

BRANDYWINE

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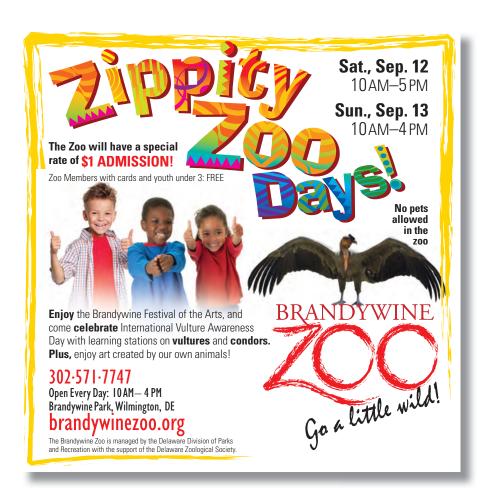
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On the Cover

Green tree pythons (Morelia viridis)

Our new pythons here at the zoo are only about a year old, so they still have their juvenile coloration but will eventually turn green.





The Zoo News is a publication of the Delaware Zoological Society.

www.brandywinezoo.org

Notes from the Director



Change is once again taking place at the ZOO!

In late 2013, the Brandywine Zoo, Delaware Zoological Society and Delaware State Parks began working with various local state representatives to raise funds for

what was to become Eagle Ridge. This addition, in the back of the zoo, would greatly improve accessibility in the back area of the zoo around the otter and eagle exhibits. Construction on this wonderful new addition will begin this fall, after our zoo season ends. We will be working with DNREC to put together meetings and packages for bidding the project out this summer and construction will begin this November. We wanted to let our visitors know that due to

the zoo on Mondays and Tuesdays starting November 2. This will remain in effect through February 2016.



Due to the nature of the project, there will be days contractors will need to have access to the site to accomplish the work in a timely manner. This has made the change to our normal schedule necessary. We apologize for this as it is the first time the zoo will not be open seven days a week in many years, but are confident it will be well worthwhile once the project is completed.

The Brandywine Zoo would like to once again thank Zoological Society Board Member Bob Grove for his time in designing Eagle Ridge. We would also like to thanks State Representatives Gerald L. Brady, Stephanie T. Bolden and Charles Potter as well as State Senators Harris B. McDowell III and Robert I. Marshall for their efforts in securing funding to make this project happen.

The zoo will be on its normal schedule until then with a full slate of events such as Brew at the Zoo, Boo at the Zoo and many more. Once constructions starts we will still be open Wednesday – Sunday so please come out and visit us as we will have full programming taking place and

> new additions coming.

See you at the zoo!

Gene Peacock, Zoo Director



110 Years of History at the Zoo

By Gene Peacock, Zoo Director, Delaware State Parks

Wow! The Brandywine Zoo is 110 years old this year. That puts us on a prestigious list of other AZA zoos 100 years or older that includes the Philadelphia Zoo, Central Park Zoo, Bronx Zoo, Prospect Park Zoo, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore and quite a few other very recognizable names. This is certainly a milestone in the Brandywine Zoo's history that can be marked with many newsworthy moments.

In 1904, Dr. James H. Morgan came to the Board of the Park Commissioners and with him, the idea of a zoo in Wilmington. The zoo opened in 1905 with boundaries much different from the present day zoo. The main part was the area across from the current Andean Condor Exhibit which was an old bear pit (now the education pavilion area). Other exhibits extended down the river and included a variety of animals over the years such ducks, geese, monkey, goats and even elk and bison. In fact, Monkey Hill was originally called Buffalo Hill, because a herd of bison lived on what are now the playground and ball fields on West 18th street.

the development of the Delaware Zoological Society, which has supported the zoo ever since. Nancy Falasco was then hired as Zoo Director in 1981. During her 32 years, the zoo's footprint grew significantly, with many new additions to the collection and



the new front gate, gift shop and more. During her tenure, the zoo was accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) for the first time in 1984 and has remained so ever since.



