

ZOO REVIEW 2012 - 2014

Amarillo Zoo



EXPERIENCE THE ANIMAL WORLD



Did you know?

Sarai, our female African lion ate a 72oz Big Texan steak in just...80 seconds! A new world record!

HISTORY OF

The Junior League of Amarillo started the zoo in 1955 when a duck pond was built. It was expanded soon after in 1957 to include other animals utilizing a storybook theme for exhibit construction. It was called the "Children's Story Land Zoo". It was comprised of about 25 barnyard animals and occupied an area of 2.5 acres in Thompson Park. The exhibit themes included Willie the Whale, Mouse Town, Indian Teepee and Three Men in a Tub. The 'Mountain' was the original main entrance and included the Seven Dwarfs' Mine as well as the public rest rooms. The food concession was a giant rendition of Pecos Bill's Hat. Remnants of that time still stand today and include the Mountain and Elephant Barn (now black bear holding enclosure).

The population and variety of animals was expanded over the years to include coyotes, monkeys, bears and other species of native and exotic wildlife. Zoo and park department construction crews built many of the exhibits. A children's playground, petting zoo and other features were added as various groups became interested and demand increased. The zoo currently draws around 200,000 visitors a year from nearby towns and rural areas as well as from all across the U.S. and many foreign countries. And, of course, the repeat visits from the citizens of Amarillo.

In 1989 funds were appropriated and a major renovation of over \$500,000 was begun to expand the zoo and improve the facilities. The land area was expanded to 14 acres. Major exhibits were created to include

a Plains Animal Exhibit, Spider Monkey Exhibit, and in the area of the original duck pond the North American Black Bear Exhibit was built. New temporary exhibits were established for Birds, Felines and Raccoon. The theme and name 'Children's Story Land Zoo' was dropped and a new name 'Amarillo Zoo' was adopted.

Annually, since 1955, other features have gradually been added to further enhance the zoo. These include extensive landscaping with

connecting walks, new handicap accessible restrooms and playground for the public, new and renovated exhibits in the 'old' section to bring them to an acceptable standard. Security was completed by adding adequate perimeter fencing around the 'old' section not included in the major renovation. Operational capabilities have been improved by gradually adding personnel, communication equipment, and other mechanical equipment for efficiency. The following are some of the major projects that have been completed since 1997. Funding was made available for the construction of an animal clinic and isolation area to replace inadequate facilities. A new hay barn and grain storage building replaced an older structure that



burned down in 1999. Exhibits were built for the Coyotes and the African Spurred Tortoises. An informational interactive kiosk was built. The front office was doubled in size and equipped with a computer, printer and fax machine.

In 2003, a Bengal Tiger and Bennett's Wallabies were added to the collection. During 2004 a major renovation was done to an old section of the zoo, and construction of a new building that would be the holding area

for the Wallabies was constructed. This new building would also serve as an additional hay and grain storage area and food preparation area. The Wallabies were presented for public display in April 2004. Early in 2004 the primate building expansion was completed as well as an increased area and addition of a pool and waterfall for the Bengal Tiger. Another animal added to the collection during this time was the Coatimundi.

Over the last couple of years, improvements have been made for better management of all the zoo's cat species. A new cat management building was constructed in 2006 and now houses the five cat species. All of the cat exhibit areas were renovated and a new exhibit yard was built for the

lions. Servals and African lions were the newest additions and put on exhibit at the beginning of 2007. The bison exhibit underwent renovations and now includes a new overlook area, irrigation, graphics and a zoo key box (educational story box activated by a plastic animal key). The latest exhibit that was constructed was the herpetarium located across from the Spider Monkeys. This area features reptile and amphibian species from around the world.

In 2009 the Zoo added the Cindy and Michael Terk Herpetarium, this indoor facility houses over 26 exhibits on native and exotic reptiles and amphibians from around the world. The latest expansion came in 2013 with the opening of the Bill and Alice O'Brien Education Center. This multi-use facility includes exhibits, classroom space and offices. It has been through the generous support of the community that the Zoo has been able to continue its growth and improvements. We look forward to what lies ahead!



WORDS FROM THE ZOO CURATOR

We are proud to present the 2015 edition of the Amarillo Zoo's Review, representing two years of accomplishments for 2012-13 and 2013-14. Many new and exciting things have happened both in front and behind the scenes. What hasn't changed is the Zoo staff's commitment to quality care of our animal ambassadors and commitment to education and conservation.



Over the last 2 years we've seen tremendous growth in our special events that have become traditions for family fun like BOO at the Zoo, Easter EGG-citment and Zoo Lights Safari that have brought out thousands of people for celebrations that are fun, safe and educational.

