

February 2023

The Columbus Zoo and
Aquarium Volunteer
Newsletter

ZooNews





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

From the President /CEO	2
Communiqué	3
As One Turtle Said to Another ...	4
Accessible Restrooms at the Zoo	5-9
Summary of Locations at the Zoo	10-11
A Rhino Named Brian	12-13
Median Life Expectancy	14-15
Hoo-Knew	16
2023 Training Schedule	16



FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



Greetings Volunteers,

I hope all of you had a great start to 2023. I wanted to share a few updates regarding what we have planned for this year. One significant change is the announcement of a new partner, the SSA Group. SSA provides restaurant and retail services for cultural attractions all over the US, and beginning this month, right here at the Columbus Zoo and at Zoombezi Bay and Safari Golf Club. Over the next several months you will begin to see changes to our food and beverage locations, and our gift shops. Many of the staff that previously worked for the Zoo are now working in the same capacity as part of the SSA team. So far, the transition has gone very well, and I am excited for what their expertise and their funding can do to support our mission and lift our programs.

2023 will also usher in other developments to the Zoo and all of our parks, with major construction continuing on the Hellbender RV park at The Wilds, as well as groundbreaking for our new North America Experience here at the Zoo. These projects are part of a new long range planning initiative that will transform our campuses, here in Columbus and in Muskingum County. As we approach our 100th anniversary of the opening of the Columbus Zoo, we are charting a bold new course for our future. I'll share more details as we move through this planning program, which will last about 10 months. Our future is bright, and I appreciate what each of you do to support our work and our mission; helping us make a positive impact on people, wildlife and wild places. Empowering People-Saving Wildlife-that is what you help make possible.

Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you around the Zoo.

Tom Schmid, President/CEO

Tom Schmid photo courtesy of Graham S. Jones

Communiqué

We are looking forward to another wonderful year with all of you! 2022 had its ups and downs, as all years do, but we are headed in such a positive direction and 2023 will have a lot of wonderful things in store for us. One of the first items on the agenda is the development of a framework to replace our current master plan. This framework will include the Wilds, Safari Golf Course and Zoombezi Bay, unlike our current plan. It will be dynamic and offer us options in the future, versus a static master plan, which is much less flexible. We will keep you posted as the framework takes shape.

Thank you for your patience as we navigate through the Volgistics updates. While we didn't have the option to continue using the old version of the VicNet software, we are hopeful that the updates they made in the new version will result in a better user experience for all of you.

Your continued support of the Zoo is truly valued.

Here's to a new year and new opportunities to connect people and wildlife!

The Volunteer Team,

Ginger, Carole, Mary, Kathy and Rachel

COLUMBUS ZOO FAMILY OF PARKS



COLUMBUSZOO.ORG



ZooNews Index

The updated ZooNews Index can be found on the portal under Newsletter. Click on Newsletter Index to get the most current version. ZooNews Index 2010 to 12-2022.

As One Turtle Said to the Other ...

“Hey - It’s hatching time.” OK, turtles don’t talk exactly like that, but according to reptile keeper Saul Bauer, it has been known for some time now that some freshwater and sea turtle embryos inside the nest communicate with each other to coordinate mass hatching events. According to Bauer, “Mothers of certain South American freshwater turtles wait off shore of their nests when the eggs are about to hatch -- it is still not known how the turtles know when eggs are about to hatch. When hatchlings emerge and enter the river, the adults talk to them to tell them where to go. The adults guide the hatchlings to a sort of ‘estuary’ where they grow.”

Low-frequency turtle sounds, which travel well underwater, are created when the turtles quickly expel air out of their lungs. The turtles don’t have vocal cords to control sound; their noises are described as clicks, chirps, clucks, and grunts.

South American giant river turtles are thought to produce 23 or so Individual “words,” and researchers have detected 2,122 sounds, classified into 11 different types.

As you wander past the turtle habitats in the Reptile Building, consider that there are probably unique communication sounds in every single species you are observing, as researchers believe most species have their own ‘language.’

What about Buddy, our hawksbill sea turtle? Does she have a reason to vocalize? Who knows?

Sea turtle hearing is measured by recording the electrical signals sent from the ear to the brain. This is a non-invasive method for determining hearing, and is the same technique used to measure hearing in human infants.

Sea turtles are generally solitary, but their hatchling-to-mom chatter is similar to that of the river turtles. Researchers have identified 30+ different sounds in some sea turtle species. It is, however, currently impossible to tell what they are saying!

