

Zoo Tales

FALL 2022



Mission: Create connections that inspire an appreciation for and encourage actions to conserve the natural world.



Autumn Market *in the garden*

September 24 | 9am-3pm
Rain Date: September 25




LUTHY
BOTANICAL
GARDEN

More to Explore at
Peoria**Parks**.org




Annual Mum Show: Hogwarts' Garden of Botanical Wonders

October 7-30 | 10am - 5pm



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GARDEN

Peoria**Parks**.org



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*Cover Photo: Anthony's Poison Arrow Frog
Pictured here: Grevy's Zebra*

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Victor, Malone

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ZooTales Design: Brenda O’Russa



Peoria Zoo is owned and operated
by Peoria Park District.

PZS is a 501(c)3 organization
dedicated to raising funds
for Peoria Zoo.

Letters from our

By Brenda O’Russa, Development Director, Peoria Zoological Society

It’s finally fall... a time for back to school, leaves changing color, and cooler weather. This is a wonderful time of year to visit the Zoo and enjoy all of the animals! Remember, we are open year-round with the exceptions of Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Day, and New Year’s Eve and Day. This means a membership you buy or give as a gift to Peoria Zoo is good for one year from the day it is purchased... making this the perfect time to join our family!

So what’s happening this fall at the Zoo? We are hosting two fundraising events, *Zoobrew, Wine and Spirits Too!* and our third annual *UpROARious* online auction. We are also bringing back our Membership Swap the same weekend, so it’s one crazy weekend packed full of fun for everyone!

We have been hosting *Zoobrew, Wine and Spirits Too!* for over ten years, and we are excited to bring it back to Peoria Zoo on Thursday, September 15th. This evening event to support Peoria Zoological Society will give attendees 21 and older the chance to sample beer and wine from our local vendors at the Zoo after hours. It also includes heavy appetizers, dessert, and live music by The Matt Eckberg Band, as well as options for a VIP experience, reserved tables, and reserved parking. Go to peoriazoo.org to learn more or buy tickets today!

The same Thursday night, our *UpROARious* online auction will kick off, so we hope you will sign up today to make sure you don’t miss out on some great finds, including our daily deals. Just for a sneak peak – we will be offering a limited number of memberships for \$20 off! You can sign up for the auction by going to peoriazoo.org and clicking on the Events tab. Remember, this lively auction supports YOUR Peoria Zoo!

Finally, Peoria Zoo members will be able to visit other local attractions for free the weekend of September 16th - 18th during our Membership Swap weekend. The Membership Swap is a great opportunity to see some of the amazing things Peoria has to offer! Head over to our neighbor, the Peoria PlayHouse Children’s Museum, or down to the river to visit the Peoria Riverfront Museum, or out to Hanna City to see the animals at Wildlife Prairie Park.

If you have any questions, please reach out to us by e-mailing pzs@peoriaparks.org or calling (309) 681-3500.



leadership...

By Yvonne Strode, Director, Peoria Zoo

I am calling this edition of ZooTales “I Think We May Have Forgotten to Tell You Some Things.” There are times it feels like we have been dealing with COVID forever and other times when it feels like it just started. The Zoo staff have always been experts at zigging and zagging as new situations arise but even our talents have been stretched to the limit during the last year and a half. So, I ask your forgiveness if we forgot to celebrate some of our accomplishments with you or inform you of some of our animal changes. Also, if we are sharing stories a second time we will try to do it in new and exciting ways!

In preparing to write the article on changes in the animal collection, I ran a transaction report from our software system ZIMS. I was really surprised that the report for the date range of 1/1/2020 to 8/15/2022 was 4 pages long. Our continued work with the Department of Natural Resources on the Alligator Snapping Turtle Recovery program took up almost an entire page!

Collaboration was the key to many of the enhancements we have made at the Zoo. The new and improved pollinator garden was designed and is maintained by the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners. The RiverPlex staff was instrumental in the fitness trail signs, and Eagle Scout Tyler Boley designed the new native animal signage and supervised a team for installation.

