

Alive

A vibrant blue and purple bird, likely a Victoria crowned pigeon, is perched on a log. The bird has a large, feathery crest on its head and a striking red eye. Its body is a mix of blue and purple, with a prominent purple breast. The background is a lush, green, out-of-focus forest setting.

In this issue:

Getting Back to Nature
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Helping Birds Get To and Fro
A Walk in the Woods
Celebrating 125 Years of the Zoo



The mission of the Zoological Society of Milwaukee is to conserve wildlife and endangered species, educate people about the importance of wildlife and the environment, and support the Milwaukee County Zoo.

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You're a Zoo Pass member, so it's a good bet that you love animals and nature. The Milwaukee County Zoo and the Zoological Society of Milwaukee can help you learn about animals from all over the world and the ones in your own backyard. For example, each spring the Zoo allows visitors to observe banding of migrating birds. The Zoo is an important migration stop, as evidenced by the 183 species of birds that have been spotted on Zoo grounds. Check out page 4 for more information about the bird-banding program, which is helping

researchers learn about and conserve North American birds.

One thing that attracts migrating birds to the Zoo is, of course, its beautiful woods. Trees cover about a third of the Zoo's 190 acres, making it a rarity among other zoos. Read the story on page 6 to learn more about the Zoo's urban forest and its arborist, Alex Krutsch. The Zoological Society is taking advantage of these woods through its new program, Nature Play. The pilot program brings city children and their parents to a clearing in the Zoo woods to learn about nature through what children do best - playing. Turn to page 9 to read more about this exciting initiative.

The trees in and around the Zoo help remind us of the Zoo's proud history. This year, the Zoo celebrates its 125th anniversary. Check out page 10 for a timeline highlighting some of that history, from the Zoo's beginnings as a deer park in Washington Park to today. We hope you'll continue to be part of the Zoo and Zoological Society well into the future.

Jodi Gibson

Jodi Gibson, President & CEO
 Zoological Society of Milwaukee

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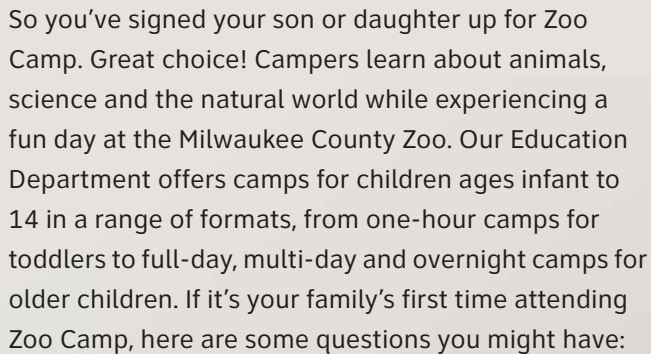
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ON THE COVER: Victoria crowned pigeon. Photo by Joel Miller



TOP 5 QUESTIONS about Zoo CAMPS



So you've signed your son or daughter up for Zoo Camp. Great choice! Campers learn about animals, science and the natural world while experiencing a fun day at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Our Education Department offers camps for children ages infant to 14 in a range of formats, from one-hour camps for toddlers to full-day, multi-day and overnight camps for older children. If it's your family's first time attending Zoo Camp, here are some questions you might have:

1. What if I need to drop my children off early or pick them up late? The Zoological Society offers supervised care before and after camp for children ages 6-14 starting at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 5 p.m. Care is \$6 per morning or afternoon session. Kids enjoy a variety of free-choice activities such as coloring, puzzles, books and games.

2. It's hard to manage my kids' schedules in summer. What tools do you offer to help? Our wide array of offerings makes it easy to tailor the camp experience to meet your family's needs. You can sign up for one day, two days or a full week of camps. When you register for camps, click on the "consecutive class dates" link on the registration page. (Please note: Weeklong camp options are available only for some age groups and during select weeks.) You can also schedule camps at the same time for children of different ages. Just click the "concurrent classes" link on the registration page.

3. What if my child has a food allergy or other special need? A snack is served in most classes. Our Education Department works closely with families to accommodate allergies and other special needs. Contact the department at 414-258-5058 to get the conversation started.

Below: Campers observe the harbor seals. Most camps include a Zoo tour.
Photo by Bob Wickland



Jacob K., of Waukesha, and Myles C., of Milwaukee, learn how to make a grapevine ball for animal enrichment with intern Emma Lynch at a career camp. Photo by Bob Wickland

4. What should my child bring to Zoo Camp? If your child is attending an all-day camp (9 a.m.-3 p.m.), he or she should bring a bag lunch and beverage. A snack and water will be provided during the camp day. Your child should dress for the weather as most camps include a Zoo tour, rain or shine. Please do not send umbrellas, toys, money, cameras or cellphones.

5. Your camps look so fun. Do you have any for adults? We offer photography classes for adults. This summer, you can sign up for "Zoo in Bloom: Introduction to Macro/Close-up Photography." You also can enjoy camp with your children by signing up for this summer's family camp, "Marine Mammals." Family camp is for children ages 4-14 and can include multiple children and adults. Camps for children 3 and under always include an adult, and camps for ages 4 and 5 offer "with-adult" or "child-only" options.

Bonus question:

Is it too late to sign my child up for camp? Definitely not! Visit zoosociety.org/summer to check availability and to register. Summer Camps are sponsored by Penzeys Spices.

By Stacy Vogel Davis



Visit zoosociety.org/CampFAQ
for more frequently asked questions about Zoo Camp.

