

# Empathy at the Racine



## Zoo



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# Areas of Focus

**CAT CHAT**

**MEET THE CANADA LYNX:**

**BAM BAM** AGE: 5 (4/25/18)     **BARNEY** AGE: 5 (4/25/18)



**ABOUT US:**

- Bam Bam and Barney are brothers and litter mates!
- The other two lynx from their litter live at Cosley Zoo in Illinois.
- Barney's mutton chops are thicker and more solid black, while Bam Bam's right mutton chop is thinner and runs up the side of his cheek.
- The lynx's favorite foods are quail, porkchops, and whipped cream (as a very special treat).

**QUICK FACTS:**

- Canada lynx live in the cold, snowy habitats of Canada and some states, including northern Wisconsin. They have a thick coat of fur to keep them warm, and huge, padded feet like snowshoes to help them get around.
- You may see the cats tilting their heads to the side while they bite down on their food - cats have special teeth on the sides of their mouth called carnassials, made for puncturing their prey and tearing meat.

**KEEPER NOTES**

- Individual feedings and training sessions are a helpful way for keepers to make sure each lynx is eating equal portions of their diet and get a closer look at them.
- Training with animals strengthens relationships, builds trust, and opens a line of communication between animals and their caretakers.

**RACINE ZOO CAT CONSERVATION:**

Conservation status:  
Canada lynx - Least concern  
African lion - Vulnerable  
Amur tiger - Endangered

All of the cats at the Racine Zoo are part of an AZA Species Survival Plan while none of them are actively breeding, their genetics are important for maintaining diversity within their species.

**Keeper chats**

**African Spurred Tortoise**  
*Geochelone sulcata*



**Dewey**

I was born on July 3rd, 2004, and arrived at the Racine Zoo in 2015. During the warm summer months, I live next to the gift shop, but spend the winter months off-exhibit to keep me safe from the harsh winter weather. Make sure to come say "hi" if you see me out and about!

**AFRICAN SPURRED TORTOISE AT A GLANCE**

- The 5th largest tortoise species in the world after Galapagos and Aldabra, and the largest African mainland tortoise.
- They are named after the spur-like scales on their forelimbs that act as protection when they tuck into their shell.
- African spurred tortoises are well adapted for burrowing, due to their long claws and strong front legs. When the weather gets too hot or too cold for them, they retreat to a burrow.
- These tortoises have broad, oval, flattened shells that are brown to yellow in color.
- In the wild, African spurred tortoises eat grasses, flowers, weeds, and cacti.
- At the zoo, they eat mixed produce, hay, and greens.

Male:	Female:
50in	20 in
120- lbs	45-75 lbs



Aug. life expectancy in native habitats: years  
Aug. life expectancy in human care: 54 years

**WHERE ARE AFRICAN SPURRED TORTOISE HABITATS LOCATED?**



Occur along the southern edge of the Sahara, from Senegal and Mauritania east through Mali, Niger, Chad, the Sudan, Ethiopia, along the Red Sea in Eritrea. African Spurred Tortoise lives in hot, arid environments of the Sahelian type. These areas range from desert fringes to dry savannas. Standing water is only ground for limited amounts of time.

**Fact Sheets**



**Ambassadors**

# Goals



**1**

Increase guest knowledge of our animal residents' personalized care

**2**

Increase capacity to train voluntary husbandry behaviors

**3**

Train staff to effectively showcase those behaviors

**4**

Increase intentionality behind empathy in education programs through evaluation and staff training

**5**

Establish hands-off ambassador animal presentation methods

**6**

Build and share resources with other institutions



# Keeper Chats

## Increase empathy through assuring welfare

### Cat Chat

**Title:** Cat Chat

**Theme:** Big cats are found all over the world and play essential roles in their respective ecosystems.

**Target Audience:** General zoo guests, mostly including families with younger children

**Goals:** Guests will learn about the different cats that inhabit the Racine Zoo and how they can protect these species.

**Objectives:**

- Audience will stay engaged and present throughout the entire program.
- Audience will walk away knowing 1 new fact about each species of cat introduced.
- Audience will leave adequately equipped to effectively make changes to their daily lifestyles for the benefit of cats.

**Measuring Objectives:**

- Have at least 75% of the audience stay for the entire program.
- Have at least 3 questions asked at the end of the program.

**Materials:** Artifacts (can be used during chat for guests to touch)

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Outline:**

**Introduction**

- Hello everyone! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a part of the animal care/education team here at the Racine Zoo. Today, I am going to tell you some awesome facts about the big cat species that call our Zoo home. Please hold your question until the end of the chat.

**African Lion**

- Here at the Racine Zoo, we have two female African lions: Azizi and Zuri.
  - Azizi was born at Reid Park Zoo in Tuscon, AZ in 2011, and she mothered a litter of 3 cubs in 2014 that included our other African lion, Zuri.
  - Azizi weighs 313 lbs, about 33 lbs less than Zuri. She is also darker, shorter, and stockier than her daughter. Azizi has a scar above her right eye and Zuri has spots on her forehead.
- Azizi loves training with the "Open Mouth" behavior as well as the pink boomer ball toy while Zuri prefers to play with her mom and heads of cabbage.