During these unsettled times, it is comforting to know how many people are eager to help the Zoo succeed and this includes our members who continue to support the animals, the staff and our mission:

“Create connections that inspire an appreciation for and encourage actions to conserve the natural world.”



Left to Right: Pollinator Garden, Start of Fitness Path, Eagle Scout Native Animal Signage.

PEORIA ZOO

— INFORMATION —

General Phone:
(309) 686-3365

Website:
www.peoriazoo.org

E-Mail:
info@peoriazoo.org

Membership Office:
(309) 681-3500
pzs@peoriaparks.org

Zoo Hours:
Daily 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
(Last Admission at 4:30 p.m.)

Concession Hours:
September & October
Weekends, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Giraffe Feeding:
September
12 p.m. - 1 p.m. &
2 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Cost: \$5/person

Australia Walk-About & Aviary:
Closed after Labor Day due
to avian influenza concerns.
Animals can be viewed from
outside the exhibit.

All times and costs are
subject to change and are
weather dependent.

ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS

Peoria Zoo has been an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) since 1976. Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things.

With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats. For more information, visit www.aza.org.

On the Cover

Anthony's Poison Arrow Frog

By Yvonne Storde, Director, Peoria Zoo

The Anthony's Poison Arrow Frog pictured on the cover is a new species at the Zoo. We received these frogs from the Brookfield Zoo, in Brookfield, Illinois.

Housed in the Conservation Center, they can be hard to spot at only 0.7 – 1.0 inches long. The frogs are dark red in color, with white or yellow stripes; the bright coloration of their skin warns predators they are poisonous. They have adhesive pads on their fingers and toes, and their back legs, while short, are very powerful. The frogs are diurnal, which means they are active during the day.

Anthony's Poison Arrow Frogs are native to Ecuador and Peru in South America. Their natural habitat is in tropical dry forests of the Andes Mountains, especially near a water source, where they live on the ground in the leaves that have dropped from the trees. Their primary diet is small insects. The species is listed as near threatened due to having a limited range that continues to decline and degrade. Agricultural chemicals are polluting the waterways where the frogs live.

The females lays a clutch of 15 to 40 eggs on the ground and the male guards them for about two weeks until they hatch. He then carries the tadpoles on his back to a suitable water body where they develop into frogs in about sixty days.

In the wild, this species secretes epibatidine from its skin. This extremely toxic substance, which causes numbness and then paralysis, is obtained from the frog's diet of ants and termites.



