

A publication of the Seneca Park Zoo Society

# ZOO NOOZ

JUNE 2022

**SUMMER  
PROGRAMMING**  
*is back!*

Amanda Lindley

 Seneca Park  
Zoo



Seneca Park Zoo inspires our community to connect with, care for, and conserve wildlife and wild places.

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**Nov. 1 – March 31:** 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
last entry at 3 p.m.

**Membership:** 585.336.7212  
**April 1 – Oct. 31:** 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
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**Development:** 585.336.7205

**Private events:** 585.295.7399  
MEMBERS MAY ALWAYS ENTER AT 9:30 A.M.

LETTER FROM

**Pamela Reed Sanchez**  
President and CEO  
Seneca Park Zoo Society

**On My Mind:**  
If You Don't Know,  
We Want You To...

I have been seeing the phrase “If you know, you know” a lot lately. Often in the form IYKYK, on “clever” social media posts. I am not a fan.

Honestly, it makes me squirm, and I’m suddenly back in junior high where I am definitely not sitting at the cool kids’ table, and the inside jokes make me feel all kinds of awkward.

Yet, after eight years at the helm of the Seneca Park Zoo Society, every day I still find a great number of people don’t know what a zoo really is. Too many people still think of zoos as places where animals are held against their will, for the purpose of entertainment.

We cannot simply say, “well that’s okay, because if you know, you know.” The survival of zoos as an industry depends on the public having a greater understanding of what zoos truly are. That’s important not because of the necessity to perpetuate zoos, but to ensure the conservation of all species for generations to come.

It all comes back to the reason Seneca Park Zoo exists: because endangered means there’s still time to act. Our job, every day, is to have our guests and our community fall in love with the living world. When you love something, you want to ensure its survival, and you want to protect it.

Now, I am not so naïve as to think all our members joined because they consider themselves environmentalists or



conservationists. We know from our guest studies that the vast majority of people come to the Zoo to have a social experience, outdoors, with wildlife and nature. We also know that most of our members join for the amazing benefit of being able to come to the Zoo as many times as they want.

We are okay with that. The more often you attend, the more chances you have to fall in love. The more likely you are to learn about what’s happening with some of your favorite animals in their natural range. You’ll probably pick up a tip or two on how to help that species, and how to live more sustainably, which helps all species. We also hope you’ll learn what the staff at Seneca Park Zoo is doing to help save your favorite animals from extinction.

Summer – our busy season – has returned. There are different programs happening across the Zoo every day, and giraffe feedings are back five days a week. The tram is running, and the Trailside Café is open! So yes. Come visit. Often. Fall in love with the living world, here at Seneca Park Zoo. Listen to a keeper chat. Talk with a naturalist. Join a nature hike or a beach cleanup.

I think you’ll find the right phrase isn’t “If you know, you know,” it’s “the more you know, the more inspired you are to make a difference.”

See you here, soon!



# ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

## ENRICHING THE LIVES OF THE SPECIES IN OUR CARE



**Environmental enhancements allow animals to demonstrate their species-typical behaviors and improve their overall well-being.**

If you've been to the Zoo, you've likely seen everything from Christmas trees to giant boomer balls to frozen fish ice blocks in habitats. These items are used for environmental enrichment, also called behavioral enrichment, which provides physical and mental stimulation to increase natural and healthy behavior for all the Zoo's animals. Environmental enhancements allow animals to demonstrate their species-typical behaviors and improve their overall well-being. Enrichment is just as important to animal welfare as proper nutrition and veterinary care are.

Keepers implement a variety of species-specific enrichment programs to maintain the highest level of animal welfare. Based on the animals' natural history, opportunities are provided for the individual or group to express their natural behaviors. This is accomplished by integrating multiple approaches including, but not limited to: varied





Walter Brooks



Amanda Lindley



Derek Palmer

## Hoofstock Zoologist Kat Kleinschmidt tells us rhinos use mud wallows in their natural ranges to cool off and protect their skin from bugs and the sun. “Here at Seneca Park Zoo, we always ensure Jiwe’s mud wallow is filled with the right amount of dirt and water so he can get as muddy as he wants, whenever he wants!”

feeding strategies, cognitive challenges, social interactions, complex and dynamic environments, and varied sensory opportunities. Providing environmental and behavioral enrichment allows the animal to respond positively to potential stressors and have an active role in making their own rewarding choices.

