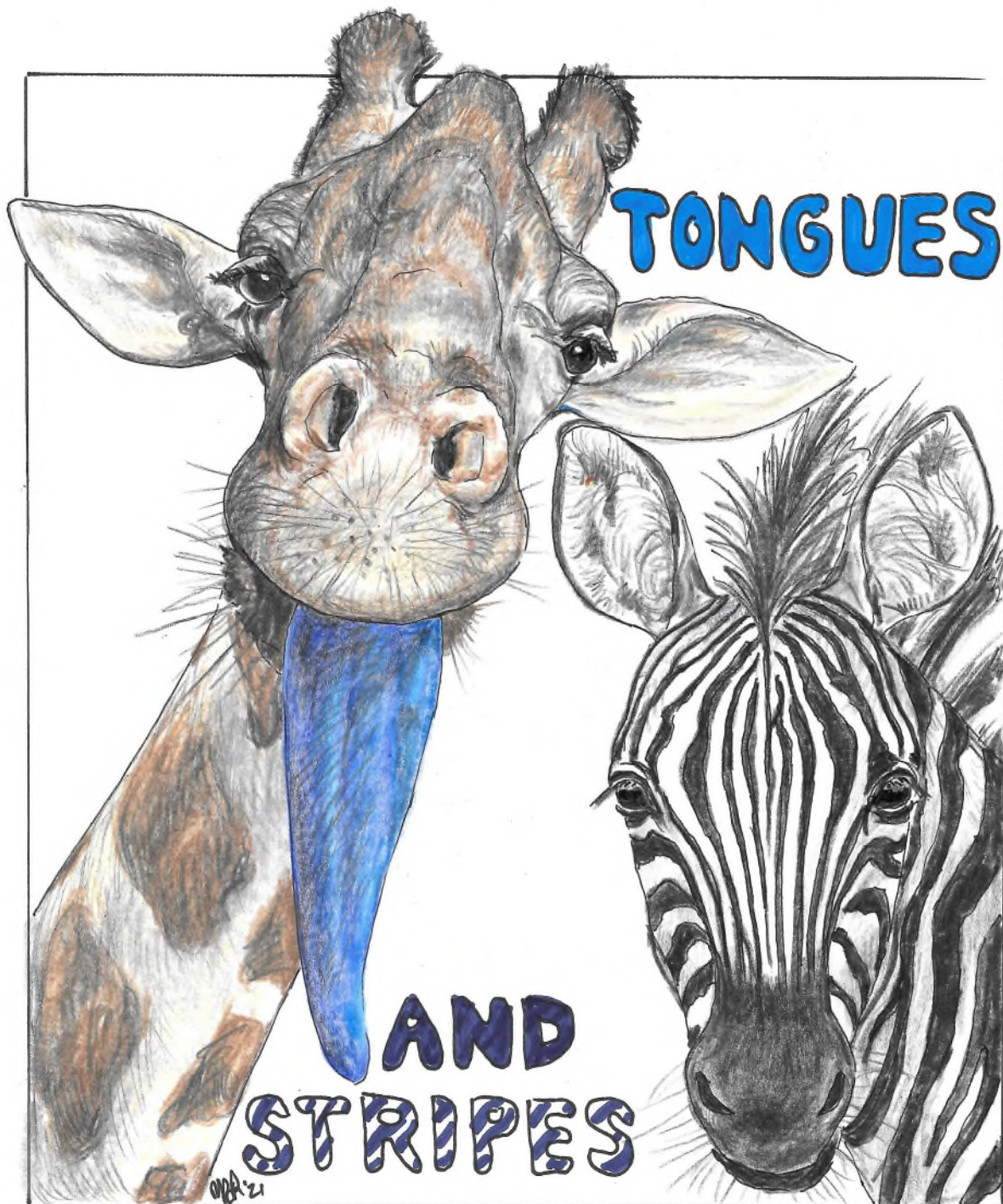


May 2021

The Columbus Zoo
and Aquarium
Volunteer Newsletter

ZooNews





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

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this issue

Tips from a Docent.....3-4

What's the Big Deal?.....5-6

What to Expect When You're Expecting a 250 lb. baby.....7

Bald Eagles, Trumpeter Swans Recover in Ohio.....8-9

We Used to Think the World was Flat.....10-11

Region News.....12-23

BRIAN!

He's majestic, weighs approximately 3,500 pounds, and is an important representative for his vulnerable species. And his name is Brian.

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium has recently welcomed a 4-year-old greater one-horned rhino from the Center for Conservation of Tropical Ungulates (CCTU), an Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Sustainability Partner located in Florida. Columbus Zoo Animal Care staff, along with a staff veterinarian, and Facilities team members, traveled with Brian to ensure that he arrived safely.

Brian's move was recommended as part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' (AZA) Species Survival Plan® (SSP), a cooperatively managed program designed to maximize the genetic diversity and increase the population sustainability of threatened and endangered species in human care. Currently, there are approximately only 80 greater one-horned rhinos in zoological facilities in North America.

