

ESSEX COUNTY
TURTLE BACK



Zoological Society
of New Jersey, Inc.
AT ESSEX COUNTY TURTLE BACK ZOO

Turtle TALK

Summer 2020

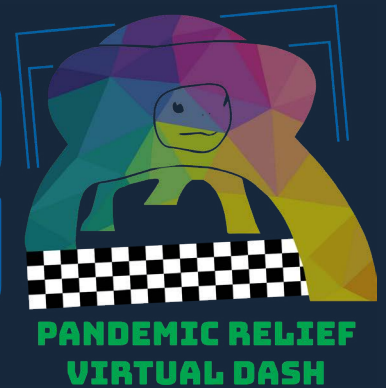
#ZOOANDYOU: pg. 1

Conservation Education:
pg. 2

Zoo News: pg. 5



#ZOO AND YOU



PANDEMIC RELIEF
VIRTUAL DASH

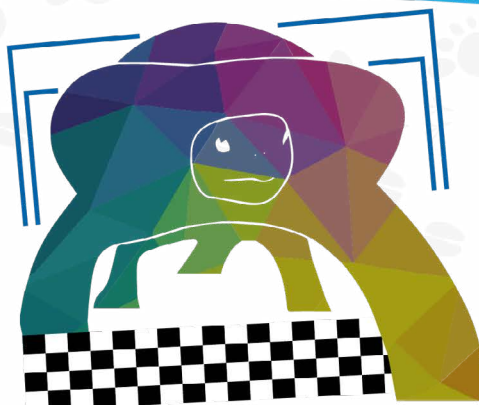
Join #ZOOANDYOU
Virtual Dash & Pandemic Relief

Visit www.zooandyou.org to register!

STEP UP FOR THE WILD!



#ZOOANDYOU



PANDEMIC RELIEF VIRTUAL DASH

WWW.ZOOANDYOU.ORG

#ZOOANDYOU Campaign

The #ZOOANDYOU Campaign supports Essex County Turtle Back Zoo's animal welfare and the New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund. In a time of social distancing, this campaign intends to UNITE us in support of vital causes to keep both animals and humans safe, healthy, and happy. #STAYATHOME, but keep moving!

People interested in participating can create a personal or a team fundraising page. Participants are asked to select a goal for the challenge and record daily step counts to virtually circle the perimeter of New Jersey.

Join the Pack!

The Zoological Society of New Jersey invites you to join our #ZOOANDYOU campaign to support Essex County Turtle Back Zoo's animal welfare and the New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund. For the last 57 years, Essex County Turtle Back Zoo has brought people together – most recently as New Jersey's largest tourist attraction. Today, we intend to leverage this unique ability to inspire our communities in a definitive time of need. #STAYATHOME and join us!

Visit www.zooandyou.org to learn more and register! Share how you are participating with posts and pictures on the social media by using #ZOOANDYOU.

At - Home Programs

Interested in an education program? Turtle Back Zoo is hosting Distance Learning programs with topic tailored to your group. For more information, email our Education Curator, Marguerite Hunt, at mhunt@parks.essexcountynj.org. Check out our topics here: <https://bit.ly/3bRrh1w>.

Facebook Live Streams

Get your questions ready for our Facebook Live streams. Tune in for keeper-guided chats on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Like and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to find out what time we go live. Check out April 28th's live stream for #NationalHyenaDay, which featured some special enrichment for our animal ambassadors. See you there!



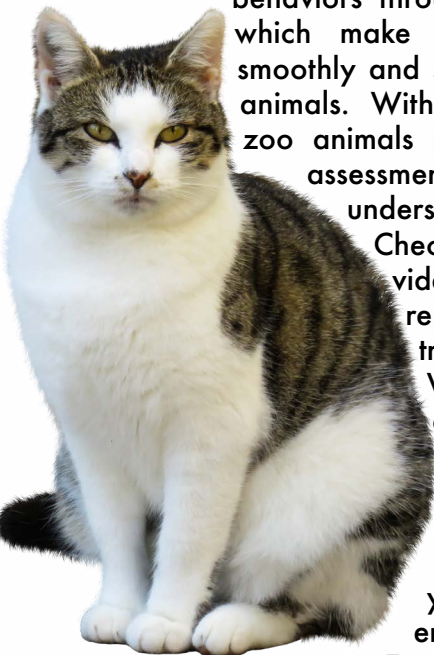


CONSERVATION EDUCATION

by Educator Katie Fenyar

While we're indoors, it's a great time to get creative. Instead of our typical article, we decided to include some cool projects and other ways you can support wildlife conservation while at home. Enjoy!

Do you have a pet at home? You can be like a zookeeper and train your favorite companion, even if it's a cat or a lizard. As zookeepers, we train behaviors through positive reinforcement which make veterinary checkups run smoothly and strengthens bonds with the animals. With behaviors in place, our zoo animals participate in their health assessments and contribute to our understanding of zoo medicine. Check out our Facebook videos, where our primate and reptile keepers demonstrate training sessions with our White-cheeked Gibbons and Komodo Dragon (p.s. Shu the dragon is harness trained, which is awesome).



For bonus points with your pets, try creating an enrichment item at home. Enrichment challenges an animal's innate skills and supports mental, emotional, and physical health. Try out some new things for your pets and see what you can design. Some cool ideas are creating a puzzle feeder or maze using household items that are safe for your pets (check with your vet when in doubt).

