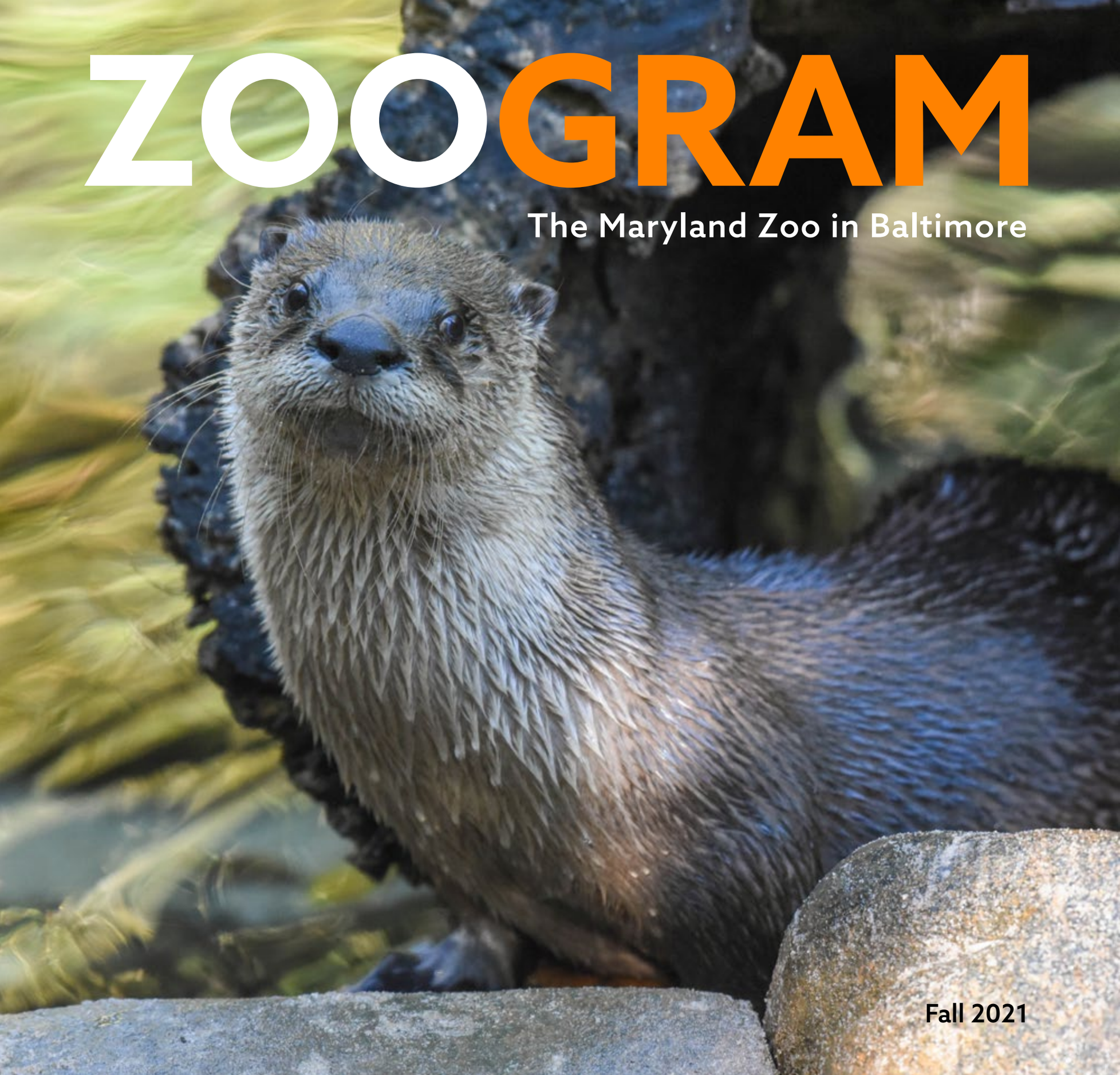


ZOOGRAM

The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

Fall 2021

> The Main Valley has been transformed into a walk down memory lane.

It's been an exciting few months here at the Zoo, with fall events in full swing and the re-opening of the Main Valley to celebrate. This historic center of the Zoo, created nearly 150 years ago, has been closed to the public for 17 years. While a complete overhaul of the area was not possible at this time, we spent several months sprucing it up so that we could welcome guests back. We repaved the walking path, removed years of plant growth from former exhibits with the help of Ruppert Landscape Company, and worked with Azola Building Rehab to renovate the exterior of both the Round Stand and the Old Elephant House. With the addition of signs and photos highlighting interesting moments in Zoo history, the Main Valley has been transformed into a walk down memory lane.

For many people, passing through the Main Valley will bring back cherished memories. For others, it will provide evidence of how our Zoo has evolved over time – in step with the evolution of other AZA institutions – from menageries to wildlife conservation centers. Central to our mission, as you know, is a commitment to provide the best possible care for our animals and to prioritize their welfare.

We make decisions about animal care and welfare thoughtfully, professionally, collaboratively, and often in consultation with AZA colleagues. We always act in the best interest of the animal, and sometimes that means saying goodbye. Such is the case with polar bear half-sisters Neva and Amelia Gray, who will soon be moving to other zoos within the AZA. We will certainly miss them, but we trust that they will thrive in their new homes and look forward to following their progress. We will share updates once they are settled in.

For me, a highlight of fall at the Zoo was the return of OktoBEARfest! It was great to host this popular festival again, and turnout for the two-day event was fantastic. We were grateful for cool, fall weather and very enthusiastic

OktoBEARfest patrons. We were also happy to bring back ZooBOOO! in all its "not-so-spooky" glory, with games, a costume contest, local children's entertainers, and trick-or-treating throughout the Zoo. These are just a few signs of things returning to normal, and we certainly hope the trend continues.

