

About The Saint Louis Zoo

Our Mission

The mission of the Saint Louis Zoo is to conserve animals and their habitats through animal management, research, recreation and educational programs that encourage the support and enrich the experience of the public.

Located on 90 acres in Forest Park, the Saint Louis Zoo is home to more than 603 species of animals, many of them rare and endangered. It is one of the few free zoos in the nation and has been voted America's top free attraction. The Zoo annually attracts three million visitors, who can see 14,840 wild animals—including the thousands of leaftcutters and butterflies at the Zoo.

Since its 1910 founding, the Zoo has been renowned for its beautiful naturalistic exhibits, its diverse collection of animals and its innovative approaches to animal management, wildlife conservation, research and education. The Zoo's Education Department staff—the largest among the nation's zoos—offers programs designed to help visitors of all ages and abilities learn through experience, involvement and discovery. Of the more than three million visitors hosted annually by the Saint Louis Zoo, approximately 1.7 million visitors interacted with an Educational Interpreter, Zoo Docent or Zookeeper who provided educational experiences and information.

Animals Always

The Saint Louis Zoo cares for a number of rare and endangered animals like Asian elephants, the horned guan, Amur tiger, Matschie's tree kangaroo, Speke's gazelle, golden-headed lion tamarin, Amur leopard and Chinese alligator. The Zoo has one of the finest collections of hoofed mammals in the nation and a spectacular natural outdoor setting for tigers, leopards and other big cats. Its Charles H. Hoessle Herpetarium is home to more than 700 animals—from alligators, snakes and crocodiles to frogs, toads and salamanders.

The Zoo is also well-known for its diverse array of bird species, with a waterfowl collection that is one of the largest of any zoo in North America and hundreds of exotic species, many of them endangered. The Emerson Children's Zoo features friendly animals to see and touch, animal shows, educational play activities, a playground and even water geysers.

The Monsanto Insectarium is one of a handful of exhibits in North America dedicated solely to bugs. It hosts more than 20 major exhibit areas, with more than 100 species of live insects and includes a geodesic dome filled with flora, fauna, beautiful butterflies, moths and katydid.

Four Continent Journey

The Zoo's River's Edge allows visitors to journey along a mythical waterway through four continents. This naturalistic environment showcases multiple species from cheetahs, hyenas, hippos and rhinos to a family of three generations of elephants. In June 2014, River's Edge got even wilder with the addition of three new animal habitats—the painted dog, or African wild dog, Malayan sun bear and Andean bears.

The first walk-through sub-Antarctic penguin exhibit in North America, Penguin & Puffin Coast offers two spacious domed exhibits, complete with rugged coastlines, towering rockscapes and underwater viewing of lively penguins, puffins and various water birds.

With its lushly landscaped habitats, flowing streams, huge deadfall trees and vines, the Donn & Marilyn Lipton Fragile Forest is an outdoor summer habitat for orangutans, chimpanzees and gorillas.

Stingrays

From April to September, at Stingrays at Caribbean Cove featuring Sharks, visitors can watch, touch and occasionally feed the unique and fascinating stingrays, as they glide through a warm saltwater pool.

Tasmanian Devils

The Zoo welcomed Tasmanian devils for the first time in 30 years to a Tasmanian-themed Zoo habitat built specifically for these endangered animals. The new \$550,000 Emerson Children's Zoo habitat is home to two female devils who came to the Zoo through a program aimed at expanding awareness about the plight of these animals in the wild.

The Saint Louis Zoo was one of only six U.S. zoos selected to care for Tasmanian devils, which are now endangered due to the spread of devil facial tumor disease. With 2,000 square feet of outdoor living space, this habitat includes dens, boulders, logs, and two 8-foot-high, 8-foot wide bird-safe glass panels.



