

REGION NEWS—CONGO EXPEDITION

Congo Expedition



We've been sending our deepest condolences to the Animal Care team since the passing of Sita **leopard**. Sita arrived at the Zoo in 2000 with her sister and has been a visitor favorite ever since. She was indeed a beautiful girl. Many visitors were always around the leopard habitat admiring her when she was out. Although her health began to decline over the last few years, she received excellent care and managed to greet her visitors regularly. The portal has a more detailed article on remembering and honoring Sita.

Jamani **gorilla** continues to explore her environment. She is moving about in both indoor and outdoor habitats while under Cassie's watchful supervision. She is also tasting more of the food given to her group. She has a full set of baby teeth now and can use them to help chew some of the food she picks up in the habitats.

Dini **okapi** has also been exploring his outdoor habitat. When he wanders away from Damisi without realizing it, he gallops back to her. It is always a great pleasure to see one of our most endangered species thrive at the Zoo. The **orangutans'** new indoor habitat is progressing on target.

During the first weekend of Boo at Zoo, the **colobus monkeys** were observed ravaging through the Halloween buckets presented to them for enrichment. They all enjoyed the treats that were inside and, when the buckets were emptied, the orange enrichment items could be seen tumbling to the ground.

As we prepare for the winter weather, the **mandrills** indoor viewing area will likely be open more. Since it can be difficult to shift the groups around without the use of the yard, it is likely that Julia and Eebi will not be visible for the next few months. They continue to do great together though and have enjoyed the new hanging pallets and enrichment items provided to them by the keepers. Keeper Karen has continued to engage them in painting. They are quite the artists!

Cooler weather limits the amount of time that the **bonobo** troop spends outside. As is the case each year, staff will use a variety of enrichment to keep them engaged over the next few months.

Red river hogs Harold and Harriet have a better tolerance for chilly fall weather than some of the other animals in the region. Therefore, visitors should still be able to see the pair outside for a few more weeks. When it does become too cold for them to be out for extended periods, they enjoy access to a yard (off view) that is attached to the building. Thus, they get great outside time in almost all year round. With the hogs inside more during cooler months, keepers can increase the time they spend on training.

REGION NEWS—HEART OF AFRICA

Heart of Africa



Fall is officially upon us with Boo behind us and Wildlights just right around the corner. Things are status quo in the region, except for the following updates.

Lion Roary is still doing well. The keepers continue to adjust things based on Roary's confidence and comfort. He spends time with all of the females – one pair at a time. Kazi is always part of the trio.



Photo courtesy of Lindsay DeMuth

All of the **giraffes** are doing just fine. The “littles” are thriving and doing very well in the feeding yard. They are still unnamed as of this date.

The keepers had to split the **vervet** group due to some social dynamic issues caused primarily by the little boys. Betsy and Sassy no longer go together, but the keepers mix and match everyone else. So far, all is going well.



Photo courtesy of Astrid Kreidl

Our **Dama gazelles, wildebeests, Grant's zebras, greater kudus, slender-horned gazelles, Thomson's gazelles, ostriches, East African crowned cranes, saddlebill storks and guinea fowl** are all doing well. The keepers take things day to day in regard to sending them out on the savanna. If it is rainy or a bit too cool, they will leave them inside. Otherwise, they should be out on nice days.

The **camels** will be here until after Wildlights.

REGION NEWS—NORTH AMERICA

North America



Swans Cher and Georgeanne are doing great. Their ability to waterproof is being monitored by staff and, if need be, they will be moved to the barn later this fall/early winter.

The **goats** and **sheep** are getting along just fine. The inside of the barn has been reopened. Staff report that, “A decision has not been made yet for Wildlights, but if we are open we’d love to have our docents back! We have a large area stanchioned off to keep you all safely distanced from guests.”

The **cows** are doing well.

Emily **chicken** had a growth on a wattle that was recently removed.

All is well with our **Mexican wolves**. Sol and Snow may be separated for a couple of weeks this month. They do not have a breeding recommendation, so they need to have a contraceptive implant placed.

Banjo **pronghorn** is still doing well as are our **bison**, Clover and Hermie.

Beavers Acorn and Zucchini are doing great.

Otter females Paso and Catori still comprise their own group as they and Wildcat just didn’t mesh as well as hoped.



Photo courtesy of Astrid Kreidl

The **eagles** are doing well.

The **aviary** is getting prepped and ready for winter.

Montana **bobcat** continues to be one of the most spoiled residents of NA.

The **lynxes** are doing well and working on emergency recall and target training. Torvi had a procedure to remove the plate from her previous jaw fracture.

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Stevie and Joan **black bears** are working on blood draw training.