Before your next visit, I encourage you to take a few minutes to read this issue of Zoogram. You'll get some interesting insight into a few favorite animals, and you will learn how many animals at the Zoo participate in their own care. Find out what's happening at the Zoo this winter and make plans to join us for Zoo Lights!

See you soon.

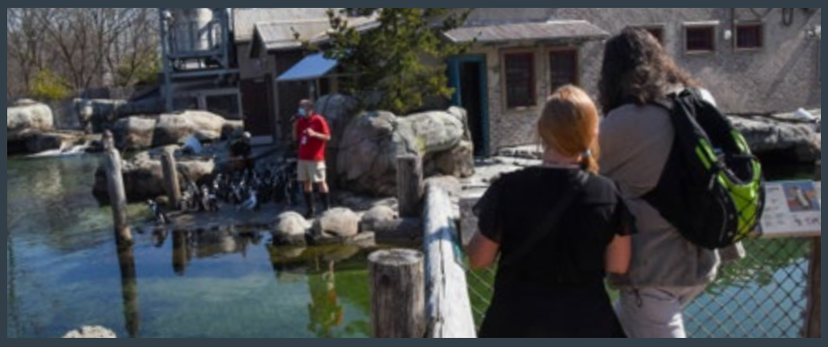
Sincerely,

J. Kirby Fowler, Jr.
President & CEO

Click the images or boxes below to navigate

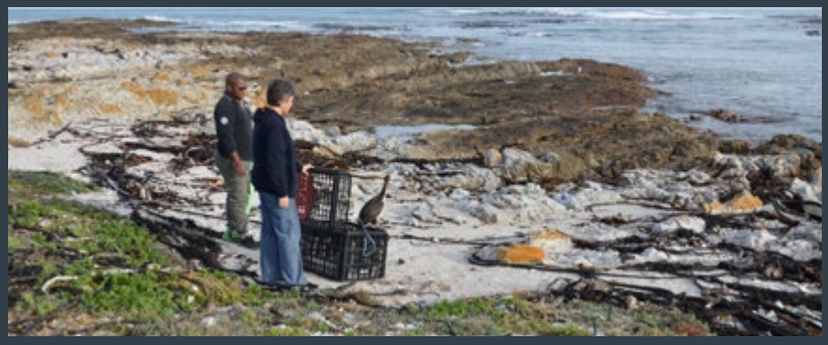
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

