

Animal Tracks

**An Inside Look at
Enrichment from
a Zoo Keeper's
Perspective**

+ **FEATURED ANIMAL:**
Speckled Mousebird

**EXCITING CHANGES
COMING TO THE ZOO:**
Nightlife Programs

Birmingham Zoo Partners with
other AZA Zoos for Great Ape
Heart Project



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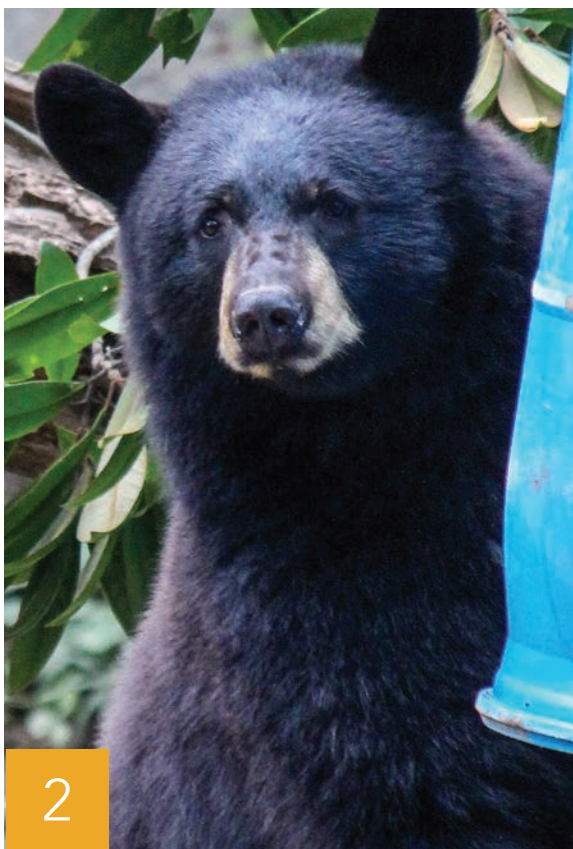
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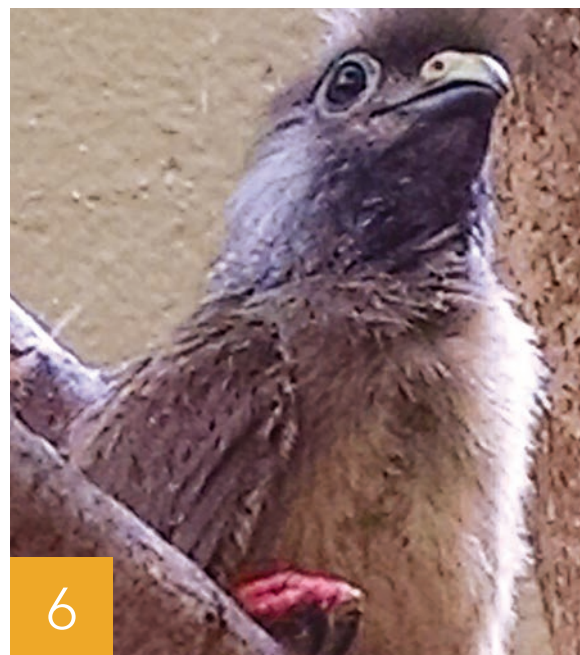
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The Birmingham Zoo is the only AZA accredited zoo in the state of Alabama.

ZOO HOURS:

Open daily, Monday
through Sunday:
9am–5pm



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Members,

I would like to reflect on some of the highpoints from the exciting summer season at the Zoo.

In fulfillment of the Zoo's mission, we have been busy working to assist various conservation efforts. In the late spring, a speckled mouse bird chick hatched. To learn more about what an accomplishment this is for the Zoo's Bird Department, visit page 6. In addition, the Zoo's Primate Department has been working hard to help the Zoo's male orangutan. For more information on this endeavor, visit page 12.