— Sue Allen



Sources:

Saul Bauer, Keeper, Shores Region, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

Ferrera, C. et al. (2014) *Sound Communication and Social Behavior in an Amazonian River Turtle*. *Herpetologica* magazine Vol 70 Issue 2. Retrieved January 14, 2023 from <https://bioone.org/journals/herpetologica/volume-70/issue-2/HERPETOLOGICA-D-13-00050R2/Sound-Communication-and-Social-Behavior-in-an-Amazonian-River-Turtle/10.1655/HERPETOLOGICA-D-13-00050R2.short>

NOAA Fisheries. (June 12, 2022) *Sea Turtles in a Sea of Sound*. Retrieved January 14, 2023 from <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/sea-turtles-sea-sound>
Willis, K. SpringerLink. *Underwater Hearing in Turtles*. Retrieved January 14, 2023 from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4939-2981-8_154



Accessible Restrooms at the Zoo

This past year a group of volunteers took a deep dive into better understanding accessibility challenges and they conducted a survey of the Zoo's restrooms to identify where accessibility may be more challenging for our guests with special needs, such as people with limited mobility, in wheelchairs or scooters, and those who require the assistance of an aide. The following information provides the background on restroom facilities to help volunteers and Zoo staff find the best accommodations for special-needs guests during their day at the Zoo.

First some background information. In 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by the US Congress. This act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and established design standards for new construction and alterations to existing buildings. The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium has followed the design guidelines of the ADA since they were first published in 1991 and updated in 2010. ***It is important to understand that these standards evolve over time.***



Each year we work on improving areas where accessibility has shortcomings. One of these areas is the restrooms. While the buildings and restrooms constructed since 1992 at the Columbus Zoo Family of Parks have been designed to the Department of Justice (DOJ) ADA Design Guidelines, (ADADG) the Zoo still needs to improve some items such as reach obstacles, locations of soap and paper towel dispensers, and aprons at sinks.

Family or universal restrooms at the Zoo are designed to the guidelines of the ADADG 2010 Standards (DOJ enforced), however, those standards were not created for users who might require assistance when needing to transfer from a wheelchair to a toilet. For this reason, many of these spaces will not work for guests who require an aide to assist with transferring, or those who are in need of an Adult Changing Table. The Zoo is in the process of trying to remove or improve some of the obstacles in our family restrooms that become barriers for our staff, volunteers and guests in the following ways:

1. Removing the permanent step stool and replacing with a moveable step stool for children
2. Getting smaller-profile trashcans



Guests Who Require the Assistance of an Aide

The guests who may need the most guidance will be those who require the assistance of an aide. An adult changing room was opened in 2020 in Adventure Cove in the restrooms adjacent to the Stingray Bay Building. This universal / Family restroom was designed for guests who require the assistance of an aide and/or require an adult changing table. It is the Zoo's plan to add more adult changing rooms as improvements are made to the North America region and updates to the west side of the Zoo. Earlier this year, a group of volunteers

evaluated our existing restrooms to see which may be more accommodating for people requiring assistance with an

aide. It is important to note that Universal /Family restrooms are the most ideal for guests who have aides assist them, as there is no assurance that a guest and their aide will both be male or female, so public ADA stalls are not always a choice.

As the Zoo undergoes the Framework plan for all the family of parks, aging infrastructure within our parks will be addressed for change. However, it will take time to redevelop our older areas of our park.

