

An insider's view of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo

My ZOO

WINTER 2023

Magazine

**MAKING
HISTORY:
MALI HAS
TWINS!**

P3



**MEET
RED PANDA
CUB RAJI!**
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ON THE COVER:
Baby Elephant Twins
Yaad and Tukada
Photo by Camille Murphy

A Message from the Friends Executive Director

Hello and Happy New Year! The past year proved to be incredibly amazing to say the least – the birth of our miracle elephant twins Yaad and Tukada, and the wonderful community support we received since then has capped off an exciting year of successes and growth.



Asian elephant births are extremely rare; with less than 1% of all Asian elephant births resulting in twins, and most do not survive. We are tremendously proud of how the animal team responded to this wonderful surprise – their dedication, experience and swift decision-making helped young Tukada survive (see our feature article on page 3). It has been remarkable to see the love for the twins pouring out from all over the world, and we eagerly look forward to seeing them outdoors again as the weather warms.

Getting a glimpse of the baby elephants is a great reason to come and visit but we also have a slate of exciting new exhibits and activities planned. Our 2023 event schedule is packed with activities for all and kicks into high gear in the spring with our annual Zoo Run Run and Party for the Planet on April 22. In addition to events that embrace our community – like the LGBTQ+ Family Day of Visibility held on Sunday, May 7 and Senior Citizen’s Appreciation Day on Wednesday, May 10 – we’re also bringing back our popular Breakfast with the Bunny, Mother’s Day Brunch and much, much more (see page 15).

As always, thank you for your membership – your belief in our mission is what makes our work possible. We could not have had such an exceptional year without all your support! Here’s to making 2023 a year to remember!

With gratitude,

Carrie Large

Carrie Large
Executive Director, Friends of the Zoo



MALI MAKES HISTORY: Gives Birth to Surviving ELEPHANT TWINNINGS!

When Asian elephant Mali went into labor in the early morning hours of October 24, the elephant barn was unusually quiet.

The rest of the herd watched but did not make a sound – an unusual occurrence among a species that normally vocalizes during a birth of one of their own.

Despite this abnormality, Mali swiftly gave birth to a healthy calf with little-to-no help from Collection Manager Ashley Sheppard and Zoo Curator Dan Meates. It was a boy.

What didn’t come, however, was Mali’s placenta, which was to be shipped immediately to a facility for Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpes Virus (EEHV) research. EEHV is a lethal strain of herpes that targets young Asian elephants and took the lives of Mali’s previous two calves.

Ten hours later, Mali began to show signs of labor again.

continued on pg. 6



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Please direct questions regarding this publication to editor@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo One Conservation Place, Syracuse, NY 13204 is owned and operated by Onondaga County. Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a level of excellence that makes the Rosamond Gifford Zoo a national leader in animal care, conservation and visitor experience.

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ANIMAL UPDATES

A female red wolf, Evie, arrived from the Point Defiance Zoo on December 5. Read more about Evie on page 9.



CREATURE FEATURE: SLENDER- TAILED MEERKATS

**AT THE
ROSAMOND
GIFFORD ZOO:
2 Females:
Ducky and Littlefoot**



A juvenile male Von der Decken's hornbill was sent to Safe Haven Animal Discovery on September 7.

Male Humboldt penguin Jose was humanely euthanized on September 7 after a battle with cancer.

Two male Northern lined seahorses were sent to the Columbus Zoo on September 28.

Six female Northern lined seahorses were sent to the Virginia Aquarium on September 28.

Two female meerkats, Ducky and Little Foot, arrived from the Caldwell Zoo on September 29. They are on exhibit in the Social Animals Building.

Male Moholi bushbaby Lannister passed away on September 30.

Fifteen juvenile yellow-spotted Amazon River turtles were sent to the Catactin Wildlife Preserve and Zoo on October 5.

A juvenile banded gila monster was sent to the Henry Vilas Zoo on October 6.

Two male Asian elephant calves were born to parents Mali and Doc on October 24. The history-making twins, named Yaad and Tukada, have been called "miracle twins" as only 1% of elephant twins survive in the wild.

Eight female Northern lined seahorses were sent to the New England Aquarium on October 26.

Eight juvenile whitebelly reed frogs were sent to Abilene Zoological Gardens on November 1.

Four Panamanian golden frogs were sent to the Audubon Zoo on November 9.

A male white-lipped deer was born to parents Kaila and Stag on November 13.

Male Sichuan takin Bo passed away on the evening of December 24.

IN MEMORIAM

Tria, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo's beloved Amur leopard, passed away on September 23 from a viral infection.

Tria came to our zoo with male Amur leopard Rafferty in 2019. The two were recommended to breed by the AZA's Species Survival Plan. The zoo's participation in the program was crucial as Amur leopards are dangerously close to extinction with a mere population of about 300 individuals.

During her time with us, Tria and Rafferty had two Amur leopard cubs, Milo and Mina – the first of their kind ever born at our zoo. It was an extraordinary day for Amur leopard conservation efforts and our zoo's history. We were honored to help give the Amur leopard population two more of the rarest cats in the world.

Tria will be truly missed, but always remembered.



FUN FACT:

Duties among meerkat groups vary from keeping watch, guarding young pups and foraging for food. Meerkats will alternate roles randomly among the group.

Say hello to sassy sisters Ducky and Littlefoot! The Rosamond Gifford Zoo welcomed two slender-tailed meerkats to the Social Animals Building in the fall.

Meerkats are a type of mongoose, famous for their upright postures. They are about the size of a squirrel and have gray to tan colored fur.