Providing a home to a greater one-horned rhino at the Columbus Zoo is extremely important. It also further allows the Columbus Zoo and The Wilds to partner together on the vital effort to breed this vulnerable species. Greater one-horned rhinos are solitary by nature and only come together during breeding. When a male and female do come together, the courting behavior can be rather extreme. The pastures at The Wilds in Cumberland, Ohio, are a perfect location for these introductions. With this in mind, the Zoo and The Wilds support the Rhino SSP program by having the Zoo house Brian, The Wilds' future breeding bull. This partnership will allow for an easier transition when the time comes for The Wilds to welcome Brian and introduce him to the females.

Guests who visit the Columbus Zoo's Asia Quest region will notice that renovations are taking place in the rhinoceros yard. The habitat will include several new features, including the expansion of the two smaller yards into one larger space, a pool for this semi-aquatic species, and additional viewing locations for Zoo guests. The renovations, which are being funded thanks to the generosity of Franklin County voters supporting the Zoo levy, as well as other financial support and contributions, are expected to be completed in late spring.

To further protect the future of rhinos, the Columbus Zoo and The Wilds have provided more than \$218,000 in the last five years to support conservation projects benefiting rhinos in their native ranges. This includes monitoring black and white rhinos in Zimbabwe's Lowveld region through the International Rhino Foundation, protecting black rhinos in the Ngulia Rhino Sanctuary in Kenya through the African Wildlife Foundation and habitat restoration focused on the shortgrass that white rhinos eat through the White Rhinos: Rhinoceros Fund Uganda. The Columbus Zoo is also an active participant in the AZA's Saving Animals From Extinction (SAFE) program for black rhinos. The Wilds is the only facility outside of Africa with white rhinos born four and five generations removed from their wild-born ancestors.

A photo of Brian can be found in the Asia Quest Region News on pg. 14 of this newsletter.



Tips from a Docent: Volunteering During COVID19

The understatement of the year 2020 was that things got challenging, but outside my family, nowhere more dear to me than the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. Shortly after the Zoo reopened in June 2020, I began to stick my feet into the docenting/volunteering waters by trying my hand at Manatee Coast in the Shores region. Not going to lie, it was a little scary to work my way through so many people trying to reach the relative safety of the stage area, where I could use a microphone to deliver information and remind folks to socially distance themselves.

Not many folks were wearing masks at that point (Delaware County established mask mandates later on), and I decided to forego the manatees for a while in favor of Polar Frontier, where I could reliably stay back from the guests and answer questions from beyond a stanchioned area. There were some very satisfying moments when I left feeling I had done my civic duty keeping people moving along, but always with a tidbit or three about the bears and their total indifference to the pandemic. Kulu was (and is) a joyous boy, and his mother made the ideal playmate/teacher, so even on a cold day when there was no one to observe but me, it was quite enriching to observe the goings-on in polar bear world.

Eventually I joined the dedicated team of folks who fed the giraffes, and throughout the summer, signed up to

feed Enzi and Shaggy and Utu and the other very willing giraffe participants in their continuous feeding sessions throughout the day. More people were wearing masks as they went through the line, and I grew more comfortable being close to guests and giraffes and staff all in a rather narrow space. Life had returned to a semblance of normal as far as my docent day went.

However, I was missing the manatees, one of my favorite species at the Zoo, and tried it again in hopes of not



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

having to plow through a densely packed, mask-free slice of humanity in the public aisle on the way to the Manatee Cove stage area. So glad I did, because the day I chose to return was the last day for Bananatee and Tostone. The boys were set to continue the next phase of their rehabilitation journey by moving back to Florida the following morning, and soon thereafter came the introduction of Scampi and

Squirrel, orphaned babies in need of a rehab home.

On the boys' last day in Manatee Bay, they and their companion Stubby had access to a large square frame made of PVC pipe mounted with brushes on the sides that could be used like a car wash bay. All three animals swam through and around the device over and over again, getting scratches along their sides, and dragging the toy this way and that. You could sense the fun and pleasure the experience was providing.

I returned two days later to discover the device gone, but our new guests Scampi and Squirrel were getting used to the ways of the Columbus Zoo, shepherded by the ever-capable Stubby. The little girls had been introduced to Manatee Coast just the day before, and in fact, my very first sight of them was Squirrel, the younger newcomer at six months, hovering over Stubby's back and not moving away from that reassuring contact for any reason. Scampi, closer to a year at that point, was also trying to make contact with this strange new surrogate, but Stubby very distinctly waved the larger youngster away with a flipper over and over again.

