



MARYLAND ZOO

ZooTrek : Adaptations

Grades K-2



SELF-GUIDED *ZOO TREK*: ADAPTATIONS, Gr. K-2

HOW TO USE THE *ZOO TREK*

Use the animals and exhibits highlighted in this *Zoo Trek* to help guide and focus the students on their journey through The Maryland Zoo.

1. Find the highlighted species on the Zoo Map to help you plan your route. The *Zoo Trek* does not need to be done in a particular order.
2. At the exhibit for each featured species, read through the *Zoo Trek* information with students. Pose to them the questions in italics, and encourage them to discuss their responses.
The goal is not always to find the “right” answer, but for students to practice the skills of observation and questioning.
3. Many of the animals are well camouflaged. **The Viewing Tips** can help you find them in the exhibits.
4. Use the **Explore Some More** hints to guide your group to other amazing animals.

Keep in mind that every day is different at the Zoo. Some animals may be off exhibit during your visit.

Please keep your group together and supervise the students at all times.

START YOUR TREK!

BALD EAGLE

Eagles are excellent predators—that means they hunt for their food. An eagle will swoop down from the sky to catch its favorite food—fish—right out of the water!

Observe

Look closely at Vega’s sharp beak and her sharp claws called *talons*.

Her talons help her catch prey. Her sharp, curved beak helps her tear up her food.

What do you use to tear up your food?



Think About It

Imagine that you had talons on the ends of your fingers!

What would the talons help you do better?

What would the talons make it harder for you to do?

Viewing Tip

Vega prefers a high perch. Look high up in her enclosure to find her.



Explore Some More

Be sure to visit the African Aviary and Marsh Aviary today to see more birds!



RIVER OTTER

River otters are great swimmers. Their feet are webbed like frog feet to help them move through the water easily.

Observe

What's that smell?! The otter habitat can be smelly, but that doesn't mean it's dirty. Otters rub a scent from their bodies onto parts of their habitat to tell other animals, "This is my space!"

Think About It

A river otter can close its nostrils and ears while it swims.

What do you do to keep water out of your nose in the pool?

SPUR-THIGH TORTOISE

The tortoise's shell helps protect it. It has big, strong legs to help it walk on land.

Observe

The smaller tortoises in the yard are leopard tortoises.

What are some ways the two kinds of tortoises are different?

Think About It

Do you think the tortoise's shell is heavy or light?

How can you tell?

Viewing Tip

The otter often naps in the hammock on the left wall.



Explore Some More

An otter's body is covered with fur. Can you find an animal with fur that can fly?



Hint: Check inside The Cave!



Viewing Tip

The tortoises sometimes hang out in the burrows or on the small hill on the left side of the enclosure.



Explore Some More

Sometimes the tortoises blend in so well that they look like rocks! Find another animal nearby that looks like a big rock.



ADDRA GAZELLE

Gazelles are a part of a group of animals called antelopes. They look a bit like deer.

Observe

Notice the gazelle's long legs. Gazelles can run very fast. Running helps a gazelle escape from predators.

Think About It

What do you think the gazelle's big eyes and big ears help it do?



Viewing Tip

The gazelles share a yard with kudu. The gazelles are the ones that are brown and white.



Explore Some More

See if you can find a very tiny kind of antelope here at the Zoo.



Hint: Look next to the warthog!

PORCUPINE

The porcupine's sharp quills help protect it from hungry predators. The quills tell other animals, "Stay Away!"

Observe

A porcupine's quills are stiff and sharp, but they are actually made of the same material as your hair!

Think About It

What do you think it would be like to have hair like a porcupine?

Viewing Tip

Porcupines are nocturnal, which means they are most active at night. Much of the time they can be found sleeping in their burrow.



Explore Some More

Many other kinds of animals stay awake at night, too. Can you find an animal in the Zoo that hunts at night?



Hint: Look for an animal with a mane!

AFRICAN ELEPHANT

Can you use your nose like a hand? An elephant can! The elephant can use its trunk to eat, drink, breathe, and smell. An elephant can even use its trunk to lift or push heavy objects.

Observe

Elephants spend much of their day eating. Watch one of the elephants eat. Or use a Smartphone to scan the QR code to get a close look at an elephant eating.

How is the elephant using its trunk to eat?

How is the way an elephant eats similar to how you eat?

How is it different?



PANAMANIAN GOLDEN FROG

A Panamanian golden frog has poison on its skin that help protect it. Its bright colors warn any animal that wants to eat it to choose another meal!

Observe

Look closely at the frogs in the exhibit.
Do they all look exactly the same?

Think About It

Can you think of a way you could tell the frogs apart?

Think About It

How is a long trunk helpful for eating?

Viewing Tip

The lower level viewing area gets you closer to the elephants, but the overlook generally gives a better view.



Explore Some More

Female (girl) elephants live in groups called herds.



Can you find any other animals at the Zoo that live in groups?



Viewing Tip

Sometimes the frogs hang out in clumps near the back of the exhibit.



Explore Some More

Golden frogs live near streams and waterfalls. Look for another animal inside the Chimp Forest that has a waterfall in its exhibit.



OKAPI

What other animals do okapis look like to you?

Okapis are actually not half zebra! They are forest animals that feed on leaves.



Think About It

An okapi's colors help it hide in the forest where it lives.

Why do you think an okapi would want to hide?

Observe

An okapi has a very long tongue. The tongue is so long, the okapi can use it to clean its eyes and its big ears!

Why do you think okapi have such big ears?

What other ways does an okapi's long tongue help it?

Scan the QR code to find out!



Viewing Tip

If you don't see the okapi outside, look inside the Giraffe House.



Explore Some More

Check out the other residents of the Giraffe House.



Giraffes are the okapi's closest relative. A long neck helps a giraffe eat leaves high in trees. It also helps the giraffe see predators far away.

THANK YOU FOR VISITING THE MARYLAND ZOO IN BALTIMORE!

What was your favorite animal today?