- While African lions in the wild may adhere to their carnivore diet more strictly, eating wild zebra, wildebeest, and antelope, our pride here at the Zoo loves to explore different types of treats, including watermelon, "bloodsicles," and of course, meat (6.5 lbs of it per day!).
- Lions are the only true social cat.
- In the wild, the females do all of the hunting while the males protect the pride.
  - Prides can include 4-20 individuals consisting of related females, their young, and 1-4 adult males for leaders. Larger prides can take down larger prey.
- For our male lions in the wild, the blacker the mane is, the more testosterone there is in the male and the more dominant he may appear, attracting more female lions.
- If you live within 5 miles of the Racine Zoo, you may have heard our lions roar in the morning as that is how far they can be heard from!
  - Despite being early risers, lions sleep for 20 hours a day! This is due to their crepuscular nature (active during the day and night). It is highly likely that you'll find our lion friends sleeping while you visit.
- Lions live 10-12 years in the wild and 18-20 in captivity.

**Amur Tiger**

- We have two female Amur tigers here at the Racine Zoo: Anya and Naka.
  - Anya was born at the Riverbanks Zoo in Columbia, SC in 2005, and Naka was born at the Rosamund Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, NY in 2004.
  - Anya has perfect eyebrows as well as tear drop shapes on her temples whereas Naka has a "W" above her left eye and concentric circles on her temples.
- Anya loves to "talk" to her keepers, and her favorite treats are porkchops! Naka enjoys enrichment like phone books and cardboard boxes.
- Amur tigers are found mostly in Russia as they love the cold and snow—perfect for our climate here in Wisconsin!
  - Since Anya lived in South Carolina for the first 10 years of her life, she had never seen snow before she came here, but now it's her most favorite thing in the world!
- Tigers do not prefer the social scene that a pride offers. To accommodate our tigers' desire to be solitary, we alternate who is on exhibit every 2 days.
- Tigers are striped all the way down to the skin—these stripe patterns are unique just like our fingerprints!
- In the wild, tigers will eat wild boar, elk, and deer, even consuming up to 60 lbs in one sitting if they haven't hunted successfully in a while! To compare that to what they weigh, Anya is 253 lbs—that would be just shy of 24% of her bodyweight! Here at the zoo, they are fed more consistently than in the wild, receiving 10 lbs of meat per day with a cow femur bone once a week to help with oral health.
- On average, they live 10-12 years in the wild and 18-20 years in captivity.

**Conservation Message:** These animals need our help! The world's big cats are being threatened by various anthropogenic activities. African lions are considered to be vulnerable with only 20,000 left in the wild, and Amur Tigers are critically endangered in the wild, with only 520 left!

Both species of big cat are threatened by habitat loss and poaching for their bones and hides or for traditional medicines. However, there are a lot of things that we can do in order to help these animals. Accredited zoos like ours here are doing amazing work to conserve African lions and Amur Tigers via the Species Survival Plan. Even though our Zoo does not have the space to help breed Amur Tigers, we play the role of the "retirement home" that specializes in the care of geriatric animals since zoo animals live well past their wild counterparts. Supporting accredited zoos like the Racine Zoo is a great first step to helping with the conservation of African lions as well as Amur tigers!

**Canada Lynx**

- We have two Canada lynx here at the Racine Zoo: Barney and Bam Bam.
  - They are brothers who were both born at the Montgomery Zoo in Alabama in 2018.
  - Barney has two straight, dark, thick black stripes on his muttonchops with thin black lines on his forehead that extend up onto his head. Bam Bam's right muttonchop stripe is thinner and goes up his cheek, and he has two dots on his forehead before his black lines start.
- Their favorite form of enrichment here at the Zoo are kong toys—something many of you may have at home for your pets!
- Lynx are found in the boreal forests of North America, especially Canada and Alaska.
- They have large feet that act like natural snowshoes so that they don't sink into the snow when they hunt—that would be super nice to have for those of us who live here in Wisconsin during the winter!
- Lynx have black ear tufts that enhance their hearing; this is especially important since they are nocturnal and do their hunting at night.
- There are typically 1-6 kittens per litter with larger litters occurring when prey is more abundant.
  - Lynx have a close predator/prey relationship with the snowshoe hare, meaning that each population is reflective and determined by the other.
- Our lynx here at the zoo don't eat wild snowshoe hares, but they do eat a combined 1.5 lbs of Triple A.
- They live 15 years in the wild and up to 21 years in human care.

**Conservation Message:** While African lions and Amur tigers are facing immense population threats, the population of the Canada lynx is generally healthy. Yet, they still face threats such as trapping, climate change, and habitat loss all due to destruction by humans. It is imperative that we help keep this population healthy by reducing those human-influenced actions as well as closely monitoring the wild snowshoe hare populations to ensure that our Canada lynx maintain that stable population in the wild. Do your part to help our fellow cat friends supporting accredited zoos in their mission for conservation.

**Conclusion**

- Thank you all for coming to listen to our Cat Chat.
  - I hope you have all learned something new about our big cats here at the zoo!
- I hope you enjoy the rest of your visit at the Racine Zoo, and please feel free to ask me any questions related to our chat or the Zoo in general.