PLAN YOUR NEXT VISIT

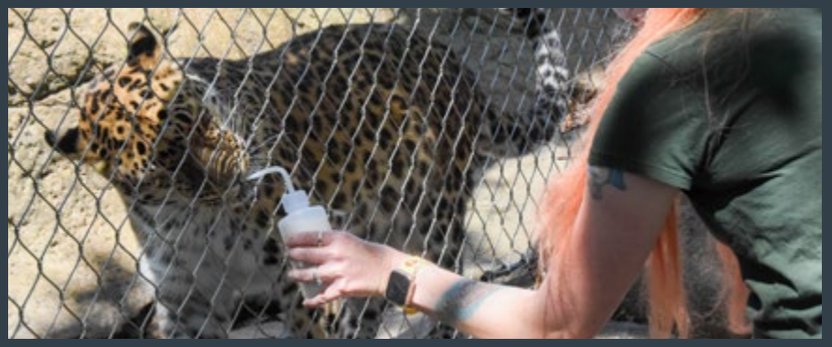


NEWS FROM THE ZOO

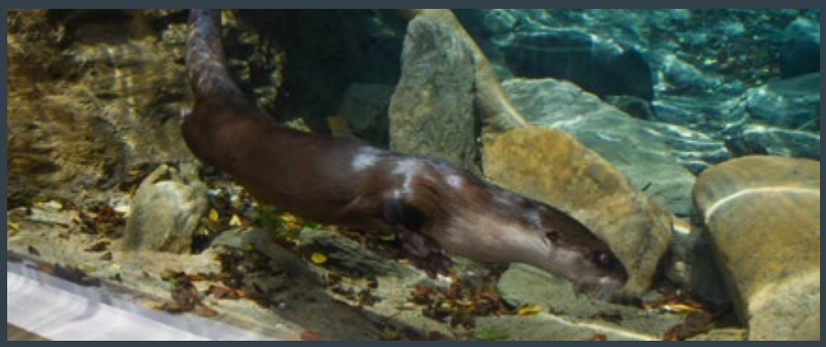
REPORT FROM THE FIELD



ZOO SPOTLIGHT

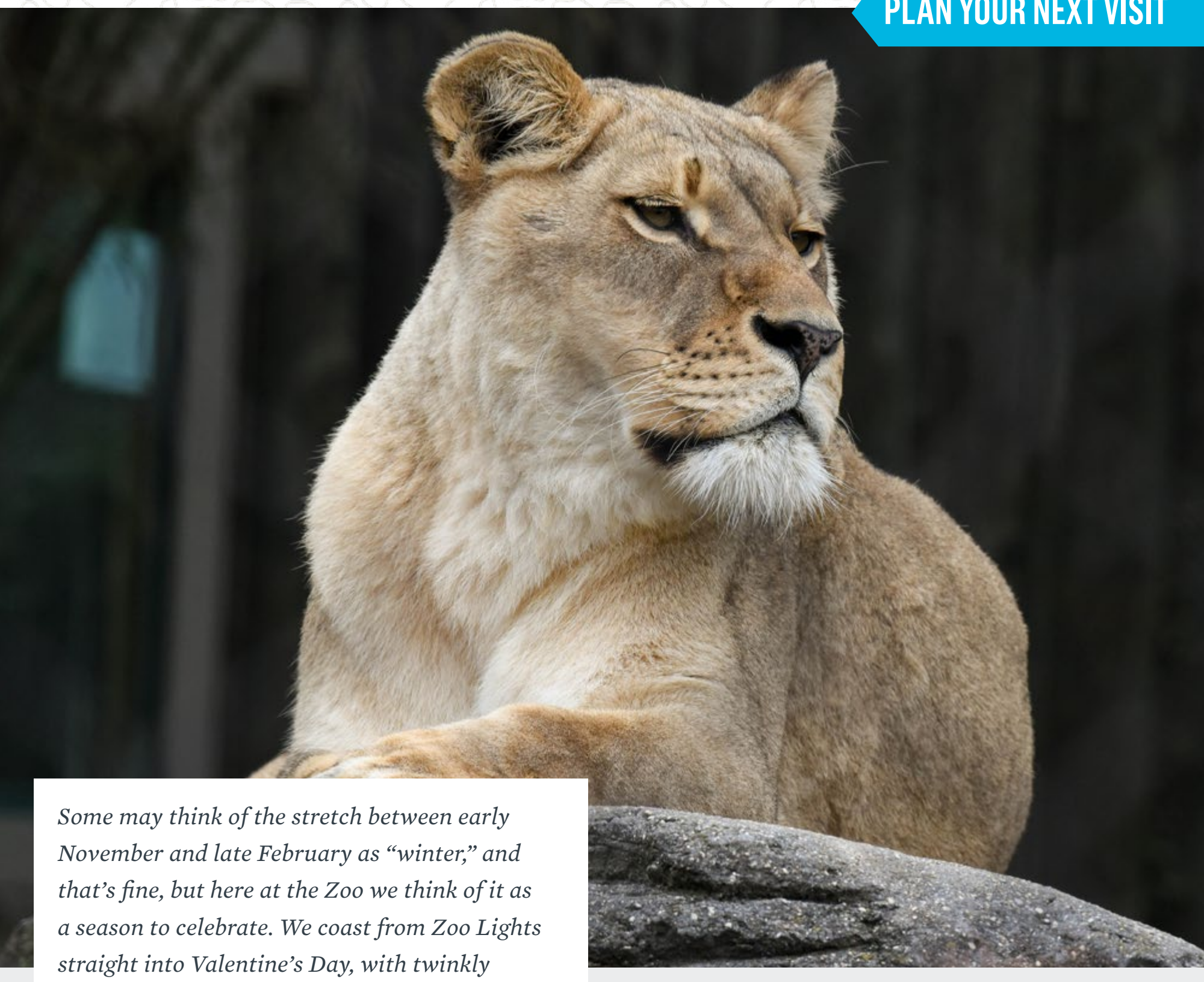


FEATURE STORY



KIDS SECTION

SUPPORT THE ZOO



Some may think of the stretch between early November and late February as "winter," and that's fine, but here at the Zoo we think of it as a season to celebrate. We coast from Zoo Lights straight into Valentine's Day, with twinkly lights, a dusting of snow, and plenty of fun to be had. Put on your coat and join us!

As you plan your next visit, please reserve your timed entry in advance and review modifications designed to keep you, our staff, and the animals safe and healthy. Please remember, as well, that the Zoo is open daily through December and Friday-Monday during the months of January and February.

We look forward to seeing you soon! And remember – your visits help support our mission to care for the animals and to promote wildlife conservation at home and around the world, so thank you!

ZOO LIGHTS PRESENTED BY CHASE

November 19 through January 2

Add a little sparkle to your holiday season. Take a trip through the Zoo after hours and enjoy our wildlife-themed festival of lights. You can walk or drive, and the whole family is welcome!

Click Here for more info and ticketing

SEX AT THE ZOO

Saturday, February 12 – Adults only

Can you dance like a crane, click like a warthog, or tail-wave like a lemur? Up your courtship game on Valentine's eve. Come for a cocktail, bring a friend, and learn from the birds and the bees.

Stay tuned for details.

GALENTINE'S DAY

Sunday, February 13

Get your girlfriends together, enjoy brunch, and then make tracks to the Zoo for some gal pal fun on the best day of the year – the day before Valentine's Day!

Stay tuned for details.

CLICK HERE to take a look at all of the Zoo's upcoming events and programs.

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MAIN VALLEY REOPENING

In September of this year, the Zoo re-opened its "Main Valley" for the first time since 2004, inviting guests back into the historic center of the nation's third-oldest zoological park. Animals are no longer exhibited in the Main Valley (although a few small ones are cared for there), but people can stroll through and learn about the Zoo's history from signs and photographs posted along the way. The walk down memory lane just might inspire you to share a few stories of your own!

