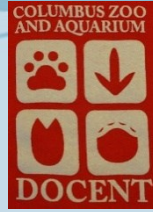
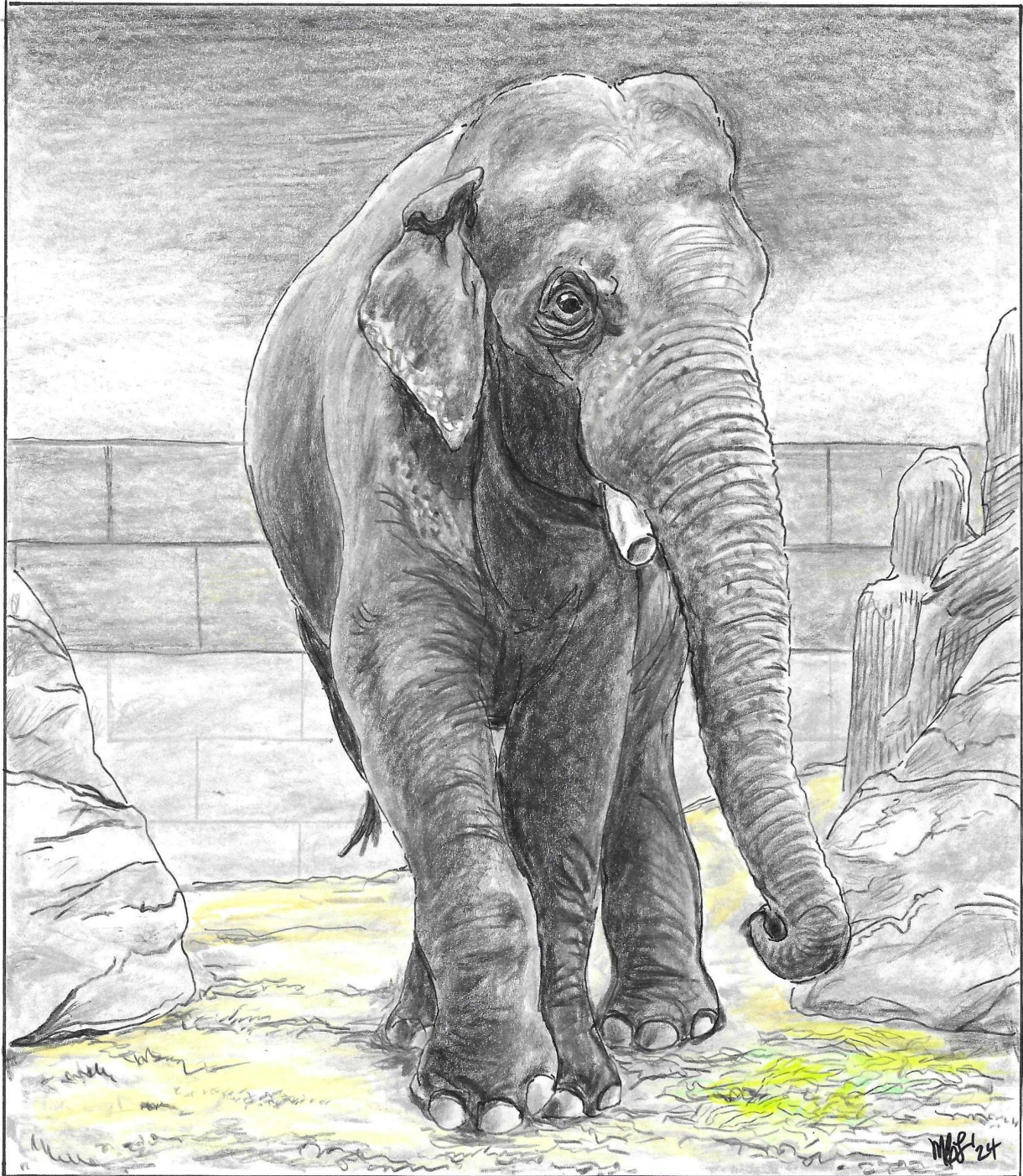