KINGDOM

Animalia

PHYLUM

Chordata

CLASS

Amphibia

ORDER

Anura

FAMILY

Dendrobatidae

GENUS

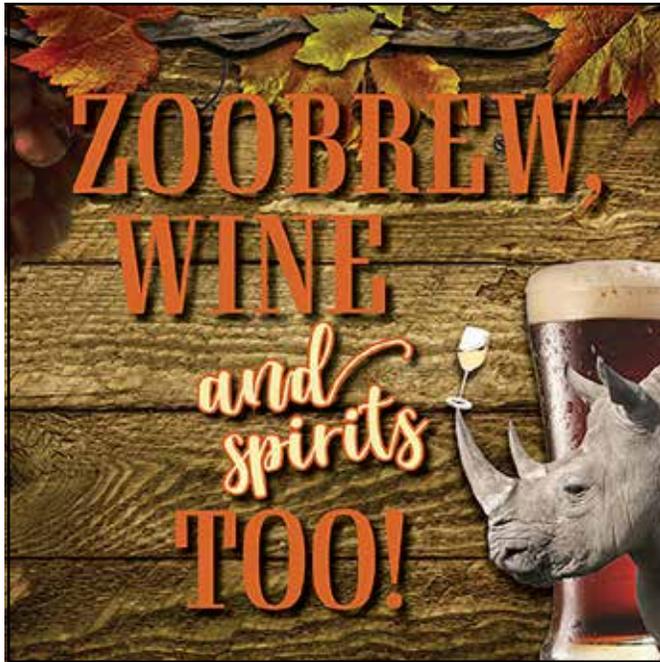
Epipedobates

SPECIES

Epipedobates
anthonyi



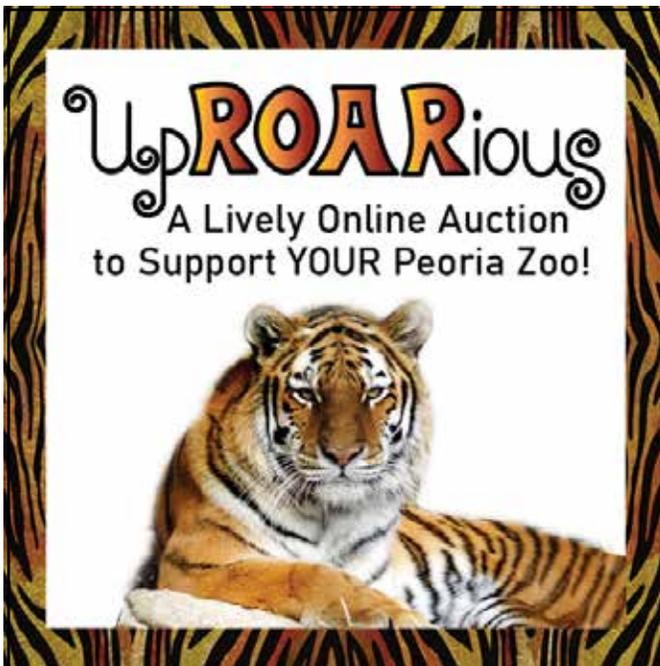
Upcoming PZS Events



Come out for Zoobrew, Wine and Spirits Too! on Thursday, September 15th. Sample a variety of beer and wine selected by 11 local vendors as you explore Africa! after hours at Peoria Zoo. This event includes heavy appetizers, dessert, and live music by The Matt Eckberg Band.

Tickets are \$75 per person. Add on a VIP experience for \$15 to come an hour early and sample a selection of sparkling wines from a variety of regions. Reserved tables and parking are also available.

Buy your tickets today!



Join us for our annual online auction to support YOUR Peoria Zoo! This multi-day auction is loaded with items of all interests and price points. From Zoo experiences, to things for your home, to jewelry, to gift cards, to stuff for your kids, there is really something for everyone. Watch for daily deals, which include memberships for \$20 off!

The auction will start at 3:00 pm on Thursday, September 15th and will go through Sunday, September 18th at 8:00 pm.

Scan the QR code to learn more and sign up for the auction.

Logos for four Peoria-area attractions: Peoria Zoo, Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum, Riverfront Museum, and Wildlife Prairie Park.

Members: Enjoy a weekend of free general admission* to all four of these Peoria-area attractions when you present your membership card and photo ID during the weekend of September 16-18, 2022.

*Charge may apply for additional experiences.

All Around the Grounds

What is commonly known as the “shaded path” to staff members, is now the start of the fitness trail at the Zoo. Consisting of eight stations, each sign contains a QR code that will link users to a video of RiverPlex staff demonstrating the correct way to perform the featured exercise. From the shaded path, the trail continues to AFRICA!, around the boardwalk and ends at the Natural Play Area.



The shaded path is the path at the front of the Zoo that connects the Asian Trail to AFRICA!



There are 6 KNOW YOUR NATIVES signs in an area on the shaded path.

A series of six “Know Your Natives” signs has also been added to the path. Designed and installed as an Eagle Scout Project, the signs allow visitors to identify and learn about species they might see in and around the Zoo that are not part of the collection. In addition to using a picture, the signs teach people how to identify each species by footprints and scat (feces). Tyler Boley not only designed the signs, he also raised money to pay for them and all materials needed for installation. He was so successful, he had funds left over that he generously donated to the Zoo.