I thought the preference for one over the other was my imagination, but when I moved upstairs to the holding pool in the back, it happened again and again. Stubby was not interested in having Scampi get close, and was totally peaceful with little Squirrel riding her back and following her every move. At one point, Squirrel was taking a baby nap and did not notice Stubby leave through the chute door to return to the habitat pool. Squirrel woke and exhibited a bit of panic as she searched all around the holding pool for her new protector, swimming all over the place trying to locate her. Finally Stubby returned to the back as if to make sure the little girls were all right, and she led Squirrel out to the big pool, stopping to block Scampi from passing through the chute. I saw her at least five more times on my behind-the-scenes watch making an effort to stop Scampi from either entering or exiting through the connecting gate, so it appeared to be a definite preference for the baby. A keeper later confirmed that Stubby had exhibited the same differential attitude to Carmen, allowing more contact with Heavy Falcon. I had not imagined it, nor, after I thought about it, was it strange that she had an opinion about a particular manatee and acted upon it. Stubby has given care to some thirteen orphaned baby manatees in her twenty years at the Columbus Zoo, so her methods are naturally going to differ depending on the individual. And a baby is a baby, after all!

Fortunately, Scampi, being older, was more independent on her arrival here, and to this day, she strikes out barrel-rolling for the far reaches of the habitat on her own. Her natural personality? Her more developed experience on arrival? Or maybe the reception she received from mom, Stubby from the get-go? Maybe all three, but Stubby made sure that the littlest orphan received the care and confidence she needed, and Scampi is providing a good example of striking out on one's own to explore and develop independently. A perfect combo.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

Be sure to sign up and work Manatee Coast, and experience the relationships among three of our most interesting residents at the Zoo. I wonder when the keepers are going to break out the PVC play device again. Scampi will explore it first, followed by an ever-braver Squirrel, thanks to her wonderful surrogate mom Stubby.

— Cindy Payne

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

The news is starting to spread - Phoebe is pregnant again. So, what's the big deal about another elephant baby, aside from the size of the calf, that is?

THE IMPORTANCE OF BREEDING

The significance of an elephant birth is huge.

Neither the Asian or African elephant population in North American zoos is self-sustaining. **The Asian elephant population currently averages 1.8 births but 5.6 deaths per year. Currently less than one third of all females are considered breeders, a few are too young, most are too old.**

The African elephant population is in slightly better shape as there are more young females, but both groups are in danger of being "reproductively dead" if more breeding does not happen soon. That is, many of the current cows will be past breeding age and there are not enough young females to maintain a viable population.

The population dilemma - older animals, not enough babies.

ELEPHANT DEMOGRAPHICS

There are fewer elephants in zoos today and fewer zoos housing elephants than any time in the last 50 years.

240 AZA Accredited Institutions
218 " " " in US
62 Institutions in the US with elephants
147 African elephants (36.111) in 33 zoos
121 Asian elephants (32.89) in 28 zoos and 1 sanctuary
5 zoos with both species

Since the early 1990's 24 zoos have closed their elephant habitats. Several of these are in large metropolitan areas such as Chicago, Seattle, Philadelphia and Toronto thus limiting residents there the ability to see these magnificent animals in person. Three others, all housing Asian elephants, have announced they will follow suit when their animals are gone. The reasons are complex, but the lack of elephants to fill zoo space is also a major factor.

- Ohioans are fortunate, we have four zoos with elephants. The Cleveland and Toledo zoos have African elephants, Columbus and Cincinnati have Asians. This is unusual. There are 21 states without a single elephant in any of their zoos.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

HOW TO MAKE A BABY ELEPHANT

Elephants are slow to reproduce. Even under the best circumstances a single calf will be born every four to five years and that calf will not be a breeder itself for a considerable number of years.

The disparity in population figures between males and females means many cows do not have access to a bull. Currently only 15 US zoos house male Asian elephants. Although recent advances in artificial insemination have made it possible to breed cows without direct access to a bull, the process is time consuming, expensive and not a panacea. To date the procedure has been more successful with African elephants than with Asians. Self supporting herds are still preferred.

There can be complications related to the pregnancy and delivery if a cow is not initially bred by her mid 20's. By this time many cows quit cycling altogether, a condition known as flat-lining. Additionally, some experts believe that first time mothers in their 20's experience a fusing of the pelvic bones that make delivery a life-threatening event for mother and calf. If cows are bred by this time, however, they usually continue to ovulate into their mid to late thirties.

Now you see why a baby elephant is such a big deal!

—Nancy Mulholand

Sources: Adam Felts, curator, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium; AZA.org



Photo courtesy of Nancy Mulholand

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EXPECTING A 250~POUND BABY!



There is a large amount of interest in Phoebe's pregnancy and much we can discuss with Zoo guests as we wait.

Breeding

Phoebe was artificially inseminated (AI) with sperm from Hank in September 2019. An elephant pregnancy lasts 640 – 660 days, plus or minus 14, or about 22 months. Phoebe's last pregnancies lasted 643 and 659 days. Using this data as a guide, the new calf is expected mid to late June.

Why A.I.?

The declining zoo elephant population (see other article "What's the Big Deal?" in this issue) has all zoos with breeding-age females and all zoos with males working diligently toward making babies. Artificial insemination is a relatively new procedure, but it is a method to make a pregnancy when there are no males present or the male-female pair do not mate naturally, for whatever reason. There have been 24 calves born since the technique was perfected, the first arriving in 1999. However, only eight of those have been Asian calves. Phoebe has had four calves and is an extremely good mother; ***it was important for the entire Asian elephant population*** that she conceive again and soon.