Slender-tailed meerkats are a type of meerkat named for their thin tails that bear a characteristic black tip. They have dark patches over their eyes, thought to help absorb some of the desert sun.

Meerkats are extremely social creatures, often found in the wild in groups of 15-30 individuals. Families tend to stick together and can be seen cuddling each other in heaps. Meerkat groups are special because they work together to raise each other's pups – a rare behavior among carnivore species.

The most important role in meerkat groups is keeping watch for predators. Meerkats only go out in the daytime, and at least one meerkat will always keep watch, even in small groups (like our two girls). If predators like large birds are spotted, the meerkat on guard will alert the group with a high-pitched barking sound.

While the sentry meerkats keep watch, the others in the group can easily scout for insects, scorpions, lizards, small birds and fruit. Meerkats are great hunters and will work together to catch small game by communicating with purring sounds.

Meerkats are native to south African plains and deserts, and currently have stable populations in the wild. To shelter themselves from the blazing sun, meerkats will create several different underground burrows to keep cool. Stop by the Social Animals Building to see Ducky and Littlefoot up close!



Members of our Elephant Care Team (Back L-R): Alinda Dygert, Keeper; Amanda Stabler, Vet Tech; Noha Abou-Madi DVM; Alana Auwae, Keeper; Micah LeClair, Keeper; Heather Jennings, Keeper; Seth Groesbeck, Collection Manager; Leisje Meates, Collection Manager; Tyler Mesick, Keeper; (Front L-R): Becky Eddy DVM; Dan Meates, General Curator; Ashley Sheppard, Collection Manager. Not pictured; Ted Fox, Zoo Executive Director; Samantha Gerraty, Vet Tech; John Moakler, Consultant; Nicole Zafarana, Keeper.

MALI MAKES HISTORY!... continued from pg. 3

The concerned team gathered, anticipating Mali to finally birth her placenta. The team was stunned to see a second elephant calf instead of the expected placenta – no one had known Mali was pregnant with twins.

Elephant twins make up less than 1% of all elephant births, and there are only a handful of cases where twins have survived. The fact that both Mali’s twins were alive was nothing short of a miracle. “It was like seeing a unicorn,” Meates recalled.

Despite their astonishment, the team immediately sprang into action, knowing the urgency of the situation. The second calf, Tukada, was weaker than the first, and the team needed to quickly give medical care to keep him alive.

As the team frantically provided medical care to the second calf, Mali birthed her two placentas. They shifted so care could continue for Tukada, while the placentas were quickly collected without contamination.

When the second calf was stabilized, the exhausted care team was finally able to process an unbelievable realization: Mali didn’t just become a mother of two new elephant twins – she had made history.

Working for a Miracle

Due to the complexity of elephant ultrasounds and the sheer improbability of elephant twin births, the team never anticipated Mali was pregnant with twins. Elephant twin births are rare and dangerous for both the calves and the mother. Twins are often stillborn or are too weak to survive. Sometimes the mother elephant does not survive. Until now, there has never been a recorded case of surviving elephant twins in the United States. The few successful twin births have only taken place in elephant range countries in Asia and Africa.

With the odds against them, the elephant care team knew they would need to work harder than ever to keep Mali’s second calf alive.

With more than 20 years of experience between them – the team knew what it took to nurture an elephant. But no one had ever experienced the birth of twins, and with two babies to care for simultaneously, they knew there were challenges ahead.

Mali’s first calf, Yaad, weighing at 220 pounds, was born perfectly healthy and quickly began to nurse from Mali. Tukada weighed 237 pounds but was noticeably weaker than his brother. While the first calf happily nursed from Mali, the second struggled to figure out how.

Luckily, the zoo had received specialized milk replacer days before the delivery to prepare. They began to supplement with the formula, but knew this couldn’t be a long-term solution. Elephant milk replacer is extremely difficult and expensive to obtain, as only two companies in the world produce it. Additionally, it is not as rich in proteins and nutrients as the mother’s milk – sustenance that Tukada would require to remain healthy.

They needed to teach the little one how to nurse, a process they had accomplished successfully before. In the meantime, fellow Association of Zoos and Aquariums-accredited zoos started to send their own supply of the formula, eager to do anything they could to support.

Animal care staff worked around-the-clock to monitor the calves. At least two staff members were present 24/7 to make sure Tukada was well fed and thriving.

After two weeks of constant care, Mali’s second calf began to nurse from her. It was an incredible achievement for the elephant care team and drastically improved Tukada’s chances of survival. Our zoo is thrilled that both calves are currently doing well!

“I can’t commend my team enough for all they have done these past few weeks to ensure the care and safety of Mali and her twins,” said Zoo Director Ted Fox. “It has been incredible to watch them in action and witness the high level of expertise, professionalism and focus under pressure.”

Mali’s twins are an incredible achievement for both the zoo and Asian elephant conservation worldwide.

The twins are a part of the zoo’s participation in the AZA’s Asian Elephant Species Survival Plan, a gold-standard population management and conservation program designed to save critically endangered animals. Of the 238 zoos and aquariums accredited by the AZA, only eight are Asian elephant breeding facilities.

“It is clear that zoos are places where people connect to wildlife, but they are also where the extraordinary conservation and research achievements occur,” said AZA President and CEO Dan Ashe. “Breakthroughs in sustaining endangered animals stem from the people whose hearts and minds are fastened to our conservation mission.”

Ashe gave his congratulations to our zoo for our “remarkable” achievement. “Saving species is why we do what we do,” he added.

A Story of Resilience

When the news of the twins was first shared to zoo staff, they cheered, applauded and shed tears in joy and celebration. Mali had done it – everybody knew she could.