Our educational programs continue to grow with over 10,000 regional students visiting the Zoo each year to participate in classroom or field trip programs. As well, the Zoo's outreach program has traveled to all corners of the Texas Panhandle to deliver a Zoo experience to children unable to travel to visit us.

2013 saw the Zoo become the first Zoo in Texas to exhibit a live Black-footed Ferret. Considered one of the most endangered mammals in North America, the Amarillo Zoo became a partner with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to provide an exhibit to help educate visitors of this disappearing mammal.

The Zoo also plays a significant role in the economy of Amarillo. The Zoo attracts guests from outside Amarillo that have a direct economic benefit for the city. Travelers, especially adults with children, see a zoo as a welcome break to their travels along I-40. Open 361 days a year the Zoo is a year-round attraction open daily which makes it a great tourist destination!

Of course, none of this would be possible without the incredible support from our donors, community partners, staff and large cadre of volunteers. On behalf of the Amarillo Zoo we thank each and every one of you! We continue to be excited about the unlimited possibilities that the future holds for the Zoo's growth and expansion and we trust you are as well!!

Thank you
Rhonda Votino



2012-2015 AMARILLO
PARKS COMMISSIONERS
DANIEL BRADLEY
ROB CHAFIN
JOYCE CUNNINGHAM
GEORGE DECOUX
TERRY EASTERLING
DAVID HUDSON
HAL LEEDY
RENEE MCCOWN
CAMERON MONROE
CLINT NORTON
JACKIE PAYNE
MIKE RIVERA

AMARILLO ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY (2014)

The Amarillo Zoological Society is a private non-profit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to promote the development, improvements and awareness of the Amarillo Zoo and it's mission.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	KRISTIN MERRISS	DIRECTOR	STEPHANIE TUCKER
VICE PRESIDENT	CAROL BRUCKNER	DIRECTOR	AMY SHELHAMMER
TREASURER	KENNY MUNSELL	DIRECTOR	GARY SANDERS
SECRETARY	ELIZABETH DODSON	DIRECTOR	TERRY HAWTHORNE

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE PARK COMMISSION

Lions, tigers, bears...and so much more. I have had the privilege of serving on the Amarillo Parks and Recreation Commission for several years. Having lived in Amarillo most of my life, I had visited the Amarillo Zoo numerous times. I remember giving money to help buy an elephant that came to live at the Zoo. The Zoo was a fun place to visit, but I always thought Amarillo could do better.

In recent years the Amarillo Zoo has transformed into an entirely different place. New exhibits have been added and some of the existing ones have been expanded. The Herpetarium has given the visitors the ability to see some truly amazing reptiles. The new education center brings the opportunity to learn about all of our Zoo residents. The Amarillo Zoo is such an outstanding facility that it is one of the few Zoos in the country that has an exhibit for



black-footed ferret, classified as an endangered animal. I am particularly amazed when I see our town tigers. Yes...tigers in Amarillo, Texas.

The transformation has been the result of many individuals and groups "falling in love" with our Zoo. I truly believe that when someone visits the Zoo, they will fall in love with it. When people visit and get involved, they are helping create an even more exciting future. I invite you to grab your friends and family and spend a few hours at the Amarillo Zoo. I promise you, you will love every minute, and come back for more.

Cameron Monroe,
President, Amarillo Park Commission
(Term, 2012-2014)

A MESSAGE FROM ERIC MILLER

A regional zoo is very important to the total tourism package for a city. It attracts key demographic groups who are vital to the health of an area's tourism product. Specifically, the Amarillo Convention & Visitor Council relies on the Amarillo Zoo to reach to young families visiting our city. Perhaps no other attraction can reach this group, generally below the age of 40 with multiple children, like a zoo. And the Amarillo Zoo's recent expansion, reasonable admission structure, extensive special event calendar and collection of animals from the Texas high plains, is a true winner. These visitors once they have seen the zoo are more than likely going to

spend time and money in area restaurants, hotels and other early family type attractions. In Amarillo, that starts right next to the Amarillo Zoo with a visit to family-friendly Wonderland Amusement Park.

Once a family has stopped in Amarillo and learned about our value and our heritage, they become visitors for life. And they have just started to Step Into The Real Texas.