The pregnancy was diagnosed through routine blood work, specifically serum progesterone. When we approach the due date, a drop in the serum progesterone will signify the birth is imminent - two to five days away.

Pre-natal Care

Phoebe is in the third trimester of a very normal, albeit long, pregnancy. There have not been any changes made to her routine or to her diet, both of which are monitored daily. She is not receiving pre-natal vitamins, since all our elephants receive a hay-balancer pellet, which is a vitamin and mineral supplement. Although Phoebe typically walks a lot, she also participates in a daily exercise program which is believed to be especially important to pregnant elephants. All elephants are weighed weekly.

Phoebe is also having weekly ultrasound exams. Tests such as these that humans receive during pregnancy are not directly applicable to elephants due to their size. They do confirm a live fetus and monitor its progress, but they will not be able to determine the gender of the calf.

Does Phoebe "look" pregnant? She does, but not as conspicuously as a woman in her third trimester. In the late stages, breast development and colostrum production might be noticeable to docents and guests.

What's next?

This is Phoebe's fourth calf in Columbus, her fifth overall (her first calf, George, lives in Canada). She has had easy pregnancies and fast labors. Both the Animal Health and Elephant Department staffs have a lot of data to assess her health and that of the calf and to help plan for the delivery. Phoebe will be monitored 24 hours a day at the late stages. Keepers and veterinarians will not intervene in the birthing process unless absolutely necessary, but will be close by to comfort Phoebe and tend to the newborn. Rudy and Sunny will also be nearby to observe the event; it is important that, as future mothers, they see the birth and the new calf.

A newborn can weigh anywhere from 200 to 300 pounds at birth and stand approximately 3 feet high. Large by human standards, a newborn calf weighs only about 4% of its mother's weight; a newborn human weighs about 7% of its mother's weight. Bodhi and Beco, at 285 and 303 pounds, were large babies. With a large father, there is the possibility of another big baby.

— Nancy Mulholand

Sources:

Adam Felts, curator, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
Biology, Medicine and Surgery of Elephants, Murray Fowler and Susan Mikota, Blackwell Publishing, 2006.
Elephants; Zoo Biology, Vol. 23, Issue 1, *Successful Artificial Insemination of an Asian Elephant at the National Zoological Park*, Janine Brown et al

BALD EAGLES, TRUMPETER SWANS RECOVER IN OHIO

The recovery of American bald eagles and trumpeter swans in Ohio continued at a strong pace last year, according to research by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife.

Both species are represented in the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's North American Region.

A bald eagle nest census conducted last year by the Division with the assistance of citizens across the state confirmed 712 nests located across Ohio. That number is 153 percent higher than the 281 nests recorded in the last census, conducted in 2012.

A separate ODNR survey last year estimated a record 650 trumpeter swans in Ohio, nearly 20 percent above the 2019 level. That number includes, among others, 98 nesting pairs, up 16.7 percent from the previous year, and 235 cygnets, a 19.9 percent increase.

The results for both species are the result of work by the Division of Wildlife and its partners, including Ohio's zoos, in supporting conservation of high-quality habitat in the state, according to Meredith Gilbert, a wildlife communications specialist with the division.

American bald eagles were once an endangered species with only four Ohio nesting pairs in 1979. However, successful efforts to protect the American symbol allowed the resurgent raptor to be removed from the federal endangered species list in 2007 and from Ohio's list in 2012.

Eagles remain federally protected.

Last year's census found eagles in all but three of the state's 88 counties compared with fewer than 60 counties in the 2012 census. More than 50 nests were found in the Columbus metro area, nearly triple the previous census, led by Licking County's 17 nests.

The Division of Wildlife also conducts several bald eagle surveys each year by helicopter flyovers. Although the midwinter survey showed a decline in eagles from a year earlier, that is likely the result of several factors, including reduced survey efforts resulting from Covid-19 protocols, Gilbert explained.

Trumpeter swans might have been seen in Ohio in the early 1990s only as they migrated. The birds were considered extinct as a nesting species in the state due to the loss of wetland habitats and other factors.

About a quarter of a century ago, the species was reintroduced to the state, using birds captured from other states, like Wisconsin, that had strong populations, said Gilbert, who earlier in her career was an interpreter at the Columbus Zoo.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

Trumpeter swans are still considered threatened in Ohio. They require large wetland habitats to forage for stems and leaves of plants like waterweed, and the birds compete with other species in these habitats. Concerns continue about invasive species in the wetlands, as well as lead poisoning and illegal hunting.

The bulk of Ohio's trumpeter swan population resides in northwest Ohio, particularly the marshes along western Lake Erie. However, some swans can be found in central Ohio at Big Island in Marion County.

Wildlife biologists from Ohio, four other states and Canada, are studying the trumpeter swan population in the

Mississippi Flyway and are fitting swans with solar-powered GPS collars to learn about their nesting, migration, and other activities. <https://trumpeterswan.netlify.app/>



*Photo courtesy of Nikki Smith and
the Ohio Department of Natural Resources*

A dozen adult swans were fitted with collars last year by Ohio's team, which included several employees of Ohio zoos, one of whom was Nikki Smith, assistant curator of the Columbus Zoo's North America Region. One of the collars, which cost \$1,200 each, was funded by the Columbus Zoo's chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers.