The new Fitness Trail, a collaboration with the RiverPlex, has 8 GET FIT signs showing guests exercises they can do as they walk the Zoo grounds.



Tyler Boley, in purple, and crew work on his Eagle Scout Project.

Because it remains a relatively peaceful area, staff has designated the shaded path as a “Quiet Area” in our partnership with KultureCity Sensory Inclusion program. Staff has identified two other quiet zones as well as three “Headphone Zones” that might be overwhelming to some visitors. Sensory bags are available at the gift shop and are designed to help children as well as adults reduce sensory overload and engage. To receive certification, staff received training on when and how to respond if a guest has sensory needs.



If you go up the hill at the west end of the shaded path, you will see our new and improved pollinator garden. Designed and maintained by the Master Gardeners for the University of Illinois Extension, the garden abounds with butterflies, bees, hummingbirds and much more.



About 75% of all flowering plant species need the help of animals to move their heavy pollen grains from plant to plant for fertilization.

There are about 200,000 species of pollinators, most are insects such as flies, beetles, ants, butterflies and bees.

Pollinators are responsible for 1/3 of all human foods!

Pollinator Garden Tips

- Choose native plants
- Cluster plants so pollinators don't have to fly too far
- Leave nesting areas
- Provide water in a shallow dish
- Reduce or eliminate chemicals



Animal Changes

By Yvonne Storde, Director, Peoria Zoo

The Zoo has continued its dedication to the care and welfare of our animals through the trials and tribulations of COVID. While none of the animals to date have displayed any symptoms of the disease, we have lost some during this time due to various reasons such as cancer (colobus, Mazey), heart disease (mandrill, Brody) and old age-related failures (llama, Osmar).

Our three meerkats were brothers and all died due to a genetic heart disease. Acquiring additional meerkats is in our master plan as a new exhibit with indoor and outdoor spaces.

In addition, we stayed committed to the animal programs like Species Survival Plans (SSP) that are essential for maintaining genetically diverse and healthy populations in managed care.

While animal transport slowed down considerably during the early days of COVID, we made sure animal welfare was not compromised by delaying transfers.

Because we had a lone cotton-top tamarin, we did arrange to safely acquire a second animal from the Nashville Zoo in May of 2020. Staff from both institutions met in the Walmart parking lot in Benton, Illinois. Not only was the town about equal distance from both zoos, it is located in Franklin County which had one of the lowest COVID rates in southern Illinois at the time. The transfer occurred outside, with masks and a continual 6' distance.

The transfer of the tree shrews born in 2020 and 2021 became essential as we were quickly running out of suitable living quarters that allowed us to restrict unwanted breeding. With an SSP population of under 20, homes were not difficult to find but coordination of all the transfers was logistically challenging.

See all of the significant animal changes at Peoria Zoo on the next page.