# Keeper Chats

Increase empathy through assuring welfare

## CAT CHAT

### MEET THE CANADA LYNX:

**BAM BAM**  
AGE: 5 (4/25/18)

**BARNEY**  
AGE: 5 (4/25/18)



#### ABOUT US:

- Bam Bam and Barney are brothers and litter mates! The other two lynx from their litter live at Cosley Zoo in Illinois.
- Barney's mutton chops are thicker and more solid black, while Bam Bam's right mutton chop is thinner and runs up the side of his cheek.
- The lynx's favorite foods are quail, porkchops, and whipped cream (as a very special treat).

#### QUICK FACTS:

- Canada lynx live in the cold, snowy habitats of Canada and some states, including northern Wisconsin. They have a thick coat of fur to keep them warm, and huge, padded feet like snowshoes to help them get around.
- You may see the cats tilting their heads to the side while they bite down onto their food - cats have special teeth on the sides of their mouth called carnassials, made for puncturing their prey and tearing meat.

### KEEPER NOTES

- Individual feedings and training sessions are a helpful way for keepers to make sure each lynx is eating equal portions of their diet and get a closer look at them.
- Training with animals strengthens relationships, builds trust, and opens a line of communication between animals and their caretakers.

#### RACINE ZOO CAT CONSERVATION:

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## MEET THE AFRICAN LIONS:

**AZIZI**  
AGE: 11 (7/28/11)

**ZURI**  
AGE: 8 (7/7/14)



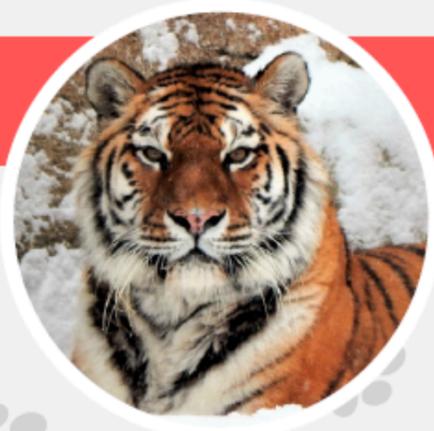
#### ABOUT US:

- Azizi is more muscular, slightly shorter, and the fur on the tip of her tail is straight. Zuri has spots on her forehead, is slightly taller, and the fur on the tip of her tail is curved and fluffy.
- Azizi is Zuri's mom! Zuri was born at the Racine Zoo in 2014.
- Some of the lions' favorite treats are watermelon and "bloodsicles" - ice treats made from blood!
- The lions love destroying cabbages for enrichment and knocking around large toys.

#### QUICK FACTS:

- African lions sleep for 20 hours a day! They preserve their energy for cooler hours of the day, and for activities like hunting and protecting their territory.
- A lion's roar can be heard from up to 5 miles away.

## MEET THE AMUR TIGER:



**NAKA**  
AGE: 18 (6/7/04)

#### ABOUT ME:

- Unlike lions, who live in prides, tigers prefer to be solitary.
- Naka can be seen lying outside even on the coldest, snowiest days. Amur tigers are native to Russia, so cold temperatures don't bother her!
- Naka's favorite treats are rabbits!
- Her favorite pastimes are naps in the sun and ripping up phonebooks.

#### QUICK FACTS:

- Tigers can walk more than 10 miles per day, patrolling their territories and hunting for food.
- Tigers' stripes are unique to them and the stripes continue down to the skin!

#### CONSERVATION ACTION:

- By visiting AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums, you are already supporting the conservation of big cats across the globe. The AZA SAFE program donates millions of dollars each year to big cat conservation projects.



# Keeper Chats

Increase empathy through assuring welfare

## BLACK-HANDED SPIDER MONKEY CHAT

### MEET THE MONKEYS:

**EMILY (31), TWIGGY (31),  
KRAMER (29), ROSIE (29)**



### ABOUT US:

- Emily has a blonde circle on top of her head, Rosie has a blonde headband from ear to ear, and Twiggy has darker, freckled skin around her eyes. Kramer is the only male in the troop and has one eye.
- The spider monkeys eat a large variety of fruits and vegetables at the zoo in addition to specialized nutritional biscuits. Their favorite treats are bananas and grapes.

### QUICK FACTS:

- Spider monkeys are highly intelligent primates. Keepers provide a variety of puzzle feeders each day filled with food to encourage natural foraging behaviors.
- Spider monkeys have a wide range of vocalizations, expressing everything from danger to communicating their location to their troop.



### OUT ON A LIMB

A spider monkey's tail is prehensile, which means it acts like a fifth limb. A bald section at the tip of their tail helps them to grip branches and vines as they climb. This spot has markings similar to a human fingerprint - each monkey's is unique, just like ours!

Spider monkeys have 4 digits on their hands and 5 digits on their feet. Their hands form perfect hooks for grabbing branches without a thumb to get snagged on anything, while their feet can be used for keeping their balance.

### CONSERVATION STATUS: *Endangered*

Palm oil can be found in many different products. The harvesting of palm oil is harmful to habitats of many primate species. You can download the app "PalmOil Scan" to easily check that products you purchase are not harmful to wildlife.