In the 1920's and 1930's more change came to the zoo. The bear bits were filled in and new exhibits built in what is now the center of the zoo. What is now the Red panda, Swift Fox, Serval exhibits were originally lion, tiger, and bear exhibits. The exotic animal house became a monkey house with a variety of species living in it. In the post-World War II years, there were upgrades to the monkey house and the development of the Children's Zoo with Nursery Rhyme characters. 1971 saw the New Castle County Government take over the zoo and hire Hans Rosenberg as the supervisor. During his time, he added to the collection and renovated the old zoo. In 1979, Tom Skeldon took over and added the tiger exhibit and the administration building. In addition, he was instrumental in

Today the Brandywine Zoo sits on about 14 acres and has once again seen many changes. With new directors for the zoo and society, the place is once again getting a facelift. Stick around and see some of the exciting things happening in the near future to



once again give a new look to the Brandywine Zoo.

New Reptiles

By Jacque Williamson, Curator of Education, Brandywine Zoo

We are excited to announce the addition of three new Australasian reptile exhibits at the Zoo! This year, we have added prehensile-tailed skinks (Corucia zebrata), mossy prehensile tailed geckos (Rhacodactylus chahoua), and green tree pythons (Morelia viridis) to our collection. Staff at the Zoo have spent the better part of the spring and summer preparing for this exciting trio's arrival! With these three species, we will now have reptiles on exhibit year-round, making it a great addition to the Zoo.

Species profiles:

Prehensile-tailed skinks (Corucia zebrata)

Hailing from the Soloman Islands, this skink species is the largest in the world, with individuals growing upwards of 32 inches. Interestingly, prehensile-tailed skinks live in family units, and both parents participate in rearing of their young. A single baby one-third the size of an adult is born to a mother skink who carries it to full term, rather than laying an egg; in reptiles this is called "live-bearing." Once the baby arrives, both mother and father skink will help to raise it together in their territory.

Mossy prehensile tailed geckos (Rhacodactylus chahoua)

These geckos, from New Caledonia, are named both for the moss-like pattern of their skin as well as their long, prehensile tails. The term 'prehensile' means that an animal's limb is capable of grasping or holding onto something. As you can imagine,

having a prehensile tail helps these arboreal lizards move about the treetop canopy.

Green tree pythons (Morelia viridis)

This nonvenomous snake from New Guinea goes through something called an 'ontogenetic color change.' This refers to the fact that baby green tree pythons hatch as a deep, brick-red, or bright yellow coloring but as they mature they turn emerald green, which can take several years. Our new pythons here at the zoo are only about a year old, so they still have their juvenile coloration but will eventually turn green.



Celebrating Zoo Keepers and the Job They Do

By Sharon Smith, Animal Keeper, Delaware State Parks

Being a zoo keeper is an awesome job that involves joy, sometimes sadness, educational opportunities, great achievements, challenges, friendships, and allows us to share with and help educate visitors on conservation efforts both locally and globally.



Everything we do during our work day directly affects the animals in our care. Our days include feeding the animals, cleaning enclosures, making sure all the animals are healthy and happy, both physically and mentally. We do "positive reinforcement" training and we also do behavioral

the animals. The training we do helps us better care for the animals and the enrichment keeps the animals stimulated and hopefully solicits some of their natural behaviors. We are constantly bettering ourselves through confer-

ences, networking, newsletters and schooling to help us grow and stay up on the best animal care practices. We are professionals dedicating our careers to gaining knowledge and experience, sharing this knowledge to constantly improve the care of the animals here at The Brandywine Zoo.

enrichment for

The mission of The American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) is to advance excellence in the animal keeping profession, foster effective communication beneficial to animal care, support deserving conservation projects, and promote the preservation of our natural resources and animal life. The Brandywine Zoo AAZK Chapter (BZAAZK) is made up of zoo keepers, educators, and other zoo employees and is committed to supporting the professional and conservation efforts of AAZK. By supporting BZAAZK, you help enhance the professional development of its members and help our chapter grow. We have hosted several fundraising events including, 'Bowl-

fundraising events including, 'Bowling for Rhinos'. This year, we raised over \$1500 to help fund rhinoceros

conservation projects in Kenya and Indonesia.
Last year our BZAAZK chapter created the first 'Tango for Tamarins' event.
This year's 'Tango for Tamarins' will be held August 29th

rins' will be held August 29th at the Blue Ball Barn in Wilmington. Funds raised will support Golden Lion Tamarins in Brazil and at the Zoo. Additionally, we raise money to help with professional development for the keepers. We offer guest speaker events to help educate the public on a variety of topics. For more information on BZAAZK and upcoming fund-

raisers and events, visit: www.facebook.com/bzaazk.