It was emotional but welcome news, given that two years ago, Mali lost two of her calves to EEHV within days of each other. Batu was five years old, and Ajay was only days from his first birthday.

Batu and Ajay had brought so much joy to our zoo, keepers and community, and their deaths were a devastating loss to everyone.

“It took a while for our herd to recover after the loss of Batu and Ajay,” Sheppard said. “Just as humans mourn after a loss, our elephants did, too. We all did.”

Now, two years later, Mali welcomed two more calves in an event celebrated around the world.

Both her placentas were successfully collected and transferred to an out of state facility for research. The placentas are rich with stem cells that will help researchers to create a treatment and vaccine for EEHV.

Additionally, the Batu and Ajay Memorial Fund, (created by Friends of the Zoo in 2020), enabled our zoo to gain state-of-the-art technology that allows us to test for EEHV in-house. All the elephants in our herd are tested twice a week for EEHV.

A Growing Family

Mali is doing very well after her big delivery day and is tenderly caring for the twins. The trio is inseparable, and are frequently joined by Mali’s mother Targa. Targa is a seasoned grandmother who has helped Mali with her three previous calves.

Yaad and Tukada bring our herd at the Helga Beck Asian Elephant Preserve to eight, and represent the third generation of their family – mirroring natural herd compositions in the wild.

As the twins grow, they will slowly meet the rest of the herd: matriarch Siri, Mali’s half-sister Kirina, Romini and lastly, their father Doc. Doc was gentle with his calves Batu and Ajay, and has responded well to the twins in their first visual interactions.

During the winter months, the twins will be mostly indoors for their protection as they grow. Guests can see them through the viewing windows of the Pachyderm Pavilion at the Helga Beck Asian Elephant Preserve at 11-11:30 a.m. and 2-2:30 p.m., weather dependent.





Welcome Red Panda Cub Raji!

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo announced in November that our red panda Simone had her first cub – an incredible achievement for her endangered species.

The adorable female cub, named Raji, was born on July 31 and was so tiny, she could fit in the palm of your hand. She is Simone’s first baby and continues a crucial bloodline for the survival of red pandas.

Simone has been a dedicated, attentive mother, not leaving her nesting box for months after her baby was born. Not wanting to disturb the duo, the animal care staff followed a strict hands-off policy while Simone cared for and bonded with her baby. However, the team closely monitored the new baby with nonstop surveillance cameras in the nesting box.

Seven-year-old Simone and ten-year-old Ketu were recommended to breed by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ Species Survival Plan when Simone came to the zoo in 2018. Ketu has previously fathered several red panda cubs at the zoo.

Red pandas are an endangered species whose populations are threatened by deforestation of their nesting tree habitats and bamboo food sources. Furthermore, poachers hunt red pandas for their red coats. Their current estimated population in the wild is less than 10,000 individuals.

Raji will remain at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo for at least a year as she matures, but will eventually move to another zoo to participate in the SSP. Simone and Ketu will remain at the zoo, and hopefully continue to have adorable new cubs.

Red pandas are native to the Eastern Himalayas and love to play in the snow, making them the perfect animals to watch at the zoo this winter. We invite you to visit our zoo and see our fluffy new addition!

FUN FACT:

Red panda cub Raji has started going on exhibit for short bursts with her mom Simone. Red panda cubs can nurse for up to a year, but will begin eating solid food around 4 months old. 5 month old Raji already has a taste for bamboo and craisins!



Friends of the Zoo Invites Local Students to New Youth Advisory Board

High school students on the board will generate ideas to help the zoo further connect with people of all ages.

Friends of the Zoo recently created a new Youth Advisory Board in a continued effort to connect people of all ages to our zoo’s mission. Beyond observing and seeking feedback for the zoo, the board will tackle projects like brainstorming ways to connect with teens and young adults, assisting with creating and sharing zoo social media content and creating events for awareness and fundraising.

The current Board consists of 25-30 local students attending various high schools across Central New York, including Bishop Ludden, Bishop Grimes, Baldwinsville, Fayetteville-Manlius, Skaneateles, Westhill, East-Syracuse Minoa, Lafayette, Syracuse City School District high schools, Marcellus, Liverpool and Manlius Pebble Hill.

Schools nominated students for a role on the board, and the nominees then fill out an application explaining why they want to get involved. The Youth Advisory Board was a joint effort between Friends Executive Director Carrie Large, Friends Board Chair Al Gough and Youth Advisory Representative Liam O’Connor. Liam presented thoughts and ideas with Carrie and Al about giving students more chances to get involved.

“Our community has bright youth that are eager to be leaders now. We are honored that they want to spend their time on enhancing our community zoo, helping us live our mission and be a zoo for all ages,” Large said.

The YAB is currently for students from ninth to twelfth grade, but Friends is hoping to expand the program to college students who could participate in the Board for college credits, then intern at the zoo in their respective fields of study.

The board had its first meeting on October 19 and will continue to meet virtually and in-person throughout the school year. Youth Board members will also have opportunities to attend and participate in the committee meetings and various zoo events.

Spots on the Youth Board are already filled for the current school year, but Friends will be looking for new students to join next year. Know a teen who might be interested? Tell them to look out for Youth Advisory Board applications next year. In the meantime, the zoo has plenty of volunteer opportunities – sign up today!

Elusive Red Wolf Evie Joins Waya on Exhibit

Due to their elusive nature, most people will go their whole lives without ever seeing a red wolf in the wild and, as you visit the zoo you may feel it’s true here as well – especially if you are looking for the zoo’s newest resident red wolf, Evie. Evie is exceptionally shy even for her notoriously stealthy species.

