

# WILD

# THINGS

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Beer, Food, Fun



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# ZOO ZOO ZUMBA!



Photos by Bob Wickland

## Zumba® Fitness Party at the Zoo 5-7 p.m. (Check-in starts at 4 p.m.)

**Cost:** \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door (unless event is full)

You got the moves like Jagger? How about the moves for jaguars? Don't miss the Zoological Society's Zumba® fundraiser where you can shake it out for the animals. All skill levels are not only welcome; they are encouraged. The routines are led by Zumba Jammer™ Rachel Beimel and other licensed instructors.

Money raised from this event goes to the Zoological Society's Sponsor an Animal program. Anyone 14 and up is welcome to sign up. Pre-register at [zoosociety.org/Zumba](http://zoosociety.org/Zumba). The event has sold out in the past, so don't wait to get your ticket.



### Cover Photos:

All photos by Garrett Hopkins except brown bat (stock image).



Printed on recycled paper.



# MEMBERANDA

We value your relationship with the Zoological Society of Milwaukee. The Society does not sell member/donor information to third parties but may share limited information with the Milwaukee County Zoo for the purpose of confirming membership status.

### Zoological Society office hours:

Now through Sept. 4 – 9 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Sept. 5 through Oct. 31 – 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

### Zoo hours:

Now through Sept. 4 – 9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Sept. 5 through Oct. 31 – 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

**Please Note:** The Zoo's admission gates close 1 hour prior to the posted Zoo closing time. The animal buildings close 15 minutes before posted Zoo closing hours. Many outdoor animals are brought in 45 minutes prior to Zoo closing.

**Zoo Pass admission:** Please remember to have your Society Zoo Pass and identification ready when you arrive at the Zoo's admission gates. If you've misplaced or lost your card, replacement cards may be purchased for \$5. Zoo Pass admission is valid for regular daytime Zoo hours and many events. **Please remember the person(s) named on the Zoo Pass must accompany any guest if there are guest privileges on the Zoo Pass card.**

**Problems renewing or transacting online:** If you experience any difficulties transacting a Zoo Pass renewal or animal sponsorship online, please contact us at 414-258-2333 so we can assist with your transaction. Our staff is available seven days a week.

**Visiting other zoos and aquariums:** We have agreed to participate in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' reciprocal admissions program. Some accredited zoos and aquariums choose not to participate in this program and therefore do not appear on our list. Most facilities honor free or discounted admission for two adults and two minor children. Members should call ahead to the facilities they plan to visit to get current information. In a few cases, we have opted not to reciprocate with some institutions that are in close proximity to our zoo. Members are encouraged to review the updated list by going online at [zoosociety.org/reciprocal](http://zoosociety.org/reciprocal).

**Who can use member cards?** The person(s) named on the Zoo Pass is the owner of the card, and benefits are not transferable to anyone else. We need to have the number of children/grandchildren under the age of 17 in your household reflected in your membership records for the Zoo's admission gates. Foster children are covered by your membership. **Day-care providers for children: Your Zoo Pass membership does not cover children for whom you provide baby-sitting or day-care services.** The Society and the Zoo retain the right to invalidate any membership being used inappropriately.

## WILD THINGS

Issue No. 164, Sept.-Oct. 2023



**Wild Things is a membership newsletter published by the Zoological Society of Milwaukee five times a year.**

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10001 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226  
**Phone:** 414-256-5412 **Web:** [milwaukeezoo.org](http://milwaukeezoo.org)

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# YOU BETTER BEER-LIEVE IT

## Zoo Brew

Enjoy a pilsner near a penguin or a lager by a lion. Zoo Brew is the Zoological Society's annual beer- and food-tasting event inside the Milwaukee County Zoo. There are three zones around the Zoo for you to try something new or stick to your favorite brews. Sip a stout in the beer garden surrounded by a campfire. Swish around an IPA in the big cat building while watching the lions, tigers and jaguars. Then savor a microbrew in the Peck Welcome Center while listening to live music, sponsored by Molson Coors.

Get a jump start and order a VIP ticket to enter the event one hour early! Or, purchase a designated driver ticket and enjoy the food samples, entertainment and a fall evening in the Zoo.

