. As pictured below, our cranes eat from pipes filled with “yummy” worms. The cranes also enjoy colorful objects like playpen balls. The keepers put the balls in a pail or tub and add some of the crane’s favorite bugs and worms. The cranes forage through the balls to find the bug treasures.



Training for weighing, blood drawing and other voluntary medical-related tasks, a central part of most animal care in North America and throughout at the Zoo, provides enrichment through human interaction (social) and learning (cognitive stimulation).

Both active and inactive enrichment can be found throughout the North America region including features in the physical habitats such as perching and climbing structures, climate gradients, resting spots, varying substrates. Sensory stimuli can be added such as mirrors, natural or packaged scents, or vocalizations.

Overall, enrichment possibilities are endless. The provision of novel enrichment is an ongoing, creative process in the North America region and throughout the Zoo, providing for an optimum quality of life for our animals and an enhanced animal/visitor experience.

- Sally Rudmann

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The Art and Science of Captive Animal Enrichment: Part 1 – Bears. *National Geographic Society Newsroom*.

<file:///C:/Users/rudma/Desktop/CZA%20Newsletter%20In%20Progress/The%20Art%20and%20Science%20of%20Captive%20Animal%20Enrichment%20Part%201%20%E2%80%93%20Bears%20%E2%80%93%20National%20Geographic%20Society%20Newsroom.html> Accessed January 16, 2020

Photos courtesy of NA Animal Care Staff

Takeover Tuesday:

The Planning and Design Department

(Text originally published October 29, 2019 on the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's Facebook page.)



Way Back When

Designing and constructing a new region like Adventure Cove takes three to four years from the start of design through construction completion and opening the area to the public.

One of the first steps in planning is audience research. The audience research team (ART) in the Planning & Design Department spends much of its time going through thousands of lines of data in order to gain insight into understanding what visitors want to see and experience at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium.

The evaluation plan for Adventure Cove began in 2016. The ART held a series of focus groups, surveys and interviews with our guests. Through these initiatives, guests told us they wanted a region that was open year-round, and one that was located close to the Entrance. Participants also selected sea lions as their most desired new species.

Once the animal species list was defined, animal enrichment, guest experience, educational messaging, project budgets and other project goals were identified. Research to understand the animals, their habitats, their conservation threats and the surrounding human environs was also done at this stage.



A storyline was then developed and photos were gathered, serving as a reference for the architects, theme designers and theme contractors.

For Adventure Cove, the storyline started something like this ... Imagine our guests being immersed in the colorful sights, sounds and smells of a lively coastal village and its surrounding watery landscape. Brightly-hued and salt-worn buildings are set back along a weathered wooden pier – their shutters, shingles and flower boxes reflected in the water that laps against shoreline rocks.



Fast Forward to Completion

The sea lion and seal habitat will be the largest aquatic habitat at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, consisting of 375,000 gallons of water! It was designed as one large pool, but it is actually three distinct spaces.

The first opportunity for guests to view our newest residents will be at the north end of the region. Inspired by the Pacific Northwest shoreline, this pool is surrounded by haystack rocks and includes large basking areas designed specifically for pinniped – a marine mammal with front and back flippers – relaxation.

This space also has a wave feature that can be managed by the Animal Programs staff to provide additional enrichment for the animals.

The middle pool was designed to look like a harbor with a marina backdrop that provides a long deck for the sea lions and seals to shuffle along or bask in the sun. Trainers will also work with the animals at this location — as they participate in voluntary health care, etc. Additionally, this pool includes a 60-foot-long tunnel, where guests can walk below water level and see the seals and sea lions swimming beside them and in one section, below them.



The last zone is a presentation pool located at the south end of the marina area. Here guests can watch Animal Programs staff interact with the pinnipeds to share the amazing natural behaviors of both of these species.

Sea lions are excellent divers! So too this pool was designed with a series of large rock steps that climb up the side of a lighthouse — 7 feet above the water level. The bottom of the pool is 9 feet deep. A grandstand will seat up to 250 people.