Volunteer Newsletter

The Columbus Zoo
and Aquarium
Volunteer Newsletter



August 2024





Editor-in-Chief

LINDA CASTNER

Layout Editor

CINDY WESNEY

Copy Editors

KATHY GOLDSMITH

KELLY HANLIN

CATHY SHADE

CINDY PAYNE

Staff Artist

CHRIS LUTMERDING

Team

SUE ALLEN

JULIANN BREEDING

KAREN LINN

NANCY MULHOLAND

DEBORAH POLING

MARY ROSE

SALLY RUDMANN

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

To submit an article, please email us at: cbuszooneews@gmail.com

this issue

Zoo Accreditation Acronyms	2, 3
Hoo-Knew	3
So Glad You Asked ... Why Are Johnson's Tusks So Short?	4, 5
Goodbye and Hello	6, 7
Stories from Shores	8, 9

ACCREDITED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS



Zoo Accreditation Acronyms

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is accredited by many organizations and below is a list of them, their full titles and a brief listing of their purposes.

AMMPA -- Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums. An international association and accrediting body for marine parks, aquariums, zoos and research facilities. It supports public display facilities, education, research, rescue and rehabilitation of marine mammals which meets or exceeds standards and guidelines of care of these animals. <https://ammpa.org/about/who-we-are>



Humane Certified -- This organization is the first national humane organization in America and the largest certifier of humane treatment and welfare of animals in working and other environments in the world. www.humaneconservation.org



ZAA -- Zoological Association of America - This association upholds very high professional standards in animal welfare, safety and ethics and is dedicated to responsible wildlife management, conservation and education. It has 1000 members and more than 65 accredited facilities. www.zaa.org



WAZA -- The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums - It is an alliance of global, regional and national associations, federations, zoos and aquariums dedicated to the care and conservation of animals and their habitats. WAZA has 400 global members and promotes cooperation among its members and with wildlife experts, academics and universities in management of species conservation and animal husbandry. www.waza.org



AZA -- Association of Zoos and Aquariums - Dedicated to advancing zoos and aquariums in conservation, education, science and recreation with 251 accredited zoos, 15 accredited related facilities in 46 states and 13 countries providing excellent care for more than 800,000 animals. These facilities prioritize conservation benefiting more than 800 species in 130 countries.

- The Association of Zoos and Aquariums operates several programs such as SAFE or Saving Animals From Extinction which is a collaboration of experts in managing and saving species.
- SSP or Species Survival Plan is an animal population committee which manages Taxon Groups, species survival programs and studbook programs for cooperative animal management, conservation and scientific initiatives.
- Wildlife Trafficking Alliance or WTA is a cooperative of 80 companies, non-profit organizations and zoos to reduce and eliminate illegal trade of wildlife and wildlife products.

www.aza.org



IMATA – International Marine Animal Trainers’ Association --Dedicated to the humane and professional care of marine animals, ensures facilities provide cutting-edge educational opportunities, modern training techniques, and expert management. <https://www.imata.org/>



Asia Quest Aviary

Did you know that a Cattle Egret can live up to 20 years in professional care?

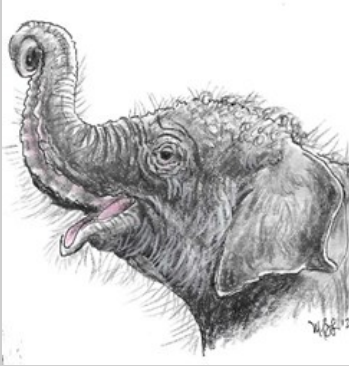


HOO-KNEW?

Stingray Bay

Did you know that individuals in a litter of stingrays are called pups?

So Glad You Asked ... Why Are Johnson's Tusks So Short?



The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium has housed male Asian elephants for 50 years. During that period, we've seen a variety of tusk lengths, diameters and shapes on our male residents. From 2011 until recently the primary question docents answered was "What's wrong with that elephant's tusks?" whenever a guest saw Hank. His long, asymmetric, curving tusks were so very different from expectations. Sabu's arrival 20 months ago provided us opportunity to see two adult males and the distinct differences in their tusks. Now we're being asked, "Why are his tusks so short?" when guests see new elephant Johnson.