—Karen Schenk, Director of Project and Site Design

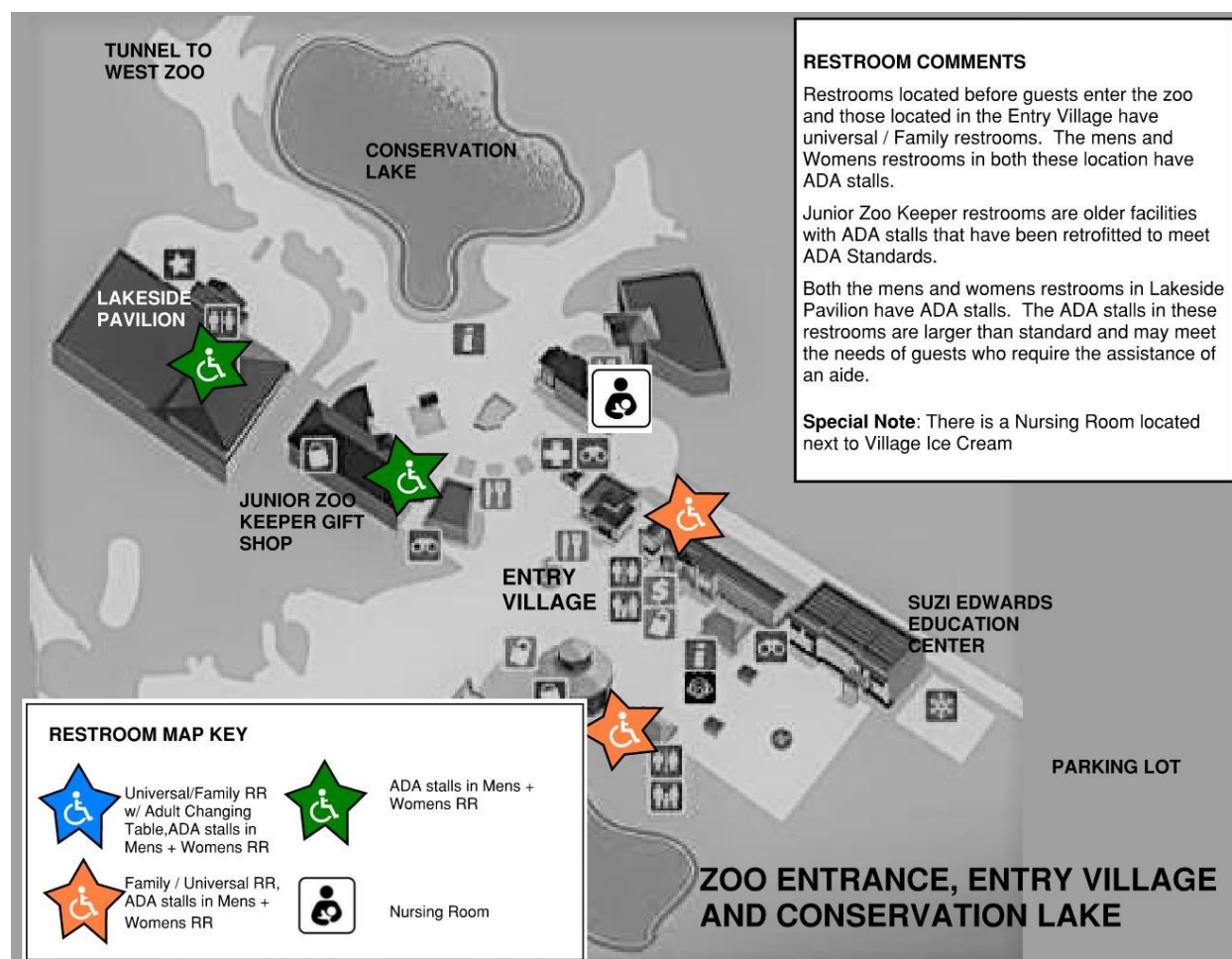
A big “Thank You” to our volunteer survey crew who provided Karen with important information about the restrooms on Zoo grounds and to Mary Rose for suggesting the topic: Cindy Payne, Sue Allen, Kelly Hanlin, Alex Murphy, and Harvey Castner.