Because Adventure Cove does have a significant quantity of rockwork, the design team produced a physical model — as well as construction drawings — to determine such things as shade structure locations, as well as rockwork sizes and formations. This miniature was also used as a tool on the construction site.



Animal Encounters Village

More than 50 species will now have a permanent home — some of the specific species in Animal Encounters Village may change, but this is the nature of the Animal Programs' list of Animal Ambassadors.

A big feature at the interior of Animal Encounters Village is a custom tree that will enable our animal ambassadors to leave their living quarters, travel through the tree and come into the public space — allowing our Animal

Programs team to introduce these ambassadors to our guests for special encounters. Because the tree was such a challenging and involved detail, a full-size model was made by the Planning & Design Department to confirm sizes of openings and placement of vines.

The sloths will be housed in this locale along with flamingos, toucans, macaws, seriema, ducks, serval, cheetah, owls, bush baby, kinkajou, armadillo, opossum, echidna, chinchilla, tamandua, red-footed tortoises, Indian Star tortoises, skink, skunk, rabbit, foxes, salamanders, green python, bearded dragons, iguana, ground hornbill, penguins, cravens, prehensile tail porcupine and African crested porcupine.

Coming Soon

As you can see, there are many moving parts when it comes to designing and implementing a new region of the Zoo.

Thank you for following along with me during this Takeover Tuesday. We look forward to seeing you at Adventure Cove in May!

— Karen, Director of Project & Site Design

Who's Who: Our Amur Tigers

There have been many changes in our tiger population within the last year with the departure of Mara's cubs, the additions of Natasha and Changbai, and the passing of Irisa. Asia Quest's assistant curator Laura McGlothlin and keeper Christy Nuss generously shared information about our four tigers.

Jupiter:

Jupiter was born July 9, 2007 at the Moscow Zoo but came to us in 2015 from the Czech Republic. He is the largest of our tigers, at about 445 pounds. Jupiter has sired three litters, one in the Czech Republic and one each with Irisa and Mara. Jupiter is very handsome and "a fantastic tiger," according to Laura McGlothlin. He is much calmer than when he first arrived, but he does vocalize loudly at the keepers from time to time. He has a breeding recommendation with both Natasha and Changbai. McGlothlin says that Jupiter "treats the females well." Jupiter's favorite enrichment items are barrels, wood wool and Skin So Soft. Jupiter loves fish, especially trout.



Mara:

Mara was born on August 8, 2008 at the Pittsburgh Zoo. She weighs about 265 pounds. Mara is currently on view at the Tiger Hut in the yard adjacent to Changbai. McGlothlin describes her as "laid back and calm," but she is not

a fan of maintenance workers. She vocalizes frequently, especially when she is in estrus, which is every month for 10 days. She has had three litters, two with Foli, our previous male, and one with Jupiter. She likes fish and most enrichment items, including traffic cones, but her favorites are paper and boxes. Nuss says that most tigers like boxes, but they soon become bored with them. Mara, however, "never lost her cub-like enthusiasm for paper and cardboard. When she had the cubs with her and we'd give them boxes all over the yard, she would *always* try and sneak one away for herself to tear up, but one of her cubs would always steal it away from her! Now she has them all to herself."



Natasha:

Natasha was born on April 19, 2012 and came to us from the Bronx Zoo in April 2019. She is on view in the main tiger yard, alternating with Jupiter. She weighs about 295 pounds. McGlothlin says that although Natasha was a little slow to warm up to them, “she is adjusting well and is fairly calm most of the time. Right now, she really loves Jupiter!” Natasha came to the Zoo knowing a lot of behaviors. She loves to train and Nuss says that she is one of the smartest tigers she has ever worked with. Although Natasha likes boxes, she doesn’t go after them immediately. The following day keepers will find “a million pieces of cardboard all over the yard!” Natasha “goes nuts” for Victoria’s Secret Very Sexy HOT perfume and she loves the spice garam Masala. Unlike our other tigers, Natasha does not like fish.



