

THE COLUMBUS ZOO

The Columbus Zoo is located in a picturesque setting along the banks of the Scioto River in Northwest Columbus. It is an accredited member of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums and the third largest municipally owned zoo in North America.

The Zoo encompasses over 400 acres of animal exhibits, naturalistic wildlife habitats, gardens, picnic areas, recreational facilities and even a golf course.

A Zoo with a Past...and a Future

Like many of the large and powerful animals who live here, the Columbus Zoo was tiny at birth.

The Zoo was established in 1927 to house a small collection of donated animals. From this humble beginning, it has developed into one of the fastest growing and most highly acclaimed zoos in the nation.

In 1956, the Zoo made headlines around the world with the birth of Colo, the first gorilla born in captivity. Since then, generations of other lowland gorillas have been born at the Columbus Zoo.

The Zoo has won international recognition for its other breeding programs, as well, and today houses many rare and endangered species.

The Columbus Zoo also boasts one of the nation's largest collections of reptiles and amphibians, an aquarium with over 250 species of fish, and a wide array of birds.

While the Zoo many have started small, over six decades of continuous growth and wildlife acquisitions have produced a truly outstanding Columbus Zoo that today is home to more than 700 species and 11,000 specimens.

Just as the Zoo has grown in size, its role and purpose have expanded, too. In addition to its recreational value, today's Columbus Zoo makes an important contribution to the preservation of wildlife through education, breeding, conservation programs and scientific studies.

And with wilderness areas rapidly disappearing, the Columbus Zoo will become even more important in the future as it joins zoos around the world in providing a refuge for endangered species and serving as a leader in conservation efforts.

From the four corners of the earth

From as close as North America and as far away as Australia, the Columbus Zoo presents a magnificent collection of wildlife. See lowland gorillas, lions, tigers, giraffes, zebras, leopards, a variety of monkeys, and many, many other creatures big and small. The Columbus Zoo is one of only four zoos in the U.S. to exhibit bonobos, also called pygmy chimpanzees. And it's one of the few zoos in the country to permanently house koalas, which are included in an Australian exhibit that also features wallabies, emus and black swans.

The secrets of a coral reef plus amphibians and reptiles

See unusual sharks, graceful stingrays and some of the ocean's most colorful fish in the exciting new Discovery Reef exhibit. This 100,000 gallon saltwater aquarium uses thousands of pieces of man-made coral and special wave-producing equipment to

give you a scuba diver's view of the ocean life around a coral reef. The Zoo also offers other marine life, fascinating amphibians and one of the nation's finest collections of reptiles.

Spotlight on North America

Spread out over the sides and a top of a small hill, the North America exhibit - the Zoo's largest exhibit area - is home to bears, bison, wolves, cougars, Alaskan moose, otters, bald eagles, pronghorn and other animals that roam the North American continent.

A haven for endangered species

The Zoo provides a refuge for hundreds of species threatened with extinction in the wild, including black rhinos, Asian and African elephants, Sumatran and white Bengal tigers, snow leopards, Atlantic loggerhead sea turtles and many more. Through a number of successful breeding programs, the Zoo is also helping bolster the population of such endangered species as lowland gorillas, cheetahs and lesser pandas.

Birds of many feathers

Peacocks, ducks and geese wander the Zoo grounds as part of a large and colorful collection of birds that include Andean condors, marabou storks, flamingos, penguins and crowned cranes.

Plentiful plant life, too

More than 800 species of plants valued at over \$3 million adorn the Zoo grounds. Many are maintained to supplement animal diets, and whenever possible the plants surrounding an animal exhibit are chosen to reflect the animal's natural habitat. To give the grounds an additional touch of color and beauty, each year over 75,000 annuals are planted.

A special experience for kids

The Children's Zoo is a wonderful area populated by animals that are a special delight for children. The Petting Barn gives kids a "hands on" experience with sheep, goats and other cuddly creatures.

Year-round fun and education

The Columbus Zoo is open 365 days a year. While spring and summer are the busiest seasons, the Zoo offers special fun at other times, too. "Boo at the Zoo" is a hauntingly delightful Halloween celebration. And the Zoo's "Wildlight Wonderland" adds a special charm to the Christmas season with more than 500,000 twinkling lights, horse-drawn wagon rides and strolling carolers.

Anytime of the year, the Zoo is a wonderful source of fun and entertainment. But the Zoo is a real education, too. A wide variety of educational programs and events are available for children and adults, including tours, live animal demonstrations, classes, day camps, camp-ins and workshops designed especially for teachers.

Visitor Services: The Columbus Zoo welcomes visitors of all ages. Services include concessions, stroller and wheelchair rental, picnic areas and the Sokoni gift shop. Various rides are available seasonally throughout the Zoo grounds. Group discounts are available by calling 614/645-3459. Bus service from downtown Columbus is available June through August.

Opportunities for Support: Programs are available for those wishing to support the Zoo financially. Through Adopt-an-Animal, contributors can cover the cost of feeding

an animal for a year. Donors can help support the Zoo's botanical collection through the Plant Parenthood program. And donors can help lay the foundation for the Zoo's future by contributing to the Brick Campaign. In return, their name will be engraved in a brick in the Zoo's entrance. For more information call 614/645-3462.

Memberships: A Zoo membership is a real bargain and offers many advantages for frequent visitors. Members are entitled to free parking and free admission to the Columbus Zoo and 80 other zoos throughout the U.S. and Canada, 365 days a year. They also receive the annual Zoo calendar, a subscription to the Beastly Banner, the bi-monthly newsletter, a 10% discount at the Sokoni gift shop, invitations to special Zoo events and more. For more membership information, call 614/645-3489.

Other Attractions: Additional entertainment attractions are available within a short distance of the Zoo. The Safari Golf Club is adjacent to the Zoo. For more information and tee times, call 614/889-8344. Wyandot Lake Water Park, located next to the Zoo, is open during the summer months and can be contacted at 614/889.9283. Overnight accommodations and many fine restaurants are within a short drive of the Zoo.