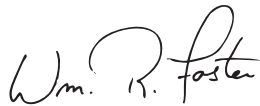
The Zoo received accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in September. This was a complex and thorough process. To be accredited, the Birmingham Zoo ensured that we met and will continue to meet the ever-rising AZA standards in the areas of animal care, veterinary programs, conservation, education and safety. AZA requires zoos and aquariums to successfully complete this rigorous accreditation process every five years in order to be members of the Association. It is quite an accomplishment to be accredited and it took hard work and dedication from our staff to obtain this achievement. The Birmingham Zoo is the only accredited Zoo in the state of Alabama.

The Zoo's largest fundraising event, ZooGala, occurred on September 16 and was a renowned success. I would like to extend a personal thank you to everyone who helped organize such a wonderful event – it is because of all of you that the Zoo continues to grow and prosper each year.

I am excited to announce a new BZI Travel Program, where Zoo patrons like you are invited to participate. In 2017 we will travel to Africa and India. There is still availability for these trips, and more information is available on the Zoo's website, www.birminghamzoo.com.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Zoo staff and the hundreds of animals that enrich the lives of our guests every day, thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing you soon and often.

Sincerely,



William R. Foster, D.V.M.
President & CEO



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Kristin Martin

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AN INSIDE LOOK AT ENRICHMENT FROM A ZOO KEEPER'S PERSPECTIVE

Enrichment is an important part of the care for the animals at the Birmingham Zoo. The animal departments provided information regarding enrichment and how the zoo keepers use it to encourage natural behaviors, mentally and physically stimulate the animal, and enhance their well-being.

WHAT IS ENRICHMENT?

Enrichment is providing an animal with a variety of options throughout the day to elicit natural behaviors, mentally and physically stimulate the animal, and enhance their well-being.

WHY IS ENRICHMENT IMPORTANT?

It exercises them physically, stimulates their minds, and encourages natural behaviors such as foraging, climbing, nest building, curiosity, and playfulness. Enrichment can recreate problem solving situations that the animals would encounter in their natural environment. Zoo keepers can make every day different for the animals simply by adding a boomer ball to their exhibit, spraying an unfamiliar smell, or even rearranging the exhibit, such as moving platforms or climbing logs. This allows them to interact with their environment in new ways and express natural behaviors like foraging for food, going after "prey" (a box or boomer ball), or marking their territory.

WHO CREATES THE ENRICHMENT?

Enrichment is created by zoo keepers, veterinary staff, nutrition team, volunteers, and even education classes and camps. Zoo volunteers help create paper mache piñatas, paper chains, and wrapped boxes

for special events. Zoo volunteers and staff also help by bringing in boxes, paper towel tubes, and newspaper that can be used for various enrichment activities. Certain departments have enrichment calendars each month that list what to give the animals that day, and it varies month to month so the animals never get the same enrichment item twice in a row or in the same order.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ENRICHMENT?

Yes! Various types of enrichment include food, sensory, environmental, social, visual, audio, novelty items, puzzle feeders, tactile, exhibit design, husbandry training and even breeding. While there are several different types of enrichment, it all ties back to the animals' natural behavior.

HOW DO KEEPERS COME UP WITH ENRICHMENT FOR THE ANIMALS?

Enrichment ideas come through heavy amounts of research. The zoo keepers are always trying to promote natural behaviors, so they need to research the species' natural history to gain a better understanding of the species' natural behaviors, environment, and social dynamics to develop proper enrichment. Other ways keepers come up with enrichment are by visiting other zoos and asking other zoo keepers. Sometimes enrichment ideas come from a pile of components, and the zoo keepers have to be creative in how to present them. Enrichment can come from observing what the animal does/enjoys, then trying to design an item that fits that need. If an animal is a forager,

creating puzzle feeders will help the animal to forage and problem solve like they would in the wild. If the animal is a browser, like dwarf Nigerian goats, enrichment can be taking them on a walk and letting them eat leaves from trees and shrubs.

HOW DO KEEPERS DECIDE WHAT TYPE OF ENRICHMENT IS BEST FOR A PARTICULAR ANIMAL?