Changbai:

Changbai was born May 24, 2007 at the Philadelphia Zoo. She is named after the Chinese Mountain Reserve where Amur tigers are found. She had a litter of cubs in 2017 at the Beardsley Zoo in Connecticut and came to Columbus in October 2019. At 361 pounds, Changbai is our largest female. Nuss says that Changbai and Mara seem to enjoy being neighbors when they are inside. After a period of adjustment, Changbai is warming up to her keepers. Nuss says that she is the only adult tiger that will return her “chuff” greeting. If you stop by the Tiger Hut in the afternoon you might catch a training session. Her favorite perfume? White Linen, “on anything!” She also loves trout and enjoys the rabbits she gets once a week.

--Bev Larson

Photos courtesy of Graham S. Jones

Sources: Thank you to Asia Quest animal care staff Laura McGlothlin and Christy Nuss.

The Chevrotain is Neither a Mouse nor a Deer!

The “mouse deer” or *chevrotain*, came to the public’s awareness last November when photographs of a subspecies that was thought to be extinct were widely published. The animal had not been seen for 30 years but after a long search it was sighted in a forest in Vietnam. The Vietnamese mouse deer, *Tragulidus versicolor*, is the world’s smallest hoofed animal.

So, do we have that species here at the Zoo? No, but we *do* have two greater Malayan chevrotains, *Tradulus napu*. Lili and Legend came to us from the Bronx Zoo and were introduced to the flying fox habitat in mid-February. They may have access to the back area as they adjust to their new home. The pair are full sisters, even though they are five months apart. That’s because chevrotains breed within hours after giving birth and the gestation is five months! Legend was born June 12, 2017 and is larger than Lili, born November 15, 2017.

Keeper Carrie Ritchie describes them as “typical hoof stock,” but they are far from typical in size. Chevrotains are about the size of a large rabbit, just over a foot tall at the shoulder and about 2 ½ feet long. They can weigh between 11 and 17 pounds.

When standing, the hindquarters are taller than the front end. They have neither horns nor antlers, but males have elongated canine teeth that they use for fighting.



“Chevrotain” comes from the old French word “chevrot,” for “kid” or “goat.” The common name is “mouse deer,” but they aren’t goats, deer or mice! It is thought that chevrotains are the evolutionary link between ruminating ungulates like deer and cattle and non-ruminating ungulates like hippos and pigs. Chevrotains have changed very little in 30,000 years.

The greater Malayan mouse deer is one of the largest members of its genus, found in subtropical and tropical forested areas of Malaysia, Sumatra, Borneo and parts of Thailand and Myanmar. They are solitary, nocturnal animals. In their native range their diet consists of fallen fruit, aquatic plants, leaves, flowers, and buds. The IUCN rates the chevrotain as an animal of least concern. Its MLE is 7.2 years.

--Bev Larson

Sources: Laura McGlothlin, Carrie Ritchie, Columbus Zoo Information Manual: Greater Malayan Chevrotain; Mouse Deer

Plant of the Month: Winter Aconite

Have you seen this cute little yellow flower poking its head out of the dreary winter landscape in Asia Quest announcing that yes, Spring is coming? Winter Aconite, *Eranthis hyemalis*, is even earlier than crocus and is often called Choirboys and Winterlings. It is also another example of how planning immerses guests in the experience as these little flowers in the buttercup family *Ranunculaceae* are native across Asia to Japan and southern Europe. If you wish to have this cute addition in your yard, plant the fleshy tubers about five inches deep and about four inches apart in late fall. The foliage covers the mud after the blooms are gone. They can even be naturalized in your lawn as their leaves will wither by the time you first mow your grass.



--Juliann Breeding

Sources: Learn About the Care of Winter Aconite Plants by Anne Bailey. April 4, 218. Retrieved February 18, 2020 from www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/bulbs/winter-aconite/growing-winter-aconite-plants.htm;

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Southern White Rhino Success at The Wilds: Is it Just Luck?