See you this summer!



A Bird in the Hand is Worth... A Lot

It's an unseasonably cold May morning, with hints of snow flurries blowing through the air. But about a dozen bird enthusiasts have braved the cold – and the early start time – to witness the Milwaukee County Zoo's bird-banding program. They watch as the banding crew returns from checking the nets holding small cotton bags, each containing a bird. A bander gently removes a stunning black, white and yellow magnolia warbler from one bag. After identifying the species, she puts an appropriately sized band on its leg and takes a few measurements. She examines the bird's condition, checking its weight, fat and feather wear. The entire process takes a couple of minutes, and the bird is set free, none the worse for its encounter.

Zookeeper Mickey O'Connor started the Zoo's bird-banding program in 2001. "We wanted to learn what migratory and resident species are using the grounds," she says. Since then, the Zoo has documented 183 species here, including 47 species nesting on the grounds and 44 that are considered endangered, threatened or species of concern. "We've really caught some cool species by banding that we otherwise wouldn't have known were here, such as Louisiana water thrush, yellow-breasted chat, hooded warblers, summer tanager and Carolina wren," O'Connor says.

"The Zoo is a very important migration stop," she adds. While a number of species nest on Zoo grounds, many more species refuel here while passing through during spring and fall migration. Some are on their way to Wisconsin's north woods, while others are headed to the boreal forests in Canada. "The Zoo is a perfect stopping place because we have shelter, fresh water and food," O'Connor says. "They can rest here a few days, wait until conditions are right and then continue on their migration."

O'Connor leads the bird-banding program with the support of the Zoo's management team. She often bands birds on her own time with help from fellow volunteers, including other zookeepers and members of Zoo Pride, the Zoological Society's volunteer

auxiliary. They band birds at the Zoo several times in April and May and again from mid-August to October, collecting data that is sent to the U.S. Geological Survey. "It's citizen-science research," O'Connor says.

Bird banding, which requires a federal permit, doesn't hurt the birds. O'Connor went through extensive training to receive her master banding permit, allowing her to train others to band as well. The information gathered at the Zoo is added to a database with information from other banders nationwide, providing ornithologists (bird scientists) valuable data about migration routes, bird health and longevity, species populations and much more. The bands even allow researchers to track specific birds if they are found or recaptured. For example, a hummingbird O'Connor banded in Fort Atkinson was recaptured by a bander in North Carolina. "The bird had traveled more than 800 miles in three weeks," O'Connor says. "Without banding, we never would've known that."

Research from ornithologists matches what O'Connor has observed – that many species of songbird are declining. For example, wood thrushes were once abundant at the Zoo, and now O'Connor rarely sees them. "It's not like before. You would hear them singing constantly." Habitat loss is the biggest problem facing the birds as forests and woody areas are cut down for new developments. Other factors include pesticides, climate change, window strikes and cat predation. "Billions of birds each year in the U.S. are killed by window strikes and cat predation," O'Connor says. "It's inconceivable." The Zoo, with support from the Zoological Society, has been working on strategies to reduce window strikes on its grounds using tools such as window clings, nylon cord and silk screens. It also is increasing its number of native plants. The plants attract more insects than exotic plants, providing more food for the birds. "We're doing what we can," O'Connor says.

By Stacy Vogel Davis



Clockwise from top:

- Zookeeper Mickey O'Connor shows observers the netting that catches birds for banding.
- Zookeeper Cassie Sajkowski blows on a Nashville warbler to check the bird's amount of feathers and fat.
- A volunteer releases a newly banded golden-wing warbler.
- A black-capped chickadee gets banded.
- Zoo Pride volunteer Pat Gerber explains bird migration and bird-banding efforts to Zoo guests.

You Can Help Our Feathered Friends

Many species of songbirds are in trouble due to habitat loss, climate change and other factors. Here are some things you can do to help the birds:

- **Prevent window strikes.** Each year, hundreds of millions of birds die in the U.S. after colliding with windows. The American Bird Conservancy offers a list of products such as tape, film or decals that help prevent collisions. Visit abcbirds.org/get-involved/bird-smart-glass to learn more. You can also reduce window strikes by keeping blinds or curtains closed.
- **Don't allow your cat outside.** Cats kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds per year in the U.S.
- **Make your yard a bird haven.** Offer bird houses, feeders and baths to provide shelter, food and water. Plant a variety of native plants to attract birds and the insects the birds eat.
- **Read "Bringing Nature Home"** by Douglas Tallamy for more ideas.

Visit zoosociety.org/MigratingBirds
to see a list of birds that have been spotted at the Zoo.

Our Resident Birds

While the Zoo is a great stop for migrating birds, conditions here are less ideal for nesting birds because the Zoo's woods are fragmented, allowing predators such as raccoons and chipmunks easier access to nests. Still, several species commonly make their homes here, including house wrens, black-capped chickadees and tree swallows. Zookeepers work with volunteers from Zoo Pride, the Zoological Society's volunteer auxiliary, to provide homes for these birds and food for any bird that nests here or passes through.

Carol Stefanich, a Zoo Pride volunteer, monitors nine of the 35 nest boxes around the Zoo. She cleans the boxes in fall and spring and checks them twice a week for six months of the year, looking for nests, eggs and fledgling birds. "It's always exciting," she says. "You never know what you'll find." In 2016, a flying squirrel and a field mouse claimed two of her boxes, but birds moved into the other seven. She counted 56 eggs laid in her boxes. In all, the Zoo



Zoo Pride volunteer Dave Stefanich spreads grape jelly in an oriole feeder on Zoo grounds.
Photo by Stacy Vogel Davis

counted 117 fledglings in the boxes in 2016, up from 85 the previous year. The volunteers' data and observations are sent to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, N.Y., and the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin.