With only 200 red wolves in human care and an estimated 10-20 remaining in the wild, the species is the most endangered canine on earth.

“This is like the quintessential species of why zoos matter,” said collections manager Seth Groesbeck. “This animal would not exist if it wasn’t for zoos. Zoos collected these animals from the wild when their population was crashing, bred them and have reintroduced them to the wild.”

The acquisition of Evie from Point Defiance Zoo in Tacoma, WA continues the zoo’s conservation efforts and increases the likelihood of eventually bolstering the wild red wolf population. It is possible to introduce red wolf pups from human care to wild red wolf mothers, so the goal is to develop and maintain a stable, captive population of red wolves to introduce back into the wild. Because of this, keepers limit their interactions with our red wolves in an effort to preserve the red wolves’ “semi-wild” mentality so they can thrive if and when they are reintroduced to the wild.

With Evie and Waya likely to work as a breeding pair, the zoo hopes to someday welcome a litter of red wolf pups. A litter of two to six may not sound like much, but with an estimated 10-20 remaining in the wild, each red wolf is vitally important to the survival of the species!

“Without the Species Survival Programs, they wouldn’t have made it,” said carnivore keeper Hannah Vona. “I would have never seen a red wolf – they would already have been extinct.”

If you’re feeling lucky, come on out and see this incredibly rare and mysterious canine. For the best chance of catching a glimpse of this elusive beauty, we recommend visiting her exhibit either early in the morning or late in the afternoon.



EVENTS RECAP

Fall Conservation Ball Celebrated Achievements

On Friday, September 23, Friends of the Zoo hosted its second annual Fall Conservation Ball. An abundance of food, champagne and live music perfectly celebrated all the zoo's achievements throughout the past year – including the grand opening of our new Animal Health Center. Guests enjoyed a phenomenal spread of gourmet food from our catering team, including a honeycomb (from our zoo's new honey bee hive) dripping honey onto delicious fall desserts below.

This event raised \$34,787 toward our animal care and conservation mission. Thank you to our sponsors, Triad Foundation, C&S Companies, Bousquet Holstein, PLLC, Holtz Family Fund, Community Bank, Visual Technologies and WAER 88.3.

You won't want to miss this year's Fall Conservation Bash on Friday, September 22, 2023. Save the date!

Zoo Boo Charmed Visitors

Zoo Boo returned to the zoo in October with a kooky-not-spooky Halloween celebration. Guests dressed to impress in their best costumes and enjoyed trick-or-treating around the zoo. The new Spooky Stroll along the Wildlife Trail wowed guests with eerie fog and haunting music. A green screen photobooth allowed guests to capture their favorite poses with a backdrop unique to each weekend.

Zoo Boo will return to the zoo this year for weekends in October. Don't miss this hauntingly fun event!

Holiday Nights Warmed Hearts

The zoo transformed into a winter wonderland with dazzling lights and entertainment for Holiday Nights. More than 6,500 guests celebrated the holidays with friends, family, and the furry and feathery residents of the zoo!

For three weekends in December, the zoo became a snow globe of sorts, playing host to live holiday carolers, visits from Santa, ice sculpting, a magical light display in Primate Park specially designed and assembled for Holiday Nights by local Ptech engineering students, and plenty of cozy fire pits to stay warm by. Thanks to local sponsors, (and an army of volunteers sporting elf hats), the seasonal celebration was a great success!

In the spirit of giving, the Friends donated \$1 from every hot chocolate sold throughout Holiday Nights to its new partner United Way of Central New York. 120 gallons were sold amounting to \$1,542 raised.

Holiday Nights was presented by Amazon, and sponsored by Community Bank, Hueber-Breuer Construction Co., Inc., Wegmans, Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield and Tops.



National Twin Day and Holidays with the Animals Doubled Down on Fun

On December 18, the zoo recognized National Twin Day by hosting a free event in celebration of the miracle elephant twins born to mother Mali just 7 weeks prior. Micron sponsored the event and paid for admission for all 1,886 guests. Everyone was eager to learn more about our famous little elephants!

As if Twin Day wasn't fun enough, the zoo doubled down on the celebratory spirit with the Holidays with the Animals event. Throughout the day, visitors watched on as zookeepers present animals with "enrichment boxes," (Holiday gifts filled with their favorite tasty treats).

Thanks to Micron, almost 2,000 visitors got to enjoy the dual delights of the day, free of charge. Each of these events would have been a blast on its own, and the combination of them made for a joyous and memorable day!



Presented by Micron



ZOO RUN RUN Saturday, April 22, 2023

Get out and get moving on behalf of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo on April 22 at our annual 5K zoo run! Join the race as a lone wolf, or build a team and run with the pack and help support the zoo's mission. Walk or run – all levels are welcome. The event even features a Joey Jog Fun Run for ages 7 and younger. Where else do you get the opportunity to burn some calories while hanging out with an array of beautiful wild creatures? If you can't participate, support an individual runner or team!

Come for the run and stay for some fun!

Participants will receive a finisher medal and complimentary admission to the zoo. Once you've finished the race, don't run off just yet! Stick around to learn more about your favorite animals and enjoy complimentary water and snacks. The zoo opens at 11 a.m. when we kick off Party for the Planet (see page 17).

This is a unique event offering education, engagement, and of course, exercise! All proceeds raised by the Zoo Run Run support the mission of Friends of the Zoo to provide exceptional animal care and unparalleled conservation education in Central New York and beyond.

Thank you to Woodlawn Cemetery – Volunteer Program Sponsor.