Hoofstock Zoologist Kat Kleinschmidt tells us rhinos use mud wallows in their natural ranges to cool off and protect their skin from bugs and the sun. “Here at Seneca Park Zoo, we always ensure Jiwe’s mud wallow is filled with the right amount of dirt and water so he can get as muddy as he wants, whenever he wants!”

Kat continues, “Giraffes use their very long, prehensile tongues to maneuver around thorns

to get to the leaves off some of their favorite trees in Africa. To encourage this natural behavior, we create puzzle feeders that we put produce and hay into, so they are mentally and physically stimulated trying to get the food out.”

Understanding the history of an animal as well as its behaviors in nature is essential to providing the correct type of enrichment. Keepers have a variety of sources to educate themselves, including networking with other facilities, Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), spending time observing the animals, and working together to build new enrichment toys. The options are endless!

For small carnivores, enrichment is quite different. Zoologist Brian Sheets says of river otters, “They really love live prey. This is the

best enrichment we can give them because they must hunt for them: a natural behavior.” Brian stops by S&R Bait and Tackle in Irondequoit for a half pound of minnows weekly, which is completely funded by our ZooParent program. “They usually throw in extra because they like supporting the Zoo,” he says.

Enrichments are not provided on a predictable schedule. Brian mixes it up, keeping the animals hunting and searching like they would do in nature. “They check the rocks daily to see ‘Did I miss one?’” Brian continues. “They never know when they go out, if there is going to be live fish out there or not. The last thing I want to do is dump the fish out in front of them so they can see – I want them to have to search like they would in their natural range.”

Brian also offers enrichment designed to



Kleinschmidt tells us rhinos  
natural ranges to cool off and  
s and the sun.



Kat Kleinschmidt

provide comfort, like adding a wood wool substrate to the habitat's hollow logs to give the otters a nesting place. Keepers also provide ice blocks, shade areas, and fans to keep animals comfortable in all seasons.

"Not every animal reacts to all forms of enrichment," says Brian. He continues, "Our river otters have never really shown any interest in things like olfactory or smell enrichment as opposed to animals like the big cats which typically love that sort of stuff."

Just like people, every animal is different and unique in their own way and has their own levels of intelligence, cooperativeness, and physical ability that can make it easier or more difficult to develop different behaviors and skills.

For example, sea lions Mary Lou and Daley tend to pick things up quickly, while Bob can be resistant and harder to work with.

Zookeeper Sue Rae says of Bob, "A lot of his behaviors we captured, meaning he did something and we clicked the training clicker and gave him food." This begins the process of the animal associating a specific behavior with rewards so that they will start to learn to repeat it. Keepers "capture" a behavior by noticing an animal behaving in a way they want to reinforce, whether it is something that helps in healthcare or an act that is fun or stimulating to the animal, and immediately reacting to it in a positive way.

When it comes to animals that usually means a food reward. This sort of technique is used

frequently with animals who are more resistant or stubborn when it comes to husbandry, like sea lion Bob, who will surprise his keepers by doing a behavior on his own terms.

"When you do your enrichment, the goal is to elicit their natural behavior," says Zoo keeper Heidi Beifus. "You may see us use a lot of boxes with animals by placing food inside, because we're trying to simulate them diving into a carcass and ripping and tearing to get to it." Heidi continues, "You want to use all the animals' senses; you don't want to do the same thing over and over, like always giving them food for enrichment. You want to give them something that they can see, smell, touch, taste, hear and keep cycling through."

*Continued on next page.*





Wayne Smith

**“You want to use all the animals’ senses, you don’t want to do the same thing over and over, like always giving them food for enrichment. You want to give them something that they can see, smell, touch, taste, hear and keep cycling through.”**



Sean Maciejewski





Elesa Kim



## Dr. Chris McKinney, DVM



### Welcome New Zoo Veterinarian Dr. Chris McKinney, DVM!

Seneca Park Zoo welcomes Dr. Chris McKinney, DVM, as the Zoo's Veterinarian. After a comprehensive national search and interviews with candidates from around the country, Dr. McKinney has been chosen to lead animal health care at the Zoo. He is no stranger to Seneca Park Zoo, having worked as a backup Veterinarian and as Interim Attending Veterinarian, working with the Zoo's collection since 2018.

Dr. McKinney's diverse background with wildlife in the field and with animals in human care was central to Zoo leadership's decision to select him for the role. Zoo Superintendent Steve Lacy states that Dr. McKinney's "broad experience, history of working with a wide range of exotic zoo animals, and ability to build rapport with our team, make him an overall great fit for our organization."