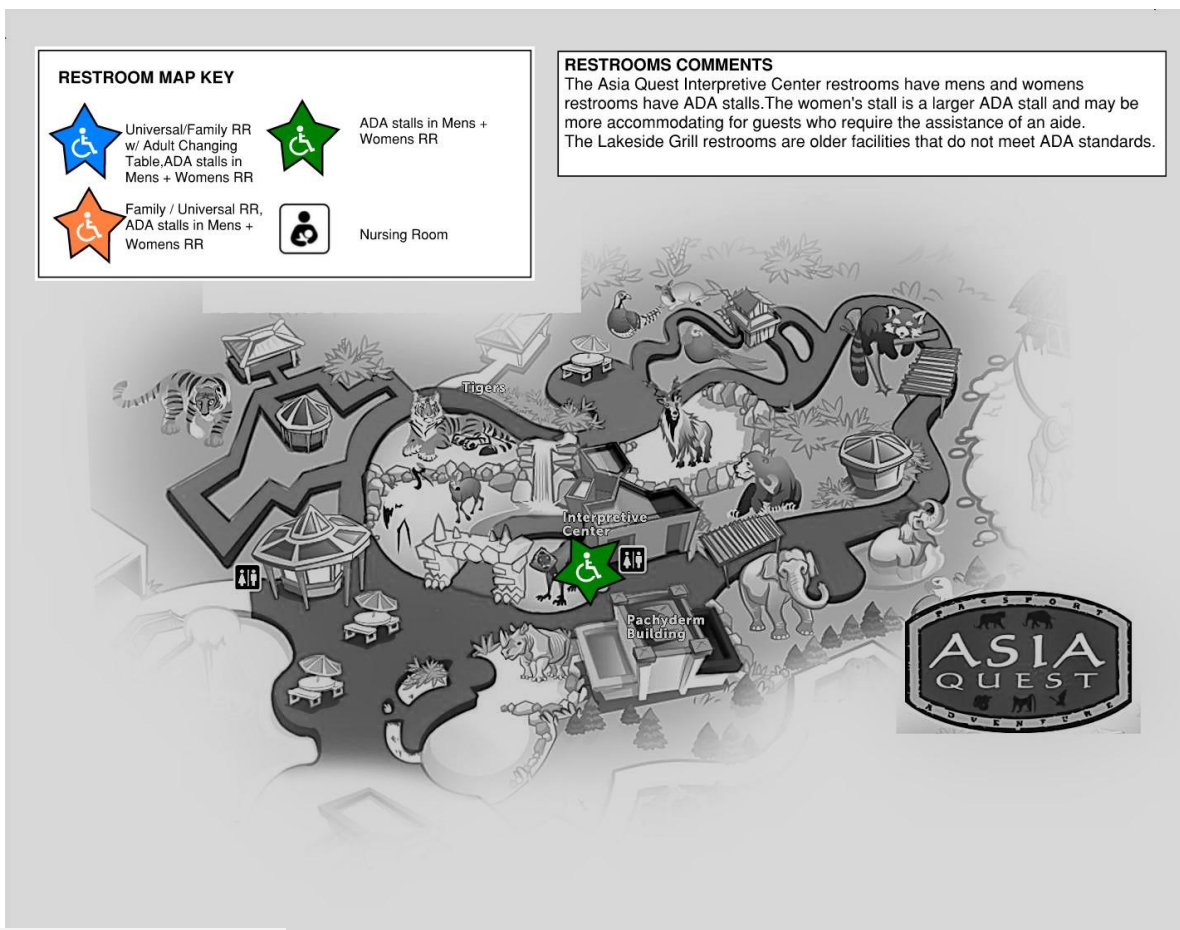
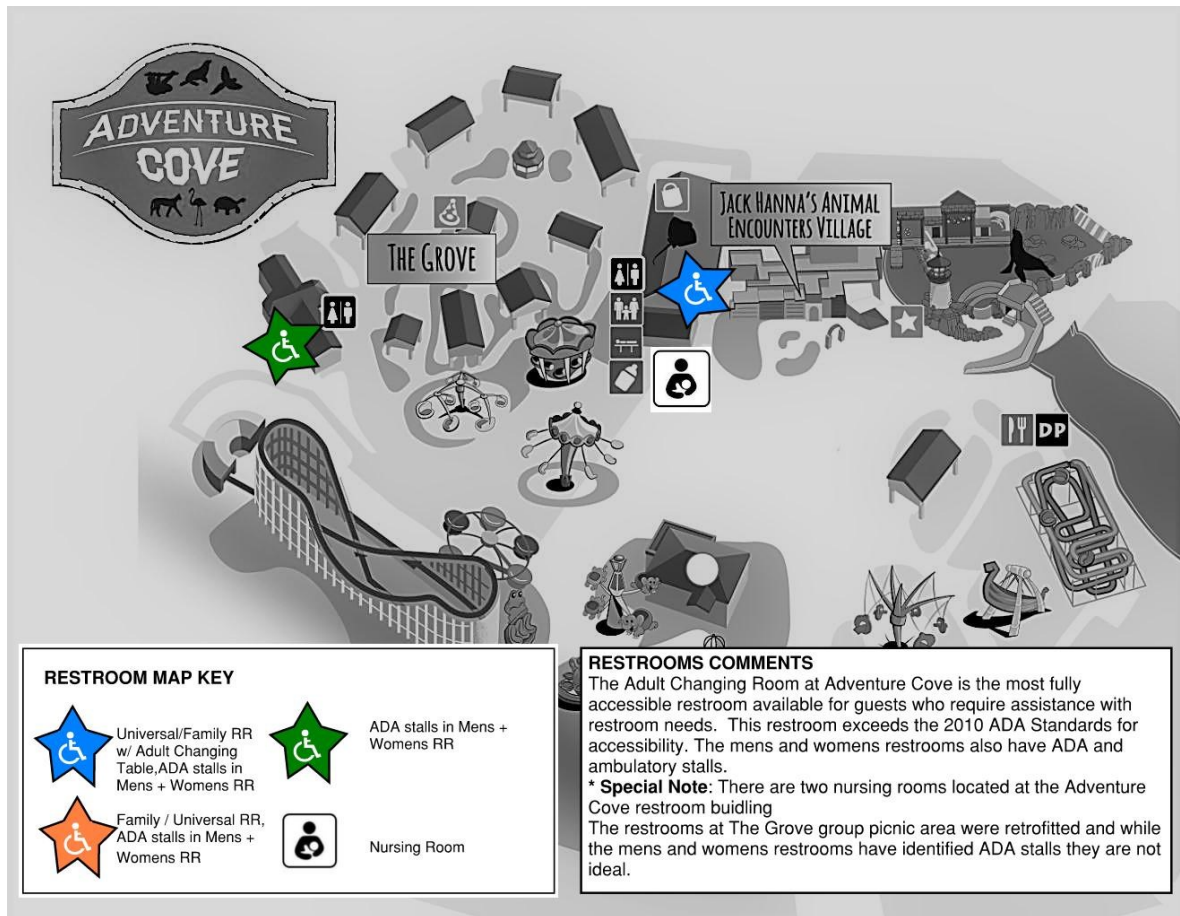
Here is an internet source for the 2010 ADA Guidelines for toilet rooms:

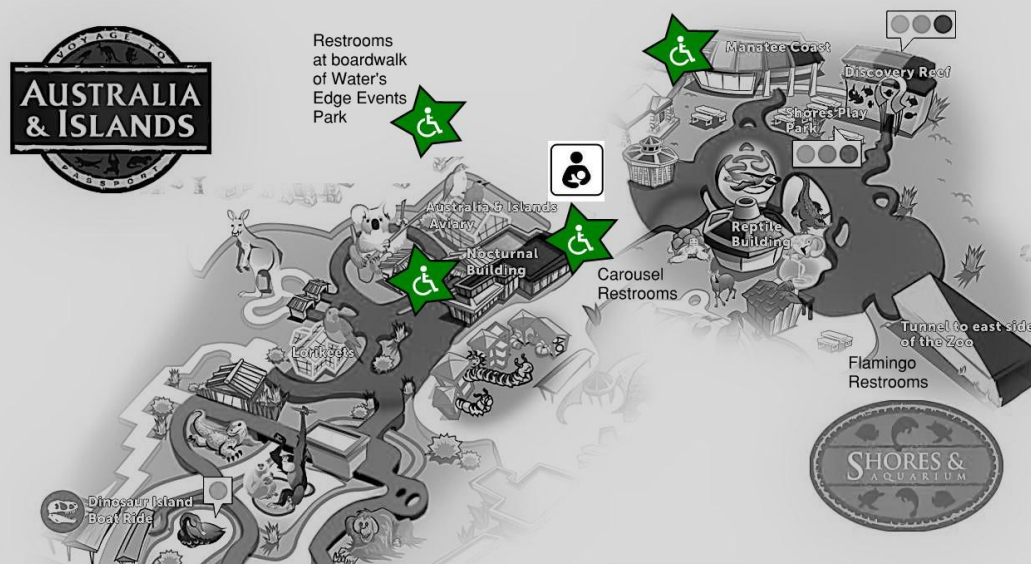
<https://www.access-board.gov/ada/guides/chapter-6-toilet-rooms/>

Region Maps

The following maps show restrooms and nursing rooms in the various regions of the Zoo.
Some guidelines are included in each region.







RESTROOMS COMMENTS

Australia & Islands

The Nocturnal Building, Carousel Restrooms and Water's Edge restrooms have mens and womens restrooms with ADA stalls.

Special Note - There is a Nursing Room located between the mens and womens Carousel Restrooms.

Shores & Aquarium

The restrooms at Discovery Reef and Flamingo do not meet ADA standards. Manatee Coast mens and womens restrooms have ADA stalls. Stalls in these restroom are larger than standard ADA stalls and may meet the needs of guests requiring the assistance of an aide.

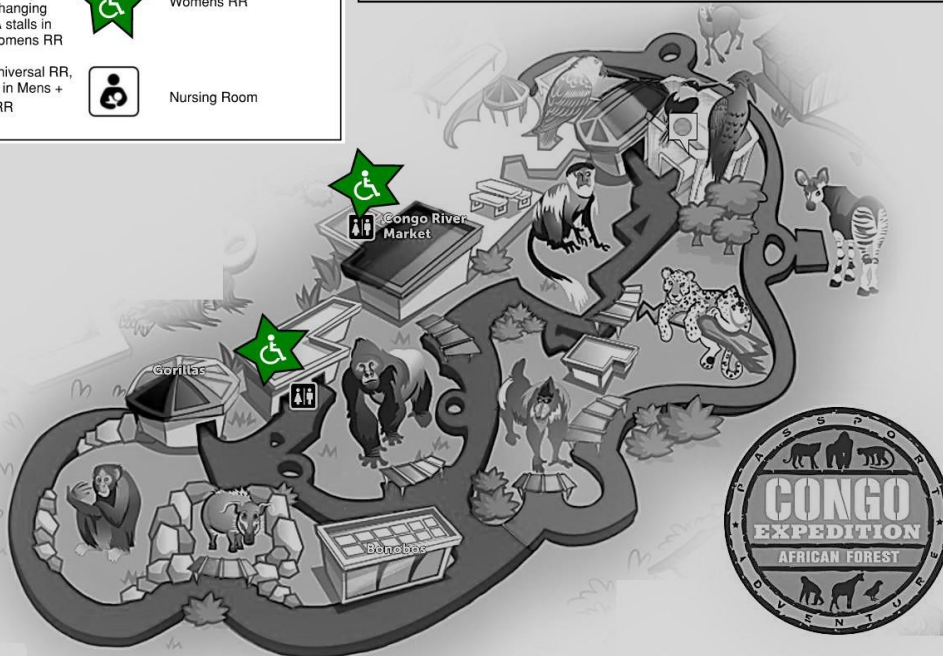
RESTROOM MAP KEY

	Universal/Family RR w/ Adult Changing Table; ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR		ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
	Family / Universal RR, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR		Nursing Room

RESTROOM MAP KEY

	Universal/Family RR w/ Adult Changing Table, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR		ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
	Family / Universal RR, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR		Nursing Room

RESTROOMS COMMENTS	
The Food Court restrooms have mens and womens restrooms with ADA stalls.	
The Gorilla restrooms are older facilities that have been retrofitted and they meet ADA criteria.	