DAPHNE AND DELILAH

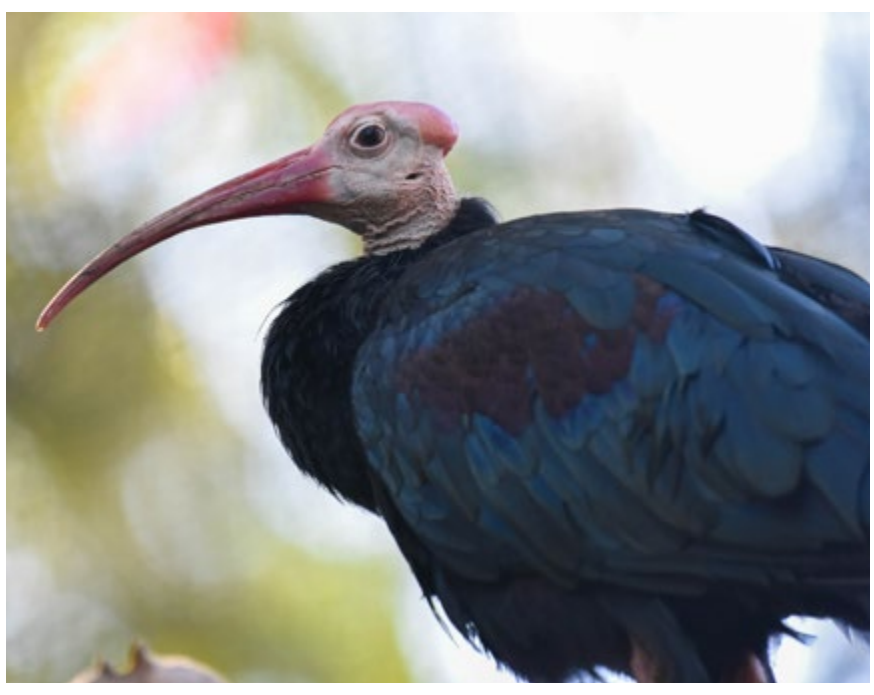
"Daphne" and "Delilah" are growing up fast in the Farmyard. These two young Cotswold sheep arrived at the Zoo early last summer when they were only two months old. They are neighbors to "Miriam," a Cotswold ewe, and enjoy visiting with her through the fence. Cotswold sheep were originally bred in the Cotswold hills of southwest England but are now found worldwide. They have been in the United States since the mid-19th century.

GIANT TREE

Welcome to the Giant Tree's better-than-ever burrow! Home to several species of native Maryland wildlife, the burrow has been getting a makeover and is now ready for visitors. Step through the tangle of roots to get inside and you'll discover new and improved exhibit spaces, larger viewing windows, brightly lit signs, and a few other surprises. Check it out!

ZOO TEENS HOST PEERS AT "ZOO DAY"

This past summer, the Zoo hosted "Zoo Day" for the Washington Youth Summit on the Environment. Organized by George Mason University, the summit brings top high school students from around the world together for an "in-the-trenches" learning experience. 130 students and faculty spent a day here exploring the role of a modern zoo in conservation and learning about zoo-related careers. Maryland Zoo Teens escorted their peers while staff hosted breakout sessions on wildlife rehabilitation, partnerships with international organizations, cutting-edge animal husbandry, and more. It was a great opportunity for the Zoo to inspire the next generation of conservationists.



SOUTHERN BALD IBIS

There is a new bird in the African Aviary that gobbles quietly and vaguely resembles an old man. It is large and long-legged with a bald head, a wrinkly neck and face, and iridescent black, green, violet, and copper feathers. It is an African ibis – a Southern bald ibis – native to the mountain kingdom of Lesotho and neighboring regions of South Africa and Swaziland. This particular bird arrived in August from the Bronx Zoo and, after quarantining, is now hanging out in the aviary with his ibis cousins, the hadada ibis and a waldrapp (or northern bald) ibis. Southern bald ibises are listed as vulnerable by the IUCN, the world's leading conservation organization.

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WILDLIFE RESCUE

In addition to his work at the Zoo as area manager of Penguin Coast and the Africa Barn, Jess Phillips spends time proactively protecting wild penguins and other seabirds off the southern coast of Africa. Since 2017, he has served as coordinator of the AZA SAFE African Penguin Disaster Response Project. Coming into the role, he knew plenty about penguins but chose to also become HAZWOPER certified so that he could talk the talk and walk the walk of disaster preparedness. We caught up with Phillips recently to talk about HAZWOPER, penguins, and wildlife rescue missions near and far.

Let's start with the obvious. What does HAZWOPER stand for?

It stands for Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response. It's a set of standards issued by OSHA [the federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration], and to become certified you have to take a course where you learn about all different types of hazardous waste, safety protocols, and stuff like that.

Why do you need HAZWOPER training to participate in wildlife rescue?

It's important to get the training and to understand your role within the larger response effort. It's also a requirement. Before HAZWOPER came along, just about anyone could go help in the event of an oil spill. Today, you might be the most qualified bird cleaner in the world, but if you don't have your certification, the federal government's not going to let you in.

You got certified when you began leading the African Penguin Disaster Response project?

Yes, I took the course through AZA and then became trained as an instructor because I felt like I needed as much knowledge and qualification as possible to be able to converse with colleagues that I was working with in the AZA and over in South Africa and Namibia.

Would your role in the event of an oil spill be focused exclusively on wildlife rescue and rehab?

That's exactly right, we'd be part of the wildlife response team and there would be completely different teams for oil spill cleanup, operations, supplies, and so on. It's all connected, but everyone has their specific job. That's the beauty of the Incident Command System that you learn about during HAZWOPER training.

Can you explain what the Incident Command System is?

It's a standardized approach to disaster response where basically everyone has a defined job and a specific place to report. Things are compartmentalized but there are clear lines of communication. It's a very well-designed system and a great way to run a disaster. ICS originated in the U.S., but I think just about every country in the world uses it now in some form or another.

Have you applied your HAZWOPER training in any real-world situations?

I happened to be in South Africa in 2019 when a fuel bunker, which is like a floating gas station, spilled fuel into the water very near one of the bigger penguin colonies on the eastern Cape. It turned out to be a good case study in disaster preparedness because we had planned for just this sort of emergency, we had purchased the necessary supplies, and we were set up and ready to go [at SANCCOB] when the oiled birds arrived. The spill affected about 250 birds, and I was able to help clean them. All were rescued, rehabbed, and released successfully.

I understand that you and other HAZWOPER-certified staff at the Zoo are now beginning to apply your wildlife rescue skills locally. Can you tell me more about that?

We've started training people here at the Zoo and we've sent staff to help on three recent oil spills along the East Coast. Those rescue efforts have been coordinated by Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research in Delaware. The Zoo has a long-standing relationship with Tri-State, and now we have joined their network of wildlife responders.