### KEEPER NOTES

- The spider monkeys have color-coded training stations and know which one is theirs. They have a large repertoire of body part presentation behaviors (tail, hand, foot, belly, etc.) that allow keepers to monitor their health.
- In 2021, keepers discovered a tumor behind Kramer's eye. A voluntary behavior was trained to allow keepers to monitor his eye pressure and compare it to others in the troop until the eye could be removed.
- Kramer has limited vision in his remaining eye, but has memorized the layout of his habitat and knows where to reach for his next branch! He performs all of the same behaviors as the other spider monkeys, just with minor modifications to accommodate his needs!

# Fact Sheets

## Increase use of empathy practices from the start

Racine Zoo Animal Fact Sheet

### AFRICAN LION *Panthera leo*



**At the Racine Zoo:**

You can meet: Azizi, Female, b. Jul 28, 2011;  
Zuri, Female, b. July 7, 2014

They can be found: In the Vanishing Kingdom/Great Cat Canyon

**Quick Facts:**

Conservation Status: Vulnerable

Lifespan: Average of 15 years in the wild but can live upwards of 30 in human care

Adult Size: Average height is 3 ft.; can be 7 to 10 feet long and can weigh up to 600 pounds

Diet in the wild: Large mammals, birds, rodents, ostrich eggs

Diet in the zoo: Specialized meatballs

Habitat: Plains or savannah

Range: Found in most of Sub-Saharan Africa except in deserts and rainforests



**Mammal Threats:**

The main threats to lions are prey depletion

and pre-emptive killing to protect livestock and human life.

**Fun Facts:**

A lion's roar can be heard from 5 miles away.  
Lions sleep up to 20 hours a day!  
Lionesses prefer males with a darker mane.

African lions are one of the only cats that live in social groups – called prides. A pride usually consists of 1-7 males, a group of upwards of 30 related females and their offspring, and a few juvenile males. Juvenile males are kicked out at around 1 ½ -2 years of age.

Males patrol the territory and protect the pride from competition and invading male lions. Females take part in raising each other's cubs as well as their own. Female lions work together to bring down large prey via ambush tactics, but males usually eat first.

Though the lion is the top predator in the savannah, it does face some competition with hyenas and other animals. Lions have been known to actively kill hyenas and vice versa.

**Conservation Messages:**

Farmers in Africa often use chemical pesticides on their crops. Herbivores in the area graze on the treated plants and become poisoned by the chemicals. Those herbivores are then hunted by the lions and as a result, the lions are harmed by the chemicals as well. Use natural pesticides on your garden, crops, and lawn to prevent bioaccumulation such as this from happening – it happens to our raptors from poisoning mice and other small rodents as well!

### PREHENSILE-TAILED SKINK

*Corucia zebrata*



**At the Racine Zoo:**

You can meet: Harley, Male, b. December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

They can be found: During Educational Programs

**Quick Facts:**

Conservation Status: Not evaluated

Lifespan: Unknown in the wild; 25-30 years in human care

Adult Size: A length of 32 inches (81 cm) from nose to the tip of their tail, 500-850 grams

Diet in the wild: Leaves, flowers, fruit, and growing shoots of many plants

Diet in the zoo: Mixed produce

Habitat: Strictly arboreal, usually inhabiting the upper canopy of forested areas

Range: Native to Solomon Islands archipelago, a group of islands in the southwest Pacific Ocean off Australia



Reptile

**Threats:**

Threats to prehensile-tailed skinks include

habitat loss from extensive logging, capture for the pet trade, and hunting and consumption by native people.

**Fun Facts:**

The prehensile-tailed skink is the world's largest species of skink.

Prehensile-tailed skinks have special tails that are capable of grasping branches and helps them move through the tree canopy. They are also known as monkey-tailed skinks or monkey skinks.

Unlike most reptiles, prehensile-tailed skinks live in communal groups called a circulus. Once young skinks reach a certain age – around 1 year – they leave the circulus to form their own.

Female prehensile-tailed skinks are very protective on their young, which is unusual in reptiles.

Prehensile-tailed skinks are ovoviviparous, which means the eggs hatch inside the mother.

As a crepuscular animal, they are most active at dawn and dusk, feeding primarily at dusk.

**Conservation Messages:**

Destruction of their habitat through lumber and agriculture and depletion by the pet trade have greatly reduced this animal's chances for survival. Buy household paper products made with recycled paper. Purchase products certified by programs like the Rainforest Alliance or Forest Stewardship Council to promote sustainable forestry and farming practices.

# Fact Sheets

## Increase use of empathy practices from the start



### COLORADO RIVER TOAD

*Incilius alvarius*

#### EMPATHY BUILDING BLOCKS

- Emphasize animal welfare
- Provide accurate information
- Use animals' names + pronouns
- Model empathy
- Bring attention to animals' perspectives
- Connect to human experiences

#### BASIC BEHAVIORS

##### WALKING

This is one way you can tell that I'm a toad, not a frog! Toads like me use our shorter legs to walk or make very small hops, while frogs have long legs for leaping.