Carol's husband, Dave, helps fill the bird feeders around the Zoo, including sunflower and thistle feeders for finches and jelly feeders for orioles. The Zoo also has three hummingbird feeders. He even fills the feeders in winter for birds that stay year round. Dave says he enjoys getting up early to fill the feeders and watch the birds. "You see a lot of different birds you wouldn't normally see," he says.

A Woodland Retreat

Everyone loves to see the animals at the Milwaukee County Zoo, but there's another part of nature you can enjoy here as well: the beautiful urban forest covering about a third of the Zoo's grounds. The Zoo's woods, full of a variety of mature and young trees, help people connect to the natural world as they watch the forest change across the seasons and years.

"Colleagues and visitors frequently comment on our beautiful wooded campus and how it sets us apart from other zoos," says Zoo Director Chuck Wikenhauser. "The trees help provide a natural setting and an opportunity for everyone to enjoy a walk in the woods. They assist in climate control by absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen, moderating temperatures and absorbing rain water. Also, the forest is an important stopover for migrating birds."

"I haven't seen anything like our forest at other zoos," says Alex Krutsch, Zoo arborist. He estimates there are at least 10,000 trees on the Zoo grounds. The most common are oak, maple and ash, but Krutsch and his team have documented more than 80 species at the Zoo. Krutsch takes care of the trees in the woods, exhibits, walkways and parking lots with the help of a crew that varies from one to three additional workers throughout the year. "When you work with trees, you really have to take the long view," he says. "The impact of the work we're doing now won't be realized until I'm long gone."

At this time of year, Krutsch and his team are busy planting new trees and trimming existing ones. "I try to plant native

species that we don't have a lot of already, such as ironwood, musclewood and witch hazel," he says. In summer, keeping the trees watered is top priority. "It takes up a lot of our time, particularly last summer when it was very dry." In fall and winter, the workers stay busy clearing dead trees, pruning and plowing snow. Lumber from cleared trees is milled on site by a private company. The Zoo uses some of the wood for benches and other items. The train trestle near the Caribou Exhibit and the crane holding pen also contain wood from the Zoo's trees. Some of the wood is donated for community projects. Krutsch and his staff, with the help of Zoo Pride volunteers, are even turning some of the Zoo's lumber into cutting boards, bottle openers and pizza cutters that will be for sale in the Zoo's gift shop later this year.

Krutsch hopes visitors enjoy strolling among the trees as they look at the animals. In fact, he'd like to see more public access to the Zoo's forest through trails and programming. A good start is the Zoological Society's Nature Play program, which launched in 2016. The program brings young children and their families to the Zoo to play in a clearing in the woods near Macaque Island. (See page 9 for more about Nature Play.) "The more the public is utilizing our woods, the more they will appreciate them, and the more likely they will be to conserve them," Krutsch says.

By Stacy Vogel Davis



The Zoo's trees burst into color in autumn. Photo by Olga Kornienko



Snow coats the branches of trees in an animal yard. Photo by Richard Brodzeller



Zoo arborist Alex Krutsch stands next to a black walnut tree in the Zoo's forest. Photo by Joel Miller

Forestry workers are making cutting boards and other items from Zoo lumber to sell in the Zoo gift shop.

Photo by Creative Dept. staff



Fighting Invasive Species

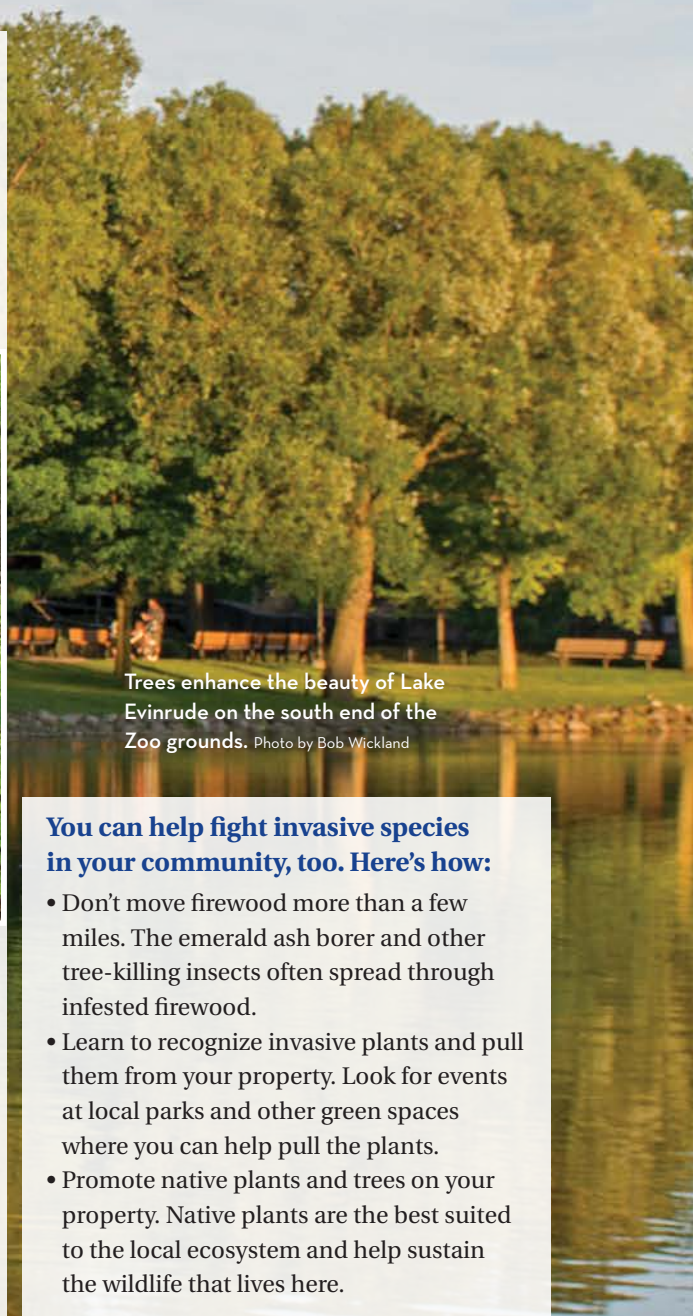
As the forestry team plants and nurtures new trees, it also fights invasive species. Invasive species are plants, animals and fungi that aren't native to an area and threaten the area's ecosystem. They are often spread by people through travel or trade.