The type of enrichment is decided by knowing the animal's natural behavior. Some animals respond to enrichment in different ways, and just because



enrichment works for one animal does not mean it will work for another animal of the same species. One of the biggest deciding factors for whether an animal can receive a particular enrichment item is whether it is safe. For example, orangutans cannot receive the same items as monkeys, because they are stronger and may break them. Another important factor that keepers use to determine appropriateness is the specific species or individual behavior. If an animal relies on sight more than scent, then visual enrichment items will be more stimulating than olfactory items, such as perfume or spices.

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF ENRICHMENT AND HOW DO THE ANIMALS REACT TO THEM?

Sarabi, the African serval, naturally enjoys water. Keepers will put some of her diet, such as egg whites, spoons or other objects in a large bowl of water and she will fish them out, similar to how she would fish out objects in the wild.

In the Bird Department, breeding behaviors are one of the best kinds of enrichment. Even if they do not lay eggs, nest building is an excellent form of enrichment. Keepers aid in this by creating nesting platforms or other "bases" for the animals to build from, as well as providing nesting material. Some examples of the nest building include the nesting platform for the secretary birds and the flamingo mud nests.

Bob the bobcat appears to enjoy a variety of scents. The smellier the better, so the keepers give him "cover scents." This includes liquids

like bull elk urine, buck urine and even "beaver butter" taken from a smelly gland on a beaver. Bob will rub and roll around in any strong smells the keepers put in his exhibit.

The Reptile Department provides species specific temperature gradients as enrichment. Spatially (hot and cool areas of the exhibit) and temporally (hotter at certain times of the day, cooler at night), basking spots, humidity gradients, misting systems, simulated rain, proper perching and dens and natural plants are also provided.

Certain animals in the Children's Zoo Department are given large water cooler bottles full of treats as enrichment. The American black bears pick up the bottles and shake them, the North American river otters dunk them under water to remove the fish from inside, and the dwarf Nigerian goats push them around with their horns to get food out.

The Zoo's ostriches have bamboo wind chimes that hang from a window in their indoor housing areas. The ostriches peck and play with the pieces of bamboo as they move around.

De Brazza's monkeys are omnivorous, very dexterous with their hands and they spend a lot of time foraging. Enrichment items for this group are often chosen as a means to help extend the time they spend searching for and consuming their diet. On a regular basis, staff cuts produce and greens smaller, mixes diet with substrates such as straw or shavings, and scatters birdseed or insects on exhibit. These techniques are aimed at eliciting the De Brazza's natural foraging behaviors. Other times (including birthdays and holidays), the zoo keepers include items such as boxes, heavy paper bags, or paper mache as enrichment. De Brazza's monkeys naturally utilize their hands and teeth to open and manipulate fruit, nuts, and other food items, and similar behaviors are utilized at the Zoo when they tear open boxes filled with substrates and/or food.

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For over 70 years, since our founder Elton B Stephens started selling magazine subscriptions door-to-door in the 1930s, EBSCO has been a part of the Birmingham community. While we have grown into an international corporation, producing products and services for both individual consumers and businesses, we are proud to continue to be headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama. Whether it be digital information services, real estate, consumer products, or manufacturing, our approach is customer-focused—striving to truly understand our customers' needs in order to deliver solutions that are relevant, innovative, and better than our competition. That is the EBSCO Way—our commitment to continuous improvement is seen not only in the 25 businesses and 72 brands we represent, but also in our dedication to the communities in which we operate.

EBSCO partners with non-profits whose dedicated teams and volunteers work tirelessly to better the lives of residents locally and throughout the state. Our sponsorship of the Zoo was a natural addition. By offering unique opportunities that are both fun and educational, the Zoo encourages members of the community to make a lasting impact on conservation—an effort that has been equally important to EBSCO for decades.

EBSCO is honored to have been a part of Birmingham's evolution over the past 7 decades, and we look forward to being a part of its ongoing revitalization through our continued involvement with organizations like the Birmingham Zoo.