Smith's small group met at the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge last summer, when the swans were in molt and thus less able to fly away. The goal was to collar one adult in a breeding pair.

"We went out in boats and grabbed them on open water," Smith recalled. Once the group returned to land with a bird, they took measurements and a blood sample, collared the swan, and returned it to the water where it was captured. She called this "an amazing experience" and a great opportunity to be involved with a local effort to conserve the species.

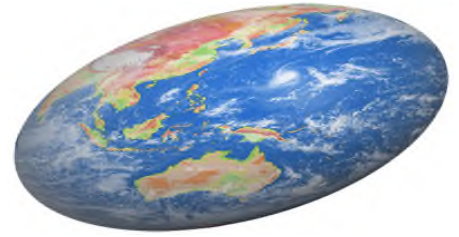
The Zoo is home to three American bald eagles, Cheyenne, Sioux, and Zuni, and two trumpeter swans, Cher and Georgeanne.

— Barney Wolf

Sources:

Gilbert, Meredith, wildlife communications specialist, Ohio Division of Wildlife
Smith, Nikki, assistant curator, North America Region
Ohio Department of Natural Resources web page, www.ohiodnr.gov

WE USED TO THINK THE WORLD WAS FLAT



As science educators we sometimes face the dilemma that the most recent information, what we might think of as "really cool," contradicts previously believed thought, printed material, information on the web and folklore. Here are three examples you might find yourself explaining this summer.

Hank is the Largest Elephant in the Country

Hank's a big guy, bigger than most bulls, but he's also lost a considerable amount of weight in the last few years and weight records aren't kept. Focus on the size difference between males and females, the fact that Beco is just an adolescent with several years of growing yet to do, and that only 15 US zoos have male Asian elephants and only nine of those zoos have two or more males.

Source: Adam Felts, curator Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

The Muscles of an Elephant's Trunk

The elephant's trunk is the most unusual appendage in the animal world - a sensitive, strong, dexterous nose, used like a hand. It is also an organ of enormous complexity. A normal limb, such as our arm or a horse's leg, is moved by muscles pulling against jointed bones. A



Photo courtesy of Nancy Mulholand

trunk does not contain bones - it is a muscular hydrostat, a structure that can bend, extend, and change shape by

muscular movement only. Other examples of hydrostats, which primarily function in manipulating food to the mouth, include an octopus's tentacles, a manatee's nose and our tongue. The elephant's trunk is more complex, is more functional and more complex than the others mentioned.

An elephant's trunk is made up of 100,000 to 150,000 individual separately moving muscle units. The exact number isn't known as there has never been a complete dissection of a trunk. Often quoted, old estimates of 40,000 are wildly inaccurate.

Sources: Elephants, Majestic Creatures of the Wild by J. Shoshani, Checkmark Books, 2000

Zebra Stripes

The purpose of the zebra's stripes and why zebras evolved to have stripes and why other hooved mammals did not has intrigued scientists since the days of Charles Darwin. Many theories have been put forth, but only **one has been proven**.

Zebra hair is shorter than that of most savanna hoof stock and shorter than the mouthpart of biting flies, so they may be particularly susceptible to insect bites. However, the black and white coloration of the zebra discourages biting insects such as tsetse flies and horse flies, who prefer hosts with plain coats. Solving one riddle often creates another – it's well known that flies avoid striped surfaces, but the reason has yet to be determined

The once popular belief that stripes "dazzled" or confused predators through disruptive coloration has been discounted, although it is still frequently mentioned in literature or on web sites. Two other possible purposes, to aid in thermoregulation by creating a rotary breeze and for foals to find their mothers, *might* have merit.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

"We used to think stripes confused predators, but now we know that's not the case. Insects bite striped animals less often than plain ones" is an accurate statement.

The black and white dilemma

- All zebras have white fur with black or brown stripes, the skin under the white fur is black. Some populations have faint shadow stripes between the bolder ones.
- Stripes are vertical on the body and become horizontal on the rump.
- No two zebras have the same stripe pattern, although each of the three species has its own general pattern.
- From north to south within the animals' range the stripes on the hind quarter become less bold.

Source: Scientists Solve the Riddle of the Zebras' Stripes by Tim Cato et al, Univ. of California Davis

The Giraffe's Tongue

A giraffe has its long tongue exposed to the hot African sun for hours and hours every day. Although often mentioned as such, **there is no scientific proof the bluish-purple color is an adaptation to prevent sunburn.** The okapi, a forest dweller that doesn't have as much sun exposure also has a long, dark tongue. Polar bears have dark tongues, several breeds of dogs, such as the Shar-pei and chow have dark tongues and the Angus and Jersey breeds of cattle do, too.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

We're advised to not directly bring up the subject with guests, but when asked you can respond that the old belief has not been proven to be correct.