Wayne Smith



Kristen Matteo



Wayne Smith

### What about smaller animals?

We caught up with Zoologist Ryan Statt to talk naked mole rat enrichment. “We’re totally hands-off with them. They are pretty sensitive animals,” says Ryan. He continues, “If it’s something that maybe smells too stinky, or if it’s too wet, it’s not good for them; they love paper towels and anything they can shred and

burrow into.” Ryan explains, “Paper serves two purposes with naked mole rats: enrichment of the shredding and for privacy to hide under.”

For tips and help when caring for a species, keepers heavily rely on their peers at other zoos and AZA institutions. We are in contact with “Knoxville Zoo, which is where the naked

mole rats came from,” says Ryan. “They’ve been a great resource, as is the Smithsonian.” Ryan continues, “Buffalo Zoo and Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse are two regional zoos I often talk to. It is constant networking. We do not rely on just one zoo or two zoos, but all zoos, depending on what we’re trying to find out.”





Wayne Smith



Erick Machajewski

## Enrichment: Behind the Science

One of the main strategies and guiding principles animal care staff use to understand and address the physical and psychological needs of animals is what is known as the S.P.I.D.E.R. framework. S.P.I.D.E.R. stands for: Setting goals, Planning, Implementation, Documentation, Evaluation and Readjusting. This acronym is a model that zoos like ours can follow to help ensure the training and enrichment we are doing has real thought and evaluation put into it – it's more than just giving an animal a treat when you feel like it!

When **setting goals** for animals it is important to consider not only the natural history of the species we're working with, but also the individual history of that specific animal. This is where keepers must keep in mind variables like more cooperative or resistant animals as is the case with the aforementioned sea lions. We don't want to set an animal up for failure. Even though we might be working with the same animal species, each individual animal might have entirely different goals and behaviors we're working towards.

The **planning** step is where keepers brainstorm and produce ideas based on a particular species or animal goal, which then goes on to the approval phase to ensure it is an appropriate and safe idea before it is added into an animal's care program.

**Implementation** might seem straightforward, but again there is a little more to it than simply giving the animal enrichment. Our animal care staff create and manage unique enrichment calendars for

every animal. This helps to ensure that the enrichment any animal is receiving is varied. It is not going to be stimulating if they are getting the same thing and it becomes a routine.

Next comes **documentation**. Every single time enrichment is given to an animal, one of the keepers documents what it was, when it was given, how they set it up, and may even upload pictures or videos. At Seneca Park Zoo we use a platform that is familiar to many zoos and aquariums called ZIMS (Zoological Information Management System). Basically a data tool for animal species, ZIMS is where animal staff documents animal information, which then can be shared with other organizations working on the platform. This is an incredible resource for animal care staff. For example, if we bring a new species to the Zoo, our keepers would be able to go in and search for that species, or even that particular animal, and see what other zoos have done in the past.

The next step of the S.P.I.D.E.R. framework is **Evaluation**. This is a critical step as it forms the basis for improvement moving forward. Evaluating how specific animals react to certain enrichment is crucial to creating a holistic management plan for every animal.

Last is **Readjusting**. Using documentation and evaluation data, the animal care staff are continuously setting new goals, seeing what works and what does not, changing or discontinuing certain enrichments when necessary, and evolving.



## ▶ PANAMANIAN GOLDEN FROG AWARENESS WEEKEND

**AUGUST 13 & 14**

Join us as we support and celebrate the Panamanian golden frog and some of the culture from their natural range! This fun and festive weekend will feature plenty of great live experiences, fun activities, keeper chats, and more to celebrate and support this amazing species and unique culture from where they hail. This is a conservation and cultural experience you won't want to miss!

**Date:** August 13 & 14  
**Price:** Free with entry

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/pgf22](https://senecaparkzoo.org/pgf22)



## ▶ ELEPHANT AWARENESS WEEKEND

**AUGUST 27 & 28**

Did you know that Seneca Park Zoo is the ONLY zoo in New York State with African elephants? Come visit the Zoo's three female African elephants on August 27 & 28 for Elephant Awareness Weekend! Enjoy special animal experiences with Moki, Lilac and Genny C, meet their caretakers, learn about their daily care, and much more. Learn about the threats that elephants face due to human impact, including the complexities of the ivory trade and poaching, along with human encroachment.

