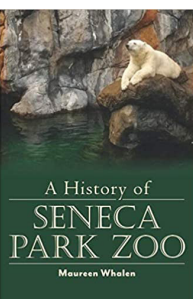




What we're reading

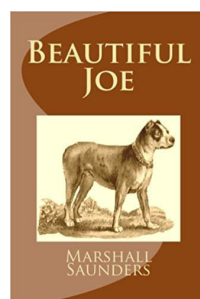
Enjoy these staff recommendations for great books on wildlife and wild places, perfect for adult readers. Go green and borrow the books via e-reader from the Monroe County Public Library!



***A History of Seneca Park Zoo*, by Maureen Whalen, 2020**

Recommended by Sarah Hanson, Director of Marketing

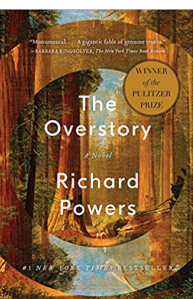
Zoo docent and historian Maureen Whalen has written the first comprehensive history of the Zoo, tracking the many changes over its 125 years. A compelling read!



***Beautiful Joe*, by Marshall Saunders, 1955**

Recommended by Tina Fess, Zoologist

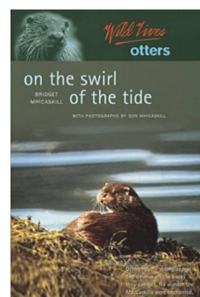
Written as an autobiography from the dog's point of view, this bittersweet story takes the reader through a world of animal life and sadly, animal abuse. Originally designed for young readers but a story that should be read by all.



***The Overstory*, by Richard Powers, 2018**

Recommended by Erin Donnelly, Membership Manager

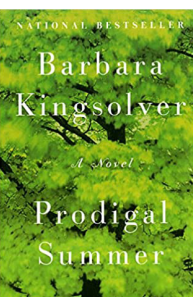
The Overstory is a collection of stories about trees and humans' relationship to nature. It's a 2019 Pulitzer prize-winning work of fiction, but its themes ring true to the real-life struggles the planet and its inhabitants are facing.



***Wild Lives Otters: On the Swirl of the Tide*, by Bridget and Don MacCaskill, 2006**

Recommended by David Hamilton, Interim Zoo Director

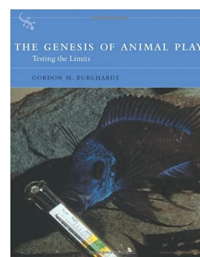
A documented 12-year study of three wild otters and how they became used to the humans following their habits and behaviors. This book includes amazing photographs of otters in their natural habitat.



***Prodigal Summer*, by Barbara Kingsolver, 2000**

Recommended by Gretchen Spencer, School and Group Programs Coordinator

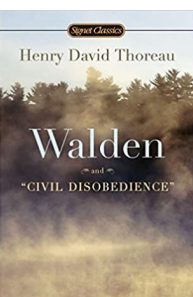
The overall theme is about connection -- to nature, to other human beings.



***The Genesis of Animal Play: Testing the Limits*, by Gordon Burghardt, 2005**

Recommended by David Hamilton, Interim Zoo Director

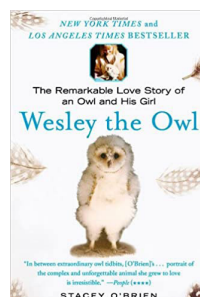
This study of play in animals digs deep into the study of evolution, behavioral organization and the psychology of how different species of animals play. A fascinating view into the development of animal behaviors.



***Walden*, by Henry David Thoreau, 2012**

Recommended by Rhonda K. McDonald, Program Manager

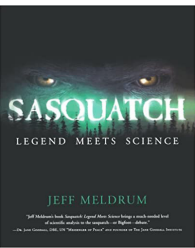
The book summarizes the time Thoreau spent living in nature, away from society (which ties in a bit with living away from society right now with social distancing). There are details of nature journaling and observations, as well as information about the intrinsic value of connecting with nature.



***Wesley the Owl: The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His girl*, by Stacey O'Brien, 2008**

Recommended by Susan Herzberg, Docent

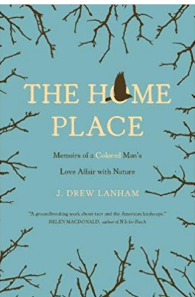
A biologist adopts baby barn owls, follows them over 19 years. A charming, heartwarming read.