The most serious invasive species threatening the Zoo's forest is emerald ash borer. The larvae of this beetle feed on the inner bark of ash trees, eventually killing the trees. Since the bug's discovery in Michigan in 2002, it has been found in 30 states and killed tens of millions of ash trees. Krutsch and his team have tried to mitigate the problem here by proactively removing hundreds of trees and replacing them with native species. Despite that effort, the beetle was discovered at the Zoo in summer 2016. The Zoo is treating 145 of the strongest, most mature ash trees with pesticides, but the other trees will eventually succumb to the pest, Krutsch says. (The Zoo does not treat ash trees in animal exhibits so that the chemicals won't affect the animals.)



Brigham Whitman, a Zoological Society employee, shows the garlic mustard he's pulled in an afternoon in the Zoo's woods.

Invasive plants at the Zoo include garlic mustard, buckthorn and honeysuckle. Forestry workers pull as many of the plants as they can, sometimes with the help of volunteers from the Zoo and Zoological Society staff. These plants haven't hurt the Zoo's woods much yet, but the workers have to be proactive to make sure it stays that way, Krutsch says. "By the time an invasive species becomes a huge problem, the damage is almost irreversible."



Trees enhance the beauty of Lake Evinrude on the south end of the Zoo grounds. Photo by Bob Wickland

You can help fight invasive species in your community, too. Here's how:

- Don't move firewood more than a few miles. The emerald ash borer and other tree-killing insects often spread through infested firewood.
- Learn to recognize invasive plants and pull them from your property. Look for events at local parks and other green spaces where you can help pull the plants.
- Promote native plants and trees on your property. Native plants are the best suited to the local ecosystem and help sustain the wildlife that lives here.

TURNING ANIMALS INSIDE OUT

The giraffe is a remarkable creature, one that always elicits awe at the Milwaukee County Zoo for its amazing height. But think how amazing it would be to see the inner workings of the giraffe, such as how its heart manages to pump blood all the way up its long neck or the functions of its 20-inch, prehensile tongue.

This summer you'll be able to see these and many other wonders of the animal world at **BODY WORLDS: ANIMAL INSIDE OUT**, the Zoo's special summer exhibit. The exhibit features more than 100 specimens, from huge animals such as a giraffe and bull to smaller ones such as a goat and octopus. **BODY WORLDS** uses a technique called "Plastination" to show what lies beneath the skin of the animals, allowing visitors to see muscles, organs, nervous systems, blood vessels and other elements of living creatures. The exhibit is sponsored by Sendik's Food Markets.

Local residents probably remember when the original **BODY WORLDS** exhibit came to the Milwaukee Public Museum in 2008, drawing a record 338,000 people. (It returned to the museum in 2014.) **BODY WORLDS** focuses on human anatomy, but over the years it received animal donations from zoos, says Dr. Angelina Whalley, exhibit curator. "I started including animals in our regular **BODY WORLDS** exhibitions. I was happy to see that people were able to compare how similar we are to animals under our skin on the one hand, but on the other hand how different," she says. "At a certain point, we thought we had such a good collection of wonderful-looking animals that it was worthwhile to create an exhibition focusing on animals."

Whalley's husband, German anatomist Dr. Gunther von Hagens, invented the Plastination technique. No animals are harmed during the process or for the exhibit, as the organization uses corpses donated by zoos and museums. "What is certainly very striking to anyone are the really big animals," Whalley says. "We have an entire giraffe and a big bull. We also have a reindeer on display. They are in lifelike positions, beautifully dissected." The giraffe specimen took two years to create, she says.

The exhibit was created in 2010, but this is the first time it will visit a zoo in North America. "We thought this was a perfect opportunity – something that's new to everyone in town and really appropriate for zoos with the exotic animals," says Chuck Wikenhauser, Milwaukee County Zoo director. The Zoo will open the exhibit May 6, earlier than in previous years, to allow school groups to go through at discounted rates. "People get a completely different view of these animals," Whalley says. "They make people wonder and think differently. I hope people leaving the exhibition are more respectful and appreciative of animals and life in general."

By Stacy Vogel Davis



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Visit **BODY WORLDS: ANIMAL INSIDE OUT**, sponsored by Sendik's Food Markets, May 6-Sept. 4. Cost is \$10 per adult, \$8 for children 3-12. Zoo Pass members will receive 50% off the ticket price during Nights in June, June 6-8, and Kids' Nights, July 11, 13 and 14.