**Date:** August 27 & 28  
**Price:** Free with entry

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/elephant22](https://senecaparkzoo.org/elephant22)





## ► GIRAFFE AWARENESS WEEKEND

**JUNE 25 & 26**

Celebrate the longest day of the year with the tallest in the animal kingdom! Following the longest day of the year (June 21) we will have Giraffe Awareness Weekend where we will have plenty of giraffe content, onsite enrichment, activities, and more! Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor Five Star Bank for supporting our Conservation Awareness Days!

**Date:** June 25 & 26

**Price:** Free with entry

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/giraffe22](http://senecaparkzoo.org/giraffe22)

## ► RIVER OTTER AWARENESS WEEKEND

**JULY 9 & 10**

Mark your calendar to join us in celebrating and supporting otter conservation by coming out to the Zoo this week! Also, some great otter keeper content, activities, and more!

**Date:** July 9 & 10

**Price:** Free with entry

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/otter22](http://senecaparkzoo.org/otter22)

## ► LION AWARENESS WEEKEND

**JULY 23 & 24**

Join us for Lion Awareness Weekend to learn all about these amazing big cats through keeper chats, enrichment, training demonstrations and more. Hear directly from animal care staff about what it's like to care for the Zoo's three African lions.

**Date:** July 23 & 24

**Price:** Free with entry

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/lion22](http://senecaparkzoo.org/lion22)





## ▶ APPLES, ALES & TAILS

SEPTEMBER 24

After a highly successful sell-out debut, our beer and cider tasting safari will be back in the fall! This event features tasting stations throughout Seneca Park Zoo's A Step into Africa and Animals of the Savanna regions. Guests will also enjoy delicious food and entertainment, with live music and the opportunity to purchase chances to win some great items in the evening's raffle.

**Date:** Saturday, September 24

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/aat](http://senecaparkzoo.org/aat)

## CONSERVATION AWARENESS WEEKENDS

## GO IN-DEPTH WITH YOUR FAVORITE ANIMALS!

Presented by:  Five Star Bank

## ▶ SEA LION AWARENESS WEEKEND

JUNE 11 & 12

We love sea lions and we know you do too! Come out and help us support these amazing and incredibly intelligent animals that you can see right here at the Zoo. We will have some great sea lion content, onsite enrichment, activities, and more!

**Date:** June 11 & 12

**Price:** Free with entry

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/sea-lion-day22](http://senecaparkzoo.org/sea-lion-day22)





**JUNE 17/JULY 22/AUGUST 19/SEPTEMBER 9**

Everyone's favorite 21+ happy hour event is back throughout the summer! It's the only event in town where you can help save elephants from extinction just by attending! A portion of each ticket sold supports elephant conservation. Guests enjoy live music from multiple bands throughout the Zoo, animal experiences, and more.

For the first time ever, get a VIP ticket which includes a guaranteed parking spot in the Cornell Cooperative Extension lot, admission, separate VIP entry, and 2 drink tickets. Any guests who carpool with the VIP ticket holder must purchase a general admission ticket in advance. Only 75 VIP tickets available!

**Dates:** June 17, July 22, August 19 and September 9

**Price:** \$9.50 in advance; \$12 at the door (if available); \$45 VIP

**Sponsors:** Lake Beverage, Kinecta Federal Credit Union, Precision Optical Transceivers

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/zoobrew](http://senecaparkzoo.org/zoobrew)

**JUNGLE JOG 2022  
5K RUN AND WALK**

**JULY 17**

We're back and in-person! Join us Sunday, July 17, 2022, for the first of a three-race series to celebrate the transformation of the Zoo and the opening of the new Welcome Center, Education Resource Building and Tropics Complex in 2024. For the first time ever, we'll be offering race medals to commemorate this exciting time. Participate and collect all three! The medals will interlock to create one impressive medal. There will also be a 'virtual' option to participate as we have done the past few years in addition to the traditional in-person option. Virtual runners will register and perform their 5k wherever they choose between July 17 – July 30. Please note virtual participants will not be eligible for race prizes.

**Date:** Sunday, July 17

**Price:** \$45 Registration Fee - Race, 2022 Jungle Jog dri-tech shirt and race medal, custom bib

\$35 Registration Fee – Race, 2022 Jungle Jog dri-tech shirt, custom bib

**Presenting Sponsor:** M&T Foundation

**Learn More:** [senecaparkzoo.org/junglejog](http://senecaparkzoo.org/junglejog)



Eric Caballaro



Amy Reinholz



## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

### ► COMMUNITY CLEANUPS

**JULY 15/AUGUST 20/SEPTEMBER 17**

Join like-minded neighbors to help clean-up our local green spaces. You'll be amazed at the impact a focused group can make in just three hours. Help us make Rochester a cleaner, greener city! Please dress for the weather and bring water to stay hydrated. Tools, bags, and gloves will be provided and all ages are welcome to attend. Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor Kinecta Federal Credit Union for supporting this amazing initiative!