Sasquatch: Legend meets Science, by Jeff Meldrum, 2006

Recommended by Kelly Ulrich, Director of Education and Visitor Studies

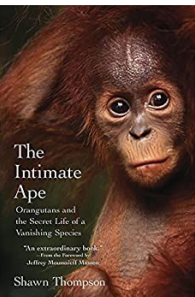
Dr. Meldrum is an Associate Professor of Anatomy and Anthropology at Idaho State University, and in this book, he analyzes possible evidence of Sasquatch. This is a great read for anyone who is curious about the existence of creatures that science has not found or described or who is interested in following a case study of scientific inquiry.



The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature, by J. Drew Lanham, 2016

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

Lanham is a wildlife ecologist, professor, author, and poet committed to "coloring the conservation conversation". He also serves as a role model for the Zoo's Urban Ecologists. The book is charming, funny, and an extraordinary meditation on nature and belonging.



The Intimate Ape, by Shawn Thompson, 2010

Recommended by Dr. Louis DiVincenti, Assistant Zoo Director - Animal Care & Conservation

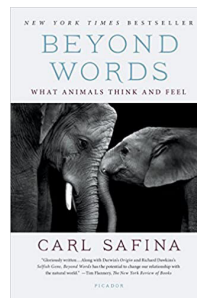
This book is written by a journalist and intimately evaluates orangutan conservation through the point of view of the people who study and work with them, in the wild, in rehabilitation centers, and in zoos. He connects the reader to what makes orangutans so special and what inspires people to care for them.



Zoo Story: Life in the Garden of Captives, by Thomas French, 2013

Recommended by Dr. Louis DiVincenti, Assistant Zoo Director - Animal Care & Conservation

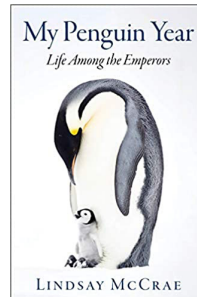
The book is a very well researched, fair examination of the role of modern zoos in a time of extinction caused by human activities, within the setting of Lowry Park Zoo in Tampa. The author delves into real ethical issues involved with human's appreciation and control of nature and invites the reader to consider for themselves the positives and the negatives of the power of zoos to save animals and inspire people.



Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel, by Carl Safina, 2015

Recommended by Dr. Louis DiVincenti, Assistant Zoo Director - Animal Care & Conservation

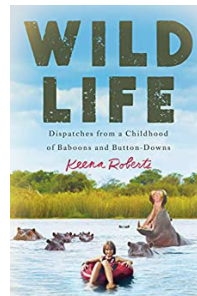
In a very accessible way, the author shares scientific research that shows the depths to which a variety of species think and feel, and calls on humans to reconsider how we care for animals and our planet given this understanding.



My Penguin Year: Life among the Emperors, by Lindsay McCrae, 2019

Recommended by Holly Hammond, Docent

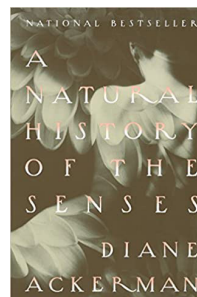
The story of an award-winning photographer and cinematographer who spent 11 months in Antarctica as part of a three-man team living his life's dream to photograph Emperor penguins. He was commissioned by the BBC to provide documentation of the life cycle of the penguins through all seasons, including the high points and the low.



Wild Life: Dispatches from a Childhood of Baboons and Button-Downs, by Keena Roberts, 2019

Recommended by Holly Hammond, Docent

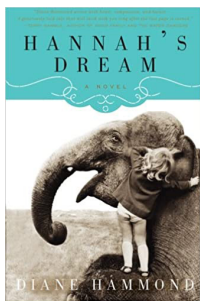
This is a memoir of the author's childhood in Kenya and Botswana living with her parents and sister in camps where they studied Vervet Monkeys in Kenya and baboons in Botswana. She chose stories that illustrated the challenges she faced moving back and forth between Philadelphia and Botswana. The author made it easy to picture the situations that she described, and I became engrossed in each story.