### Zoo Pass Members & Guests:

Regular ticket: \$60

VIP ticket (early entry at 6 p.m.): \$70

### Non-members:

Regular ticket: \$75

VIP ticket (early entry at 6 p.m.): \$85

**Registration opens on Aug. 15.**

**We are still accepting beer and food vendors.**

**To sign up, visit [zoosociety.org/ZooBrew](http://zoosociety.org/ZooBrew).**

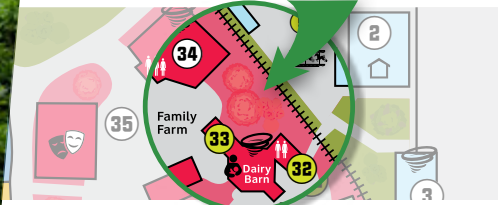


Photos by Garrett Hopkins

# NEW SPACE FOR GUESTS



**E**mbrace nature and wild birds while also picking up tips for your own backyard oasis. The new Backyard Bird Walk is located in the Northwestern Mutual Family Farm behind the Dairy Barn.



The area was previously unused and not accessible to guests. The space now features a looping walkable path with numerous stations that guests can explore.



## Here is what you will find:

- Different types of nesting boxes, including boxes for bats, purple martin birds and more.
- A pergola with a variety of feeders to attract different birds.
- Fruit trees, including plum and cherry, plus native flowers and plants to attract pollinators.
- A "bug house" and brush pile for native insects to live, nest and eat in while supplying native birds with a nutritious meal.

The Backyard Bird Walk invites Zoo guests to be inspired to become conservationists in their own backyards. Guests can discover easy ways to support migratory birds and native pollinators, help prevent bird strikes and more, from their house.



Photos by Kevin McIntosh

# FOOD CLUES

Since animals can't talk or tell a person what's wrong, zookeepers have to look for clues. Last year, zookeepers in the Aquatic & Reptile Center noticed one of the two stuChris in the Lake Wisconsin aquarium was acting too polite and wouldn't compete with the other fish for food. Zookeepers took notice and decided to move him to a private area so he could get the right amount of food, that is, until he found a new home at Discovery World where they hand-feed their sturgeons during weekly dives.

Zookeepers in the Aquatic & Reptile Center walk around the building each day to observe the fish and take notes if any of them are looking thin or in poor health. Then, they scatter small food items to observe how the fish are eating as well as their social dynamics. It was during this time that zookeepers noticed the sturgeon was being shy when other fish were present. (There are 16 species of fish inside the Lake Wisconsin aquarium.)

This particular sturgeon arrived at the Milwaukee County Zoo in 2004. While we may not know what changed that made him so shy to eat, we do know that he is thriving in his new environment thanks to the watchful and caring zookeepers.



# ORNAMENT REVEAL

The Zoological Society is excited to announce this year's animal ornament is the scimitar-horned oryx. One of the most dazzling features of this animal is its horns. The horns can grow as long as 3 feet and have a beautiful curve that is delicately displayed in this ornament.

Each year, local artist Andy Schumann studies the features of the animal selected for that year's ornament and sketches a design before carving it out of clay. The final product is then cast in pewter. This is the Society's and Schumann's 32nd ornament design.



Each ornament is \$16 and includes shipping and handling. You can also buy any of the 31 ornaments from years past by going to [zoosociety.org/ornaments](http://zoosociety.org/ornaments). Buy the full set of 32 ornaments and save \$64.



# A THEATRICAL IMPACT

**K**ohl's Wild Theater is wrapping up its 12th year of wildlife-themed arts education. In 2011, Kohl's partnered with the Milwaukee County Zoo and Zoological Society of Milwaukee to develop a theater program that would use drama, songs and puppetry to teach about animals, the environment and Earth conservation. Looking to the future, Kohl's Wild Theater will continue to tap imaginations and foster empathy for wildlife through performances and arts education.

The theater program performs inside the Zoo during the summer and travels within a 60-mile radius throughout the year.

Here is a snapshot of the impact Kohl's Wild Theater has had on the community since 2011.

- 760,597 audience members at the Milwaukee County Zoo.
- 187,888 people reached at schools and community venues.
- 4,110 performances out in the community, traveling to a total of 791 different venues.
- 73 different actors have been a part of the theater program.
- 57 different shows created and performed.
- During the pandemic, KWT virtual programs won the American Alliance for Theatre and Education Monte Meacham Award for outstanding contributions to theater for youth.

### Top 5 Highest Booked Shows:

- 137** - How Does Your Garden Grow? (2019)
- 109** - Misunderstood: Musicals for the Underappreciated (2017)
- 99** - A World of Water (2015)
- 90** - Wisconsin Wonderland (2018)
- 87** - Finding Harmony (2021) \*virtual

**Kohl's Wild Theater will perform inside the Zoo until Sept. 4. For more information on this unique programming, visit [wildtheater.org](http://wildtheater.org).**



## LIVING UNDERGROUND

If you have ever seen the prairie dogs at the Zoo, then you are one of the lucky ones. Prairie dogs spend most of their time in the burrows they dig. Even the zookeepers don't see all of them every day. Your best chance is early in the morning or at the end of the day.