Johnson's tusks are not unique. Most male elephants in zoos have their tusks trimmed on a regular basis. Males can be extremely rambunctious in rough play with balls, barrels and logs. Tusks on young animals are narrow and thin and can easily chip or crack. If this occurs the injury is filed smooth or trimmed off to prevent the crack from getting worse, possibly introducing dirt into the wound and leading to infection.

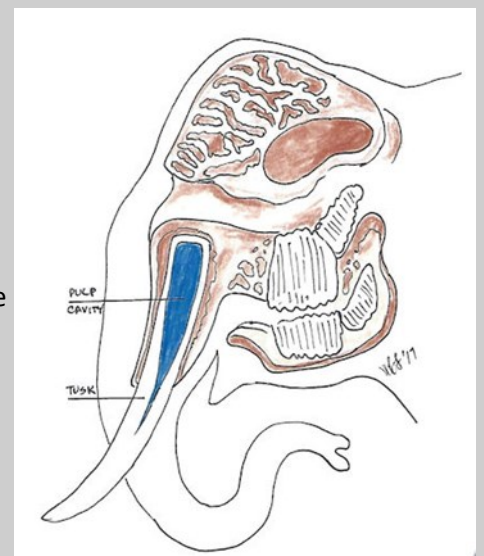
Routine trimming helps the tusk grow thicker and stronger making it less likely to crack and conditions the elephant behaviorally to having his mouth and tusk area touched, so that if an injury does occur it can be treated quickly and easily. Flat tusks are also more comfortable than pointed tusks for herd mates if a larger male pushes them.

Tusk Basics

Known as "tooth tools," tusks are used for many tasks: to dig for tuberous foods and water, to strip bark off trees, as levers to move heavy objects, as trunk rests, for social interaction, and as weapons. **They are more useful as tools than weapons.**

A tusk is a continually-growing upper incisor tooth made of "ivory" - chiefly calcium and dentine. Tusks are chemically similar to bone or antler, without the blood network but denser. Elephants can have tooth decay, chipped tusks or malocclusions. All of our elephants have their tusks and teeth checked daily as part of their husbandry routine.

Tusks on an adult elephant grow 4 – 7 inches a year but only 2 – 4 inches on a juvenile. About one-third of the total length of the tusk is embedded in the skull and is not visible. Most elephants have pulp cavities containing blood vessels and nerves in the hollow base of the tusk. The pulp cavity is the location of the laying down of dentine internally for the continued growth and development of the tusk.



Continued on page 5

Both genders of the African elephant have tusks; those of the male are usually longer and thicker. Only the male Asian elephant has tusks that are visible. Female Asians have small incisor teeth called tushes rather than tusks, which are rarely visible. These teeth do not have the same pulp cavity as other elephants' teeth, hence their smaller size. Their source of growth comes from the lining of the tooth socket.

Tusk Care at the Zoo

The purpose of tusk care at a zoo is to protect the elephant, his herd mates and staff from possible injury and to prevent having to do dental work at a later time. Tusks do not have the same protective enamel coating as molars. In their native ranges it's natural for elephants to wear down their tusks when rubbing on trees to get bark, digging or in interactions with other elephants. Zoo animals live in a different type of environment and there is less opportunity to wear down tusks naturally. Very long tusks make it difficult for a zoo elephant to get into proper alignment for routine husbandry such as nail filing or blood collection and are more likely to break.

Trimming Basics:

- Trimming does not hurt, probably feeling similar to having a fingernail trimmed.
- A radiograph is taken prior to trimming so the exact location of the pulp cavity can be determined and avoided.
- Trimming is done with a hand wire saw while the animal is awake and standing still.