##### VOCALIZING

My relatives living in the wild use their voices to communicate with each other. Males will call out to females during breeding season using a low-pitched "hoot" sound that isn't as loud as the sounds of many other toads or frogs. If you hear me grunting or squeaking, that's my way of telling you I am not happy with what is happening.

##### THROAT FLUTTERING

I am breathing! I don't have a diaphragm to help me draw air into my lungs like humans do. Instead, I bring air into my body by quickly lowering and raising the bottom of my throat.

#### EMPATHY IN ACTION

##### WE ALL NEED AIR

Just like us, toads need to air to survive. Unlike us, they don't just breathe using lungs - they can absorb oxygen from water through their skin!

##### WE ALL WANT TO BE HEALTHY

Like humans, toads need proper nutrition to stay healthy. Jabba enjoys meals of invertebrates like mealworms and crickets, which are often dusted with a vitamin powder to keep his body in tip-top shape.

##### WE ALL NEED SLEEP

Animals that hibernate (or brumate), as scientists suspect toads like Jabba might, rely on this ability to stay healthy. Studies have shown that being allowed to hibernate can slow down the lengthening of animals' telomeres (which is what happens naturally as we age) and help them live longer!



### CRT AT RACINE ZOO



#### JABBA, male

**Birthdate:** Unknown

**Birthplace:** Unknown

**Arrived in Racine:** October 5, 2021

Jabba adjusted quite well to his home here at the zoo, living in a spacious tank all to himself in the Zoo's behind-the-scenes ambassador animal area. He was a bit nervous when he first arrived, but soon became comfortable in his new space. He can often be found relaxing in his water dish or in an upside-down plastic baseball cap toy, which he fits into perfectly.



We didn't always know Jabba's gender. Male CRTs will develop dark calluses on their thumbs during breeding season, and it wasn't until we first noticed these appear on his hands that we realized he is likely a boy!

#### HOW CAN WE HELP?

##### ADMIRE FROM AFAR

Toads like Jabba definitely don't want to be eaten. To prevent this from happening, they secrete a poisonous substance called *bufotoxin* from glands behind their eyes, which can cause severe illness or death in an animal who tries to eat them! It's always a good idea to keep pets away from wild amphibians and supervise young children who may be curious to touch a toad!

##### KEEP WETLANDS WET

Wetlands are home to hundreds of amphibian species in the US, but they are disappearing at the rate of 80,000 acres per year - that's about 220 acres per day! Do your part to help save wetlands by staying informed, spreading the word, and supporting initiatives focused on wetlands preservation.

##### NATURAL NAUTRE

Like other amphibians, Colorado River toads are particularly threatened by overuse of pesticides due to their semi-permeable skin. You can help amphibians like Jabba by using natural landscaping techniques, as well as avoiding using poisons to deter pests and disposing of waste liquids appropriately.



### ALL ABOUT COLORADO RIVER TOADS

*Incilius alvarius*

#### WHAT ARE THEIR BODIES LIKE?



When disturbed, parotoid glands behind their eyes secrete a highly toxic poison that can cause vomiting, shallow breathing, tremors, seizures, paralysis, or death to animals if ingested.



Their skin is much smoother than many other toad species, but they do have small white bumps near the base of their jaw. Although these bumps may look like warts, they are actually glands - and contrary to popular belief toads do not cause warts in humans.

4-8 inches long nose-to-vent



Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: 4-10 years  
Avg. life expectancy in human care: Up to 20 years

#### HOW DO THEY ACT?

Although they live in the Sonoran Desert region, Colorado River toads are more aquatic than most toad species and are the largest in the United States. They are mostly solitary, but gather in large groups at temporary pools during the summertime mating season. Females will lay strands of 7500-8000 eggs in shallow pools; tadpoles grow rapidly after hatching, becoming small adults within a month!

Adults will spend their summer days underground, keeping cool from the desert sun making sure they don't dry out. They emerge at night to search for their favorite snacks: invertebrates, lizards, small mammals, and other amphibians. Once winter arrives they retreat underground - although whether or not they enter a state of brumation or torpor is still unknown.

#### WHERE ARE NATIVE COLORADO RIVER TOAD HABITATS LOCATED?



Colorado river toads, also known as Sonoran desert toads, can be found in northern parts of Mexico, southern parts of Arizona and New Mexico, and maybe even the far southeast corner of California - in the Colorado River region. They primarily live in desert shrubland habitats, but also live in semi-arid grasslands and along river edges. They even take refuge in rodent burrows!

# Fact Sheets

## Increase use of empathy practices from the start



### Colorado River Toad *Incilius alvarius*



#### Jabba

My birthday is **unknown**, but I came to the zoo in **October, 2021**.

I am one of the Racine Zoo's educational ambassador animals! I live behind the scenes, so you will only see me during educational programs. My skin is sensitive and toxic so I am a non-touch animal!

I am also known as the **Sonoran desert toad**

#### RIVER TOADS AT A GLANCE



- My skin is **smooth** and **wet**. Just like other amphibians, I use my skin to help me breathe oxygen.

Adult:  
4-7 inches in length  
10-11 ounces



- I have a **wide mouth with no teeth**. I swallow my food whole.
- In the wild, I like to eat **insects, small mammals, small lizards, and other amphibians**.
- At the zoo, my favorite food is insects.
- I blink when I swallow my food. **My eyes** help me push food down my throat.



Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: 4-10 years  
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- I have special **parotid glands** behind my **eyes** and **on my back**.
- I secrete a **bufotoxin** to prevent predators from eating me. It is **poisonous** and causes serious harm when ingested.

#### WHERE ARE NATIVE RIVER TOAD HABITATS LOCATED?



The Colorado river toad can be found in arid grasslands, wooden scrubland, and inland water sources. They are semi-aquatic, so they stay around large streams or temporary rain drains, canals, and irrigation ditches. Their range spans throughout the Sonoran Desert from Southern California and Arizona to Northern Mexico.

### Colorado River Toad Behavior

#### PUFFING UP

When I feel threatened, I will inflate my body to look bigger. I do this to scare predators and make myself unappealing to eat.

I feel uncomfortable in the situation that I am. I may need some alone time.



#### BURROWING

In the wild, I burrow when it's hot and dry to stay cool and moist. I like to stay in my burrow through the hottest points of the day.

I might want to get comfortable and find a place to rest.



#### VOCALIZATIONS

To communicate with others, I will make a low-pitched screech. I can use this to find other toads, or scare off other predators.

If I am making these noises, I may be feeling stressed out and need some time alone.



#### SLEEPING

I am naturally nocturnal, so I tend to be active during the evening hours and sleepy during the day.

I may be sedentary when you see me. I will need some time to wake up and get comfortable before being seen.



- Amphibians, like the Colorado river toad, go through brumation when temperatures get colder. Toads will burrow themselves deep into the ground and stay there until the springtime comes and it gets warmer. Brumation is similar to hibernation, or a state of inactivity, unique to reptiles and amphibians.
- River toads wait for spring rains in the desert to mate. They will gather in temporary breeding pools and streams.
- Females lay strands of eggs containing up to 8,000 eggs

### River Toad Conservation

There are no significant threats to this species worldwide; however, tadpoles are threatened by pond contamination. Adults are threatened by habitat destruction, and are listed as Endangered in California and Threatened in New Mexico.

Colorado river toad's are currently listed as Least Concern, but vary depending on what U.S. state they are in. They are endangered in California, and threatened in Arizona. Habitat destruction and climate change is reducing the waterways they like to live in.



Least Concern (IUCN 3.1)<sup>[1]</sup>

#### How can we help?

Amphibians have sensitive skin which can be affected by the presence of pesticides and herbicides. They can be irritated and be threatened if their ponds are contaminated. Reduce the use of pesticides and weed killers on lawns or use natural landscaping practices.

Handling amphibians with your bare hands can injure both you and the animal. The oils and salts found naturally on your skin are harmful to the frog. Please admire them from a distance.

# Ambassador Animals

## Increase empathy for ambassadors to improve wellbeing

### Hands-off presentation



### New improvements

#### Education Program -- Stress Indicator Scale --

When signing an animal back in the Education Animal Use Log, always record the stress behaviors in the scale section of the forms.

Double check the animals' SOP reference sheet for a list of their stress behaviors and give the animal a rating based on how many and what stress behaviors you saw on a program. When giving an animal a 3, 4, or 5, let keepers and education staff know of these behaviors either in person or through an email.

#### Stress Behavior Scale:

1-5 from Least to Most Stress behaviors

5: Animal showed many/all (5+) minor or major stress behaviors, was unable to participate in program safely.

4: Animal showed many (3-4) minor or major stress behaviors, was able to participate in some of the program.

3: Animal showed a few (2-3) mild stress behaviors, was content and participatory in some or all of the program.

2: Animal showed minimal (1) or no mild stress behaviors, was content and participatory in some or all of the program.

1: Animal showed no stress behaviors, was content and eager to participate in program.

#### Example:

Animal Use- African Pygmy Hedgehog (*Atelerix albiventris*)

M1811 - "Minx"

Born 01/06/18

Date:	Time Out:	Time In:	Purpose:	Initials:	# of People:	Stress Scale:
2/19/2024	10:35	12:00	Onsite B-day	JM	22	2

Notes: Puffed up in her habitat when woken up. Very curious and active on program. Showed no stress behaviors during touch portion of the program. No poops on the program.

#### KENYAN SAND BOA

Name: Cheese and Crackers  
Sex: Female (Cheese) and Male (Crackers)  
Birthdays: Dec. 26th 2010 (Cheese)  
May 9th 2018 (Crackers)  
Location: Routine 3 keeper area  
Last updated 1/24/2024 JM

**USAGE**

No more than three programs per day, next day off is used for over four hours in one day.  
Snakes are off on days they are fed and two days after. Do not use when shedding.

**TEMPERATURES**

Kenyan sand boas should be kept between 75-85F.  
Use heat pack when necessary.

**STRESS SIGNALS**

- Wiggly in hand
- Jerking in response to touch
- Hissing
- Twisting
- Defecating
- Attempting to bite

**BOTH ONSITE AND OFFSITE PROGRAMS**

**BOTH OUTDOOR AND INDOOR PROGRAMS**

#### HANDLING GUIDELINES

Scoop fossil from underneath and provide support at all times with open or cupped hands. Keep Fossil level and supported on at least three points on the body. Redirect with open hands and provide ample surface area.