Eric W. Miller
Director of Communications
Amarillo Convention & Visitor Council

WORDS FROM THE AMARILLO PARKS DIRECTOR



The Amarillo Zoo continues to be one of the community's favorite attractions and regardless of how many times one visits you can always find something new and different. The recent completion of the Bill & Alice O'Brien Education Center in 2013 has opened the door to tremendous educational opportunities and enhanced our visitor experience which we will continue to focus on as we move forward in the upcoming year. With increased events and programs annually our visits to the Zoo continue to increase as well. Our talented staff and volunteers are committed in providing each visitor a quality experience that is fun and exciting and possibly, if you are not careful, you may also learn something new as well! Community support and involvement is the key reason for past successes and the backbone for our future and we thank each and every one of you for enabling us to be the stewards of such a fantastic facility. We invite you and your family to get involved in the Amarillo Zoo!

Rod Tweet,
Director - Parks & Recreation Department



Junior Zoo Keeper, camper, Sarah Robel helping prepare diets.

WHEN I GO TO THE ZOO...

"I wish I could take care of animals"

"I wish I could touch a snake"

"I wish I could hear a lion roar"

"I wish I could discover the world of animals"



Junior Zoo Keeper Camp kids with one of the Zoo's Albino Burmese Pythons.



Ryan Libbin feeding the Zoo's donkeys.

WHERE MORE THAN IMAGINATION RUNS *WILD*

TRAVEL THE WORLD AT THE AMARILLO ZOO



CLASS	# OF SPECIES	# OF INDIVIDUALS
Invertebrates	6	100+
Amphibians	5	7
Reptiles	36	52
Mammals	32	76
Birds	9	12
Total:	88	153

Did you know?

Last year 200 people volunteered 6,721 hours.

GROWING OUR FAMILY...

Animal care

There are no snow days at the Amarillo Zoo. 365 days a year our animal care staff is at the zoo making sure each of our 140 animals are fed, watered and are in good health. It isn't easy or inexpensive, but the dedicated staff are there to ensure the animals, exhibits and facilities of the Amarillo Zoo are the best they can be.

New Additions in 2012-14

- Black-footed Ferret
- Crested Gecko
- Desert Tortoise
- Indian Peafowl
- Black-tailed Prairie Dogs
- Brazilian Giant Cave Roaches
- African 4-toed Hedgehog

ZOOschool

Wildest Classroom in Town!



Amarillo
ZOO

ED-ZOO-CATION - "BRINGING BOOK LEARNING TO LIFE!"

One of Amarillo Zoo's top goals is to educate and inspire while developing an appreciation, respect and sense of stewardship for the natural world. We believe that one of the best ways to reach our audience is through fun, interactive and playful events, programs and activities. Play helps children learn to use their imagination to explore and discover their environment, expand creative thinking and to express themselves. Through this form of interactive hands-on learning children build a respectful relationship with the world around them.

ZOOmobile Outreach Programs

Zoo educators traveled throughout the Texas Panhandle to deliver hands-on educational programs to all grade levels. Zoo programs are designed to reinforce classroom curriculum and provide students a fun and engaging way to learn. Last year the Amarillo ZOOmobile outreach program reached over 2,500 Panhandle students in communities including:

Amarillo	Borger	Boys Ranch	Cactus	Canadian
Canyon	Dalhart	Dumas	Friona	Hereford
Lefors	Miami	Nazareth	Pampa	Panhandle
Perryton	Spearman	Stratford	Texhoma	Walcott

59 on-site education programs reaching 2,582 students.

ZOOschool

This extremely popular program completed a very successful year in 2014 reaching more than 2,000 students with "hands-on, minds-on" learning experiences using live animals as a living classroom. ZOOschool topics include: *Tales of Scales, Jaws and Claws, Conserving Wild Treasures, Rainforest Wildlife and more...*

October 1, 2011 - September 30, 2012

	# of Programs	# Reached
On-Site Programs	33	1,488
Off-Site Programs	34	1,511

October 1, 2012 - September 30, 2013

	# of Programs	# Reached
On-Site Programs	41	1,866
Off-Site Programs	29	1,025

October 1, 2013 - September 30, 2014

	# of Programs	# Reached
On-Site Programs	59	2,582
Off-Site Programs	23	2025

BILL & ALICE O'BRIEN EDUCATION CENTER

- CLASSROOM PROGRAMS
- TEACHER WORKSHOPS
- EXHIBITS FEATURING NATIVE AND EXOTIC ANIMALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!