— Nancy Mulholand

REGION NEWS—ANIMAL PROGRAMS

Thank you to the presenters and all the members of the volunteer community who attended the Adventure Cove and Cheetah Yard/Watering Hole training for the Animal Programs region. There are now more training references on the portal. New additions under the Animals Programs tab include documents explaining/covering training demonstrations, pinniped pointers, common questions in Adventure Cove, sea lion Bodega's medical care and a Cheetah Yard/Watering Hole checklist. Those documents will assist you when you're in the region.

The Eggs, Paws & Claws event Egg-splore-n-Find trading cards in April included one of Cali Sea Lion. Additional experiential event dates include an opportunity to enjoy yoga classes with sloths October 23-24 and a Cheetah Conservation Fund event on October 29. Ticket information will be available via the Zoo's website.

Upcoming region meetings for Animal Programs will be on May 4, June 29, August 24 and October 19. Though we miss seeing everyone in person, Zoo Zoom presentations provide the opportunity for many more volunteers to join the fun at once.

Speaking of fun, you'll often see a splash coming from behind the Training Pool curtains in Adventure Cove. The **sea lions** and trainers are in preparation mode for when the 250-seat theater can be safely utilized as intended for scheduled presentations. Times for the training demonstrations and cheetah runs will be posted on the portal in lanyard card format.

Sea lion pups Sunshine and Norval are still growing. Sunshine remains reliant upon her mother's milk, while Norval has been eating fish more readily. Dr. Katie Seeley shared a story about Qizai having a successful root canal performed by a veterinary dentist for an upper-right canine tooth that may have been damaged during sea lion transport. Toby is participating in intubation training and an ultrasound procedure was conducted to check if there were remnants of a plastic bag within his stomach from his time in Florida. Sea lions do not have a gag reflex, so the process was smoother for Toby than you might imagine. Sea lion Banana likes to jump up on the North Pool window.

Bodega, our dominant and largest senior sea lion, has twice-daily massage therapy with a personalized plan created by a specialist from MedVet as part of his care regimen. Our trainers massage Bodega



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Davis

by hand and with Kong toys to help restore mobility to his lower body. You may see Bodega's treatment sessions occurring on the Central Pool deck. He also continues to receive weekly cold laser therapy.

Volunteers can enjoy staffing both the Adventure Cove Deck and the Adventure Cove Tunnel as each area provides a different perspective. On the deck, you can see animal interactions with trainers as well as a view of the Zoombezi Bay log ride being dismantled followed by the building of a family roller coaster. In the tunnel, you'll see sheer joy on guests' faces as animals swim above, below or beside them. You will also notice enrichment toys in the water for animals to interact with in addition to watching the animals further explore their habitat.

We're entering the time of year when the barking volume goes way up as the male **harbor seals** and **sea lions** enter rut. This will be manifested in louder and more frequent barking, weight gain and sparring. For instance, harbor seal Keaton has begun surfacing and blowing air through his nostrils in a snort/cough, which is succeeded by rolling on his side and slapping the water with his hind flippers. This is his way of keeping females close to him and other males away.

The Cheetah/Watering Hole area for volunteers will consist of one combined position covering both places this year. Young **cheetahs** Adrienne and Dave will be spending more time in the Cheetah Yard and it will be great to have volunteers help watch them get acclimated.

As the weather warms, spaces will be available to work in the indoor and outdoor areas of Animal Encounters Village. While there, staff would love for you to talk about the themed conservation messages within the village as well as the animals.

Please don't hesitate to sign up in this ever-changing region – newcomers and veterans are welcome!



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney



Photo courtesy of Astrid Kreidl

REGION NEWS—ASIA QUEST



Photo courtesy of Bev Larson

Happy spring, Asia Quest fans! There's lots of exciting happenings in the land of fur, scales, wings and trunks. The biggest news is the arrival of a brand-new species to the region, a 4-year-old **greater one-horned rhino** (or GOHR for short) named Brian. He is currently getting used to his new surroundings and his care staff behind the scenes in the elephant/rhino building. Initially, it's likely that guests will see him inside the building. The renovations to the rhino yard are expected to be complete in early May. *Please remember to keep this information confidential until a public announcement is made.*

Elsewhere in the building, Phoebe **elephant** is doing great with her pregnancy. With her due date being in June, she's in the home stretch now and guests have tons of questions! If you're ever unsure which

elephant is Phoebe, look for the small hole in her left ear. A document with general information about elephant pregnancy and Phoebe in particular, along with frequently asked questions, is available on the portal. The rest of the elephant family is doing well. If overnight temperatures are warm enough, all the elephants have access 24/7 to an outdoor yard – either the main yard or the breeding yard.

New **silvered leaf langur monkeys** Bernie and Jasper have been integrated into the bachelor group, so you'll see five cool dudes hanging out together now. No breeding is planned for this year, so all the females in the breeding group are (or soon will be) implanted. Breeding male Thai is still with the family. Both groups have outdoor access when weather permits.