**TOUCH?**  
Yes, on the back in the direction of scales (head towards tail). Do not touch on or near the head.  
Remember, touch is always optional and at the discretion of the educator.

**Summer Transport**  
For temperatures above 75 degrees.  
Snakes are placed first in a pillowcase which is folded over and knotted at the top. Pillowcases are then placed in a large acrylic for transport.

**Winter Transport**  
For temperatures under 75F  
Snakes are placed first in a pillowcase which is folded over and knotted at the top. Pillowcases are then placed in a large cooler for transport. A heat pack is wrapped in a towel and placed in a way that doesn't come into direct contact with the snake.

**Additional Presentation Materials**  
Fossil has a sandbox that is available for presentations. Fossil can NOT be transported in the sand box. Before using, make sure that sand is dry and clean.  
When using, place fossil into the sandbox and either hold with two hands on the bottom or place the sandbox on a stable surface.  
The sand box should remain level at all times that fossil is inside. No touch is allowed when fossil is in the sand.

**Don't forget!**  
Did you sign out your animals in the education binder and put an "I'm at a program" sticker on the animals' homes?

#### MADAGASCAR LESSER HEDGEHOG TENREC

Name: Gilly  
Sex: Female  
Birthdays: Unknown  
Location: Routine 3 keeper area  
Last updated 1/24/2024 JM

**USAGE**

No more than three programs per day. Gilly gets next two day off after each use.

**TEMPERATURES**

Tenrecs should be kept at 75-85F.  
Use heat pack if needed.

**STRESS SIGNALS**

- Balling up
- Puffing up spines
- Hissing
- Jumping
- Sitting
- Defecating
- Self-anointing

**BOTH ONSITE AND OFFSITE PROGRAMS**

**BOTH OUTDOOR AND INDOOR PROGRAMS**

#### HANDLING GUIDELINES

When picking up Gilly, gently scoop from underneath and support all four feet. Use flat and utilize 'conveyor belt' technique to keep up with her when active.  
Gilly can also be handled with her pouch. Support underneath the pouch for security and comfort when Gilly is in or on the pouch.

**TOUCH?**  
Yes, on the back in the direction of spines. No touch near head. Provide example of how to touch from front to back to not get poked.  
Remember, touch is always optional and at the discretion of the educator.

**Summer Transport**  
For temperatures above 75 degrees.  
Gilly has a designated large acrylic below her habitat with a pouch. Open pouch in acrylic and place Gilly safely on top.

**Winter Transport**  
For temperatures under 75F  
Follow warm weather transport protocol. Additionally, place acrylic with designated pouch inside of a cooler with a heater wrapped in a towel. Use towels to prevent acrylic from sliding.

**Additional Presentation Materials**  
Gilly can be presented from her designated pouch. Support on bottom at all times.  
Gilly also has a presentation habitat that can be utilized for presentation. It is a clear Winnnebago container. Currently Gilly can not be transported in this habitat. When using it for presentation, hold the container from the bottom.  
FULL TIME STAFF ONLY ATM

**Don't forget!**  
Did you sign out your animals in the education binder and put an "I'm at a program" sticker on the animals' homes?

# Ambassador Animals

Increase empathy for ambassadors to improve wellbeing

## MADAGASCAR LESSER HEDGEHOG TENREC

Name: Gilly  
Sex: Female  
Birthdays: Unknown  
Location: Routine 3 Keeper area



Last updated 1/24/2024 JM



### USAGE

No more than three programs per day. Gilly gets next two day off after each use.



### TEMPERATURES

Tenrecs should be kept at 75-85F.

Use heat pack if needed



### STRESS SIGNALS

- Balling up
- Puffing up spines
- Hissing
- Jumping
- Biting
- Defecating
- Self-anointing

**BOTH ONSITE AND OFFSITE PROGRAMS**

**BOTH OUTDOOR AND INDOOR PROGRAMS**

## HANDLING GUIDELINES



When picking up Gilly, gently scoop from underneath and support all four feet. Use flat and utilize 'conveyor belt' technique to keep up with her when active.

Gilly can also be handled with her pouch. Support underneath the pouch for security and comfort when Gilly is in or on the pouch.

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### Summer Transport

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Gilly has a designated large acrylic below her habitat with a pouch. Open pouch in acrylic and place Gilly safely on top.

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For temperatures under 75F

Follow warm weather transport protocol. Additionally, place acrylic with designated pouch inside of a cooler with a heater wrapped in a towel. Use towels to prevent acrylic from sliding.



### Additional Presentation Materials

Gilly can be presented from her designated pouch. Support on bottom at all times.

Gilly also has a presentation habitat that can be utilized for presentation. It is a clear Winnebago container. Currently Gilly can not be transported in this habitat. When using it for presentation, hold the container from the bottom.

FULL TIME STAFF ONLY ATM



### Don't forget!

Did you sign out your animals in the education binder and put an "I'm at a program" sticker on the animals' homes?

### Education Program

#### -- Stress Indicator Scale --

When signing an animal back in the Education Animal Use Log, always record the stress behaviors in the scale section of the forms.