It was big news last fall when two additional fifth-generation Southern white rhinoceros (SWR) were born at The Wilds. We are the only place outside of Africa to have had this on-going success.

According to Dan Beetem, director of animal management at The Wilds, there have been 22 white rhinos born at The Wilds since 2004, including 10 fourth generation and 4 fifth generation animals. This refers to how many generations the animals are removed from their wild ancestors. The Wilds received the Bean Award from AZA in 2017 for this long-term breeding program success.



Photos courtesy of Graham S. Jones

Cause of Reproductive Challenges

In a paper delivered in late 2017, Christopher Tubbs of San Diego Zoo Global gave this explanation for reproductive challenges in SWRs in human care: "Our research into this phenomenon points to chemicals produced by plants present in captive diets, such as soy and alfalfa, as likely causes." Herbivorous animals under human care are often fed pelleted diets containing soy and alfalfa, and both are high in phytoestrogens which can disrupt hormone functions in some species.

As a result of this research, San Diego has developed a new feed formulation that might eventually be available to other institutions. Until that happens, the recommendation is for facilities holding rhinos to limit pelleted feed and to increase hay.

Why is The Wilds so Successful?

Timing

From his study, Tubbs believes that the impact of phytoestrogens is greatest during conception and early pregnancy. According to Beetem, during the winter, our SWRs eat the same pelleted diet as almost every other rhino in zoos. However, the animals at the Wilds are out in pasture during conception and pregnancy, and are eating lots of fresh grass and very little pelleted food.



The Herd

Beetem says, " We believe that our ability to keep a large social group of animals together is a big part of our success. Young rhinos grow up around breeding adult females and calves, and learn appropriate behaviors, as they would in the wild. At this time, all of the animals in our main breeding herd

were born and grew up at The Wilds. Only the adult breeding bulls were born at other zoos."

We look forward to the ongoing success of the rhino breeding program at The Wilds.

---Sue Allen

Thanks to Dan Beetem, Director of Animal Management, The Wilds, for his significant input to this article.

Additional Source: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/10/171026142308.htm>

Turtle-y Awesome!

Turtles, what's not to like? Visually, their body style is impossible to miss, the result of evolutionary trends going back over 200 million years. As a reptile with a boney shell, fused backbone and ribs, and limb attachments inside that boney shell, turtles are uniquely out of the ordinary!

But turtles today are in decline. As of 2017, turtle experts studying the 356 species of turtles have come to the conclusion that approximately 61% are threatened or have become extinct. The reasons seem familiar: unsustainable over-harvesting for food and the pet trade, habitat destruction, the impact of a warming world (the sex of many turtles is determined by egg incubation temperature) and disease.



So what is so good about turtles and why should we care? Much research has been done about turtles and the role that they play in the environment. In all stages of their lives (from egg through life and even in death) both as consumers and as prey, they are an important link in the shaping and productivity of the ecosystem. Their eggs are a source of nourishment for predators; infertile eggs and the shells and membranes left after hatching return nutrients to soils, beaches, water and the microbiome around them. Even dune grasses grow into the eggs of a turtle nest for nourishment while stabilizing the dunes as nesting habitat for the turtles.

Their eating preferences shape the plant and animal life of the environment. For example, hawksbill sea turtles eat sponges which can outcompete coral for space on the reef. This turtle diet reduces the competition for space between the two and encourages the growth and health of corals. Plant life is also shaped by what turtles eat. Turtles are important seed dispersal agents and germination enhancers through seed scarification from digestion. The process: eat vegetation and seeds - digest and scarify the seed coat (to allow the eventually deposited seed to absorb water and develop the seed embryo) - walk away - poop - drop seeds in fecal pellets - germinate new plants - enhance and restore the environment! As an example, the only known seed dispersion agent of the spring-blooming mayapple is the eastern box turtle. And scientists have found that the eaten mayapple seeds germinate faster and have a better chance of success than non-digested seeds.