How has Zoo staff contributed in those wildlife responses?

We were on site to help triage, stabilize, clean, and care for birds and other wildlife that were oiled. I think the fact that we handle birds every day and are used to doing many of the things required was really helpful. When you work in this environment all the time with animals, you build up knowledge and experience. You know what needs to be done and you can be trusted to get it done. So this is a case where you never want an oil spill to happen, but if it does, the Zoo is in a position to really contribute meaningfully.

Why is this important work for the Zoo to be doing?

It's something we can do well, it extends our network of conservation partnerships, it's a great way to give back to the local community and the Mid-Atlantic region, and it solidifies our reputation as a zoo that really cares about conservation. And it's great experience for the staff who get to go.

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SAVING SOFIYA
and Other Stories of Training Put to the Test

by Sarah Evans, Zoogram Editor

Earlier this year, "Sofiya" the Amur leopard was not feeling well. The signs were subtle, but the keepers who work with her daily are attuned to even the slightest changes in her behavior. They are the first to notice when something is not quite right.

The keepers shared their observations with Jen Sohl, one of the Zoo's four registered veterinary technicians, who assessed Sofiya carefully and then alerted Dr. Ellen Bronson, Senior Director of Animal Health, Conservation & Research. Bronson suspected a uterine infection. "Big cats are prone to this type of infection," she explains, "and Sofiya was showing some telltale symptoms."

Suspicion is not enough to go on, though. Treatment depends on diagnosis, and in this case, diagnosis would require bloodwork and abdominal ultrasound. Fortunately, Sofiya was able to provide both with relative ease and minimal stress because she is a well-trained leopard. She has spent countless hours over many years working with her keepers to deliver behaviors on cue, in the presence of veterinary staff, that facilitate her own medical care.

In a behind-the-scenes area of the Leopard Lair, the animal care team prepped Sofiya for a blood draw. Responding to a series of cues from her trainer, Sofiya walked to a specific spot, lay down parallel to a protective mesh barrier, and held still. While the leopard remained fully focused, Sohl collected a blood sample. The fact that Sofiya will voluntarily participate in a blood draw – one of the most essential diagnostic procedures known to medicine yet one involving a potentially intimidating needle – is remarkable. It is testament to the rigor of her training program, the focus that she has achieved, and careful coordination between keepers and vet staff.

The next day, the team readied Sofiya for an abdominal ultrasound. Again, the leopard was in her off-exhibit den, behind the mesh barrier wall. Recessed into that wall is a box – a specially designed ultrasound box – open on the keeper side and topped by a platform large enough to hold a big cat. When cued by her trainer, Sofiya jumped onto the platform and lay down. She focused on her trainer while Sohl reached into the box, slid open an access panel beneath the leopard's belly, and completed an ultrasound.

The ultrasound showed that Sofiya's uterus was distended. The bloodwork confirmed that she had an infection.

"We started her on medications, knowing that we could monitor the pace of the infection because of her training," says Dr. Bronson. For the next several days, Sofiya's animal care team alternated daily between ultrasounds and blood draws. The infection showed no signs of resolving, and Sofiya was prepped for surgery. Because she is also injection trained – in other words, she will voluntarily accept a shot – she was induced for anesthesia on the day of her surgery by hand injection.

The surgery was successful and life-saving, and Sofiya has now recovered fully. Training played a critical role in her diagnosis, treatment, and recovery. It provided her animal care team with the best possible information about her condition, and it spared Sofiya undue stress and risk. "Typically, in a cat not as well trained, this situation would have called for two anesthetic procedures: anesthetize first, diagnose the infection, wake her up, plan the surgery, anesthetize again," notes Bronson. "Basically, we were able to spare her an entire anesthetic procedure, which is pretty remarkable."

Figure Out What Works

Make no mistake, though, Sofiya is wise to the ways of training. She does not participate voluntarily in her own care for the sake of a better medical outcome. She participates for the promise of goat's milk or raw meat. Training at the Zoo is premised on positive reinforcement, which means that animals are rewarded for their voluntary participation. Food is a strong enticement, and it is up to keepers – who lead all animal training programs – to figure out which food reward will best motivate each animal.

For the female warthog, apples are a good reward but apple juice is even better. The two otters will show up for fish, but one likes smelt and the other prefers capelin. The male giraffe is motivated by sugar cubes while the adult female wants bread. "She's more of a carb girl," explains vet tech Kaitlin Ayrault, who partners with keeper staff in the training of warthogs, giraffes, otters, and a host of other animals at the Zoo. As for the chimpanzees, they eagerly prepare to train as soon as they see a keeper holding a mini Dixie cup. "They don't even know what's in it yet, but they know it's something good," says Ayrault. And what is in it? "Could be mixed nuts, could be peanut butter, could be peanut butter with marshmallow fluff."

An animal that is highly food-motivated can become a training rock star. Take the female otter, for example. "I'm going to give her a shout-out," says Ayrault. "The otters are extremely energetic, but when a keeper asks Piper to hold to a target, it's like her whole world stops. She is so focused on getting that piece of fish, she will freeze in place. We're working on blood-draw training with her right now, and she is holding for nearly a minute, which is just incredible."

Animals that are less food-motivated can be enticed in other ways. The two male rhinos, once too wary to approach people, now come right over to their keepers and will hold still while being brushed or rubbed with clay. They like skincare and they like alfalfa cubes.

Meanwhile, "Kiwi" the female warthog has been working on blood-draw training and ran into a slight roadblock. Every time she felt the prick of a needle on her hind leg, she would stomp. Caitlin O'Donnell, her trainer, suspected that the prick of the needle felt to her like a fly bite. Together, O'Donnell and Ayrault figured out that if someone gently scratched Kiwi, it was enough sensation to overcome the feeling of being pricked, and she would regain her focus and hold perfectly still. In this and every other training case, it's a matter of experimenting until you find what works for each animal.

