

Media Contacts:

Saint Louis Zoo 314/781-0900

Janet Powell, ext. 4633; Christy Childs, ext. 4639;

Joanna Bender, ext. 4703

Saint Louis Zoo Behind the Scenes Tours

Have you ever met a Penguin, fed a giant tortoise, scratched a legless lizard? Venture "behind the scenes" at the Saint Louis Zoo for a rare look at areas the general public does not get to see. Meet the keepers that take care of the animals. For more information and reservations, call (314) 781-0900, ext. 4840.

Penguin Encounter

Experience "Penguin & Puffin Coast" from a zookeeper's point of view. During this one-hour tour, you will see the kitchen/food prep area, keeper office, ozone tower/water treatment room, and have an "up close and personal" visit with two Magellanic penguins!

Fee: \$50 per person. Minimum of four guests on the weekend and a maximum of 15. (Less than four guests are allowed; however, full payment is required.)

Gentle Giants

Take a stroll to Red Rocks and experience a rare opportunity to feed the Zoo's "gentle giants," the Reticulated Giraffes. See their long eyelashes up close and watch their tongues as they grasp a leafy branch or a piece of bread from your hand. Learn about their behavior, feeding ecology and why their necks are so long!

Fee: \$50 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 15.

Snakes Alive

A 30-minute behind-the-scenes tour of the Herpetarium includes a look at safety protocols, snake anti-venin, keeper tools and the difference between snakes and lizards. You will get the chance to touch a legless lizard and a ball python!

Fee: \$35 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 15.

Tour de Tortoise

This visit to the Herpetarium takes you into the heart of tortoise territory! Your visit to the giant tortoises, some of which weigh up to 600 pounds, includes hand-feeding carrots to these colossal ancient reptiles. Bring your camera for great photo opportunities!

Fee: \$35 per person. Guests must be able to walk well downhill on uneven terrain in the tortoise yard. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of six.

Leaping Lemurs

Meet a group of small primates from Madagascar, our Ring-tailed and Black Lemurs. Learn about their unique behaviors and detailed family histories! Watch the lemurs interact with each other and feed them healthy treats with a zookeeper.

Fee: \$50 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 10. This tour is offered during the warmer months, when the lemurs live in their outdoor habitats.

Playful Primates

Keepers in the Primate House take extra care to create new and interesting Animal Enrichment activities for some of the Zoo's most playful animals: the monkeys and lemurs. These activities help keep the primates mentally active and physically fit. Help zookeepers make special primate enrichment toys, treats or puzzles, and then watch what happens as your homemade goodies are given, or hidden, for the primates to discover.

Fee: \$25 per person. Minimum of four guests and a maximum of 15. (Less than four guests are allowed; however, full payment is required.)

After-School Zookeeper

Children work side-by-side with a zookeeper in the Children's Zoo to perform a variety of keeper duties, including cleaning, feeding and enriching zoo animals.

Fee: \$50 per person (up to two children and one accompanying adult). For children in kindergarten through 5th grade. This tour starts between 3 and 4 p.m. and is offered Monday - Friday, Labor Day through Memorial Day.

Chirping Cheetahs

Visit the off-display Cheetah yards with a zookeeper. Meet these fast cats and learn about their unique behavior and chirping vocalizations, and why they don't live near the other big cats at the Zoo. See how the keepers use enrichment toys to keep them on their toes!

Fee: \$50 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 10.

Tiger Tales

Visit the world's largest big cats, the majestic Amur Tigers "up close and personal" at Big Cat Country with a zookeeper. Learn about their training, animal husbandry and conservation in the wild. Listen to their unique "chuffling" noises and see their huge canines!

Fee: \$50 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 10.

Sea Lion Encounter

Go behind the scenes of the Sea Lion Show to meet a California Sea Lion superstar! Watch the zookeepers train these magnificent animals to do amazing behaviors using positive reinforcement. You will learn the ins and outs of the main stage attraction and may even have the opportunity to touch one of the show's stars!

Fee: \$75 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of six.

Lemur Lessons

Adults and kids alike will learn the basic principles of training an animal to go to a target for a food reward. Participants will "target train" a group of five ruffed lemurs to the sound of a clicker device. Guests will feed the lemurs small pieces of food through the mesh as a reward with a zookeeper's help. This tour is held in the Children's Zoo.

Fee: \$60 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of four. Includes Children's Zoo admission. Offered Mon/Wed/Sun at 10:30 a.m. or 3 p.m. Seasonal, warmer months only.

Family Safari

Gather your family members or friends and head to the Children's Zoo for a fun and informative behind-the-scenes tour. Guests are invited to meet, touch and take photos of some of our contact animals "up close and personal." Explore the back rooms and kitchen area. Hear interesting stories about the Children's Zoo residents, and learn educational conservation messages about them.

Fee: \$55 per person. Ages one year and up, minimum of two guests and maximum of six. Includes Children's Zoo admission. Offered year-round: Tue/Thu/Sat at 10:30 a.m. or 3 p.m.

Creepy Crawlies

Come to the Monsanto Insectarium and see rare and amazing invertebrates from all over the planet. What do these animals have in common? No backbone! Go behind the scenes in the containment room where endangered American Burying Beetles live. Get up close and personal with a giant spiny stick! This is the perfect opportunity to learn about a variety of spineless wonders first-hand from the keepers that take care of them.

Fee: \$25 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 12.

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Rhino Ramble

This tour takes you behind River's Edge to the hidden rhino/hippo barn. There you will be introduced to one of our stately black rhinos, hear stories about him from a zookeeper, learn about his species' plight in the wild and feed this dinosaur-like vegetarian. You might even get to touch his horn!

Fee: \$60 per person. Minimum of two guests and a maximum of 6.

(1/2/09)