Left to right: Xander G., a kindergartner at Hawley Environmental School in Milwaukee, and his father, Daniel, look for wildlife during a Nature Play program. • Addison H., a kindergartner at Hawley, makes mud pies at the Critter Cafe. • Instructor Jessica Ciatti introduces kids to a raccoon puppet during Nature Play.

Photos by Bob Wickland.

Connecting • To • Nature

Last October, students from Milwaukee’s Hawley Environmental School made their way to Macaque Island and walked up a pathway into the middle of a thick wooded area. Zoo Pride volunteers were already waiting as the children and their parents were invited to do one thing: play. They made mud pies, tested balancing skills by moving acorns from basket to basket, made nature art, identified animal tracks, collected bugs and helped construct a fort using sticks and leaves.

By playing, kids let their imaginations run wild. The Zoological Society of Milwaukee’s Education Department developed Nature Play to encourage children and parents to interact with the natural world and learn through playing instead of a structured curriculum. The Society received funds from the Association of Zoos & Aquariums’ “Nature Play Begins at Your Zoo & Aquarium,” a program it offers with support from The Walt Disney Company.

The Society’s education staff worked with the Zoo’s Forestry Department to create an area where educators, children and their families can be on Zoo grounds but feel like they’re tucked into their own wild world. Forestry staff transformed the wooded area behind the Macaque Island Patio into an inviting space while achieving forest restoration goals. This is the first time that one of the wooded areas has been opened up for an immersive, educational program that brings in children and adults. “We’re kind of opening their eyes to what nature really is,” Jessica Ciatti, education specialist, says.

Studies have shown that interacting with nature increases empathy, reduces stress levels, and improves motor skills or coordination. James Mills, director of conservation education, says, “There is growing recognition that people and especially urban children are not spending enough time in nature. Children are missing out on many opportunities to develop physical and mental skills because of this. Nature Play aims to help families realize the benefits of playing in nature – for the child and the family. There is so much joy to experience together when playing outside.”

“Playing in nature is shown to reduce stress and inspire curiosity,” education specialist Amanda Cohen says.

“This experience helps children and adults connect with nature in a positive way and, at the same time, connect with one another.” The program increases students’ comfort level in nature. “Many of the students may not have a space like this to play in,” Ciatti says. “Being fully immersed in a safe, natural area allows the students to explore and push their boundaries.”

The program, started in 2016, is just in its infant stage. Hawley Environmental School and Milwaukee’s Allen-Field Elementary have participated in the pilot program so far. Both schools will return in May 2017 so that the students can experience the site in two different seasons with new features. The Education Department plans to add more schools in the years to come. The program is made possible with additional support from Mark and Pat Westen and a C.D. Besadny Conservation Grant from the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin.

By Colton Dunham

Studies have shown that playing in nature has many benefits for children.

- Supports creativity and problem-solving
- Enhances cognitive abilities
- Improves academic performance
- Increases physical activity
- Improves eyesight
- Improves self-discipline
- Reduces stress
- Facilitates child-initiated learning, curiosity and exploration

Celebrating 125 Years

From its beginnings in Washington Park to its present offering of more than 3,300 animals on 190 acres of land, the Milwaukee County Zoo has a proud history as one of the cultural gems of southeastern Wisconsin. The Zoo is celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2017. Here are some highlights of the Zoo's history.

TIMELINE

1892 Two prominent Milwaukeeans donate eight deer to West Park, later renamed Washington Park, to establish a deer park. The park adds more animals, such as bears, monkeys and a bald eagle, in the coming years.



1904 The first bears arrive at the Washington Park Zoo.
Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Parks

1907 The Zoo's first Asian elephant, Countess Heine, arrives in Milwaukee. A crowd greets her at the train station and parades her to the Zoo.

1910 A group of community leaders creates the Washington Park Zoological Society, later to become the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, to buy animals and raise funds for the Zoo. Today, the Society raises money for the Zoo and participates with the Zoo in education and conservation initiatives, but most animals are acquired from other zoos.

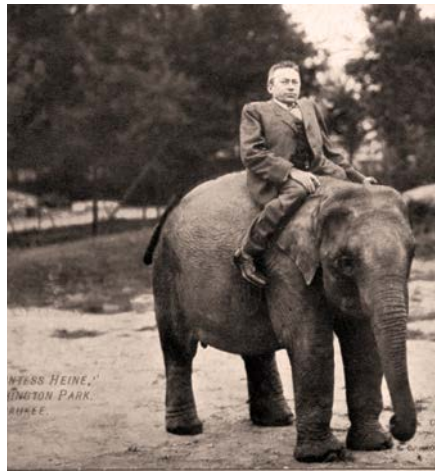


Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Zoo Archives

1937 The Zoo becomes part of the Milwaukee County Parks Commission. It continues to be owned and operated by Milwaukee County today.



1947 Milwaukee County starts buying parcels of land for the new Milwaukee County Zoo. Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Parks

1950 The Zoological Society acquires 1-year-old gorillas Samson and Sambo for the Zoo. Sambo dies of tuberculosis at age 10, but Samson goes on to become the Zoo's most famous animal until his death in 1981. He delights visitors by running at his enclosure windows and pounding on the glass.

Samson (left) and Sambo, 1-year-old gorillas, came to the Zoo in 1950 through a donation from Pabst Brewing Company.



Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Zoo Archives



As an adult, Samson reached a peak weight of 652 pounds before he was put on a diet. Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Parks



Construction of the Zoo's feline house began in the 1950s. Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Zoo Archives



The Zoological Society's conservation coordinator, Gay Reinartz, interacts with Maringa the bonobo. The Stearns Family Apes of Africa building houses the largest Zoo collection of bonobos in the world.

Photo by Richard Brodzeller

1958-1963

The new Milwaukee County Zoo on Bluemound Road is built. It's one of the first zoos to offer predator-prey exhibits, showing predators and their prey grouped together separated by a moat. The new Zoo officially opens in 1961.



Photo courtesy of W.E. Bartram and Milwaukee County Parks

1959

The Zoo's train opens, allowing visitors to view construction of the new Zoo as they ride.

1971

The Children's Zoo opens in what is now the site of the Northwestern Mutual Family Farm. Photo courtesy of Milwaukee County Zoo Archives



1975

The Zoological Society forms Zoo Pride, its volunteer auxiliary, with 63 charter members. Today, it includes more than 500 members who help with everything from events to education classes to interacting with the public.

1976

The Zoological Society's Education Department is founded. Today, the department offers 123 classes and programs throughout the year in addition to Kohl's Wild Theater, the largest zoo-based theater program in the country.

1985

The Zoo and Zoological Society launch a capital campaign to support the Zoo's master plan. The campaign results in the creation or upgrade of Wolf Woods, the Polar Bear Exhibit, Sea Lion Exhibit, Dairy Complex, Herb & Nada Mahler Family Aviary and Peck Welcome Center.



The Animal Health Center, made possible by Milwaukee County, the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, the Gretchen and Andrew Dawes Charitable Trust and the Holz Family Foundation, opened in 2003. It includes several educational elements, including a window to allow the public to view animal surgeries.

Photo by Richard Brodzeller

1992

The \$10.7-million dollar Stearns Family Apes of Africa building opens with funding from the capital campaign, housing western lowland gorillas and bonobos. Milwaukee has the largest zoo collection of bonobos in the world.

2001-2008

The Zoological Society and Milwaukee County launch a second capital campaign. Improvements over this time include the new Animal Health Center, Karen Peck Katz Conservation Education Center, Florence Mila Borchert Big Cat Country, MillerCoors Giraffe Experience, Northwestern Mutual Family Farm, Stackner Animal Encounter, Idabel Wilmot Borchert Flamingo Exhibit and Overlook, Holz Family Foundation Impala Exhibit, Humboldt Penguin Exhibit and U.S. Bank Gathering Place.

2010

The Dohmen Family Foundation Hippo Home opens with significant upgrades to the hippopotamus exhibit.



There's more in store for the Zoo. It is working on a new west-side parking lot and exciting outdoor otter exhibit. The Zoo broke ground in 2016 on a new elephant exhibit that will include expanded space for elephants and state-of-the-art enrichment equipment. We look forward to seeing what the next 125 years bring!

FUN at the FARM

Farm animals like cows, chickens, pigs and bunnies can be found all over the world, including at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Without farms, we wouldn't have foods like milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables and ice cream! Farms are especially important in Wisconsin because we are the leading producer of cheese in the country. The Zoo's Northwestern Mutual Family Farm is the only operating farm in the city of Milwaukee. Milk from the farm is sent to Clock Shadow Creamery, a local cheese-making company.

SNACK FARM ANIMAL BAGELS

Ingredients:

One package plain bagels
Plain and/or strawberry cream cheese
½ cup strawberries
1 banana
½ cup chocolate chips (or blueberries for a healthier option)

Directions:

1. Carefully slice strawberries vertically to form triangles.
2. Peel banana and slice to form half-inch circles.
3. Now that your toppings are ready, toast bagels in toaster.
4. Spread plain cream cheese for "chicken" and "cow" bagels, and strawberry cream cheese for "pig" bagels.
5. Use banana slices with two chocolate chips on top to form the pig's and cow's noses, and cut a banana slice in quarters to form a chicken beak.
6. Use strawberry slices for pig ears and sliced strawberry tips for the chicken's comb.
7. Use chocolate chips or blueberries for eyes.
8. Enjoy!

Try using pizza toppings for a savory snack!



pig

chicken

cow

Brain Game

Visit zoosociety.org/farmgame to write your own silly story!

SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Practice MILKING a COW at HOME

What you'll need:

Strong rubber glove, small needle, rubber band, milk, flour (optional)

Poke very small holes into the tip of all fingers (except the thumb) of a rubber glove. While holding over a glass or container, fill the glove with milk (or water) two thirds of the way full. Seal the top of the glove with a rubber band. Squeeze the fingers to watch the milk come out just like milk from a cow's udder! If the milk is coming out too fast, try adding flour to thicken it.



CRAFT

Make a FARM ANIMAL PUPPET SHOW!