Photo courtesy of Nancy Mulholand

Baby **tufted deer** TJ has been introduced to the yard and to his dad, Dexter. If you've noticed some deer in unexpected places, it's not your imagination! The tufted deer have been out in the musk deer yard so they can get used to being outdoors without the cranes around. Both species of deer should be back in their usual yards by May.

The **Burmese mountain tortoises** may be seen either in the aviary or the bat habitat depending on the weather. Both **chevrotains**, Lily and Oona, can be seen in the bat habitat along with the **blue-faced honeyeaters**. All of the **aviary** birds should be outside by the time this newsletter comes out.

No pregnancy news for Natasha **Amur tiger**, but another attempt will be made soon. She and Jupiter are still rotating in the yard. The **sloth bears** will also be put together very soon.

Another new arrival to the region is 2-year-old **Pallas' cat** Moose, who is very active. He completed his quarantine and will soon be joining Manda. We'll look forward to seeing him in the habitat!

All is well with the **red panda** family. Many volunteers have asked for identification tips. Here are a few: Kora has the darkest face; Bandit has the lightest tail; Santi has the lightest face. A document with photos will be available soon, so keep an eye out for that.



Photo courtesy of Bev Larson

REGION NEWS—AUSTRALIA & THE ISLANDS

The region/Zoo will be doing a sex and name reveal on the **koala** joey soon! There was a well-care visit toward the end of April and, at that time, the baby was 1.55 kilograms. It looks healthy and well!

Gouda **loris** had her baby. However, they are still in the back due to COVID precautions. The care team does not know the sex yet and is still working on a name. Never fear, it's sure to be cheesy!

There is a LOT of construction going on right now. Hopefully, all will be back to normal in the next couple of weeks. Once that occurs, docents will be needed again to support this awesome region!

Dinosaurs are arriving soon and will be installed at the beginning of May for a late May opening. They are supposed to be the most realistic yet!

Although the **Lorikeet Garden** is still closed, staff are in the process of determining when it will open. **Congo Aviary** birds and the **gray parrots** will likely be starting to go out within the next two weeks, and keepers hope to have those habitats up by mid-May.



May 1, unassembled dinosaur

Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney



May 2, assembled dinosaur!

Photo courtesy of Bev Larson

REGION NEWS—CONGO EXPEDITION

Jamani **gorilla** turned one and had a lovely first “Bee-Day” party. Now that she’s bigger, the group will be able to get more enrichment items and she will start taking a multivitamin. Mac’s group is doing well; the kids are getting bigger each day and are as rowdy as ever. Nia has joined Ktembe’s group and the introduction



went very well! She’s even been seen holding Jamani a few times. Ktembe and Mac are getting reacclimated to being able to see each other in the new building so, if they’re both inside, Mac’s group will likely have access to the back area for a visual break.

Construction on the new **orangutan** building is moving along. The keepers are looking forward to getting them in their new place soon (hopefully)! In other news, all three orangutans have been amazing about training for voluntary blood collection. Staff hopes to get blood from them soon. Doing so will help them monitor different aspects of their health in the months between their regular exams.

Mosi **mandrill** continues to grow up right before our eyes. His adult canine teeth have been coming in and he’s getting more and more colorful. All of the ladies are doing well.

Gander, Jerry and Elema **bonobos** have been adjusting to their new normal after the loss of their mother, Unga. They’re doing fine, but group changes are happening frequently just to keep them socialized and happy. Everyone, animals and keepers alike, have been excited about the warmer weather and the ability to get out into the yard!

Depending on the weather and construction noise, the **okapis** will stay in certain yards or just be given access to them to accommodate for the commotion. El Jewar, Miliki and Damisi have all been doing pretty well with the noise and the keepers have all been adjusting to a barn without Karatasi.

Claire **colobus** was recently immobilized to treat a wound on her left shoulder and the area was shaved as a result. The hair is growing back but isn’t quite filled in yet. Aside from that, the monkeys are all enjoying being out in the warmer weather.

To continue the trend, **leopard** brothers Tyrion and Jamie and **red river hogs** Harold and Harriet are loving the warmer weather! Many little holes and dug up spots are visible in the hog yard from them snorting through everything. The leopard boys have been basking in the attention from all the guests.

REGION NEWS—HEART OF AFRICA

The region is open for business and 2021 is going to be a great season!

If you haven't heard, we have two baby **dromedary camels** in the small yard this year. Their names are Larry and Moe. Larry is the smaller, darker one of the two and Moe is a beautiful sand color. Moe came into the world on December 5 of last year and Larry was born exactly one month later. Needless to say, they are adorable!

The returning adult camels for camel rides are Riddle (11), Luke (10), Bo (8), Archie (9), Ghost (11) and Lippy, who is 13 years old and everyone's favorite. Camel rides are presently operating daily from 10-5. Starting May 29, they will be available from 10-6:30 each day. Tickets will be the same as last year at \$7.00 and are included in the Zoo More wristbands.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

As Shannon mentioned during the docent training class, nothing is set in stone other than **lion Roary** will not be housed with Asali. Currently, the keepers are making sure that both Asali and Roary get to spend equal time with the other females (Kazi, Imara and Nyasi) as well as time out in the large lion yard. If they are not in the lion yard, they do have access to the back holding yard and, hence, the option to be outside. Because the keepers are rotating the lions, you may see Roary outside with the girl(s), by himself or all four of the girls together. It will just depend on the day, but they are getting along great!