Here's your chance to join in and be part of the action at the zoo! To register for the run, visit rosamondgiffordzoo.org/zoo-run-run or scan:



Education Programs

Sessions fill up fast, so sign up today!
 Register online at rosamondgiffordzoo.org/learn/for-kids-and-families.
 Questions? Call the education department at (315) 435-8511 x8559
 or email education@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.



School Break Zoo Camps

Join us one, two, or all 5 days as we explore the zoo, play games, make crafts and meet animals up close!

Winter Break: Monday, February 20- Friday, February 24
Spring Break: Monday, April 3- Friday, April 7

Ages 3-5 | Morning and Afternoon Sessions

Morning Session: 9 a.m. - Noon
Afternoon Session: 1 - 4 p.m.

Tuition per Session: \$38 per child
Members receive a 7% discount

All campers MUST be potty-trained to attend this camp!

Ages 6-12 | All Day Sessions

9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday through Friday

Daily Tuition: \$55 per child | Members receive a 7% discount



Register online at rosamondgiffordzoo.org.
 Questions? Call the education department at (315) 435-8511 x8559 or
 email zoocamp@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.



SUMMER ZOO CAMP

Don't forget to register your child for Summer Zoo Camp!

Week-long day camps for children ages 3-17.

Campers tour the zoo, meet keepers and animals up close, play games, make crafts and participate in many more fun activities.

REGISTRATION FOR MEMBERS BEGINS ONLINE WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1 AT 9 A.M.
Registration for Non-members begins online Wednesday, February 15 at 9 a.m.
rosamondgiffordzoo.org/summer-zoo-camp

Zoo Edventures

Join the education team for three-week Zoo Edventure programs tailored just for your age group. Each series includes three days of fun! Perfect for home-schooled children or anyone wild about learning!

Wild Beginnings

Ages 1-3 | 9:15-10 a.m. and 10:30-11:15 a.m.

Join the Education Team for a three-week learning series tailored just for the little ones. Each themed class includes animal biofacts, nature-themed sensory play, a story and an opportunity to see an animal up close! During this early learning adventure, young ones will explore with their senses while developing language and motor skills in the process. *This program is for one child/one parent pair.*

Series Options:

Animal ABC's: March 13, 20 and 27

Tales & Tails: April 10, 17 and 24

Colorful Creatures: May 8, 15 and 22

Tuition per series:

Members: \$30 per child/adult pair

Non-members: \$45 per child/adult pair

\$15 per additional child in same session

After-Hours and Weekend Programs

Kids' Night Out

Ages 6-10 | 5:30-9 p.m.

Friday, February 10*

Friday, March 31

Friday, April 28

Friday, May 19

**Pair with the Perfectly Paired Paint-N-Sip (see page 13) for a fun night out of your own!*

Looking for a night out? Drop your kids off at the zoo to party like an animal! Kids will enjoy pizza on arrival, meet animals up close, tour the zoo after hours, make crafts and play games throughout the night.

Members: \$30 | Non-members: \$35

Family Edventures!

10 a.m.- noon

Grossology: Saturday, March 4

Join us for a family-style learning adventure for people of all ages! Whether it's touring the zoo, playing games, making crafts or meeting animals up close, this family-friendly programming is a perfect opportunity to connect with your loved ones while also connecting to nature.

Members: \$30 per child/adult pair

Non-members: \$40 per child/adult pair

Adult Programs

Perfectly Paired Paint-N-Sip

Friday, February 10 | 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Okay, lovebirds, this event is for you! Join us for a wild evening of paired painting, light refreshments, raffles, an animal ambassador and more! Come alone, bring a mate or travel with a herd. Complimentary light refreshments include wine and beer (limit of 2 drinks per person). **Must be 21 or older.**

Individual Member: \$55

Individual Non-Member: \$60

Member Pair: \$100

Non-Member Pair: \$110

Member Group (4): \$180

Non-Member Group: \$200

Adult Zoo Camp

Why should kids have all the fun at zoo camp? Join us for programming exclusively for a mature audience! Learn from the education team and animal staff, meet animal ambassadors and assist in enrichment projects. Go beyond the zoo with a view into our global commitment to conservation. Immerse yourself in an elevated animal experience guaranteed to inspire your inner zoo camper. Each program will include our core themes of enrichment, conservation and care. **Must be 18 or older.**

Saturday, April 15

Saturday, May 13

Morning Session: 9 a.m. - Noon

Afternoon Session: 1 - 4 p.m.

Members: \$50 | Non-members: \$60

Sessions fill up fast, so sign up today!

Register online at rosamondgiffordzoo.org/learn/for-adults.
 Questions? Call the education department at (315) 435-8511 x8559 or
 email education@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.



New at the Gift Shop!

STORE HOURS:
10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
No admission required to shop!
Scan the QR code to visit our online store or go to syracusezooevents.org/shop



Elephant twin-themed attire for children and adults - plus mugs, water bottles, toys and more!

Remember to show your valid membership card to receive your

10% discount!



NEW! Gift Cards

The Perfect Gift for Friends, Loved Ones or Yourself!

Choose from three different themes: elephant, holiday or hearts
 Gift cards can be used for zoo admission, purchases at the café, gift shop, special events and education programs.

Available at The Curious Cub Gift Shop, the HoneyBee Café and online (scan QR code).