Jessie **cougar** is doing very well. She had a small mole removed from her face (you may notice a shaved spot if you visit her) during a recent eye checkup with Dr. Webb. The mole was found to be benign.

Alvar and Guillotine **wolverines** are enjoying their privacy as the cabin is still closed due to COVID protocols.

Oji and Bertha **moose** have been separated for rut and the **sandhill cranes** are doing fine behind the scenes. You'll see Oji in the bull yard and Bertha out in the bigger one.

The **reindeer** have shed their velvet. You may see them sparring with deadfall or each other. If you haven't heard, you can now get up close and personal with our wonderful reindeer in a new encounter offered by the Zoo. The visit lasts 30 minutes and takes place daily at 2:30 p.m. (4:30 p.m. on weekends during Wildlights). Please visit the Zoo website to book a tour today

The **prairie dogs** are active on warm days, but prefer to hide out in their burrows on colder ones. Our **arctic foxes** are turning white again.

Brown bears Brutus and Buckeye are doing well. They are on their fall hyperphagia diet so they can bulk up before winter. The glass was recently polished in the cave, so you'll be able to see them even better on Wildlights nights.

Our **polar bears** are doing well. Anana is now in her den behind the scenes – fingers crossed! Aurora and Kulu will be in the public aisle every day as well as during Wildlights.



Photo courtesy of Astrid Kreidl

REGION NEWS—SHORES

Shores



Obviously, the big news is that **manatees** Bananatee and Tostone left on October 19 for the Miami Seaquarium. They will spend some time there preparing for their release. They did really well on the transport and transitioned easily back to the Miami lifestyle. No news on when they will be released just yet. A few days after their departure, we welcomed Squirrel and Scampi. At just 133 pounds, Squirrel is one of the smallest manatees we have had in Columbus. She gravitated immediately to Stubby and has not left her side since. Scampi is a little bigger at 200 pounds, and a little more independent. She has been busy exploring the habitat and eating all of the lettuce.

A note from the staff: “We can’t thank our docents enough for watching our new girls when they arrived. I saw a lot of you getting in your steps as the manatees moved back and forth from the exhibit to the rehab pool. We appreciate everything you do to help us!”

Two new animals arrived in quarantine recently. A female **Grand Cayman iguana** and a **snake-necked turtle** will be joining our reptile collection based on SSP recommendations.

Our **Humboldt penguins** will receive their physical exams in October. They usually start showing an interest in nesting in December. There are recommendations from the SSP to send a few of the juveniles to other institutions late this year or early in 2021, so look for more about that later.

The **corals** from the Florida Reef Tract Rescue Project are located in a bio secure area behind the scenes in Discovery Reef. They are doing well, and our staff is proud to be involved in the project.

All of the male southern **stingrays** are now in Stingray Bay and the females are in Manatee Coast.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

THE WILDS

The Wilds



Everything is winding down from a busy summer. While the Operations team was dealing with protocol adjustments that needed to be made in light of COVID, the Animal Management and Animal Health teams still had the same number of animals to look after. One of their big jobs this year was getting two of our **southern white rhinos** ready to move to other zoos as part of the SSP breeding and transfer plan. Late in the summer, the herd was brought back in from pasture long enough to sort out the two designated 14-year-old females. Both were born at The Wilds in 2006 and grew up in our herd. Since each one has had three calves, the hope is that these experienced mothers will help jump start a breeding program at each of their respective new homes.

Our rhinos are transported in large crates made out of wood and steel that are just big enough for them to lay down comfortably or stay standing if they so choose. Prior to leaving The Wilds, each female was set up in the rhino barn with access to her travel crate. Staff started feeding them inside the crates to get them used to going in and out of the spaces and to provide them with a positive experience to associate with the process. The time spent on that type of training makes everything less stressful for all involved.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Wesney

Once moving day comes, the animals are secured in their crates and made ready to travel. The Wilds averages about two rhino moves a year, and they could not do so without their wonderful Maintenance crew. Those team members are responsible for operating the heavy equipment needed to move nearly 10,000 combined pounds of rhino and crate out of the yard and into the back of a trailer. It can be a delicate operation at times but the crew knows the best ways to get it done safely. The contractor that was used is an experienced animal handler and transporter. He used a refrigerated 18 wheeler to make sure the animals traveled in climate-controlled comfort and worked in tandem with another driver to ensure the rhinos were delivered safely to their destinations over 900 miles away the next day.

Even with the two females gone, there are still 15 white rhinos to see at The Wilds. The regular season has been extended into mid-November this year but, once it ends, Winter at the Wilds tours will still be offered. If you would like to come for a wild getaway, the Lodge is open year-round and the cabins at Straker Lake are open through the end of December. Check the website to make reservations.