A Natural History of the Senses, by Diane Ackerman, 1990

Recommended by Darla Bragg, Guest Services Coordinator

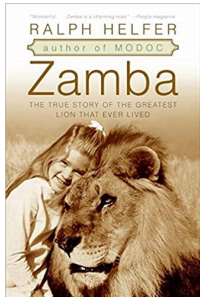
Some would say "To better understand nature, we must first understand ourselves." How exactly do we perceive our environment, wherever that may be? Ackerman dives into each one of the five human senses and explores the possibilities through poetic yet scientific storytelling. It will leave you feeling much more connected to the world outside of yourself, and more aware of the observations that you are capable of making.



***Hannah's Dream*, by Diane Hammond, 2008**

Recommended by Tina Fess, Zoologist

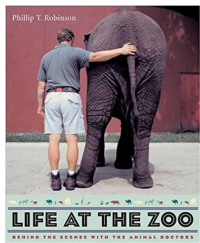
An elephant never forgets, but can she dream? A charming story of a lone elephant and the relationship of her long-time animal handler. When a new elephant keeper comes into their world, a plan is hatched to get Hannah into an Elephant Sanctuary to no longer be alone. A great read for all ages.



***Zamba: The True Story of the Greatest Lion that Ever Live*, by Ralph Helfer, 2005**

Recommended by Tina Fess, Zoologist

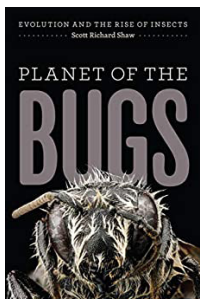
Ralph Helfer, one of Hollywood's top animal behaviorists, is a firm believer in "affection training" -- that love, not fear, should be the basis of any animal's development, even when dealing with the most dangerous of creatures. Then Zamba came into his life -- an adorable four-month-old lion cub that went on to prove Helfer's theories resoundingly correct.



***Life at the Zoo: Behind the Scenes with the Animal Doctors*, by Phillip T. Robinson, 2004**

Recommended by James Weinpress, Zoologist

Seasoned veterinarian Phillip T. Robinson shares his remarkable stories of working at the world-famous San Diego Zoo. An excellent introduction to the zoo world.



***Planet of the Bugs: Evolution and the Rise of Insects*, by Scott Richard Shaw, 2014**

Recommended by James Weinpress, Zoologist

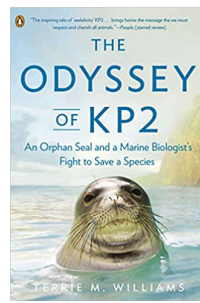
Planet of the Bugs spins a sweeping account of insects' evolution from humble arthropod ancestors into the bugs we know today. This "excellent guide to the history of our planet" offers a bugs-eye view of evolution, biodiversity, and today's ecological crises.



***Never Home Alone: From Microbes to Millipedes, Camel Crickets and Honeybees, The Natural History of Where We Live*, by Rob Dunn, 2019**

Recommended by James Weinpress, Zoologist

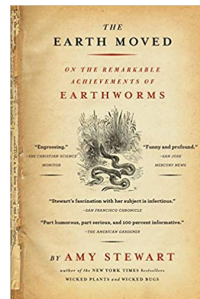
A natural history of the wilderness in our homes, from the microbes in our showers to the crickets in our basements. Biologist Rob Dunn introduces us to the nearly 200,000 species living with us in our own homes. You may never look at your home the same way again!



***The Odyssey of KP2: An Orphan Seal and a Marine Biologist's Fight to Save a Species*, by Terrie M. Williams, 2012**

Recommended by James Weinpress, Zoologist

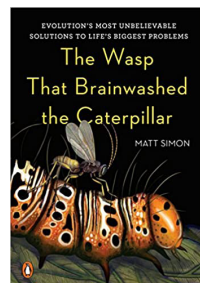
I read this book as a young keeper and was truly enthralled in this story. At the time I didn't realize all the factors that must be addressed when creating an effective conservation program. This includes recognizing the needs of the animals and their habitat, the needs of the people who live in close proximity to them, and the cultural relevance of an endemic species. This story serves as a true eye opener to the world of wildlife conservation.