New Girls in Town



Kofola, Mandrill



Clementine, Cotton-Top Tamarin



Mirabel, Mongoose Lemur

Significant Animal Collection Changes

1/1/20 – 7/31/22

Species	Name	Birth	Death	Transfer
Anthony's Poison Arrow Frog	0.0.8			In from Brookfield Zoo 12/9/21
Axolotl	45009		05/30/21	
Axolotl	45008		02/16/22	
Yellow-headed Poison Frogs	0.0.4			In from Brookfield Zoo 12/9/21
Tiger Salamander	Tony		07/25/22	
Alligator Snapping Turtle	2.2.9			Released to wild 9/8/21
Alligator Snapping Turtle	0.0.14			Released to wild 5/11/22
Wrinkled Hornbill	Malfoy			To Atlanta Zoo 7/12/22
Kookaburra	Mac			In from Dickerson Park Zoo 5/14/21
Black Swan	Melbourne			In from Gladys Porter Zoo 5/14/21
Colobus	Safiya			In from Hogle Zoo 9/17/20
Colobus	Mazey		06/29/22	
Cotton-top Tamarin	Maya		11/20/21	
Cotton-top Tamarin	Mateo			In from Nashville Zoo 5/14/20
Cotton-top Tamarin	Clementine			In from John Ball Zoo 4/27/22
Giraffe	Zara			To Detroit Zoo 9/13/20
Llama	Osmar		08/31/21	
Mandrill	Brody		07/08/22	
Mandrill	Kofola			In from Audubon Zoo 7/2/22
Meerkat	Beagle		08/03/20	
Meerkat	Ori		01/28/21	
Meerkat	Theory		09/09/21	
Mongoose Lemur	Mirabel	04/28/22		In from Lemur Conservation Foundation in Florida 4/28/22
Prehensile-tailed Porcupine	Fauna			To Miller Park Zoo 2/12/21
Spider Monkey	Agnes		08/26/20	
Swift Fox	M3203			To Lake Superior Zoo 3/13/20
Tree Shrew	Relish	10/17/20		To National Zoo 10/28/21
Tree Shrew	Gherkin	10/17/20		To Fort Wayne Children's Zoo 3/11/21
Tree Shrew	Caper	12/03/20		To Potter Park Zoo 3/11/21
Tree Shrew	Casper	01/15/21		To Rosamond Gifford Zoo 10/28/21
Tree Shrew	Juniper	01/15/21		To Bronx Zoo 10/28/21
Tree Shrew	Pepper	01/15/21		To Gladys Porter Zoo 10/29/21
Zebu (cow)	Zoe		09/10/20	

Animal Birthdays

Happy Birthday to our curious cats, remarkable reptiles, and all that call Peoria Zoo Home!

August 1
Emy, Giraffe

August 3
Sparky, Chinese Alligator

August 15
Vivian, Giraffe

August 16
Tara, Mandrill

August 30
Peach, Muntjac

September 5
Garfunkel, Wallaby

September 9
Arthur, Lion

September 11
Harris, Rhinoceros

September 12
Samson, Muntjac

September 23
Darla, Spider Monkey

September 27
Sherman, Wallaby

October 14
June, Gazelle

October 23
Lizzy, Lion



Give the Gift of Enrichment

Support Peoria Zoo's Enrichment Program with a gift to your favorite Zoo residents.

Select an item from our tree, purchase directly and deliver your gift to the zoo yourself or have your items shipped right to the Zoo. Your generous gift will be used as a "BEEP item" in our Behavioral Enrichment and Enhancement Program.



Birthday Spotlight

Sherman and Garfunkel, not to be confused with Simon & Garfunkel for you older folks out there, are our Red-Necked Wallabies. They can be found in the wild from Eastern Queensland to southeastern Australia, in Tasmania, and on islands in the Bass Strait. They have also been introduced to southern New Zealand. Their habitat is coastal scrub forest and sclerophyll forest. Sclerophyll (pronounced 'sklerəfil) forest is made up of woody plants with evergreen leaves that are thick and tough in order to reduce water loss. Our wallabies were both born at the Scovill Zoo in Decatur, which made for a very convenient transfer.

Red-Necked Wallabies are medium-sized kangaroo-like mammals with enlarged hind quarters, short forelimbs, and long, tapered tails. Their fur is thick, coarse, and often appears shaggy. They are largely solitary animals, although in the wild, loose groups known as mobs often share common feeding areas. These "mobs" can be up to 30 individuals.

The diet of a wallaby is mostly grasses and herbaceous plants, and both Sherman and Garfunkel enjoy eating grass in the summer, and leaves in the fall. Fighting among males in the wild is necessary to establish a hierarchy for mating, and during spring, our wallabies have a tendency to fight with one another in the morning, but after a short period of time they go their separate ways.

Our Red-Necked Wallabies can be found in the Australia Walk-About, and when the Walk-About is open they are free to roam around the exhibit with our guests. Sherman can be identified by the lack of an ear tag. Garfunkel is more social with his keepers and will even take food from their hands.

