**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!

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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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.

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**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.

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.

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 Biologists 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.

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.

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.

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.