Double check the animals' SOP reference sheet for a list of their stress behaviors and give the animal a rating based on how many and what stress behaviors you saw on a program. **When giving an animal a 3, 4, or 5, let keepers and education staff know of these behaviors either in person or through an email.**

#### Stress Behavior Scale:

##### 1-5 from Least to Most Stress behaviors

5: Animal showed many/all (5+) minor or major stress behaviors, was unable to participate in program safely.

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Notes: Puffed up in her habitat when woken up. Very curious and active on program. Showed no stress behaviors during touch portion of the program. No poops on the program.

# Moving forward

Increase empathy among guests by inviting participation in assuring welfare

Have you **herd**?

There's a new way to help the Racine Zoo!



1

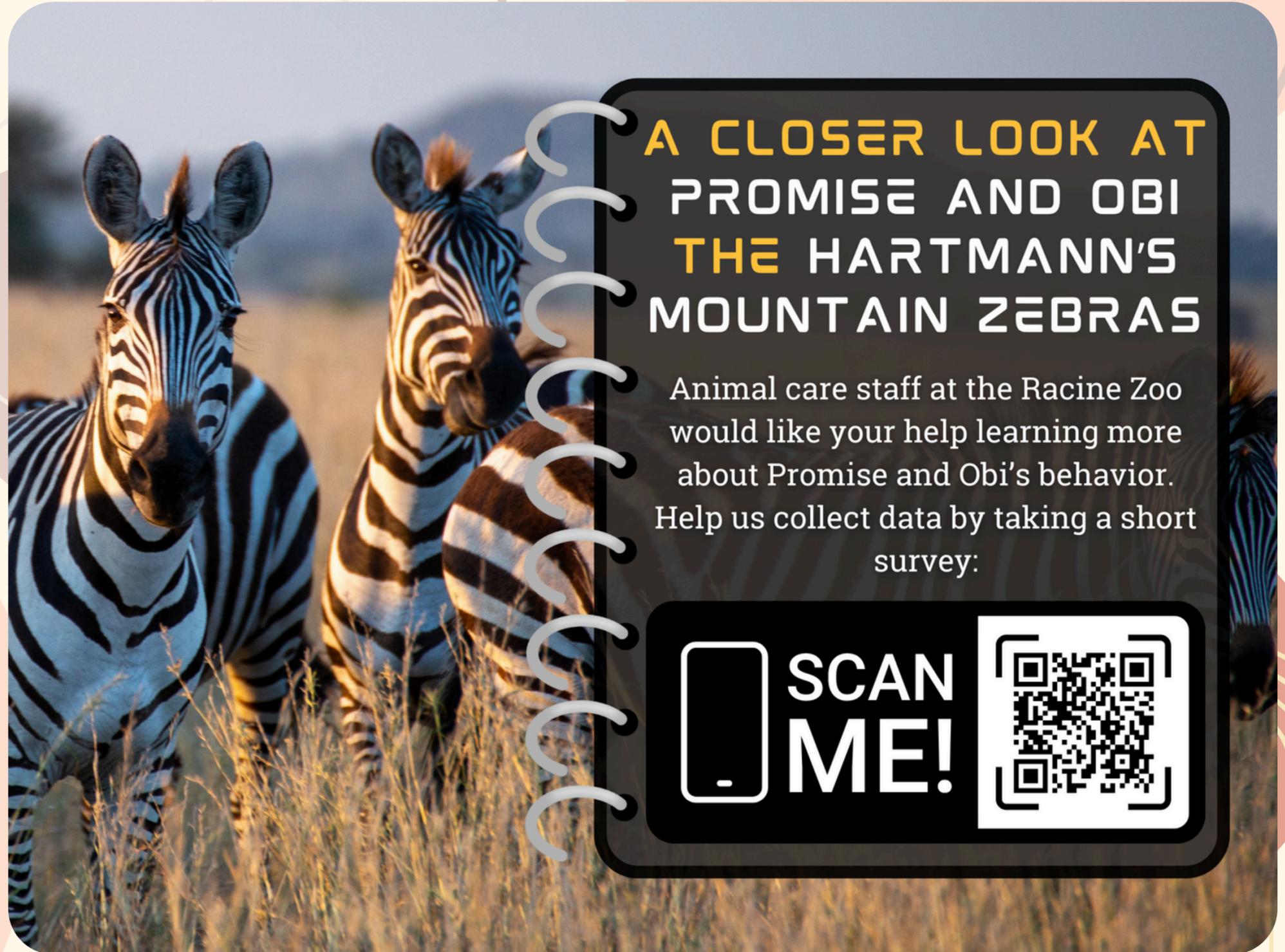
Find **these** signs located near animal habitats and **scan the QR code** with your phone!

2

**Observe** the study species and answer a few short questions about their **behavior**.

3

Bring a screenshot of your completed survey to the gift shop for a **prize!**



## A CLOSER LOOK AT PROMISE AND OBI THE HARTMANN'S MOUNTAIN ZEBRAS

Animal care staff at the Racine Zoo would like your help learning more about Promise and Obi's behavior. Help us collect data by taking a short survey:



SCAN ME!





# THANK YOU!

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