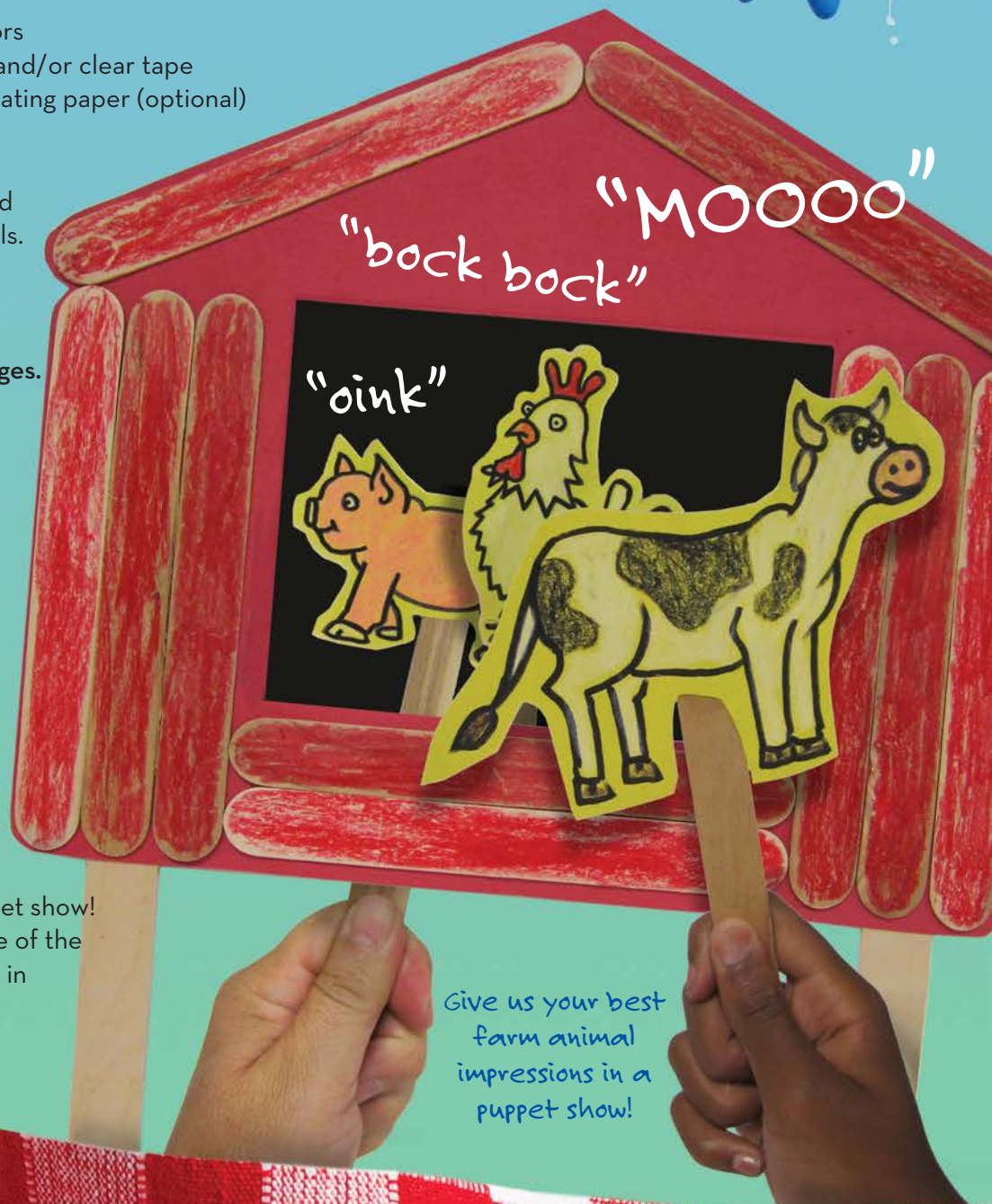
What you'll need:

Markers and crayons
Bag of Popsicle sticks
Construction paper

Scissors
Glue and/or clear tape
Laminating paper (optional)

Steps:

1. On construction paper, draw and color in your favorite farm animals. Have your parents/guardians help you cut them out. You can find printable coloring pages at zoosociety.org/FarmColoringPages. Hint: Laminate the puppets to help them last longer.
2. Glue the paper animals to the end of Popsicle sticks. Let dry.
3. Color the rest of the Popsicle sticks red like a barn.
4. Cut a large barn shape out of red construction paper. Cut a rectangle out of the center of the barn for the "stage."
5. Glue the red Popsicle sticks around the opening in the barn and on the roof. Glue a couple of sticks to the back of the barn to serve as handles.
6. Grab a friend to perform a puppet show! Each friend can hold up one side of the barn and perform with a puppet in the other hand.



Give us your best
farm animal
impressions in a
puppet show!

The **Buzz** about Honeybees

Flamboyant flowers and perky summer plants amaze Milwaukee County Zoo guests each year. While the grounds crew works hard to keep the Zoo in bloom, it has 40,000 other creatures helping out – honeybees. The Zoo's bee house in the farm area has a fully operating hive, with a vent at the top of the wooden building where the bees can leave and pollinate the beautiful horticulture around the Zoo.

Overseeing the bee house is tall, bearded Wisconsin native Andy Hemken. "For the most part, bees do their own thing, but it's up to the beekeeper to keep them healthy, happy and, most importantly, alive," he says. On an average day, Hemken will be stung by a honeybee 12 times. But that comes with the job description – he's a beekeeper.

Hemken bought his first package of bees in 1996. In 2016, he managed 600 beehives. Hemken is a commercial beekeeper, which means he makes his entire living off the beekeeping business: selling honey, providing pollinators to farms and much more through his company, Hemken Honey Co.

"I'm a little strange, and beekeeping is a little strange," Hemken says. "Beekeepers are eclectic people. You have to keep your bees in your own, unique way."

About 1,000 people in the U.S. make a living off of beekeeping. That's a small part of agriculture compared with the 2.2 million traditional farms nationwide. But the value of pollination on agriculture products in the U.S. is about \$15 billion – \$200 billion worldwide. For example, an acre of almond trees in California produces about

200 pounds of nuts without bees. Add two beehives to the acre, and production increases to 2,600 pounds.