Burrowing turtles are considered ecosystem soil engineers as well as providing habitat for other occupants of their burrows. Snakes, rodents, rabbits, lizards, gopher frogs and others share the burrows of gopher tortoises. The soil disturbance of these burrows allows for water and gas diffusion, soil layer mixing and more diverse vegetation, and regulates soil nutrient cycling. This has a huge effect over large areas.

These are just a few of the “accomplishments” that turtles achieve in their lives. Scientists are exploring many more. And, of course, turtles make more turtles - there are many interesting statistics on the biomass of turtles in their environment. Turtle decline and not understanding their importance in maintaining their habitat and their important

relationship to the ecosystem will ultimately make our world a poorer place. How sad to have to reflect on the idea of the loss of even one species in the age of mankind, when this ancient race made it through the extinction event of 65 million years ago that wiped out the dinosaurs. We must learn and take care of our world.

2020 has been declared The Year of The Turtle by the Tennessee Aquarium, fostering a global outreach and education effort to prevent the extinction of turtles and tortoises. The Turtle Survival Alliance, the Tennessee Aquarium and Peppermint Narwhal Creative together with a large group of several zoos, aquariums and conservation organizations are behind this effort for turtle conservation and research.

#Turtles2020 #YOT2020 #SavingTurtlesTogether

- Chris Lutmerding

References:

(from the author: The first article below is the best and should be read by all turtle lovers!)

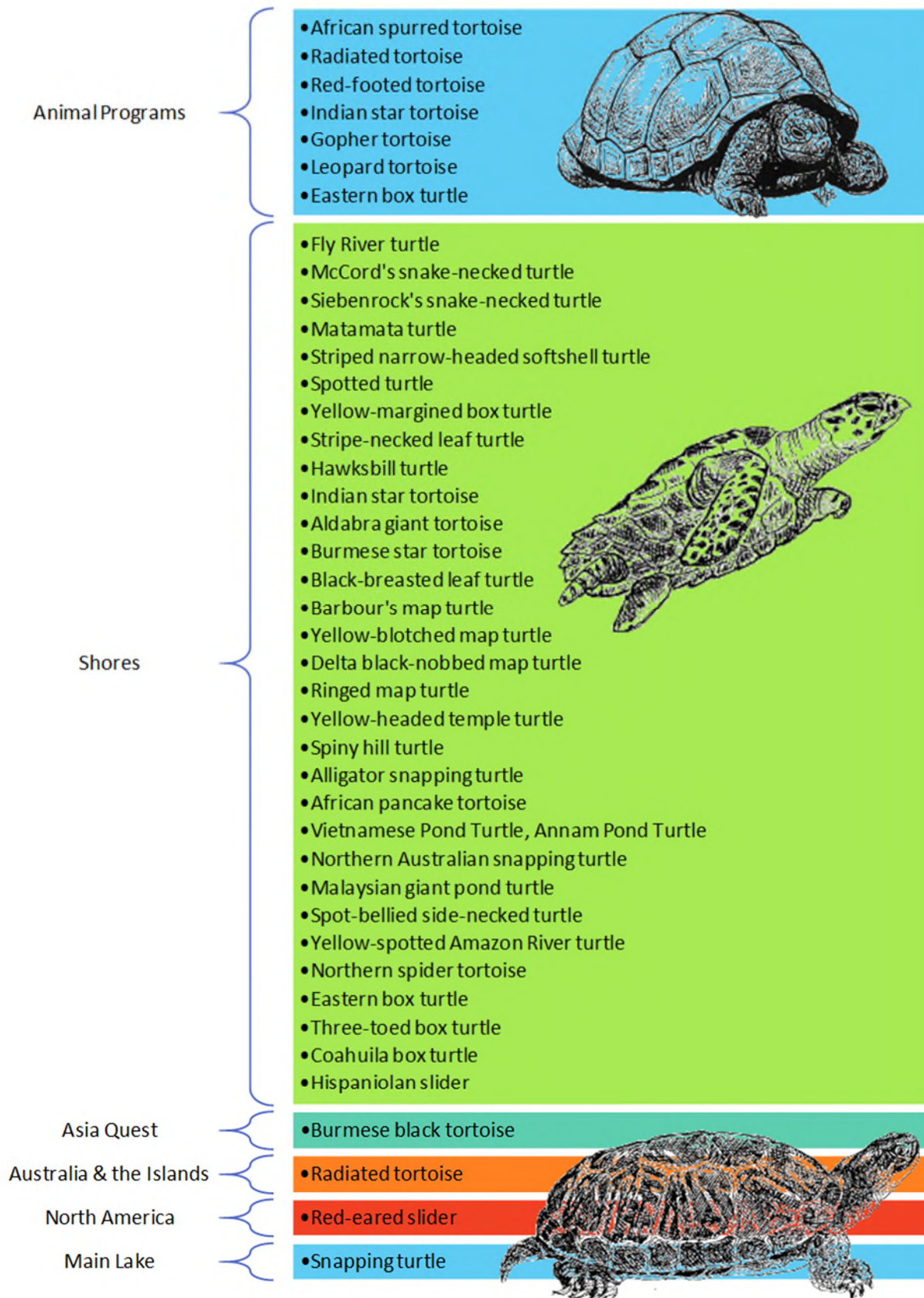
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Tennessee Aquarium's "Year Of The Turtle" www.tnaqua.org/yearoftheturtle