RESTROOMS COMMENTS

The Mapori Restaurant restrooms have a Family / Universal restroom and the mens and womens restrooms both have full ADA stall and an ambulatory stall.
The HoA restrooms located on the east side of the site (near the Giraffe Shamba) and the restrooms inside the Africa Event Center both include a Family / Universal restroom and the mens and womens restrooms each have ADA stalls.

Special Note: There are two nursing stations located along the main guest path at Jerry Borin Trace



RESTROOM MAP KEY

-  Universal/Family RR w/ Adult Changing Table, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
-  ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
-  Family / Universal RR, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
-  Nursing Room



RESTROOM COMMENTS

The Prairie Outpost restrooms in North America have accessible stalls in the mens and womens restrooms.
Polar Frontier has a Family/Universal restroom and accessible stalls in the mens and womens restrooms.

RESTROOM MAP KEY

-  Universal/Family RR w/ Adult Changing Table, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
-  ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
-  Family / Universal RR, ADA stalls in Mens + Womens RR
-  Nursing Room

Summary of Locations at the Zoo

Locations of Accessible Restrooms at the Zoo

The following information is a result of a series of restroom surveys conducted, and this information can help both volunteers and Zoo staff direct special needs guests to the facilities that best meet their needs here at the Zoo.

Accessible Restrooms

With a few exceptions, the restrooms at the Columbus Zoo Family of Parks have been designed to the ADA Design Guidelines that should accommodate our guests with special needs. However, many are not suitable for those who require the assistance of an aide to transfer from a cart or wheelchair to a toilet. They also may not be suitable for guests on electric carts or scooters. The restrooms in Discovery Reef, near Flamingos and at the Lakeside Grill are among our oldest restroom facilities, developed prior to implementation of the 1992 ADA standards. Guests who need to use an aide or have an ADA device to get them into a restroom stall should be directed towards the closest accessible facilities. This includes Manatees on the West side and Asia Quest restroom opposite pachyderms.

Guests Who Require the Assistance of an Aide

Here are our larger ADA stalls that may be useful to guests. The larger stalls **may** accommodate an aide.

- Asia Quest women's and men's restrooms
- Adventure Cove women's and men's restrooms
- Women's and men's restrooms outside the turnstiles at the Front Gate
- Lakeside Pavilion women's or men's restrooms
- Manatee Coast women's or men's restrooms
- Men's restroom at Prairie Outpost
- Women's restroom near Junior Zookeepers Gift Shop



Outside Front Gate

Guests Using Scooters

The electric scooters available for rent at the Zoo are not an ADA mobility device. The turning radius of the scooters is too large for them to be suitable to enter a restroom facility. Guests should park them outside of the restroom and then must be able to walk or use another type of mobility aid to enter and use the restroom. Other scooters may also be too large or not turn easily.

Continued on page 11

Family or Universal Restroom Locations

Guests with special needs looking for a universal restroom/family restroom, can find those restrooms in newer areas that were constructed after 2007 as shown in the list below:

- Outside the turnstiles at the Front Gate
- Entry Village next to Village Coffee
- Adventure Cove (includes the Adult Changing Table)
- Polar Frontier
- Heart of Africa – at Mapori Restaurant
- Heart of Africa – Adjacent to Giraffe Shamba

Nursing Room Locations

Nursing rooms were integrated into our park standards for development beginning in 2011. These rooms have a lockable door and include a rocking chair, changing table, sink, soap dispenser, paper towels and trash receptacle. They can be found in the following locations:

- Near the Zoo's entrance next to the First Aid building
- Adventure Cove/Stingray Bay
- Heart of Africa – Near the camel rides
- West Zoo – Across from the carousel

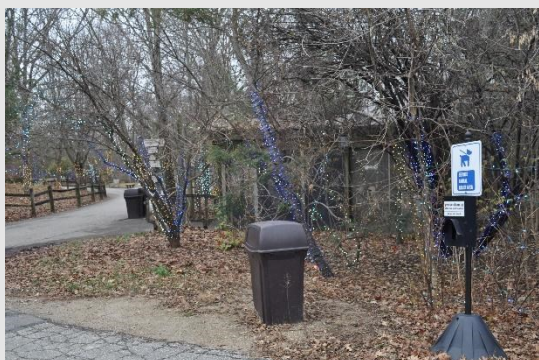


Across from Carousel

Service Animal Relief Locations

There are two locations set aside for service animal relief:

Between the North America railroad tracks and North America aviary.