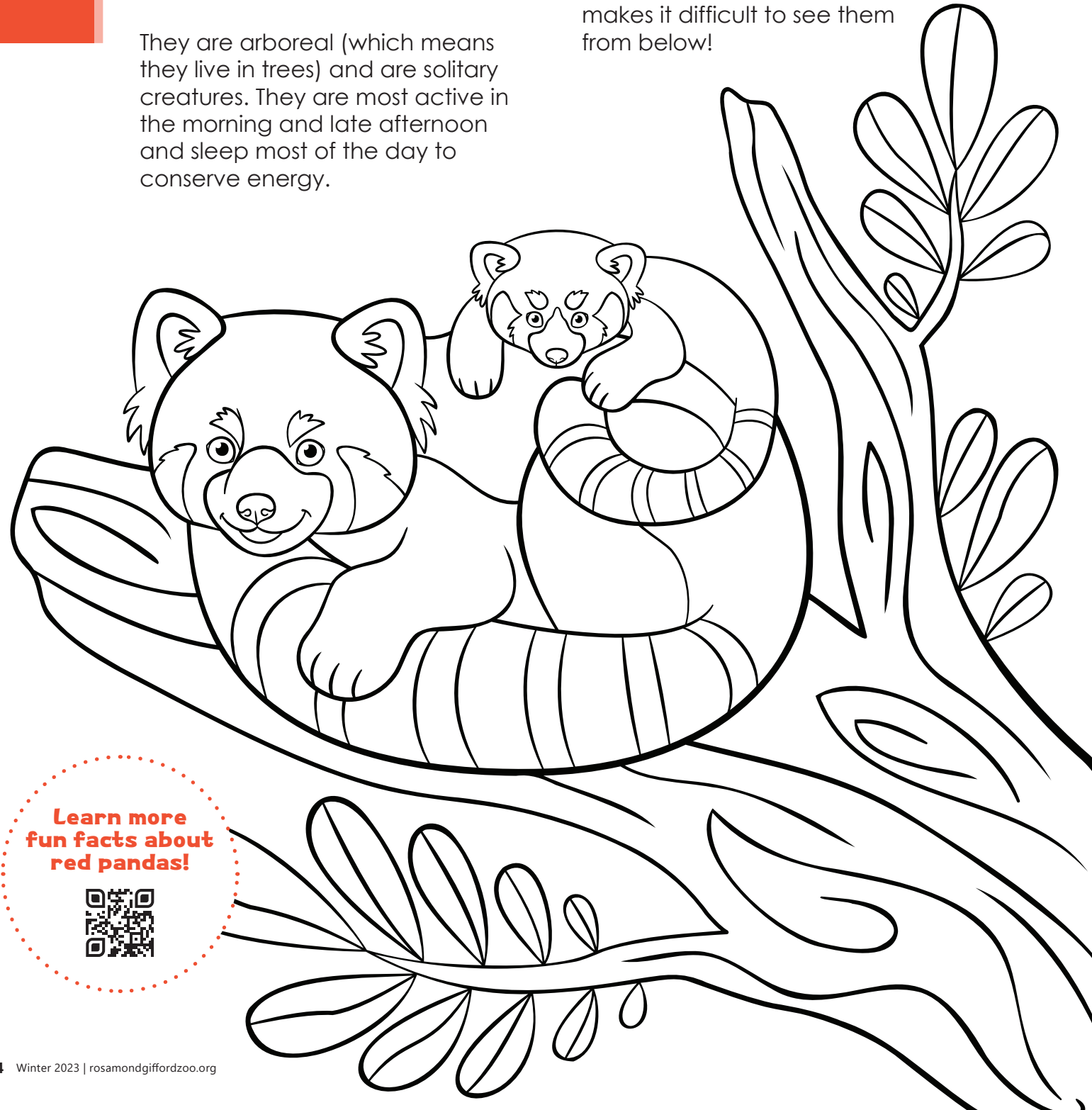


Remarkable Red Pandas!

The red panda is an elusive and mysterious mammal of the Himalayan forests. The red panda has many nicknames and has been called the “firefox,” “lesser panda,” and “red-cat-bear.”

They are arboreal (which means they live in trees) and are solitary creatures. They are most active in the morning and late afternoon and sleep most of the day to conserve energy.

The red pandas' red and black color camouflages (helps hide) them from their predators. The red on their backs is exactly the same color as moss found on the trees where they live. The black on their stomach makes it difficult to see them from below!



Learn more fun facts about red pandas!



2023 Save the Dates

These and many more events await you in the upcoming months. Best of all, these events help support the zoo's mission of animal care, conservation and nature education.



Back this spring – Breakfast with the Bunny Saturdays and Sundays, March 25, 26 and April 1, 2 Easter Brunch – Sunday, April 9
Check our social media and website for updates.



Zoo Run Run – Saturday, April 22
Get out and get moving on behalf of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo with our 5K zoo run! Walk or run – all levels are welcome. Build your team and support the zoo's mission.



Party for the Planet – Saturday, April 22
The zoo's annual Earth Day celebration brings dozens of conservation groups and thousands of visitors to the zoo to spotlight nature conservation and saving species. Our Conservation Stations and Eco-partners offer fun activities, giveaways and tips on how we can all help protect our planet.



LGBTQ+ Family Day of Visibility Sunday, May 7
Join us for a special day celebrating the rainbow of families in our community! Enjoy special keeper talks, exhibitors, entertainment, activities and much more!



Senior Citizen's Appreciation Day Wednesday, May 10 | 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Join us for a special morning open house at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo created especially for senior citizens (62+)! Enjoy free zoo admission till noon, complimentary continental breakfast from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., special keeper talks, and access to senior-specific exhibitors. Tour the zoo and walk around the zoo's scenic Wildlife Trail. **Registration required.**



Mother's Day Brunch – Sunday, May 13
We invite you to join us for a wildly unique Mother's Day Brunch.