Turtle Survival Alliance, 2020 Year of The Turtle-Saving Turtles Together turtlesurvival.org



At the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium we are always happy to "shell-ebrate" our turtles and tortoises; here is where you can find them. (Thanks to Shelly Roach, Registrar, for this information).



REGIONAL NEWS



Asia Quest

Two pieces of sad news from Asia Quest: Paval **Pallas' cat** was humanely euthanized following a period of declining health and Stetson **musk deer** passed away suddenly on February 15. Stetson's necropsy results are pending.

In other news, the new **mouse deer** may be seen intermittently in the bat habitat as they acclimate to their new home.

I think I can speak for us all when I say we are looking forward to warmer temperatures and seeing the rest of the region's animals in their outdoor habitats!



Congo Expedition

Damisi **okapi's** pregnancy is continuing right on track. Keepers caught some images of the calf on a recent voluntary ultrasound and the little one was very busy moving about! Training for the birth watch will be on Tuesday, March 31 from 6-7 p.m. and Saturday, April 4 from 1-2 p.m. You must be a docent and attend one of the training sessions (sign up on Volgistics) in order to participate in this watch, which will begin Tuesday, April 21. There will be two shifts: 5-8 p.m. and 8-11 p.m.

The **mandrill** yard received a little bit of a face lift thanks to our Horticulture Department. You will notice a lot of deadfall and more usable space for the mandrills (e.g., logs leading up to the trees, large dead trees with multiple levels for perching, etc.). So far, the keepers think the mandrills approve! The "renovations" also help our older mandrills be able to use more of the habitat space. Staff continue to manage two subgroups, so Julie and Eebi are often not visible.

The keepers have noticed Mosi vomiting up red liquid. They recently immobilized him in an effort to find some answers. After doing so, they discovered that he has ulcers and are waiting for the results of the biopsies to find out the cause. If you notice this behavior, please let the keepers know so they can track it.

The **leopard** yard received some new mulch to help with the muddy ground cover. The keepers did not want any of the leopards to slip, especially our lovely Sita. The leopards continue to rotate their spaces.

Colobus Jabari is recovering from her C-section and the hair on her belly is slowly growing back. The group loves the random nice days we get in the wintertime so, if the sun is shining and it is above 40 degrees, stop by to visit.