Interesting Facts About Red-Necked Wallabies:

- They are one of the largest wallabies and can be easily mistaken for a kangaroo.
- They use their tails as props when they stand on or kick with their hind feet. They also use their tails for balance when hopping.
- Wallabies lick their wrists to cool off during hot weather because their blood vessels are close to surface.
- They have 5 clawed fingers but only 3 toes. One toe is actually 2-in-1 and has 2 nails that are used like tweezers for grooming.
- A male is called a buck, a female is called a doe, and a baby is called a joey.
- Wallabies are marsupials so females have a pouch.



Animal Welfare

Louise, the Burmese Python



When an exhibit was recently renovated to house the Burmese python, staff carefully considered the effects the move would have on the snake's welfare. First and foremost, the new exhibit gives Louise more room to move and stretch out. The large branch constructed gives her a sturdy structure if she chooses to climb. Because reptiles rely on their environment to maintain their body temperature, we installed a heated floor and a basking lamp so Louise can control how warm or cool she is. The large pool not only adds humidity to her surroundings, it also gives Louise the opportunity to fully submerge her body; both will help with healthy shedding. With all of these changes, we feel that we were able to significantly increase the snake's welfare.



1 Keeper Doug Holmes takes hold of Louise in her old enclosure to start the moving process.



2 A line of keepers carefully carries Louise through a back hallway. Louise is 17 feet long!



3 The keepers enter the new enclosure with the 240 pound snake.

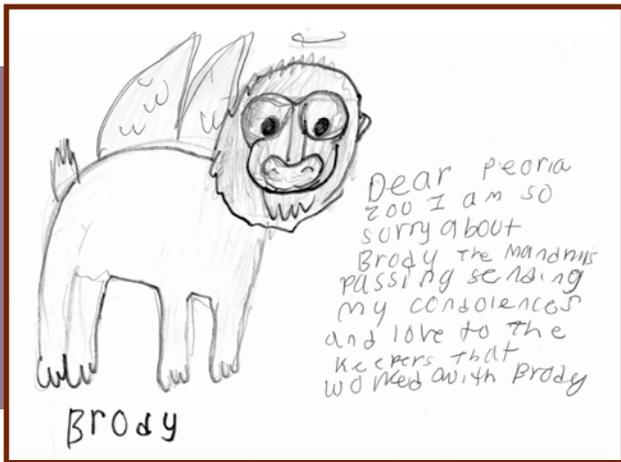


4 Louise enjoys the bigger pool in her new space. You can find her in the Tropics Building.

To watch Louise moving to her new home scan the QR code:



Cards from our Guests



Pumpkin Bash

October 31
11:00pm - 2:00pm

Come to the zoo on Halloween and decorate a pumpkin to take home. Then watch our animals get pumpkins of their own! Donations accepted, general admission applies.



Conservation Days

Throughout the year, we hope you join us in celebrating conservation days at Peoria Zoo. Each day we will dive into the realm of the species and highlight worldwide conservation efforts. Enjoy self-guided activities where you'll learn about some of your favorite animals and how to help.

WORLD RHINO DAY
September 11

WORLD LEMUR DAY
October 29

2320 N. Prospect Road
Peoria, IL 61603-2193

Peoria Zoological Society
is a not-for-profit organization
dedicated to supporting and
realizing the vision of Peoria Zoo.

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HOWL-ZOO-WEEN

October 14-15
5:30pm - 8:30pm

Member Night: October 13
5:30pm - 7:30pm

**Admission is \$8/person for everyone
1 and over, including members.**

This year, enjoy a trick-or-treat trail around Africa!,
a scary area at Luthy Botanical Garden, bounce
houses, and other experiences. You'll also
find a unique fall market full of vendors where
you can purchase local goods and food.
Advanced tickets go on sale September 19.



PeoriaZoo.org