Tee Off FORE the Animals Charity Golf Tournament – Monday, June 26
Spend a late-spring day playing golf for a very worthy cause on one of the most coveted golf courses in the state of New York – the elegant and historic Bellevue Country Club. This Captain-and-Crew tournament features breakfast on the cart, lunch on the course and a post-tournament dinner in the luxurious clubhouse, as well as on-course contests, animal greeters and 18 holes of championship golf.



Scan the QR Code for all event information or visit, rosamondgiffordzoo.org/events



Penguin Palooza – Sunday, July 9
Kids of all ages enjoy this ice cream party featuring an incredible array of fun activities, entertainment, free ice cream, kid-friendly foods, music, face painters, and of course, demonstrations with our colony of Humboldt penguins!



Brew at the Zoo – Friday, August 4
Make plans now to attend one of the most anticipated events of the summer. More than 100 tastings of craft beers, wines and other adult beverages, live music performances throughout the zoo and a great gathering of food trucks, plus animals on exhibit. This is one party not to be missed!



Asian Elephant Extravaganza – Saturday, August 19
Come celebrate the Rosamond Gifford Zoo's Asian elephant herd and the cultural traditions of their native countries in South Asia. Daylong activities include performances of traditional Indian music and dance, demonstrations with our eight-member elephant herd, birthday celebrations for our two eldest elephants, Siri and Romani and more!



Fall Conservation Bash – Friday, September 22
Join us for an evening of fantastic food, energizing entertainment and raffles of the most sought-after gifts all to benefit animal care at the zoo and conservation in the wild. You won't want to miss your chance to win an epic prize!



Zoo Boo – Saturdays and Sundays in October
Join us for a “kooky-not-spooky” daytime Halloween celebration. The zoo transforms into a hauntingly fun destination for the whole family with trick-or-treat stations, creepy crawly animal encounters, keeper chats, games, activities, photo-ops and a costume parade!



Holiday Nights Fridays and Saturdays in December
Celebrate the season with Holiday Nights at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo! Sing along with holiday carolers, visit with Santa, gather around and warm up by glowing fire pits with family and friends, enjoy festive lighting, ice sculpture carving, animals, and much more!



Noon Year's Eve – Sunday, December 31
Join us for our annual Noon Year's Eve celebration that keeps bedtime in mind – complete with a dance party, noisemakers, countdown to noon and a juice toast!



It's that time of year again for New Year's resolutions – a list that is hard to come up with and even harder to follow through on. We hope living more sustainably was on your list this year and we have some simple ideas to help make your resolution a long-lasting reality. These small lifestyle changes are ones you can make throughout the year, every year!

And remember, when it comes to sustainable living, millions of people doing it imperfectly is better than a few people doing it perfectly.



SUSTAINABLE GIFT GIVING

Your holiday shopping may be behind you, but there are always gifts to be bought for birthdays, anniversaries and the upcoming Valentine's Day.

So let us help you brainstorm ideas that are both impressive and better for the environment!

Gift experiences, not items.

If you find yourself pulling your hair out trying to think of something to gift your loved one, maybe shake things up a bit and gift them an experience.

An experience can be things like a sports game, brewery tours, wine tastings, a trip to the spa, a weekend getaway, cooking classes or a membership to their favorite place (like the zoo), or a behind-the-scenes encounter. This alternative prevents harmful waste and emissions from manufacturing, shipping and potential returns. By giving an experience you know they'll enjoy, you not only give them a meaningful gift, but also memories to last forever.

Gift experiences also benefits the local businesses you purchase from – this acting as a better, and greener, alternative for everyone!



STOP LOSING YOUR MITTENS!

Are mittens a fleeting resource in your family? No worries, we've all lost a mitten or two in our day. Those pesky things seem to run away from you when you aren't looking.

Luckily, there is a method to keep your mittens where they belong – together! So, before you send your little one to school, loop a thick string through one arm hole of their coat straight across to the other arm hole. Once you have string hanging out each arm hole, tie each end to its corresponding mitten. This way when your kiddo takes their mittens off, they'll just hang by their sides until they are ready to put them back on.

Taking the coat off? The mitten method should stay in place if the mittens are taken off before the coat is removed.

When you keep your mittens together, you prevent them from entering landfills or littering the outdoors. It also allows you to spend less money buying new sets! It's a win-win for everyone!



STAYCATIONS

Time-off and school vacations are wonderful, but when travel plans and expenses are involved, it can get pretty stressful.

With winter getaways and school vacations in February and Spring coming up, save yourself the stress and consider having a staycation! A staycation is a vacation spent at home or involving day trips to local attractions.

By staying local, you can lower the harmful emissions caused by planes. According to a study by the International Council on Clean Transportation, airplanes cause 2.4% of global CO² emissions. One international round trip can produce more than double the emissions a family car makes a year.

Besides, there is so much to do at home! You can enjoy a relaxing stay at local cabins, ski-lodges and other semi-local tourist attractions. Additionally, local tourism gives back to smaller communities and vendors.

This doesn't mean you need to cancel your annual trip to Cancun, but when other opportunities for time-off arise, just consider staying local and include a visit to the zoo!

Party for the Planet Educates Public for a Better Earth

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo will celebrate Planet Earth this year with two events aimed at educating the public on protecting wildlife and the environment.

The first is Friday's Earth Day celebration: Clean Up, Create, and Connect. We invite the community to help spruce up the zoo grounds! Sign up for "Clean Up" to help with weeding, raking, mulching and trash pickup around the zoo starting at 9 a.m.