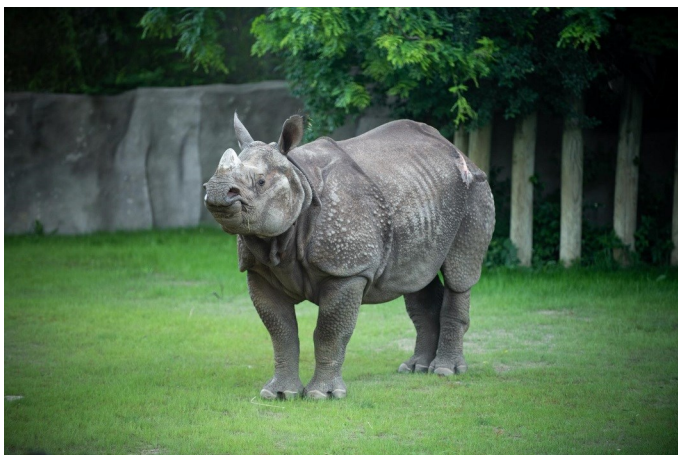
Next to the Main Street guest services kiosk (closest to the carousel) in the Shores region.



For more information about accessibility at the Zoo here is information from the Zoo web page to help volunteers guide our guests.

<https://columbuszoo.org/home/visit/plan-your-visit/accessibility>

A Rhino Named Brian



*Photo courtesy of Graham S. Jones,
Columbus Zoo and Aquarium*

He runs “zoomies” all over his yard, wallows in the mud even on coldest days and tosses his toys over the fence – it’s Brian. Guests have been enthralled with this guy since his arrival in April 2021. He is probably the most lively and personable rhino that has ever lived at the Zoo. Let’s learn a little more.

IN THE BEGINNING

Brian’s previous home, the Center for the Conservation of Tropical Ungulates in Florida, is a private institution not open to the public. He had never experienced the sights, sounds and aromas that come with living at the Zoo before his arrival. In addition, having next door neighbor elephants was a new experience. Frankie’s birth shortly after Brian’s arrival created

even more activity inside and outside the building. None of these things seemed to faze him in the least, and he quickly settled into zoo life, loving every aspect of his newly renovated yard, except the swimming pool. Brian also had to learn many of the typical animal husbandry practices as a 4 ½ year old rather than as a young calf. Initially Animal Care staff experimented to find his favorite foods, which turned out to be apples and carrots, so he could be rewarded when learning new behaviors. He’s learned target, open mouth, ear, front foot presentation and blood draw so far with more to come.

QUESTIONS

Without a doubt the most frequently asked question has to do with Brian’s horn. It’s not filed, shaved or removed as many guests think. Brian uses his head to interact with enrichment such as barrels and balls as well as stationary objects in his yard. This sometimes raucous behavior has resulted in the tip being worn down and the horn is rounded rather than pointed. Pictures of other greater one-horned rhinos in the public aisle and on the web sites of other zoos show similar horn shapes.

Unlike the black and white rhinos that have two horns, an Asian rhino does not use its horn for fighting but to search for food, forage for roots and to form pathways through tall grasslands or thick forests of their native habitat. Very long lower incisors are used for defense.

Brian’s incisors are just now becoming noticeable and will get longer as he matures.



Photo courtesy of Mindi Scott

Thanks to the grayish-brown skin folds that resemble armor plating and the wart-like bumps (known as tubercles) that look like rivets, the greater one horned rhino has the most pre-historic appearance of any of the five rhino species. The skin folds protect vital areas, especially the neck and chest, and increase the surface area which aids in regulating body temperature and in cooling by trapping water and mud.



Is he as silly and goofy as he appears? The keepers say even more so.

THE NEXT STEP

Brian has an SSP recommendation and will move to the The Wilds in the future to be part of the vital effort to breed these animals. This is the first time the Zoo and The Wilds have partnered in such an effort.

—Nancy Mulholand

Sources:

Mindi Scott, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

Greater One-horned Rhino. Retrieved January 14, 2023 from <https://www.fortworthzoo.org/new-at-the-zoo/category/Greater-one-horned-rhino>

Save the Rhino. Retrieved January 14, 2023 from <https://www.savetherhino.org/>

International Rhino Foundation. Retrieved January 14, 2023 from <https://rhinos.org/>



*Photos courtesy of Graham S. Jones,
Columbus Zoo and Aquarium*



Median Life Expectancy

There are three ways to talk about how long an animal lives.

1. **Maximum Longevity** – This is the oldest age that an animal can live. For example, in humans the maximum longevity is currently 115 years. This could change if someone lives longer.
2. **Life Span** – This is how old an individual lives. That number is determined when the individual dies. For example, my grandfather's life span was 77 years. NEVER use life span when talking about how long a species can live. Unless talking about a specific individual, do not use this term.
3. **Median Life Expectancy** – This can be thought of as the "typical" life expectancy for a population, or how long the "typical" individual in a population can be expected to live. Half of all individuals can be expected to die before the median and half can be expected to live longer than the median. In humans in the U.S., the median life expectancy from age one is 77 years.

So, what do I say to guests when asked about how long an animal can live?