**Dates:** July 15, August 20, September 17 OR contact us at [volunteers@senecazoo.org](mailto:volunteers@senecazoo.org) to schedule your own group cleanup!

**Register:** [senecaparkzoo.org/cleanup](http://senecaparkzoo.org/cleanup)

### ► INVASIVE SPECIES EARLY DETECTION NATURE HIKES

**JUNE 16, 30/JULY 14, 21/AUGUST 4, 18/  
SEPT. 15/OCT. 8, 29/NOV. 13, 26**

Join Zoo naturalists and members of the community on a hike to learn about and find invasive species in our local area. An invasive species is a species of non-native plant or animal that can disrupt the balance, biodiversity, and overall health of native plants and animals. The Seneca Park Zoo Society has teamed up with the Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (FL-PRISM) to find, report, and educate the public on these invasive species by hiking through this area of Rochester that has not yet been surveyed.

**Dates:** June 16, 30 July 14, 21 August 4, 18 Sept. 15 Oct. 8, 29 Nov. 13, 26

**Price:** FREE

**Register:** [senecaparkzoo.org/hikes](http://senecaparkzoo.org/hikes)



Wayne Smith





# CALENDAR

Mark your calendars for what's next at your Zoo.

## SUMMER PROGRAMMING RETURNS TO THE ZOO!

ALL SUMMER LONG



Five Star Bank

We are SO excited to bring back summer programming for animal enrichment, feedings, keeper chats, conservation talks and more so that you can better plan a truly memorable Zoo experience. Check out the schedule below to see some of what we have in store for you to plan on Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor Five Star Bank for supporting our summer programming!

Stay tuned to our social media and website for updates on specific animal programming schedules as they are subject to change.

**View Schedule: [senecaparkzoo.org/summer-programming](https://senecaparkzoo.org/summer-programming)**



Sean Maciejewski

## SENECA PARK ZOO SUMMER PROGRAMMING



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

10:00	Animal Meet & Greet	Animal Meet & Greet	Animal Meet & Greet	Animal Meet & Greet	Animal Meet & Greet	Animal Meet & Greet	Animal Meet & Greet
10:30	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience
10:45	Naked Mole Rat Experience	Red Panda Keeper Chat	Polar Bear Experience	Baboon Keeper Chat	Tiger Experience	Crane Conservation Talk	Naked Mole Rat Experience
11:30	Red Panda Keeper Chat	Sea Lion Experience					Reptile Keeper Chat (ECO)
11:45	Giraffe Feeding \$	Giraffe Feeding \$	Rhino Keeper Chat	Wolf Keeper Chat	Giraffe Feeding \$	Giraffe Feeding \$	Giraffe Feeding \$
noon	Sea Lion Experience	Elephant Keeper Chat			Elephant Keeper Chat	Red Panda Experience	Elephant Keeper Chat
1:15	Polar Bear Experience	Sturgeon Conservation Talk	Crane Conservation Talk	Polar Bear Experience	Sturgeon Conservation Talk	Lion Experience	Polar Bear Experience
2:00	Sea Lion Experience			Sea Lion Experience			
2:30	River Otter Experience					Baboon Keeper Chat	Sea Lion Experience
2:45	Giraffe Feeding \$	Giraffe Feeding \$	Baboon Keeper Chat	Rhino Keeper Chat	Giraffe Feeding \$	Giraffe Feeding \$	Giraffe Feeding \$
3:00		Sea Lion Experience	Penguin Experience	River Otter Experience	Penguin Experience	Sea Lion Experience	
3:30	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience	Sea Lion Experience	Penguin Experience	Sea Lion Experience	Penguin Experience	Penguin Experience

Schedule subject to change without notice.

[senecaparkzoo.org](https://senecaparkzoo.org)



**Seneca Park Zoo Society**  
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Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.

**senecaparkzoo.org | 585.336.7200 | The Zoo is open 362 days a year.**



Follow us socially. Visit [senecaparkzoo.org](http://senecaparkzoo.org)



Walter Brooks

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