For more information about EBSCO Industries, Inc. and EBSCO's many businesses, visit ebscoind.com.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

While visiting the Birmingham Zoo, there is a good chance you have interacted with a volunteer. They may have greeted you at the front gate with a warm smile, given you directions to navigate through the Zoo, or educated you about the animals that you came to see. It does not matter if it is rain or shine; our volunteers are here to plant the seed of "Inspiring Passion for the Natural World."

Among those volunteers is George Butler, who has been a volunteer at the Birmingham Zoo for over 4 years. Butler helps in a variety of ways when he is on Zoo grounds, including educating Zoo visitors with biofacts, Creature Carts, and helping out wherever he is needed during our special events. Butler is also an active member in our Bear Crew program and he uses his animal knowledge and training to observe our bears and relay his findings back to the bear keepers. When asked to describe Butler's participation in the Bear Crew, the keepers had the following to say:

"George has been a part of Bear Crew from the beginning. We can always depend on George to exceed his hour requirements and observe Bety and Sassy for us. He does a wonderful job interpreting the bear's story and behavior while leaving guests with an understanding of how they can be a good neighbor to the increasing population of black bears in Alabama." - Allison and Amanda, Birmingham Zoo Bear Keepers

We would be lucky to have more volunteers like George Butler and we are always actively searching for adult volunteers. Orientations are held bi-monthly to get new volunteers started. Boo at the Zoo and ZooLight Safari are just around the corner, which is open to adults and teens who are over 14. If you are eager to get started, volunteering at these events is a great way to do so!



UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

8-9, 14-16, 21-31 Boo at the Zoo
Presented by Wells Fargo

NOVEMBER

11 Veterans Day Holiday

FREE admission for all for all Veterans, active and retired military personnel and their dependents. Must bring military ID to receive FREE admission.

19-20 United Way Food Drive

Bring any canned or non-perishable food item and receive half-price admission. Limit one per guest.

DECEMBER

9-11, 16-23, 26-31 ZooLight Safari
Presented by Wells Fargo

17 Breakfast with Santa

JANUARY

16 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Bring any canned or non-perishable food item and receive half-price admission. Limit one per guest.

FEBRUARY

2 Groundhog Day

FEATURED ANIMAL: SPECKLED MOUSEBIRD

The Birmingham Zoo Bird Department has housed speckled mousebirds for many years, and we finally have our first chick. Speckled mousebirds are only housed in a handful of Zoos accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and are not a part of a Species Survival Plan (SSP). Without an SSP, it is up to individual zoos to make the best decisions for their breeding populations.

In the fall of 2015 we moved two males, Morty and Ferdie, and a female, Zizi, to our indoor central bird exhibit. Mousebirds can be cooperative breeders, meaning many different birds (often including previous offspring or relatives) will help with the raising of chicks. Morty, Ferdie and Zizi are a non-related triad who all share the responsibilities of nest building, egg incubation and chick rearing.

Michelle Duplichien, a zoo keeper in the bird department, is in charge of the speckled mousebird breeding program. This past January she began working on a possible nest and nesting material for the mousebirds. Duplichien provided the mousebirds with a plastic flowerpot, cut in half at the top, filled with palm fibers. They responded well to this at first, but over time they grew more confident in their nest building and found their own material. Another way to encourage breeding is through diet changes, as many birds will vary their diet during breeding season. The usual diet for speckled mousebirds is a fruit and vegetable mix with softbill bird pellets. Duplichien began adding banana pieces and lettuce to increase their plant intake. She also added more mealworms, and even lorikeet nectar as these birds have been known to eat flower nectar in the wild. All of this hard work paid off as they laid their first eggs in March of this year. We currently have one chick, which lives with its parents in the central building. Over a dozen eggs were laid by the speckled mousebirds and we are hopeful this breeding effort will have continued success in the future.