Celebrate Red Panda Day at the Zootique

To celebrate International Red Panda Day, we are having a special week-long red panda sale in the gift shop. All plush red pandas will be 10% off their normal retail prices! The sale runs September 14th - 20th, 2015. Stop by Zootique to check out all of the great souvenirs from your day at the zoo!



Don't forget to come back to the Zootique in November and December! Merchandise will be 20% off for the end of the year sale!

Members get this discount in addition to their normal discount.

EDZOOCATION Go a Little Wild at the Zoo!

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BRANDYWINE

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Breakfast with SANTA 9:00am-10:30am	14			17	18	19		
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27		29	30	Noon Year's Eve 31 11:00am-12:15pm				

Species Survival Plans, the Brandywine Zoo ands You!

By Lynn Klein, General Curator, Delaware State Parks

Here at the Brandywine Zoo, we participate in many SSP's. They include: Amur tiger, Bobcat, Capybara, Golden-headed lion tamarin, Golden lion tamarin, Prehensile-tailed Porcupine, Red panda, River Otter, Serval, Swift fox, Tenrec, Two-toed sloth, Prehensile-tailed skinks, Andean condor, Rhea, and Burrowing Owl.

Burrowing owls weigh about as much as a baseball. They can be found from southern Canada to the Caribbean. In the United States, they are mostly found in the western

half of the country, except for an isolated population in Florida. They are more nocturnal, active at night, in the winter and diurnal, active during the day, in the summer. Burrowing owls eat mostly insects and small mammals. In Florida, they eat reptiles and amphibians, which are abundant. Some research has shown that Burrowing owls will line their nests with dung in order to attract beetles and eat them once they are in the nest.

Most often these little owls will use an existing burrow made by another animal for their own. Burrows can be leftover from a badger, ground squirrel, marmot, prairie dog, fox, skunk or armadillo. The simplest owl burrows are "L" shaped to ensure that the nest chamber is dark. A mound of dirt is placed at the entrance of the chamber for protection from the weather and predators. The burrowing owl has the largest clutch size, up to 12 eggs, of any raptor in North America. The female is the only one who sits on the eggs, but while she is incubating them, the male will feed her. He stays close by the burrow while gathering

food so that he can also protect his family. After the eggs hatch, both parents feed the babies. By eight weeks of age, the owlets are gathering the bulk of their own food.

The Brandywine Zoo has been part of the Burrowing owl SSP for many years. Last year, our male Burrowing owl passed away so we contacted the Burrowing owl SSP to help us find a new friend

for our female owl. As soon as the weather was warm enough to fly (in a plane that is), our new male was on his way from the NEW Zoo in Wisconsin! Oz, who was named at the NEW Zoo, arrived in good health. As with all animals at the zoo, he entered a

What is a Species Survival Plan? The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) states that the mission of an AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP) is to cooperatively manage threatened or endangered species populations within AZA accredited zoos and aquariums. Their goals are designed to ensure a healthy and genetically diverse AZA population while making sure the captive population is also sustainable.

How do SSP's work? There are currently more than 450 SSP Programs. Each SSP has a Coordinator and a Studbook Keeper and often the same individual fulfills both of these roles. They are responsible for developing a Studbook as well as a Breeding and Transfer Plan that identifies the population management goals and recommendations for their assigned species. An AZA Studbook documents the pedigree and entire demographic history of individuals in a specific population. This information is very important when tracking and managing each individual animal. The SSP members will meet once per year to make recommendations for breeding pairs and transfers between institutions.

Why are SSP's important? In a modern zoo, most of the animals are born in captivity. We want to make sure that our animals are healthy. SSP's were started in the early 1980's after some scientists at the Smithsonian discovered that animals, whose parents were closely related, were more likely to suffer from life-threatening diseases. SSP's were created to ensure that offspring had as diverse a set of genes, as possible. Pedigreed studbooks, which had been used for documenting the family trees of race horses for centuries, were adapted for exotic species.

period of quarantine, which can last from 30 to 90 days depending on the animal, its health, and how it adjusts to its new surroundings.