The **bonobos** are all doing well and really enjoyed the celebration of World Bonobo Day on February 14. Staff would like to thank everyone who supported the fundraiser by

REGION NEW S

purchasing a magnet. If you missed out, the magnets are still available in the education office.

The **orangutans** are status quo, but eagerly awaiting the spring and warmer temperatures. The new indoor area construction has been delayed until August, so you will not see these amazing redheads in their yard for a good portion of the summer.

Gorilla birth watch training is scheduled for Thursday, March 19 from 7-8 p.m. and Sunday, March 22 from 2-3 p.m. Please sign up for either session on Volgistics. You must attend one training session and be a docent in order to participate in Cassie's birth watch, which will begin Wednesday, April 1 and last until April 30. There will be two evening shifts: 5-8 p.m and 8-11 p.m.

The Gorilla SSP has recommended that Kambera move to Zoo Atlanta to be part of a new group they are forming. There is not yet a timeline for this move as there are several other moves that need to take place prior to it. The Congo team is very excited about this opportunity and feels that it will be good for her. Please note that this information is being shared with you at this time as a courtesy; it is not to be shared publicly. As there are often ears where you do not see them, it would be appreciated if you would please refrain from discussing the topic with other volunteers in public places as well. Curator Audra Meinelt is happy to talk to you if you have any questions. Thanks!

Docents and adult volunteers: If you missed the February Enrichment Workshop, you still have one more opportunity to participate! According to the keepers, "A LOT" of enrichment items are wanted to celebrate this campaign. All of the items made will be given to the gorillas in their habitats. To participate on Sunday, March 8, you must be TB tested. The workshop will run from 9 a.m. to noon. Please sign up for it on Volgistics.



Heart of Africa

You know spring is approaching when savanna introductions begin. The target date is March 20 with the fence going up as the keepers start with a quarter of the yard, then half and, finally, the whole savanna when the animals are ready. Oh to be on the Shamba when all the animals are getting rid of their winter kinks by pronking and kicking up their heels. March and early April is also the time keepers give vaccines to all of the hoofstock and the giraffes – preparing them to go out for the season.

Unfortunately, **Thomson's gazelle** CC did not calve this winter. After the last possible date for her gestation and still no calf, the keepers did an ultrasound exam and found she was not pregnant. The plan is to put the girls back with Ducati toward the middle of May, so they can breed throughout the summer. Hopefully, the keepers can

REGION NEWS

“time” calving in the fall and winter months again. Thanks to the incredible Dr. Junge, **dama gazelle** Kix’s horns were saved! The plaster casts worked by stabilizing her horns.

North America



Regrettably, the **aviary** lost one of its amazing birds. The towhee was a favorite and will be missed.

Billy **cougar** was euthanized in January due to health complications. Jessie is adjusting well and is receiving lots of extra TLC from the keepers.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the **wolverine** birth watch.

Sadly, Audrey **otter** was humanely euthanized in mid-February for health related reasons. At nearly 19 years old, she far outlived the North American river otter median life expectancy of 12.3 years. Audrey will be sorely missed by all who loved and cared for her.

Oji **moose** has dropped both of his antlers. They weighed in at 28 pounds! He will be rejoining Bertha soon. In the meantime, Oji and Bertha will alternate between the two moose yards.

Sugar **reindeer** dropped both of her antlers and Snowflake and Abby should be dropping theirs soon.

Polar bears Lee and Anana are in the midst of breeding season. Everyone has their fingers crossed in hopes that Lee can once again be a successful dad. Aurora and her cub continue to do well. The sex of the cub was announced by the Zoo on social media at the end of January; it’s a boy!

Shores



The **coral warehouse** is coming along – all tanks are up and running! Staff received their first shipment of live rock and grazing animals to get the tanks cycling, and the first load of coral should arrive soon.

Stingray Bay heaters were installed, the pool is up and running and stingrays will be added to it soon. Everyone is excited to open this experience back up in conjunction with everything Adventure Cove will have to offer this spring. There will be a new entrance/exit for visitors and the garage doors have been replaced with windows. A new HVAC system allows for the building to be open all year for our guests.