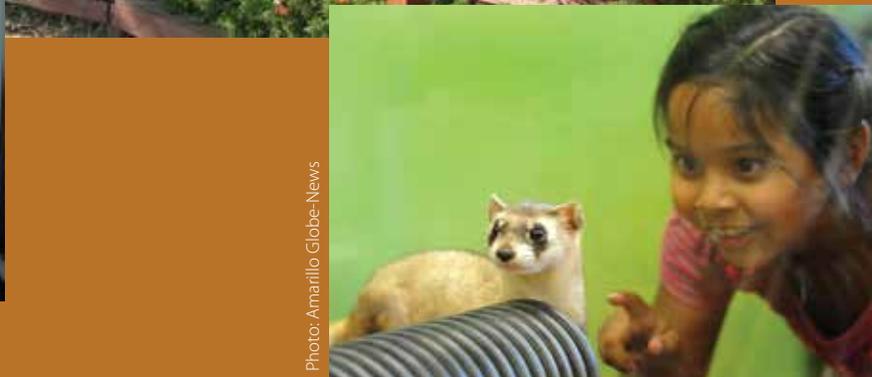


Photo: Amarillo Globe-News

Once thought extinct the endangered Black-footed Ferret is now on exhibit in the Amarillo Zoo's classroom.

OPEN:

TUESDAY - SATURDAY 9:30AM-4:00PM
SUNDAY NOON-5:00PM

CLOSED MONDAY

(MAY ALSO BE CLOSED AT TIMES FOR PROGRAMS)



FAMILY AND ADULT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Zoo hosts many fun and educational programs for people of all ages. From workshops on Xeriscape gardens to youth camps, the Zoo strives to provide everyone an opportunity to come to the Zoo to learn and experience our natural world. Featured below is just a sample of the programs the Zoo offers every year.

ZOOFARI CAMPS

More than 200 youth attended seasonal camps over the last 2 years at the Zoo. Camp experiences include behind the scene tours, working alongside keepers, making enrichment toys for Zoo animals while learning about nature and conservation.

TODDLERS AT 10

A popular series that is offered every spring for children 18 months to 2 years of age. Parents and children meet a different animal at each program and then join together to make a fun take home craft.

SATURDAY SAFARI SERIES

From bird watching to making enrichment toys for the Ring tailed Lemurs, we strive to offer a tremendous variety of fun programs to both youth and adults.

SENIOR TOUR AND TEA

Designed for those 55 and older who wish to have a guided tour of the Zoo by one of our educators. Scheduled at times when the Zoo is quiet, our senior guests enjoy a quiet and relaxed visit.

SCOUTS

Program partnerships with the Boy and Girl Scout council has brought hundreds of scouts to the Zoo to participate in a variety of badge workshops and programs.

ROARS AND SNORES

Participants sleep under the stars and experience the Zoo after the sun goes down.

MUSIC AT THE ZOO

Special after-hour experiences for our music lovers – whether the rock and roll beat of Rock and ROAR or the easy listening of JazZOO, where else can you enjoy the tunes alongside lions and tigers?

FOR THE CREATIVE SIDE

The Zoo is just more than animals. It is also art and music! Zoo Tunes and If I Drew the Zoo programs meld together the animal world with music and art.

CONSERVATION WORKSHOPS

The Amarillo Zoo has a strong commitment to conservation. From our annual community clean up of Thompson Lake and streams, to educational workshops and special events, we strive to lead the way on education and inspiration to conserve our natural world.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events scheduled throughout the year continue to give visitors even more reasons to visit the Amarillo Zoo. Our annual BOO at the ZOO and Easter EGG-citment are the most popular, family-friendly events in town.

Signature events included:

BOO at the ZOO, Easter EGG-citment, International Tiger Day, If I Drew the Zoo and more!

Did you know?
More than 10,000 attended
zoo special events in 2014.



MAGICAL AND WONDERFUL THINGS FREQUENTLY HAPPEN AROUND THE ZOO!



Lemurs enjoying their very own Jack-o-latern.



Kids having fun.

ZOO IN THE NEWS

THE ZOO ENJOYS A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL - RADIO, PRINT AND TELEVISION.

PRONEWS 
The Panhandle *Spirit*



Jackie Kingston, KAMR News anchor hams it up with a Savannah Monitor.



Meaghan Collier and Andy Justus join campers at the Amarillo Zoo during the "Keeper for a day" segment on KAMR Studio 4.



Meredith Keller with KVII, and Bobby Lee with the Big Texan, show-off a 72 oz steak before feeding it to our lion.



A camera man captures all the wild action at the Amarillo Zoo during a special event.



AMARILLO GLOBE NEWS



Meaghan Collier, host of KAMR Studio 4.

AIG work day at the Zoo.



Zoo Volunteers doing everything from taking care of animals to helping with children and their activities.

VOLUNTEERS

ZOOcrew - Volunteers make up the junior and adult divisions of the Amarillo Zoo's ZOOcrew volunteer program. ZOOcrew volunteers perform a variety of duties including education, special events, keeper assistant, clerical and more.