McDonnell Polar Bear Point

Home to Kali, an orphan bear from Alaska, McDonnell Polar Bear Point opened in June 2015. This 40,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art habitat, was created to provide an enriching environment for polar bears, which are declining in the wild and highly vulnerable. This habitat offers a natural substrate and saltwater pools, giving Kali an opportunity to swim, dive, rock climb and dig in the sand. Visitors can enjoy McDonnell Polar Bear Point's 22-foot viewing window where polar bears can come right up to the glass to greet them. The sea area features a 1,000-square-foot Arctic cave room that allows visitors to get up-close and personal with the bears by looking through a four-panel viewing wall.

Sea Lion Sound

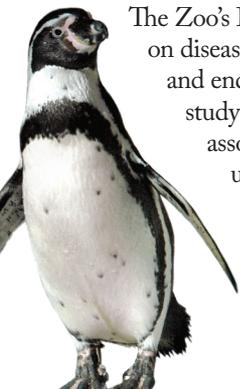
Opened in 2012, Sea Lion Sound makes it possible for the first time in North America for visitors to walk through an underwater tunnel into the sea lions habitat with sea lions swimming all around. This is also home to the Zoo's beloved Sea Lion Show.

Saving Endangered Species

The Saint Louis Zoo is a world leader in saving endangered species and their habitats, leading the nation with the greatest number of active Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plans. SSPs are long-term programs for conservation breeding, habitat preservation, field conservation, reintroduction and supportive research for threatened and endangered species. U.S. zoos and aquariums spend \$160 million annually on field conservation projects and have funded 4,000 projects in more than 100 countries.

Through its WildCare Institute, the Zoo focuses on wildlife management and recovery, conservation science, and support of the human populations that coexist with wildlife in conservation hotspots around the globe, including four in Missouri. The WildCare Institute, with the support of its conservation fellows, takes a holistic approach to troubled ecosystems by addressing wildlife management and recovery, conservation science and support of the human populations that coexist with wildlife.

The Zoo's Institute of Conservation Medicine focuses on diseases that affect the conservation of threatened and endangered wildlife species. Scientists study the origin, movement and risk factors associated with diseases so that they can better understand the impact of diseases on the conservation of wildlife populations, the links between the health of zoo animals and free-living wildlife populations and the movement of diseases between wildlife, domestic animals and humans.



Animal Care

The Zoo's Endangered Species Research Center & Veterinary Hospital complex hosts a central treatment area, research laboratories, an animal quarantine wing and administrative space. A clinical pathology laboratory allows for careful study of diseases. The Zoo's veterinary staff continues to make "house calls" to animals that can be treated more comfortably where they are housed.

At the Orthwein Animal Nutrition Center, the experienced staff works hard to make sure the animals eat well. The Zoo's staff includes a Ph.D. nutritionist—the Saint Louis Zoo is one of only a handful of zoos to have a nutritionist on staff. It takes as many as 24 man hours per day to prepare the bulk foods and special diets needed throughout the Saint Louis Zoo.

Research

The primary focus of the Zoo's Research Department is reproduction. This includes studies of behavior, physiology, endocrinology and gamete biology. Zoos must enhance captive breeding programs for future conservation recovery of threatened and endangered species. Because managing recovery programs involves controlling as well as increasing reproduction, development and testing of contraceptive methods is also important. In fact, the Saint Louis Zoo is home to the AZA Reproductive Management Center, which serves zoos across the nation.

Revenue Sources, Economic Impact

In 1916, the citizens of St. Louis voted a tax for construction and operation of the Zoo. Through the years, the community has continued to support the Zoo, with approximately one third of its budget coming from property taxes in St. Louis City and County, a third from food service, gift shops and parking lots and a third from private donations, corporations, foundations and memberships.

In 2014, the Regional Chamber and Growth Association analyzed the Zoo's economic impact—a measure of the way dollars associated with the Zoo circulate through the region. Analysts found that the Zoo's annual impact was \$230 million based on a range of factors from the Zoo's generating over 2,140 jobs to the Zoo's attracting tourism spending of almost \$47 million.

On The Web:

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