***The Earth Moved: On the Remarkable Achievement of Earthworms*, by Amy Stewart, 2005**

Recommended by James Weinpress, Zoologist

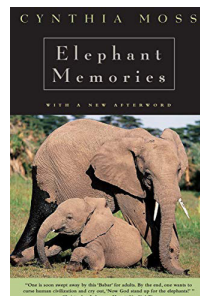
Amy Stewart takes us on a subterranean adventure. Witty, offbeat, charming, and ever curious, she unearths the complex web of life beneath our feet and investigates the role earthworms play in cutting-edge science—from toxic cleanups to the study of regeneration.



***The Wasp That Brainwashed the Caterpillar*, by Matt Simon, 2016**

Recommended by Azzara Osten, Zoo keeper

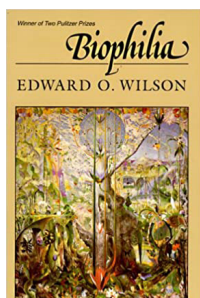
It's a fun book that makes a sometimes-complex science topic very accessible. The author highlights lots of interesting evolutionary stories, and how animals came to have unique (and sometimes weird) adaptations or relationships. There are illustrations, and lots of cool facts to keep readers engaged.



***Elephant Memories: Thirteen Years in the Life of an Elephant Family*, by Cynthia Moss, 1988**

Recommended by Lynn Harris, Docent

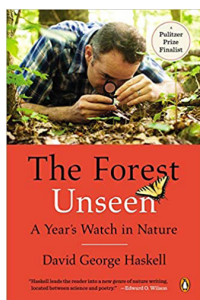
The chronicle of Moss's long-term study of an African elephant family and their daily lives. Great stories as she describes the herd interactions she observed.



***Biophilia* by E.O. Wilson, 1984**

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

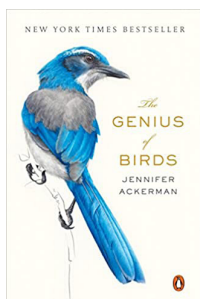
A personal reflection by the founder of the Encyclopedia of Life and Pulitzer Prize winner, on our innate affinity to nature and other species, which he termed “biophilia.” A beautifully written and optimistic treatise calling for environmental stewardship. If you’ve never read anything by Wilson, this is where to start, although *The Future of Life* is a must read as well.



***The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature*, by David George Haskell, 2012**

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

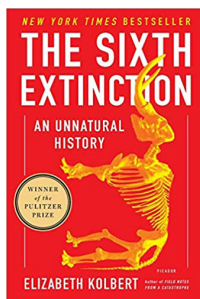
Haskell observed one – square meter patch of old growth forest in Tennessee nearly daily for one year, and shares his observations in delightful prose as nature unfolds in this Pulitzer Prize finalist book.



***The Genius of Birds*, by Jennifer Ackerman, 2016**

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

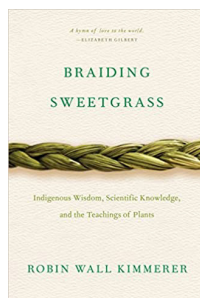
You don’t have to be a bird lover to enjoy this book exploring the brilliance of avian species and taking the reader to remote locations around the world.



***The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*, by Elizabeth Kolbert, 2014**

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

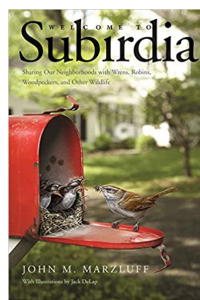
Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, this book discusses the five mass extinctions that the earth has experienced previously, through the evidence that we are presently experiencing the sixth extinction. A powerful and accessible writer, Kolbert writes in the same conversational tones that made her “Field Notes from a Catastrophe” so compelling.



***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013**

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

Native American legends feature plants and animals as the source of knowledge and as teachers. Kimmerer blends her indigenous heritage with her scientific training as a botanist to encourage a wider ecological consciousness. Beautifully, magically written.



***Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers and Other Wildlife*, by John M. Marzluff, 2014**

Recommended by Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of Seneca Park Zoo Society

A beginner’s guide to urban ecology, exploring our own backyards to encourage a land ethic appreciating the importance of the biodiversity in our own living spaces.