Keepers take the lead in "figuring out" the animals that they work with every day. They train regularly and methodically with the animals in their care several times a week, and in some cases daily. Vet techs get involved in training for medical procedures. During joint sessions between keeper and vet tech, good communication is essential. There is definite teamwork involved, and together, keeper and vet tech become expert at knowing what each animal will tolerate and how to get the most out of an animal.

"The trainer's job is to watch the animal and the vet tech's job is to perform the procedure," explains Erin Grimm, Mammal Collection and Conservation Manager. "It is up to the trainer to guide the interaction because she knows the animal best. The trainer will pick up on even the slightest signals – maybe it's a tail swish, maybe it's an ear twitch, maybe it's a tightening of the muscles – and will give the necessary feedback and guidance to the vet tech."

"It takes a lot of skill on both sides," adds Bronson. "You really have to know the individual animal, know the cues, not push it too hard but not wait too long, know which animal wants to anticipate what's coming next and which does better if it just happens quickly. With the giraffes, for example, if you're doing an injection, you pound on them first – you go "1,2,3" – because they like to know what's coming. But imagine trying to pound a lion! A lion is not going to appreciate that."

Take It One Step at a Time

Desensitization is another big piece of the training puzzle. Keepers spend a great deal of time in an animal's company, developing familiarity, building a relationship, and reinforcing basic trained behaviors. In the buildup to a specific procedure, keepers coordinate with veterinary staff to condition an animal so that there are no surprises. If there is a needle involved, the animal will first get accustomed to the touch of a paper clip. If there is pounding involved (say, on a giraffe's shoulder), there will be scratching and patting first. And if there is equipment involved, there will be plenty of time spent getting used to that equipment.

Recently, the Zoo's oldest ostrich, "Matilda," was being treated for lameness in one leg. To assess her condition properly, veterinary staff needed bloodwork and x-rays. Matilda was already trained for blood draws and for tactile exams, but she had never experienced an x-ray before. She needed to feel comfortable around the equipment, so her animal care team started with a mock x-ray machine.

"Our portable x-ray machine is bright yellow with black handles. Several years ago, I made a mock version out of Cheerios boxes and black zip ties. We brought that in first and got Matilda desensitized to the bright color. Then we brought in the actual x-ray machine," explains Ayrault. Matilda took one look at it and retreated to her stall. Her keepers understood the need for patience. It took several more days to desensitize Matilda to the actual machine, which has lots of things sticking out of it (including a wiggly cord), but eventually she learned that it was safe. She will now stand for an x-ray. In return, she gets grapes.

Never Say Never

"I have learned to always ask," says Bronson. "I'll think something's impossible, but then I'll talk to a keeper, and they'll be on it, and a month later, it's trained. It's pretty amazing what they can get done. The training itself is important, but the relationship with the animal is equally important."

The same could be said of the teamwork between keeper and veterinary staff. Those individuals, working together, need to trust each other and communicate effectively to get the best response from any animal. Then, amazing things happen. A kudu stands still while its hooves are trimmed. A giraffe tolerates a blood draw. And a sick leopard participates willingly, calmly, and successfully in her own treatment and recovery.

Vaccinating against COVID-19

This fall, as soon as it receives its allotment of vaccine, the Zoo will achieve a major medical milestone. Vet staff will work with keeper teams to start vaccinating certain animals against SARS CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans and has also sickened some zoo animals. The animals will receive this vaccine like any other, and hopefully the otters will set a good precedent. "They're very solid with their injection training," says vet tech Kaitlin Studer, "so when it comes to the COVID vaccine, I anticipate no problems at all."

The Zoo's allotment is coming from Zoetis, a global animal health company that has developed a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine specifically for animals. Zoetis is donating more than 11,000 doses of its vaccine to help protect the health and well-being of more than 100 mammalian species living in nearly 70 zoos, as well as other animal care facilities. The vaccine has been authorized for use on a case-by-case basis by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and appropriate state veterinarians.

"We plan to vaccinate those species at the Zoo that we have assessed to be most likely to contract SARS CoV-2, including the North American river otters, the chimpanzees and other primates, and our cat species – Amur leopard, cheetah, bobcat, and lion," says Dr. Bronson. "We have not had any cases of COVID-19 at the Zoo to date, but the vaccine will add another layer of protection for the animals in our care."