The Zoo is home to six male prairie dogs. They are all named after Hobbits: Frodo, Bilbo, Merry, Samwise, Pippin and Bungo. Before the boys arrived in the fall of 2022, the Zoo had just put in fresh soil and grass. The area's supervisor and zookeepers put a box in the ground toward the back of the habitat, so the animals had a stable and safe chamber underground while the new soil settled. A PVC pipe attached to the box helped them get their tunnels started. Since their arrival, they have been working hard to create a series of burrows including separate chambers for sleeping, food storage and waste.

Due to their skittish nature and instinct to spend a fair amount of time underground, the zookeepers' management is very hands-off. They may try to offer treats when they walk by to build a positive relationship and encourage the prairie dogs to pop out of their burrows more often. However, they still find safety and comfort underground. Since they are prey to many species, their survival response is to hide when danger is possibly near. When they do come out, one of the prairie dogs will act as a lookout and warn others if they see something that they think is a danger.

As winter comes, guests will have less of a chance to see them because the six prairie dogs will hibernate underground. Zookeepers give them extra bedding in the fall to take into the burrows for insulation. Until then, try to head to their habitat next to the elk as soon as the Zoo opens to see if you can catch a glimpse.



**FRODO  
BILBO  
MERRY  
SAMWISE  
PIPPIN  
BUNGO**

SEPT  
10

# A CHAIN REACTION

## Ride on the Wild Side

Sponsored by Annex Wealth Management  
7 a.m. check-in/registration; 8 a.m. start

Choose from one of four routes: a 2.5-mile family-friendly route that stays inside the Zoo or a 10-, 17- or 27-mile ride that starts and ends in the Zoo but goes out on local trails. Riders that do the 2.5-mile ride can take as many laps as they want before 9 a.m.

### Registration includes:

- A long-sleeved T-shirt
- Continental breakfast
- Picnic lunch
- Crafts and activities for kids
- A day at the Zoo plus parking

When you register for this annual bike ride inside the Zoo, you're setting off a chain reaction. Just like the pedals on your bike move you forward, this fundraiser moves the Zoological Society in the right direction. Money raised for this event helps the Zoological Society in its mission to conserve wildlife and endangered species, educate people about the importance of wildlife and the environment, and support the Milwaukee County Zoo.

In addition to signing up to ride, we hope you share with family and friends so they can support you and the Society. By getting pledges you earn points for possible rewards. Plus, the Society gets extra help to support its mission. Visit [zoosociety.org/bike](http://zoosociety.org/bike) to register and learn more about your impact.

Not only do Zoo Pass members get a discount, but if you register early, you'll save even more! Plus, members receive an additional \$10 off registration of 4 or more riders with code **SAVE10**.

	Until Sept. 4	Day of Ride
Adult (14 & over)	\$50	\$60
Child (13 & under)	\$25	\$30



### Special thanks to our ...

- **Supporting sponsors:** BMO; Carmex; Connect Chiropractic; J.K. Lee Black Belt Academy; Litho-Craft; R&R Insurance; Southport Engineered Systems; Stephanie Murphy, DDS; TrueSmile Orthodontics
- **Food donors:** Cedar Crest Ice Cream; Festival Foods; Lifeway Foods; Olympia Granola; Prairie Farms Dairy; Sargento Foods, Inc
- **Media sponsors:** News/Talk 1130 WISN, FM106.1, 95.7 BIG FM, V100.7



# TRACKING BATS



Bats can get a bad rap. Despite their importance to our environment, many of them are in trouble. The conservation team at the Zoological Society is stepping in to help the population by performing a method of research called acoustic monitoring. April through October, the team walks through the Zoo grounds twice per month with a device that picks up different bat calls. Then three times total during those months, they participate in a driving route in certain areas of Southeastern Wisconsin. "Bat monitoring technology has advanced incredibly in recent years," says Zoological Society conservation programs coordinator Auriana Donaldson.

During each monitoring session, the team walks or drives the exact same route so they can compare bat presence through the years. They strategically go along tree lines and water sources and use a small device called an Echo Meter 2 that plugs into a smartphone or tablet and works with an app. From there, either Donaldson or someone on her team holds the device up to record bat echolocation calls. Here is where it gets fascinating ... the technology can detect species and call type by analyzing the frequency, sound quality and duration of the call. "We typically pick up social chirps and feeding

calls," says Donaldson. Meaning, the device can tell not only what species of bat is present but also what the bats are trying to communicate to each other.