You can also "Create" better habitats for wildlife by doing a cleanup in your own neighborhood, planting wildflowers or a tree – then watch as these habitats flourish with life! "Connect" and share your photos of what you did to improve your local habitat via social media with the hashtags #syracusezoo and #CelebratePlanetEarth for a chance to win a special prize!

On Saturday, April 22, the zoo will host the Party for the Planet beginning at 11 a.m. Earlier in the day, the zoo will host the 2023 Zoo Run Run 5k, and when the runners wrap up, the Party for the Planet kicks off. Make the rounds to exhibitors like Greening USA, Cornell Cooperative Extension and the SUNY-ESF Snailblazers and attend keeper chats featuring zoo animals. Additionally, vendors will set up around the zoo to sell sustainable products.

There is no better place to appreciate the beauty of our planet, (and the variety of life on it), than here at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo!

To sign up, or to inquire about selling a sustainable product, please email Heidi Strong at hstrong@rosamondgiffordzoo.org.



MEMBER NOTES



A very warm welcome to our 2023 members!

Whether your membership was a gift this holiday season or you have chosen to join or renew — we are thrilled to have you with us for the upcoming year. We have many exciting things on the horizon for 2023 — you'll want to visit us again and again. From our popular annual events to new exhibits and animals, there's always something new at the zoo!

Make sure to take advantage of all your exciting member benefits, such as discounts in The Curious Cub Gift Shop, The HoneyBee Café, education programs and events, plus much more!

Thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you at the zoo often!

2023 Member T-shirts are Here!



This year's design features our Asian elephant twins Yaad and Tukada and their mother Mali!

Stop by the membership desk and redeem your FREE T-shirt —an exclusive perk for our zoo members!
Additional shirts available for purchase.



**Adopt
an
Animal**

Humboldt Penguin

Senior Keeper Special \$55

Package includes:

A certificate of adoption, 4x6 color photo of a Humboldt penguin, animal fact sheet, 12" animal plush, an adopt parent gift, copy of *MyZoo Magazine*, and listing in online adopt parent board for one year.



Adopt an Animal online at syracusezooevents.org/shop
Looking to adopt another animal at the regular rate?
Call (315) 435-8511 x8563 or
email giftshop@rosamondgiffordzoo.org



Save the Dates!

Don't Miss this Season's Gourmet Dinner Pairing Series

Featuring savory dishes skillfully prepared by Executive Chef Dan Hudson.



Marvelous Mardi Gras Medley
paired with Rum
Friday, February 10
6-9 p.m.



Savory and Sustainable Seafood
paired with Wine
Friday, March 24
6-9 p.m.



Flavors of South Africa
paired with South African Wine
Friday, April 28
6-9 p.m.



Learn more about hosting your own private dinner pairing at the zoo. Contact us today!
Email events@rosamondgiffordzoo.org, call (315) 435-8511 x8543 or visit cateringatthezoo.org/private-dinners.



Meet the Catering at the Zoo Team!

Our Catering team, led by Executive Chef Dan Hudson, combines culinary creativity with enthusiasm and expertise to provide superior catering service in a setting like no other. From private dinners to company retreats, baby showers to weddings, our team of skilled professionals will ensure your event is truly a one-of-a-kind experience!

See just why they love their jobs!



Chuck Anthony
Director of Food and Beverage

"One of the most rewarding aspects of working with the food and beverage team here at the zoo is having a front row seat to their enthusiasm and creativity. The entire food and beverage team is constantly bringing fresh ideas and solutions to the table to tackle new challenges. From our monthly pairing dinners, which regularly sell out, to pushing the boundaries with service and presentation each and every day, they always rise to the occasion in service of our guests and in line with our mission. I feel fortunate to be a part of this team and I know our future is bright!"



Dan Hudson
Executive Chef

"Working at the zoo gives me the ability to stay creative while working for a great cause. It is super rewarding to know that I get to use my skills to make a positive impact within the Syracuse community and on a larger scale."



Allison Walts
Sous Chef

"Work at the zoo is fast-paced, fun, and sociable; I love that I'm able to provide a memorable experience for our guests while also contributing to the care of these beautiful animals. Best job I've ever had!"



Stephanie Deibler
Sales Manager

"My job is pretty fantastic! I come to work each day to plan events knowing that our events benefit the animals here at the Zoo, as well as conservation efforts. Many of our clients book with us because they know that their event gives back to the zoo. I am very grateful to be able to be a part of the Catering at the Zoo team."



Emily Gillette
Event Manager

"I love my job! I have always dreamed of working at a world-class zoo; the Rosamond Gifford Zoo is an industry leader. It's my sincere honor to bring two decades of experience in event management to help raise funds for our animal friends."



Mary Galek
Event Associate

"After years of working here at the zoo, knowing that what I do not only puts a smile on our guests and clients faces but also benefits the animals of the zoo, it's easy to come to work every day. It's incredibly rewarding knowing that I make a difference and I can truly say, I love my job."

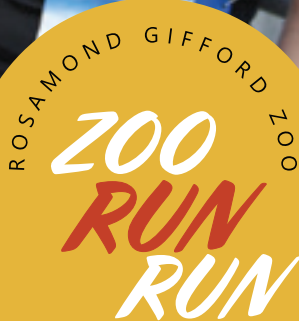


Learn more about hosting your own special event at the zoo. Contact us today!
Email events@rosamondgiffordzoo.org, call (315) 435-8511 x8543 or visit cateringatthezoo.org.



Upcoming Events

Scan QR code for full event details or visit, rosamondgiffordzoo.org/events



**SATURDAY
APRIL 22**



**MONDAY
JUNE 26**



**FRIDAY
AUGUST 4**