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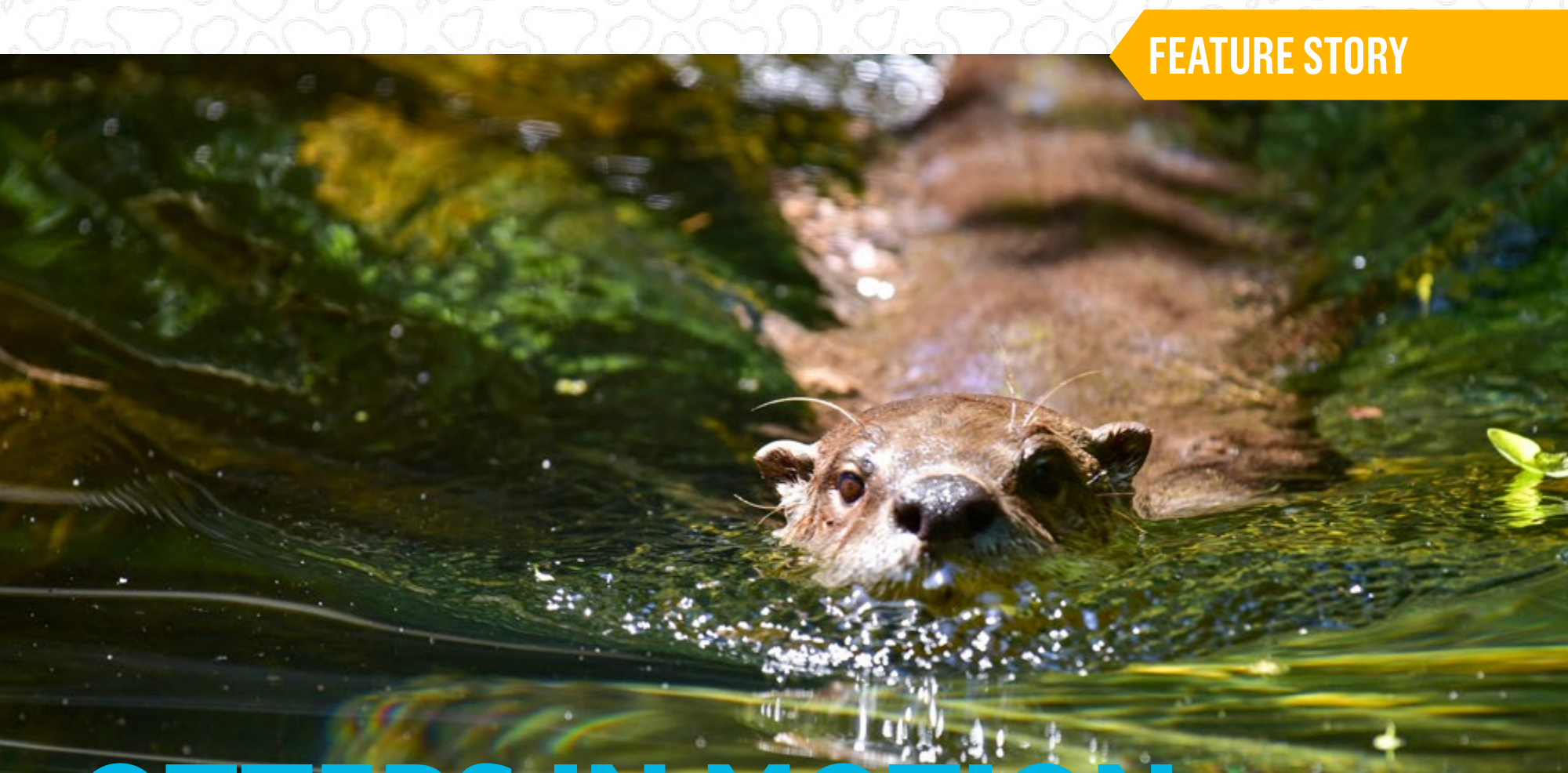

OTTERS IN MOTION

by Sarah Evans

Every morning when the Zoo's female otter goes outside, she pokes her head out first, looks around, gets a sense of her surroundings, and then jumps in the pool. She is more apprehensive than the male otter, more cautious, and water is where she is comfortable.

That should come as no surprise. North American river otters are made for water. They are basically sleek mammalian submarines with webbed feet, a propeller-like tail, short legs that act as rudders in front and paddles in back, and a special "swim mode." They can close off their ears and nostrils under water and protect their eyes with a drop-down "third eyelid," or nictitating membrane. They have long whiskers that allow them to sense prey in dark or murky water. They can dive more than 50 feet and travel a quarter of a mile without surfacing for air. They are easy and graceful swimmers, flipping, gliding, rolling, and coursing their way through rivers, lakes, marshes, swamps, and estuaries all over North America, including Maryland.

Otters need water to survive, but they also need land. They split their time between water and land, and this is what makes them the only truly amphibious members of the mustelid family. There are 13 species of otters worldwide, and they are related to weasels, badgers, ferrets, martens, minks, and wolverines.

While otters are well adapted for swimming, most actually spend more time on land than in water. Otters are avid diggers, foragers, and groomers. They dig, rub, root around, and groom in loose, soft substrates such as dirt, mulch, and sand. These activities are considered essential to their physical and behavioral health. With this in mind, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) now recommends that otters be given as much if not more access to land as water in outdoor exhibits.

The Zoo followed this AZA recommendation during the recent renovation of its otter exhibit. Many of the otters' favorite spots on land – the logs that they sleep in, the rocks that they climb on, the raised area where they often choose to rest – remain the same. But their beach is significantly bigger now and full of sand rather than mulch.

The Zoo's otters had never experienced sand before and were not sure what to make of it at first. "They stepped on it and were hesitant, but once they tested it out and walked across it, they started rubbing and rolling in it and then they started wrestling with each other," reports Danielle Regan, Area Manager of the *Maryland Wilderness*. "It was really fun to see," she adds. The otters now use this part of their exhibit much more than they did before the renovation. They like to run onto the beach and dig and roll in the sand and then get in the water to clean off.

The otters also have a new set of steps to run up and down, but quite honestly, these were not installed for their benefit. These were installed for the keepers. "That was one of the incredible things about this renovation project," says Regan. "The people involved really understood that keepers are the ones working the exhibit every day, and we would know what improvements were needed. So, one day Karl [Kranz, the Zoo's Chief Operations Officer] found me and said, 'Walk through the otter exhibit and show me what changes you want.' And we got everything we asked for." Among other things, Regan asked for steps to access the raised embankment, steps to get in and out of the pool, and hand holds along the pool walls. The design team encouraged keepers to get in the pool and show exactly where they would step and grab for balance, and that is precisely where each step and hand hold went.

"It's so much easier to work in there now," says Regan. "My team is really excited about the new safety features." The fact that the otters like the steps, too, is a bonus.