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EVENT RECAP

ZOO, BREWS AND FULL MOON BAR-B-QUE

On June 18, the Birmingham Zoo hosted its second annual Zoo, Brews and Full Moon Bar-B-Que event with over 2,000 guests in attendance. Guests of the event enjoyed a selection from over 10 breweries from all over Alabama and the southeast, food from Full Moon Bar-B-Que, chips from Golden Flake and a special kids' Mellow Yellow sampling booth provided by Coca-Cola. The event also included live music by Park Band, a Talladega Superspeedway pace car and street team, Dino Discovery, animal greetings and walkabouts, train rides and much more. The Birmingham Zoo strives to provide the community with exciting family events while promoting the Zoo's overall mission, "Inspiring Passion for the Natural World." A big "thank you" goes out to all of the vendors and visitors who made the event a huge success. Save the date for June 17, 2017 for the third annual Zoo, Brews and Full Moon Bar-B-Que!





EXCITING CHANGES COMING TO THE ZOO: NIGHTLIFE PROGRAMS

ZooSnoozes and Twilight Tours have long been a popular way for groups to experience a side of the Zoo that is rarely seen. Sleeping under the stars while the coyotes howl and the hippo bellows is definitely a once in a lifetime experience. Coupled with flashlight-led night tours and evening carousel rides, Nightlife Programs can truly be an occasion to remember. But, this fall, Nightlife Programs are set to receive some exciting updates and additions that will give our guests a new appreciation for nocturnal animals, both at home and in far-away places.

Nighttime walks through the Zoo have always been one of the most popular parts of ZooSnoozes and Twilight Tours. In order to take advantage of this unique time at the Zoo, and to be more interpretive in our approach, our evening tours have been re-vamped to focus only on the nocturnal abilities of a few of our resident animals. Adaptations that help animals rule the night - like night vision, herd protection, and keen senses of hearing - will all be highlighted. Guests will have a chance to see these skills in action when they take a walking tour through the Trails of Africa to see our giraffes, zebras and elephants as they settle in for the night. If they are lucky, they may even experience the evening calls of Kwanzaa and Akili- our pair of African lions. You don't have to travel all the way to Africa to see amazing nocturnal adaptations in action.

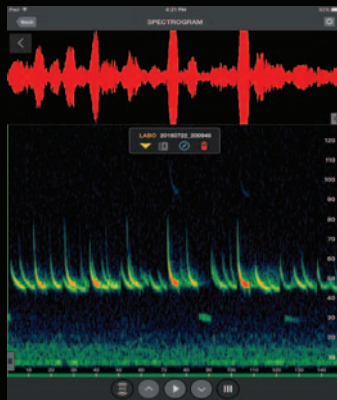
One big thing has been missing from the program- our native nocturnal neighbors! Animals like bats and frogs have an obvious presence at night, but are easily overlooked. Their small size and ability to stay out of sight helps them

blend into the background of evenings in the South. These animals play a huge role in our ecosystem, so we have decided to bring them back to the forefront. One way we plan to bring the life of these misunderstood animals into focus is through a small, but hi-tech piece of technology. The Echo Meter Touch from Wildlife Acoustics is an extremely sensitive microphone that can connect to any