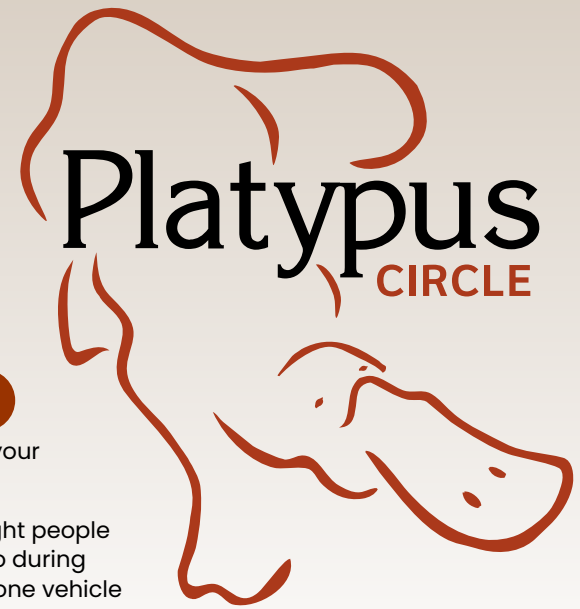
Bat monitoring is vital in order for scientists to better respond to bat conservation issues and preserve the species for years to come. "Bats are ecologically important animals and are the primary consumers of night-flying insects – including mosquitos," explains Donaldson. A single little brown bat in Wisconsin can catch 1,000 mosquitoes in one hour. Currently, the little brown bat is listed as threatened in Wisconsin due to habitat loss and devastating white-nose syndrome. **To learn how you can help, use the QR code below.**



Photos by Kevin McIntosh  
except bat photo (stock)

# MORE MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

If you are looking to help the Zoological Society in a bigger and broader way while getting more benefits and VIP opportunities than a Zoo Pass membership provides, consider joining the Platypus Circle.



## Individual Platypus Circle Membership

- Transferable cards allow you to share your membership with friends or family.
- Your membership card allows up to eight people – in one vehicle – free access to the Zoo during regular Zoo hours. Free parking for the one vehicle is included.
- Memberships start at \$750 with increased benefits at different levels.
- Invitations to VIP events at the Zoo.
- Private, behind-the-scenes tours.

## Corporate Platypus Circle Membership

- Transferable cards you can share with employees, clients, family or friends.
- Your membership card allows up to eight people – in one vehicle – free access to the Zoo during regular Zoo hours. Free parking for the one vehicle is included.
- Memberships start at \$1,000 with increased benefits at different levels.
- Sign recognition inside the Milwaukee County Zoo.
- Discounts on Zoo facility rentals.
- Invitations to VIP events.
- Private, behind-the-scenes tours.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins



Photo by Kevin McIntosh

To learn more about becoming a member of the Platypus Circle, visit [BeAPlaty.org](http://BeAPlaty.org) or call 414-918-6151.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins



Photo by Kevin McIntosh

# CAN THAT BE TRUE?

All living things have adaptations to help in their survival. But some of these seem too wild to be true. Here are just a few facts you may not know:

A caribou's eyeballs look yellow most of the year but will turn blue in winter. No other mammals are known to have this ability. The color change allows their eyes to become 1,000 times more sensitive to light in the dark winter months. The Milwaukee County Zoo has two caribou, Bean and Kylliki.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins



Photo by Bob Wickland

Female turkeys can reproduce without a male. When this happens, the turkey that hatches is almost always a male turkey. The Zoo has a few wild turkeys that roam the grounds.

A grizzly bear's bite is so strong that it can crush a bowling ball.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

Vultures urinate and defecate on their legs and feet to cool them off during hot months. There is an actual name for this; it's called urohydrosis. This behavior can also help kill any bacteria the bird picked up on its feet while preying on animals.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

Bees have five eyes. Two of them are in the front, but the three smaller eyes are on top of its head to detect light and sense when a predator is coming.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

What weighs more? A Humboldt penguin or a Caribbean flamingo? The flamingo is 5 feet tall and the penguin is 2 feet tall. The answer is the Humboldt weighs more. Humboldt penguins weigh 9 to 10 pounds and a Caribbean flamingo is almost half the weight, coming in at between 4 to 8 pounds. The reason for this is flamingos have hollow bones and penguins do not.



Photo by Garrett Hopkins



Photo by Joel Miller

There are an estimated 8.7 million species on Earth, and more than 80% of them are still undiscovered.