—Nancy Mulholand

Sources:

Fowler and Mikota. (2006) *Biology, Medicine and Surgery of the Elephant*. Blackwell Publishing

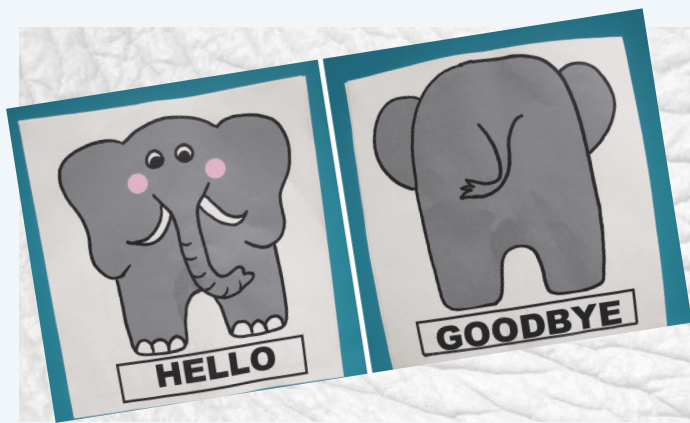
Eltringham, S.K. (1991) *The Encyclopedia of Elephants*. Salamander Books

Shoshani, Jeheskel. (2000) *Elephants, Majestic Creatures of the Wild*. Rodale Press

Thank you to Adam Felts and Laura McClothlin.



Grahm S. Jones, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium



Goodbye and Hello

2024 will be known as a year of massive change within the Asian elephant community in North American zoos and the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is right in the middle of this exciting and monumental activity. Let's take a look at the changes coming to our herd and other herds around the country.



COLUMBUS

In a very hectic four-day period in late June:

- Connie and Hank, accompanied by five Zoo staff members, moved to the Tulsa Zoo where they join 52-year-old females Sooky and Booper and 51-year-old male Sneezy in a newly renovated complex that includes two barns and 10 acres of outdoor habitat. The trip was very smooth and they have settled in nicely since their arrival.
- After visiting for almost two years, Sabu returned to the Cincinnati Zoo. His stay in Columbus was unique. Although we have housed elephants for other zoos undergoing renovations on two occasions, Sabu was the first male, the only visitor to mix with our herd, have a breeding recommendation and be cared for by Zoo Animal Care staff.
- Twenty-three-year-old Johnson, one of two new bulls we've been expecting, arrived from African Lion Safari in Cambridge, Ontario. In the next year or so, Raja, a 32-year-old bull from the Saint Louis Zoo, will join our herd.

There are also physical changes coming to the region.

- The former elephant yard on the south side of the Asian Elephant Conservation Center is being incorporated into the North America Trek renovation project. What was the rhino yard in this same area is being renovated and will become a new, larger elephant yard with lots of flexibility. The pool is being modified in depth and will become more of a splash pad type element than a bathing pool. There will be multiple hay feeders of different styles and new fencing for guests and elephants alike. The old tour area will become a tour/training space with a large training panel similar to what is inside so staff can engage with the animals at an outdoor location. Completion is expected this fall.
- The former rhino habitat inside the building will be made into elephant space.

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Columbus is not the only zoo experiencing changes to its elephant herd. There are nine different zoos involved in relocating 12 elephants over a 15-month period that began last fall. This monumental, highly coordinated effort, is designed to pair males with breeding age females in an attempt to increase the population and ensure that guests will be able to see these magnificent animals for years to come.

Continued on page 7

- Nine of the 12 animals being moved are males, moving to appropriate females.
- The Cincinnati Zoo received four elephants from the Dublin (Ireland) Zoo last fall, adding totally new genes into the North American SSP population. Two of these elephants are females, possible mates for Sabu. They also received two juvenile males that are the offspring of the new females.
- In addition to the six zoos already mentioned, the Houston, Oregon and Denver zoos will be moving or have moved males recently.
- Columbus is the only zoo moving or receiving two adult bulls and the only zoo involved in four separate moves with three other institutions.

WHY the RUSH?

The Asian elephant population in North America is not self-sustaining.

- Deaths outnumber births by a significant number and the Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpes Virus (EEHV) affects young Asians more than young Africans, impacting the next generation of breeding animals.
- There is a large elderly population of females in zoos, more than 62% of the population is past breeding age, another 17% too young.
- Elephants are slow to reproduce. The long pregnancy, long birth interval and long time before any calves born will be breeders- makes it extremely difficult to increase the population quickly.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF ASIAN ELEPHANTS IN NORTH AMERICA

318 Accredited zoos in the United States and Canada

27 Zoos with Asian Elephants

11 Zoos with males and breeding age females*

The Asian elephant SSP includes additional elephants privately owned.