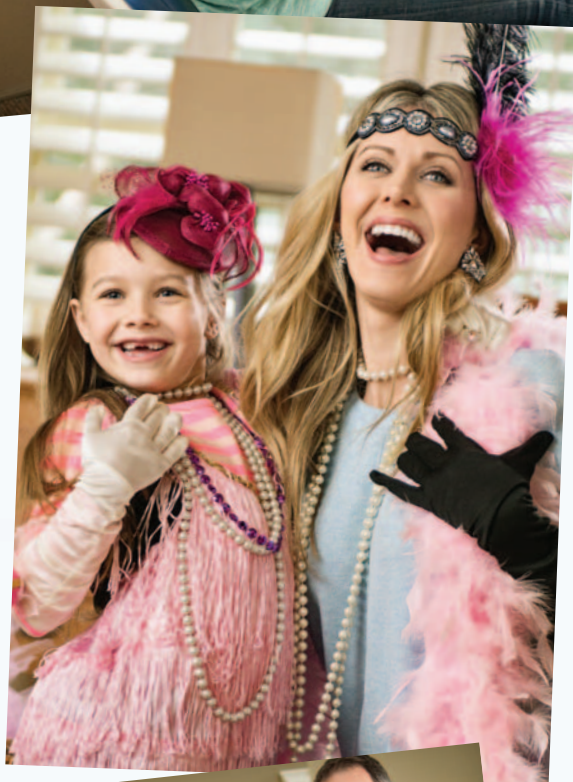
smart device. When this piece of hardware, which is about the size of matchbox, is paired with the available app, it becomes a powerful tool that literally brings the hidden world of bats into view. The Echo Meter Touch picks up the ultrasonic sound waves as a hunting bat passes nearby. The unique echolocation call from the bat is then represented visually on the smart device and the high pitched sound is brought down to a level that our ears can hear. Because the call of each species of bat has a different signature, the app will recognize the wavelengths of the call and provide a species identification that best fits. Pair this ID with a GPS location and

this data can then be used by scientists all over the world to study bats right here in our own backyard. With several populations of bats on Zoo grounds, this is sure to be an exciting addition to our programming.

Additionally, we plan to take advantage of the night in many other ways to provide an experience only the Birmingham Zoo can offer. With other activities like summertime frog call identification and premium offerings such as Night Keeper chats, behind-the-scenes tours and live animal demonstrations, this fall is definitely going to be an exciting time for Nightlife Programs.



The Echo Meter Touch app picks up the ultrasonic sound waves as a hunting bat passes nearby.



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The Birmingham Zoo is rolling out an updated Membership Program beginning this October. The Zoo has taken your numerous responses from surveys to heart. As members, your most common request was for an unlimited ride option with your membership, so we created the new Family PLUS Membership that includes unlimited rides!

When it comes time for you to renew, you will notice that we simplified our membership options and streamlined the online purchasing process. We now have just four Membership Levels to choose from, plus the ability to customize your membership with add-ons for additional children, guests and/or ride wristbands as well as the ability to make a donation to the Capital Campaign.

We have also added a couple of new benefits to the Membership Program, including 25% off regular admission tickets (up to six) anytime you bring other non-member guests with you, plus Member Mornings where the Zoo will open 30 minutes early on select days for members only. We appreciate your loyal support and hope you will continue to enjoy the Birmingham Zoo as a valued member!

Visit **www.birminghamzoo.com/membership** for all the details.



BIRMINGHAM ZOO PARTNERS WITH OTHER AZA ZOOS FOR GREAT APE HEART PROJECT

The Birmingham Zoo's male Sumatran orangutan, Oliver, was diagnosed last year with cardiomyopathy, a disease of the heart muscles. Thanks to the routine preventative examinations, this condition was found early. In conjunction with staff from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, an ultrasound was done of Oliver's heart. It was during this ultrasound that the doctors noticed Oliver's left ventricle was thickened. He was started on medication to manage the fibrosis, which is a progressive illness.

The Birmingham Zoo Primate Staff has begun training Oliver for voluntary echocardiograms. Teaching Oliver to voluntarily participate in these procedures reduces his stress and will allow for more frequent check-ups and updates on his heart.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in adult apes in human care. The results from Oliver's ultrasound were sent to the Great Ape Heart Project (GAHP), a project based at Zoo Atlanta, that the Birmingham Zoo is a member of, which addresses a critical need within the zoo community to investigate and understand cardiovascular disease in great apes. The data collected by the GAHP not only helps the individual animals, but also enhances a body of knowledge that benefits zoos internationally.



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NEW THIS YEAR! BUG-A-BOO GIANT ANIMATRONIC BUGS

BIRMINGHAM ZOO

OCTOBER 8-9, 14-16, 21-31

The poster features a dark orange background with silhouettes of pumpkins and bats. On the right, there is a large, detailed green animatronic grasshopper. In the bottom right corner, there is a jack-o'-lantern with a carved face.