BOO Crew - In addition to the ZOOcrew the Zoo also recruits special volunteers for our annual BOO at the ZOO Halloween event. Volunteers from WTAMU Herdsman Hearts, Amarillo College, WTAMU Vet Club, Caprock High School Honors Society, WTAMU Wildlife Club, Ascension Academy, Amarillo National Bank, Xcel Energy, WTAMW Pre-Healthcare, Amarillo College Government Association and Palo Duro HS Senior Leadership, helped over the 3 night event.

The Zoo's internship program attracts students from Amarillo Area Center for Advanced Learning (AACAL), West Texas A&M University and area high schools. Interns perform a variety of duties to familiarize themselves with Zoo operations including animal husbandry and education.

Number of hours worked in;	2012.....	5,602
	2013.....	5,813
	2014.....	6,721



COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION

Not only is the Zoo a fun place to see amazing animals, but it is also a place to learn more about ways to save animals and their habitats around the world and right here in your own backyard. The Amarillo Zoo has added more habitat plantings to attract and provide host plants for migrating Monarch Butterflies, nest boxes for bluebirds, purple martins and bats as well as water catchment tanks at the herpetarium. The Zoo is also one of just a handful of Zoo's in the country permitted to display the critically endangered Black-footed Ferret. Once considered extinct, these small mammals once ranged across the Great Plains of North America. Now, through conservation and captive breeding efforts, the ferret is making a slow comeback. The Amarillo Zoo in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides both on and off-site education on the Black-footed Ferret and the benefits of the prairie ecosystem.

The Zoo will continue to be a regional leader in both local and global conservation education efforts and practices.



Endangered Black-footed Ferret.

Eagle Scout
Blue Bird House project



Zoo volunteers present a check to John Hughes with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.



A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT!

Thanks to your support, we are proud to share that your generosity helped support many aspects of the Zoo's operations and growth. Community funds have helped support special events, education programs, renovations to our Bengal tiger exhibit and construction of our new education center.

From a funding perspective, over \$500,000 dollars were raised from the private sector which is quite a remarkable testament to our community, generous Zoo members and supporters like you.

A MESSAGE OF THANKS –

The Amarillo Zoo could not continue to create the amazing and vital connections without the support of our friends. Thank you to our donors, board members, sponsors, volunteers and everyone we count on being there for us year after year. We appreciate it more than you'll ever know.

IN-KIND SPONSORS

United Supermarkets	Andy Chase Cundiff
Wal-Mart	Canyon's Edge Plants
Pepsi	Big Texan Steak House
Great American Cookies	Maxwell Pumpkin Farm

PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS

Amarillo Convention & Visitor Council	
Amarillo Globe News	
KAMR	KVII
KFDA	Wonderland

LEADERSHIP GIFTS

With deep appreciation, the Amarillo Zoo and the Amarillo Zoological Society acknowledges the support of the following individual donors. Their support has had a significant contribution to the success of the Zoo. You made a difference!

Alice and Bill O'Brien	Cindy and Michael Terk
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EVENT AND PROGRAM SPONSORS

When the Amarillo Zoo talks of loyalty, longevity and giving back to the community, our corporate and community partners stand out.

Texas Parks and Wildlife	
David and Nona S. Payne Foundation	
Junior League of Amarillo	Window on a Wider World
Linda G. Miller Charitable Trust	The William Mullins Foundation
The Venom	The Hagy Foundation
Xcel Energy	The Kimble Foundation Trust
Amarillo National Bank	Wal-Mart
McDonalds	Sonic
Children's Dentistry of Amarillo	Noah's Ark Pet Hospital
Heaven's Rainbow Bridge	Chateau Pet Resort
Wells Fargo Wealth Management	Miller, Allen & Mitchell, PLLC
Josephine Anderson Charitable Trust	
Dr. Kent Roberts and Ilene Roberts Balliett Foundation	
Belmar Bakery	Atmos Energy
Data Flow	



Opossums enjoy a new bed.

ZOOGOODERS

A special thanks to those who gave our zoo animals special gifts during the year:

Jenny Hart	Jonathan Sundblom
Lana Grimes	Tyler Mayo & Kelli Tipton
Chad Miller	Maverick Mfg. & Filters
Carol Whitson	St. Andrews 1st graders

Our sincere apologies to anyone or organization that was accidentally omitted.

If you'd like to purchase an item for the animals, check out the Amarillo Zoo's Wish List at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)!

Z Amarillo
ZOO

www.amarillozoo.org