It’s been an exciting year for the Bactrian camels at the Milwaukee County Zoo. This spring, the Zoo welcomed two new calves to the herd: Patrick, born March 5, and George, born May 22. While we usually think of camels roaming the deserts of Africa, Bactrian camels originate from the rocky deserts of China and Mongolia. They are adapted to withstand temperatures from -22 degrees to more than 100 degrees.

**Fruit Camel Snack**

Bactrian camels are herbivores, which means they eat only plants. Try out this snack inspired by the Bactrian camel’s diet.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 banana
- 3 strawberries
- 3 clementine slices
- Blueberries
- Toothpicks

**Directions:**
1. Slice the top off of three strawberries and attach them together with two toothpicks.
2. Attach clementine slices to the tops of the second and third strawberries to form the humps.
3. Attach two toothpicks each to the bottoms of the first and third strawberries. These will become the legs.
4. Put blueberries on the toothpicks to form the legs.
5. To make the neck, take half of a banana and attach it to the first strawberry with toothpicks.
6. Take one clementine slice and fasten it to the top of the banana neck to make the head.
7. Add a blueberry to each side of the clementine slice for eyes, and your fruit camel is complete!
**EGG CARTON CAMEL**

Did you know that unlike their Arabian camel relatives, Bactrian camels have two humps? Their humps store fat that can easily be turned into energy when food and water aren’t nearby. This lets them walk for miles without getting exhausted. This egg carton camel craft is the perfect way to make your own camel with two humps.

**What you’ll need:**
- Egg carton
- Brown paint and a paintbrush
- Four pipe cleaners – yellow, orange or brown
- Brown construction paper
- Scissors
- Black marker
- Hot glue gun

**Directions:**
1. Cut two egg sections out from the egg carton (keep them attached to each other) and paint them brown. Let them dry while you create the tail, legs and head.
2. Cut a strip of brown construction paper the length and width of your index finger. Add “hairs” to the tail by cutting small slashes in the end.
3. Cut the shape of a camel head and neck from brown construction paper. Draw the eyes, ears and mouth with a black marker.
4. Curl a pipe cleaner around your index and middle fingers. Bend one end flat (this is the side you will attach inside the egg carton). Turn the other end into two camel toe loops so your craft can stand properly. Do this three more times for the other three legs.
5. Once the paint has dried, ask an adult to help you hot glue the head and neck onto the front of the camel and the tail onto the back.
6. Once the head and neck are dry, turn your camel upside down and attach its legs with hot glue. Make sure they are dry before standing your camel up!

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**DESERT SCENE**

**Materials:**
- Blue construction paper or cardstock
- Several pieces of sand-colored construction paper (think red, yellow, brown and orange)
- Black construction paper
- A stencil or cutout of a camel. You can find a stencil at zoosociety.org/CamelStencil, or try creating your own!
- Scissors
- Glue

**Directions:**
1. Use your blue construction paper as the background of the camel masterpiece.
2. Rip strips of the sand-colored construction paper horizontally and layer them on top of each other on the blue paper to create the look of sand and sand dunes. Be as creative as you’d like!
3. Glue your strips of construction paper into place.
4. Trace your paper camel on black paper and cut it out.
5. Glue your camel cutout on top of the sand. Add as many camel cutouts as you’d like.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

The vast majority of camels are domesticated. There are only approximately 600 wild camels living in China and 450 in Mongolia. They are critically endangered, meaning they have a high risk of going extinct in their natural habitat. Wild camels lose their habitats to domestic or livestock animals and are sometimes shot by hunters to keep them away. Mining and climate change are also factors in their endangered status.

The Wild Camel Protection Foundation is a registered nonprofit organization determined to protect wild camels in the Gobi Desert. For more information, visit wildcamels.com.

Text by Emily Gamb