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8

# HOORAY FOR HIPPOS



## Kids Conservation Club Workshop

**Two sessions to choose from: 10 a.m. or 11 a.m.**

Kids Conservation Club is a great way to get your child involved in the Zoo and wildlife. For \$25 a year (per child) KCC members sponsor an endangered animal at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Benefits include an animal fact sheet on that year's animal, collector cards with endangered animals, the child's name on a donor board in the Zoo and invitations to two free workshops a year.

In October, the workshop is all about hippos. Kids will learn about the Zoo's two resident hippos and what makes them so unique. From holding their breath underwater for up to five minutes to running up to 19 miles per hour on land, hippos are fascinating animals underwater and on land.

If your child is a member of the Kids Conservation Club, contact Becky Luft at [beckyl@zoosociety.org](mailto:beckyl@zoosociety.org) to register for this workshop.

**To sign up your child for the Kids Conservation Club, go to [zoosociety.org/sponsoranimal](http://zoosociety.org/sponsoranimal).**



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

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NOV  
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# AFFORDABLE ADVENTURES

## Family Free Day

*Sponsored by Tri City National Bank  
Media Sponsor: FOX6*

Bring your friends, your friends' friends, your family or even your 5th cousin you only see on holidays, because when you come on Family Free Day, admission is free. Between October and March, the first Saturday of the month offers free admission to the Milwaukee County Zoo. If your family and friends like what they see, tell them to buy a Zoo Pass so they can come all the time!

Venture through the wooded paths, soaking in the natural landscape. Top off the day with a visit to the Zoo's elephants. If you don't see them outside, check out their indoor home where you can also learn more about them.

**Parking and other fees apply.**



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

OCT  
19-22

# EERIE-SISTIBLE FUN



Photos by Garrett Hopkins



## Boo at the Zoo

*Presented by Prairie Farms Dairy*

**5:30-9 p.m.**

Trick or treat yourself to a Halloween evening inside the Zoo. Dress up in costume and walk through the Zoo as the sun goes down and decorations light the way. Stroll by the hundreds of hand-carved pumpkins as you stop at a Creature of the Night talk. Halloween entertainment like live music will lift your spirits! Of course, don't forget to trick-or-treat. There will be candy and allergen-friendly stops throughout the Zoo.

Tickets are required and can be purchased at [milwaukeezoo.org](http://milwaukeezoo.org) starting in early September. Boo at the Zoo is an after-hours fundraising event for the Milwaukee County Zoo.

**Tickets are required and can be purchased at [milwaukeezoo.org](http://milwaukeezoo.org).**

**Adult: \$15.50, Child: \$13.50**

**Zoo Pass members receive a 15% discount with code *spooky* and their membership number.**



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10005 W. Bluemound Rd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53226-4383

**DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY**

This year's ornament  
honors the oryx.

**Page 5.**



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

# WHAT'S HAPPENING



*Walk through the Zoo at night for this not-so-scary Halloween event. Learn about Boo at the Zoo on page 15.*



Photo by Garrett Hopkins

**Now-Oct. 7**

Special summer exhibit, Dino Don's Journey to the Ice Age, sponsored by Sendik's Food Market

**Aug. 17-20**

A La Carte at the Zoo, presented by Meijer\*

**Aug. 26**

Animal Safari: Behind-the-scenes tours for animal sponsors

**Sept. 10**

Ride on the Wild Side Bike Ride, sponsored by Annex Wealth Management

**Oct. 5**

Zoo Brew (pre-register)

**Oct. 7**

Family Free Day, sponsored by Tri City National Bank & FOX6\*

**Oct. 8**

Kids Conservation Club Workshop (pre-register)

**Oct. 19-22**

Boo at the Zoo, presented by Prairie Farms Dairy (pre-register)

**Nov. 4**

Family Free Day, sponsored by Tri City National Bank & FOX6\*

**Nov. 8**

Zoo Pass member registration for Spring Zoo Classes begins

**Nov. 4**

Zumba® Fitness Party at the Zoo (pre-register)

\*Zoo Pass members get free Zoo admission with their Zoo Pass. Those with Zoo Pass Plus also get free parking for one vehicle per membership per day. Platypus Circle members receive free admission and parking with their card.

## CONNECT WITH US!

facebook.com/ZooPass

twitter.com/ZooSocietyMKE

instagram.com/ZooSocietyMKE

youtube.com/ZooSocietyMKE



The Zoological Society of Milwaukee is proud to bear Charity Navigator's highest rating of four stars.

Gold  
Transparency  
2022

Candid.

The Zoological Society of Milwaukee is recognized for our transparency with GuideStar's Gold Seal.