Young male **vervets** TomTom and DJ James Kennedy will be moving to Zoo Boise soon but, as of yet, no date has been set. In the meantime, the keepers have had to break down the troop due to dynamics. Currently, TomTom and DJ will be seen with Betsy, Lucy and Todd. When this group is shifted out, Sassy and Bob will be seen together allowing each group equal time in the vervet yard. Once TomTom and DJ move, the keepers will work toward getting the troop back together.

Weather permitting, you can now see the **giraffes, wildebeests, greater kudus, ostriches, dama gazelles, Thomson's gazelles and slender-horned gazelles** out on the savanna. By the time you read this, the **zebras** will have been moved out of their winter holding yards to join them. **Ostriches** will be in the Watering Hole in the morning and evening as in past years. The **East African grey-crowned cranes** and **saddlebill storks** will be out on the savanna once overnight temperatures are consistently in the mid-40s or higher. Our **guineafowl** ladies will probably have access to the savanna this year. Their clucking will be missed in the small yard by



the Shamba.

Giraffe feeding will be from 10-5 daily at \$3.00 per feeding and is not included in the Zoo More wristbands. Guests can come up to the Shamba from 9-9:45 for viewing and, once the Zoo remains open until 7:00, the Shamba will be open for viewing from 5:15 until closing. Giraffe Sammie (mother Digi) has been introduced to the feeding yard. As with the beautiful Schaefer (Jana) and lovable Ralph (Zuri), the keepers started with the half feeding yard before moving to the full yard. Temperatures for the "Littles" must be 55 or above. Rest assured that everyone will see them soon. Ralph and Schaefer are so tall that Shannon feels we may have two additional feeders this summer!



Photos courtesy of Cindy Wesney

REGION NEWS—NORTH AMERICA

Swans Cher and Georgeanne are back in their habitat after wintering at My Barn and are doing well.

All of the **My Barn** animals (goats, sheep, cows and chickens) are doing great and enjoying the warmer weather. The goats, sheep and cows all received spring physicals and vaccines.

Our **Mexican wolves** are doing well as is Banjo **pronghorn**.

Bison Clover's horns were continuing to turn down toward her face, so they were trimmed and she is doing wonderfully.

The **beavers** now have access to the old den in the wetlands building to the right of the pool. Please point them out to guests who might be looking for them.

Otters Paso and Catori are doing well and so are the **eagles**.

The **aviary** is bustling with nest building and birds gearing up for breeding season.

The **lynxes**, **sandhill cranes** and **prairie dogs** are all doing well as is Montana **bobcat**.



Photo courtesy of Astrid Kreidl



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

Stevie and Joan **black bears** are getting along just fine.

Jessie **cougar** is doing well. Goldie, Poppy and Captain Cal are still behind the scenes recovering from their exams but, hopefully, they will be back in their habitat by the time this newsletter comes out. Thanks to everyone who helped watch those cuties!

Alvar and Guillotine **wolverines** have been reintroduced and are back in their habitat together, which has been updated with new perching and shelves.

Bertha **moose** is doing fine.

Our **reindeer** have all dropped last year's antlers and new growth has started.

The **arctic foxes** are doing well.

Brown bears Brutus and Buckeye are out of torpor and more active. They continue to be many guests' favorite animals to visit.

Polar bear Anana was introduced to Aurora and Kulu; it could not have gone better! Thanks to everyone who helped watch the bears!



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

REGION NEWS—SHORES

A **zebra shark** left for the National Aquarium.

Two **Humboldt penguin** chicks hatched and one is a female. The other's sex has yet to be determined. Both are just starting to peek out of their nest boxes.



There is a new juvenile **humphead wrasse** in the Tidal Pool and a new school of **flagtail kuhlia** in Discovery Reef.

You will see some new **southern stingrays** in Stingray Bay. They were born in Manatee Coast this year.



Charmin McSnugglebum



Acorn



Einstein

Photos courtesy of Peggy Heffelmire

REGION NEWS—THE WILDS

Spring started here with the first births of the year. Several **Sichuan takin** kids were born and the **Pere David's deer** followed shortly thereafter. Both are seasonal breeders and work on their own schedules.

There have been some SSP changes in the **greater one-horned rhino** herd. We have a new bull from Florida and a new female from New York. Our old breeding bull was transferred to another facility in Florida. These new animals are currently in quarantine and will stay at the rhino barns for the season. Our old female Sanya and her calf, Rohini, will be out in pasture when tours start running again.

Preparations are underway to open for the regular tour season. The usual April moves were delayed by a stretch of cold weather but, since it warmed up, staff members have been working to get the herds out of their winter holding areas and back into pasture. Please come out and take a tour (or go fishing, or horseback riding, or zip lining, or stay overnight) this summer!



Photo courtesy of Bonne McGowan



Photo courtesy of Kathy Ragsdale