2016 was a good year for honeybees, according to Hemken. But that's not always the case. Starting in 2006, beekeepers started reporting bees dying off at an alarming rate. The mysterious phenomenon came to be known as Colony Collapse Disorder.

"There is a big problem, and no one can find a definite answer to what's going on," Hemken says. Cases of CCD have dropped in the last few years, but colony loss is still a concern.

Two other factors have been causing the loss of honeybees: chemicals and pesticides and habitat loss. Hemken will tell you, from experience, that farms will purchase bees to pollinate crops that they will then spray with pesticides, killing the bees. Another problem that Hemken encounters are parasitic mites and pathogens that make the bees sick. Creating a quality environment for bees and providing them with enough nutrition and medicine can help prevent that, he says.

To put it in perspective: About one in three bites of food in your diet contains a fruit, vegetable or nut that wouldn't exist without the work that bees do. Hemken stresses that although humans won't die if honeybees become extinct, our diets will become a lot less flavorful and colorful,

void of berries, nuts and fruit. "Pollination is so important for so many reasons," Hemken says.

And no matter how many times he gets stung, Hemken can't see himself doing anything else.

By Mary Jo Contino



Andy Hemken, of Hemken Honey Co., runs the bee house in the Zoo's farm area. In addition to keeping and selling bees, he sells honey and other bee-related products. Photo by Olga Kornienko

Honeybees help pollinate flowers around the Milwaukee County Zoo. Photo by Bob Wickland



How can you help the honeybee population?

- Support natural farming.
- Plant lots of native plants and colorful flowers.
- Tell your lawmakers to support legislation that encourages ecological farming.



Queen of the Aviary

If you hear “pigeon” and think of a dull gray bird picking garbage off the sidewalk, think again. The Victoria crowned pigeon is so regal, with its blue-grey and maroon feathers and its lacy “crown,” that it was named for Queen Victoria.

Both males and females sport the large crown, or crest, but the Victoria crowned pigeon that arrived at the Milwaukee County Zoo last summer is female. Her name is Enga, after a province in New Guinea where the bird lives in the wild. “At first she was timid of her new surroundings, but after becoming familiar with her exhibit mates, she became more at ease in her new environment,” says Bryan Kwiatkowski, an aviary zookeeper. “She has become quite chummy with the crested wood partridge family and often can be seen foraging, preening and resting near them.”

At about 5 pounds and more than 2 feet tall, the Victoria crowned pigeon is the largest pigeon in the world since the extinction of the dodo. This bird also faces threats from habitat destruction and hunting, and it's listed as “near threatened” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. It spends most of its time on the ground and enjoys eating seeds, fruit and insects. Enga especially seems to like mealworms, Kwiatkowski says.

The Zoo expects to get a male Victoria crowned pigeon in the future and hopes the birds will breed. The pigeons make loud booming noises when courting each other. But for now you can keep Enga company on the west end of the Herb & Nada Mahler Family Aviary.

By Stacy Vogel Davis



Photo by Joel Miller

New Potto Climbing Around

On New Year's Day, the Milwaukee County Zoo welcomed a new furry resident: a male African potto named Jabari. He joins female African potto Kiazi in the Small Mammals Building. Jabari, born in 2001, comes from Metro Park Zoo in Cleveland. According to Rhonda Crenshaw, area supervisor of small mammals, Jabari and Kiazi are already a perfect match and are expected to breed. “We didn't have any issues introducing them,” Crenshaw says. “They love each other.” Jabari – whose name means “the brave one” in Swahili – has already gone as far as to scent-mark Kiazi. This is a common form of communication between pottos, using scent glands and trails of urine to mark their territory and to communicate their reproductive state.

Jabari moves around like Spider-Man. Instead of shooting out webs, he uses his joints to climb up the side of the wall with ease onto a nearby branch, where he crawls upside down to reach the other side. “Pottos can crawl under branches just as well as they can climb on top of branches,” Crenshaw says. You can tell the difference between Jabari and Kiazi because Jabari's tail is longer and has a black tip at the end.

This small, nocturnal omnivore can hook onto any crevice with its strong grip. It has specialized blood vessels to maintain a strong grip for a long period of time. In the wild, if danger is near, the potto will sit very still to blend in and hold this position for hours. For extra protection, a potto will tuck its head for defense and project bony vertebrae along its neck. These vertebrae have sharp points and act as a shield. Yet its jumbo eyes make it look cute and cuddly. Crenshaw says, “Their faces and their little furry bodies just remind me of a teddy bear.”

By Colton Dunham



Photo by Richard Brodzeller



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Alive

Friday, April 28, 5-9 p.m.

The smell of the dairy barn. The sound of bonobos shrieking as they playfully chase each other. The sight of a snake calmly staring at you from behind glass. The taste of cheese made of milk from the Zoo's cows. The feel of a furry friend in a special animal encounter.

The Milwaukee County Zoo is a place you experience with all of your senses. Let's celebrate that at Zootastic, the Zoological Society's annual spring fundraiser. Experience a family fun night you'll never forget as you explore the Zoo with your five senses, talk with zookeepers and even get close to a critter or two. Kids will love dancing to DJ Tim Sledge and making crafts throughout the Zoo. You'll also get a yummy dinner with food from Noodles & Company along with a special keepsake photo.

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See zoosociety.org/zootastic or the flyer packaged with this issue for more information.