REGION NEWS

You will see a few enclosures in the **reptile building** without residents. This is the time of year that staff members break down habitats and do some deep cleaning. Planning is also working to install new water features and put graphic decals on some of the tanks.

The **penguins** started laying eggs at the end of January – cross your flippers that we get some chicks!

Manatee exams were February 6. Stubby weighed in at 2,241 pounds, Bananatee at 499.5 pounds and Tostone at 381 pounds.

One of the **black tip reef sharks** in Discovery Reef is displaying odd swim patterns. It is being treated by Animal Health and the Shores team.

Another group of fish that completed their quarantine period were added to Manatee Coast last month. The group consists of 20 **French grunts**, 20 **cottonwick grunts**, 15 **needlefish**, 5 **rainbow parrotfish** and 10 **doctor tangs**.

Rachel Bares accepted the Shores Terrestrial Position. She will primarily be working in reptiles starting at the end of February. Rachel was an intern and seasonal in the region prior to accepting this position.

Tasmanian devil, Sprout, enjoys a close-up from time-to-time ... don't forget to visit him and his friends in Australia!



Photos courtesy of Bill Blair

MARCH - Zoo Hours: 10-5:00

- WE 4 Chili Luncheon: 11-2:00—Africa Event Center. Sign up to volunteer
- SA 7 *Docent class: Shores*
- SA 7 Reverse Raffle 6:30-10:00. Sign up
- SU 8 Gorilla Enrichment Workshop: 9-12
- SU 8 Frog Watch Training: 1-4:30. Certification option-4:30-5:00—Education Auditorium.
Contact: amy.torrey@columbuszoo.org
- SA 14 *Docent class: Congo Expedition. Wilds Presentation: 9:30-11:30.*
- TU 17 Kickoff Meeting: 7:00—Lakeside Pavilion
- TH 19 Gorilla Birth Watch Training: 7-8. Sign up.
- SA 21 *Docent class: Australia and the Islands*
- SA 21 Museum of Biology Diversity: Free Open House/Free parking—10-4:00
- SU 22 Gorilla Birth Watch Training: 2-3. Sign up
- TU 24 **Region Meeting: Animal Programs—7:00**
- SA 28 *Docent class: Heart of Africa*
- SU 29 Frog Watch Training: 2-5:30. Certification option 5:30-6:00—Education Auditorium
Contact amy.torrey@columbuszoo.org
- SU 29 Enrichment workshop (paper mache): 10-2:00— BYO drink—Waters Edge. Sign up
- TU 31 Newsletter meeting (before region meeting)—5:30.
- TU 31 **Region Meeting: Animal Health—7:00**
- TU 31 Okapi Birth Watch Training: 6-7. Sign up

NOTE: **Docent classes: Experienced docents may attend afternoon sessions from 12:30-4:00 in the Education Auditorium. Sit in the back of the class.*

APRIL - Zoo Hours: 9-5:00

- SA 4 Okapi Birth Watch Training: 1-2. Sign up
- SU 5 Enrichment workshop (painting): 10-2:00 —Waters Edge. Sign up
- TU 7 **Region Meeting: North America—7:00**
- FR 10 Eggs, Paws & Claws—9-5:00
- SA 11 Eggs, Paws & Claws—9-5:00
- TU 14 **Region Meeting: Asia Quest—7:00**
- SA 18 Party for the Planet—Earth Day Celebration —9-5:00
- TU 21 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner—Africa Event Center—5:15-8:00. Sign up
- SU 26 *Flamingo Awareness Day*
- TU 28 **Region Meeting: Shores—7:00**

NOTE: *All region meetings are in the auditorium unless noted otherwise. Dates are subject to change.*

Our Vision: The Sustainable Co-existence of All Living Things
Our Mission: Lead and Inspire by Connecting People and Wildlife