In fact, the otters seem to like everything about their newly renovated exhibit and explore it together daily. "They are constantly moving unless they are sleeping," says Regan. They spend a lot of time playing. They investigate, chase each other, wrestle, slide, roll, and play with leaves and other things they find. "Sometimes the male will be grooming himself and the female will want to play, but he's busy, so she'll just play around him and that's fine, too. It's very funny to see the two of them interact," says Regan.

The fact that these two spend so much time together is mildly unusual for North American river otters. In the wild, river otters tend to live on their own, with males and females only associating during mating season. Females can be especially territorial, which is why zoos typically do not house females together but can successfully group a female with one or more males.

The Zoo's otters have lived together almost their entire lives. Both are now six years old, and both were orphaned young. "Piper," the female, was found by a fisherman in Houma, Louisiana when she was only three weeks old. "Hudson," the male, was rescued along an Oregon highway when he was two months old. Ordinarily, otter pups stay with their mothers for six to nine months and then go off on their own to establish territory where they den and find prey to satisfy their relentless appetites.

Otters have high metabolism, which is what makes them so energetic, and which also explains their abiding interest in food. The only time that Piper wants nothing to do with Hudson is when she is eating. She warns him with a growl or a bark, and he knows that teeth are next. "She's very good about vocalizing a warning first," says Regan. "She lets him know, 'Don't come near me, I'm eating!" and he's like, "Yep, just kidding, I'm going over here!'" Meanwhile, when the roles are reversed, Hudson has been known to put his paw on Piper's forehead to literally hold her at arm's length while he finishes a snack.

When Piper and Hudson finally get tired, they lay down, groom each other, and then fall asleep, curled up in a ball of otter. Next time you visit, if you don't see them in motion, look for them in a log. That is their favorite place to nap.

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THE FRUITS OF FALL

We often think of fruit as juicy and sweet. But acorns and nuts are fruits, too! And these fall fruits--called mast--are important food for many animals getting ready for the cold. To prepare for their winter sleep, chipmunks, bears, and groundhogs fatten up on mast. Squirrels, chickadees, and crows stock up for winter by hiding, or *caching*, mast in secret nooks throughout their territory. Even migrating birds passing through on their way south may stop in our local woods for a mast meal.

This fall, we are celebrating fall fruits and the colors of the season at the Naturalist Lodge. Stop by to make a leaf rubbing or to test your squirrel skills. Didn't know you had squirrel skills? Just you wait and see...

Do you love observing and learning about nature? You could be a naturalist! The Zoo has a professional naturalist on staff, and he has set up a workspace right in the middle of the Zoo at the Naturalist Lodge. Come on in and peek in the cabinet, open the drawers! You will discover maps, books, and collected items for learning about the living world. You will meet volunteers and staff there who are doing fun, hands-on seasonal activities. Take a few minutes to look around and learn something new on your next visit!

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Stop by The Brewer's Art for a PGF IPA, a Wildly "Hoppy" New Brew

If you are a beer drinker, wish you were a beer drinker, know someone who drinks beer, or just appreciate a good label when you see one, then we have a beer for you! Ask for PGF IPA, the latest collaboration between The Maryland Zoo and The Brewer's Art.

These two iconic Baltimore institutions first partnered in 2016 to create Penguin Pils. A portion of all sales of that summer brew benefitted the Zoo's African Penguin breeding and conservation program. Now, The Brewer's Art has created another delicious brew, PGF IPA, to raise awareness for one of the rarest and most beautiful amphibians in the world, the Panamanian golden frog.

"We were really excited that Brewer's Art wanted to broaden its commitment to the Zoo with a new beer in support of the conservation of Panamanian golden frogs," said Kirby Fowler, president and CEO of the Maryland Zoo.

In the Central American country of Panama, golden frogs are a unifying national symbol, much like the bald eagle is in the United States. Golden frogs are effectively extinct in the wild, but there is reason to hope that they may one day be reintroduced into the montane forests and streams of their native country. The Zoo has been working diligently toward that goal for decades, collaborating with colleagues in Panama, successfully breeding the species in house, and coordinating with other AZA institutions to grow and maintain the North American population. A portion of all sales of PGF IPA will benefit the Zoo's Panamanian Golden Frog conservation program.

"Brewer's Art is excited to expand upon our collaboration with the Maryland Zoo by creating PGF IPA to help support this highly endangered species," said Volker Stewart, co-owner of The Brewer's Art.

At 6.4% ABV, PGF IPA is an easy-drinking, well-balanced IPA, dry-hopped with Mandarina Bavaria and Amarillo hops. The Brewer's Art released a draft beer in August, followed by a canned version that was produced at Oliver Brewing Company in Baltimore for The Brewer's Art and The Maryland Zoo. Hailey Hays, the Zoo's senior director of marketing, designed the can label.

PGF IPA is now available in the Baltimore Metro area through Bond Distributing.

#GivingZooDay

Giving Tuesday is a day to celebrate acts of kindness and generosity, and that includes towards your favorite furry, feathered, and scaly animals. When you wake up on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, we hope you will feel inspired to contribute in their honor to the Maryland Zoo. Make it #GivingZooDay! All funds received directly support animal care and conservation, and we are always grateful for your support.

Click to Donate Today

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take your roars OUTDOORS

Before you visit, click here to review our important health and safety measures.

Click here to purchase tickets and reserve your entry time.

Administrative offices are open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Zoo is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. during the months of March through December and Friday–Monday during the months of January and February.
The Zoo is closed Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

To all our friends and members, thank you for your continued support of the Zoo and its amazing animals. We look forward to seeing you soon.

While planning your next visit, please check the Zoo's website—www.MarylandZoo.org—for timely updates on events, programs, exhibits, and improvements. Follow the tabs on the website to reach any Zoo department, including Group Sales, Membership, and Education.

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