*When all transfers are complete.

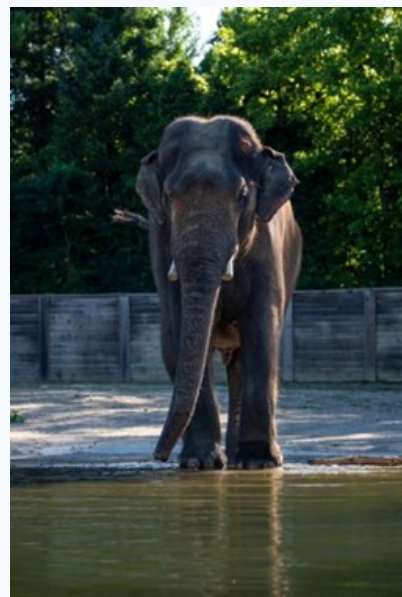
—Nancy Mulholand

Sources:

Accredited Facilities, retrieved 7/7/24 from <http://AZA.org>; <http://ZAA.org>

Columbus Zoo and Aquarium press release; Karen Huebel

Thank you to Adam Felts and Laura McGlothlin



Graham S. Jones, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

STORIES FROM SHORES

Are you looking for stories to share with guests to get the discussion started? Here are some from Shores that you can share.

Penguin Particulars (See April 2023 ZooNews for more)

Human kids go to preschool, and so do our penguins! The goals of our “Penguin Preschool” program are that chicks learn to eat from keepers, learn to swim safely, can get out of the pool, and are able to avoid other penguins when they may choose.

Penguins form bonded pairs. Our bonded pairs have the same color bands, a female has a band on the left and the male has a band on the right. For example: Watson and Tressel – pink; Gunter and Ava – yellow; Oswald and Bertha – grey.

Penguins are distinctly individual in their behavior. Our colony of 14 has a lot going on and each individual brings their own idiosyncrasies to the colony. A few examples are below:



Gunter - He tends to mind his own business. He protects his nest box better than any other penguin and will often be guarding it before the other penguins even realize the nest boxes are in. He has been one of our most devoted and successful parents. He is one of 3 remaining birds that came over from Germany in 1998 and is the second oldest penguin.

Tressel- was named after Coach Jim Tressel after Ohio State won the National Championship in football in 2003. She tends to walk in a hunched position. She is known to be a picky eater and has no problem biting birds that get in her way with little nips.

Stanley Hudson - The first chick hatched in 2024. He is a quick learner and master of the side-eye. He's very particular about what type of fish he will eat and how he's fed his fish.

Thank you to Taylor Hann, Shores assistant curator, for an update and to Cathy Shade.

Continued on page 9

Stubby in Manatees

Pointing to the wall behind the dock.....

Behind that wall there is a large pool where the new arrivals go to make sure they are just fine after their trip north. Stubby swims up to an underwater gate between the two and talks to them. Keepers say it sounds like a squeaky toy.

Thanks to Becky Ellsworth, Shores curator, and Sue Allen



Pelican Ken in Manatees

Pelican Ken had an unusual early life. Hatched around Christmas day in 2008, he chose to hang around a Florida pier, eating hot dogs. A rehab facility took him in, and when he was thought to be in “normal” pelican shape, he was released along with other rehab buddies. All did well except for Ken, who appeared to be starving. He was taken back in and began his journey to Columbus by way of the Texas State Aquarium and the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum.

Knowing that birds in transit, followed by quarantine, can lose their oil-proofing, there were divers in SCUBA when Ken was introduced to our pool. Good thing, as Ken sank! A bit of preening solved that problem and Ken did well on his next swimming adventure. The first time he was allowed to stay all night in the big Manatee Coast pool, the roof was open. His keeper, wanting to know how he was doing, came in in the middle of the night and found Ken swimming back and forth in the gentle rain that was falling through the open roof.

Thanks to Becky Ellsworth, Shores curator, and Sue Allen