- When people ask us how long an animal lives, we should use median life expectancy to give the most correct answer. You can say something like "North American river otters are expected to live 11.7 years" if you don't want to say "the median life expectancy for a river otter is 11.7 years."
- Sometimes we don't have enough data and we don't know what the MLE is for a particular species. In that case, you can say something like "we don't know how long they are expected to live. However, currently at our Zoo the Asian Elephants range in age from Connie (born 1974) to Frankie (born 2021)."
- So, if an animal is not listed on the MLE table, then we don't know what the MLE is for that species and we should not guess. Just say "we don't know." Also, we do not have any information on MLE in wild populations, only in U.S. zoos.



So, why do we need standardized statistics on survival?

The Study

The Columbus Zoo along with the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and its member institutions wanted to develop a clearer way to answer the question "How long does this species live?" It was found that there were many inaccurate and contradictory answers being given to this question. To eliminate inaccurate and inconsistent use of common terminology they began this study to be able to give accurate and consistent information to the public. The statistics in this study are specific to animals in zoo and aquarium populations and are based on a species studbook. This is only the beginning of the study and so far over 200 species have been studied and listed. The study will be ongoing and the information will be updated as information is gathered.

Continued on page 15

Sometimes on the study it is indicated that the data “cannot be calculated” for a particular species. How should I address that to the public?

“Because this species’ population size in zoos and aquariums is small and they have not been in zoos long enough, there is not enough information right now to give an accurate statement about how long this species typically lives in AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums. As we continue to gather data on this species, we will likely be able to determine this for this species in the future.”

A good thing to remember is that we have the best datasets on North American zoo and Aquarium populations, so if we can’t give this answer yet, nobody else can give an accurate answer either. The expert response is truly “nobody has enough information to provide a fact-based answer yet.”

Estimates that are given on websites, even other potentially credible sources, are often based on maximum longevity or more general estimates, rather than on statistical analysis of datasets that follow animals from birth to death.

- Updated from AZA January, 2023.

Examples of animals in the MLE Table

Common Name	Scientific Name	MLE Males & Females Combined	MLE Males (Years)	MLE Females (Years)
Crane, Grey-crowned	<i>Balearica regulorum</i>	12.2	-	-
Giraffe	<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	-	14.7	20.2
Otter, North American River	<i>Lontra canadensis</i>	12.3	-	-
Elephant, Asian	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	-	See Full Report	47.5

Work continues on the study with support from the Columbus and Lincoln Park Zoos and there are now hundreds of species listed in the table. Note that the tables are updated quarterly so each quarter there will likely be more species on the table and some of the data may have been rerun and the numbers for a species could have changed. The numbers on a report are just a snapshot in time since more animals are born, animals grow older, maximum longevity may have changed, etc.

—Patty Peters/Jen Fields

Note: The most current Median Life Expectancy Table can be found on the Volunteer Portal. Go to Links—Median Life Expectancy Survival Statistics Summary—click on web address – go to Download the Survival Statistics Table.

Sources

Species Survival Statistics, AZA, Retrieved 1/24/2023 from <https://www.aza.org/species-survival-statistics>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Fast Stats: Life Expectancy. Retrieved 1/24/2023 from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/life-expectancy.htm>



HOO-KNEW?

Kangaroo Walkabout
Did you know that kangaroos are the largest marsupials on Earth?



Barn Habitat
Did you know that Dexter cows come in three different colors? Red, Black, and Dun (a brownish hue).

2023 TRAINING SCHEDULE

Everyone must train/refresh in any ACA or region where they want to volunteer. Each ACA training is offered twice, and each region (for Docents) is offered twice—you only have to attend one session of each area where you want to volunteer.

Safety & Security/Policies & Procedures (REQUIRED) February 7—7:00pm February 13—7:00pm February 26—1:00pm	Kangaroo Walkabout/Asia Quest Aviary/Lorikeets March 12—1:00—2:30pm March 20—3:00—4:30pm
Stingray Bay/Reptile Encounter/Touch Pool February 20—9:00—11:30am March 5—1:00—3:30pm	Giraffe Feeding—2nd year plus March 12—3:00—4:30pm March 20—7:00—8:30pm
Adventure Cove Deck/Adventure Cove Tunnel/My Barn—2nd year plus February 20—1:00—2:30pm March 5—9:00—10:30am	Reptile Encounter/Touch Pool on-site training March 6—9:00am—12:00pm March 6—1:00—4:00pm March 19—9:00am—12:00pm March 19—1:00—4:00pm
Region Training—Docents—all via Zoom (the first date for each region is during the new Docent class, which tends to be much longer than the second date.	
North America February 11—12:30—4:00pm February 21—7:00pm Asia Quest February 18—12:30—4:00pm February 28—7:00pm Shores February 25—12:30—4:00pm March 7—7:00pm	Australia and the Islands March 4—12:30—4:00pm March 14—7:00pm Congo Expedition March 11—12:30—4:00pm March 21—7:00pm Heart of Africa March 18—12:30—4:00pm March 28—7:00pm