Once he finished his required quarantine, Oz was moved to his new exhibit and met Dori, our female. Almost immediately, she moved over and started nudging and trying to preen Oz. Oz however, was too busy looking up at the sky to even notice Dori. At his old zoo Oz had been in an indoor enclosure so he had not seen the sky before. Unfortunately for Dori she could not compete with the

big beautiful sky that first day but the two owls have been together for several months now and get along very well. *Whooo* knows, maybe one day when you come to visit, you will get to see a whole family of Burrowing owls! That would make the Zoo, SSP and everyone very happy!



Breakfast

Saturday, December 12th & Sunday, December 13th

Enjoy a festive breakfast then have your photo taken with Santa! We'll visit the animals in the Zoo and enjoy holiday crafts and activities. All ages welcome!

Pre-registration:

\$18 per Adult / \$15 per Child Zoo Members 10% off! Register today! Space is limited.

BRANDYWINE Go a little wild!



302.571.7747 Open Every Day: 10AM-4PM Brandywine Park, Wilmington, DE brandywinezoo.org

Don't forget! 20% off Zootique in November and December! End of the year sale!

Members get this discount
in addition to their
normal discount.



NOON YEAR'S EVE

Thursday, December 31st 11 AM - 12:15 PM



302.571.7747 ext. 209

Open Every Day: 10 AM - 4 PM Brandywine Park, Wilmington, DE

brandywinezoo.org

The Brandywine Zoo is managed by the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation with the support of the Delaware Zoological Society.



Join the countdown to noon and celebrate the coming of 2015! Program begins 11 AM. Includes celebratory activities, then we'll party with the animals! Dress for the weather.

> Admission: \$6/person Zoo Members: \$5/person No pre-registration required.



Society Executive Director's Letter



Dear Members,

I hope you are enjoying this edition of Zoo News. The Fall will be fun and busy at the zoo. Over the last few months, the Zoological Society has been looking at ways to better serve our mission and members.

For several years, we have provided a platform to buy your membership, adopt an animal,

and donate to us online. Now, our website also allows you to buy special event tickets, set up recurring donations, and book education programs all in one seamless process. You can buy your tickets to Brew at the Zoo and your Brew t-shirt online now and avoid paying more at the door!

Recurring donations save you the trouble of remembering to visit the website repeatedly and allow you to spread out your donation over time. Using our new online system, they can be given monthly, quarterly, or annually. A donation of \$10 per month won't take a big bite out of your

budget, but will add up to a \$120 tax-deductible annual gift in support of your zoo.

Finally, you can now book our Science & Career Workshops, Breakfast with Santa, Zoo Yoga & our Zoo Kids program online. For the 2016 summer camp season, we plan to offer online registration for the first time.

Some people have asked, "Why are you making this investment in technology?" There are many reasons. First and foremost, it frees up our staff to focus on their primary goal of educating and providing excellent customer service to our guests and program attendees. Second, it saves an immense amount of paper. Third, it provides an easier process for you. You will no longer have to wait to find out whether or not there is a spot for your child in Zoo Camp. You will receive your confirmation of admission within a few minutes of registering.

To see some of the changes that we have been making, check out our website, www.brandywinezoo.org.

We hope you enjoy these new services and look forward to seeing you at your zoo!

Best regards,

Mike Allen Executive Director Delaware Zoological Society



The Brandywine Zoo supports conservation projects in Delaware and across the globe. One project we help fund is the Tiger Conservation Campaign's tiger anti-poaching program in Asia. In April, Dr. Tara Harris, the Tiger Conservation Campaign's leader, visited several anti-poaching project sites and delivered one of our Brandywine Zoo shirts to Maidi, a member of one of the Wildlife Response Teams who work to resolve tiger-human conflicts. Thanks to your continued support, we can work with our partners around the world to preserve and protect wildlife.

Delaware Zoological Society

1001 North Park Drive, Wilmington, DE 19802



The Brandywine Zoo is managed by the Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation with the support of the Delaware Zoological Society.

For more information about the Division or Delaware State Parks, call (302) 739-9220 or visit our web site at www.destateparks.com.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and the diversity of its work force.

ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS C **AQUARIUMS**

Please let us know when you move; don't miss special invitations and Zoo News. Email to memberships@ brandywinezoo.org or call 302-571-7788.

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