Do you love plants? This is a perfect time to create a wildlife-friendly backyard by installing plants native to NJ. [Click here](#) for more information about NJ-native plants: <https://bit.ly/2xYFKtR>. Don't have a backyard? You can prevent bird-strikes by adding some color or patterns to your windows with liquid chalk markers or UV-bird stickers. Learn about protecting birds at <https://bit.ly/3cXq1K6>.

For our craft-inclined friends, we challenge you to take inspiration from nature using the items you have around home. It could be recyclable objects, things you find in nature, or anything that inspires you. Design your favorite animal in its habitat using those materials and let your creativity run wild. For inspiration, check out our interview on page three with Emma, who created a pangolin from pine cones!



If you want to learn more about amazing wildlife, why not create your own field guide? We recommend visiting the IUCN Red List as an excellent resource; there are so many intriguing species to learn about here, no matter which animal you love! Add to your guide as you explore the globe, learning about new species as you go. A field guide should include information like the species name, scientific name, habitat, diet, conservation status (i.e. endangered), description of the animal, and some fun facts! You can even draw or print out a picture for your field guide. Get creative!

While nature might seem far away, wildlife is still counting on us to protect them. No action, whether it be recycling or supporting conservation organizations, is too little. Your continued support of the wildlife we cherish means the world to us. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to share your latest projects and news with us. We can't wait to see where your creativity leads!



Photo by Jake Danishevsky



JUNIOR CONSERVATIONIST

(a pangolin who suffered life-threatening injuries and survived) on a PBS documentary, "The World's Most Wanted Animal." I fell in love with them and wanted to raise awareness.

As a member of the Pangolin Consortium, Essex County Turtle Back Zoo was excited to host a second Pangolin Conservation Breakfast (Feb 2020), again inviting the public to learn about the most trafficked mammal in the world. We always enjoy meeting our program guests, but we were thrilled to meet 6th grader Emma, who attended the program with her mother, Melanie. Emma brought a tribute to pangolins that she shared with everyone: a beautiful, life size, handmade statue created out of pine cones and other natural materials. Emma's passion for wildlife goes beyond her beautiful artwork; check out her interview below to learn about how she decided to raise awareness of these mysterious, but fascinating creatures. To learn a little bit about her creative process, check out our interview below. The picture is of Emma and her adorable dogs, Rocky and Nelly.

Tell us a bit about yourself, what are your favorite hobbies?

My name is Emma Cooper and I'm in sixth grade at Frankford Township Middle School. I like to read, draw, sing, dance, crochet, and spend time with my family and friends. I'm also into technology-related things like FNAF, Gacha Life, STEM programs and stuff like that. I've been fond of animals for as long as I can remember, especially animals like giraffes and cats.

What inspired you to create art based on pangolins?

This year I joined a program at my school called Distinguished Scholars Program (DSP). It's an optional program where students can graduate eighth grade with the honor of being a Distinguished Scholar after completing five projects and presentations, along with some other requirements.

For my first project this past fall, I chose to highlight pangolins because they are the most trafficked mammal in the world. I first saw Honey Bunny

For my DSP project I created "Pete" the pangolin model along with a drawing to include on my posters, a banner, and bookmarks to hand out and help spread the word. I also donated a pangolin book and pangolin stuffed animal "reading buddy" to my school and another pangolin book to a local library!

How did you choose what materials to use? How long did it take to design and build? What challenges did you face?

While I was discussing my action plan with the DSP founder, we decided on the materials. I ultimately chose to use aluminum wire mesh for the body and structure, covered it with felt for the belly and pine cone scales, making it look pretty realistic. I also molded "Pete's" claws from clay and displayed him on a real branch. My Pangolin model took about ten to twelve hours to design and build. The only challenge was for me not to hot glue my fingers too much!

During the pangolin breakfast, did you eat a bug? If so, did you like it? If not, what was your favorite activity?

During the breakfast I did eat some crushed ants; they were a little bit sweet and definitely crunchy! While eating the ants was cool, meeting Worm (Turtle Back Zoo's White-bellied Pangolin) was by far the best part of the Pangolin Breakfast!

One of our staff got an amazing photo of you meeting the pangolin. How did it feel to meet an endangered species in person?

It felt really good! I couldn't help but smile!

If you could say one thing to our readers, what would it be?

I really enjoyed the experience of the informative breakfast and meeting Worm. I highly recommend anyone of any age who has the opportunity to attend a program like this to join in and if not, just to visit the zoo and have a great time!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

How long has your family been members of the Zoo?

We have been members since Ben was 5 months old.

What do you love about the Zoo?

We love that we can spend the whole day by visiting all the animals, riding the train, feeding the animals, going on the carousel, and having a pony ride (for a little longer until Ben is too tall). We also like that we can do a quick morning or afternoon visit if our day is too busy. Ben loves to climb through the prairie dog tunnel and wave to us.

When did you start visiting the Zoo and how has it changed since?

The first time we went to the zoo as a family, Ben was only a few months old. We were so surprised by how big the zoo had become! Tim and I hadn't been there since we were kids. A lot had changed since the 1980s! We couldn't believe how big it was and the variety of animals in the exhibits. It was nice to know this was all pretty close to us. We really love visiting during Christmas! It's become a yearly tradition with family.

What inspired creating the Zoo at home?

The second week of quarantine we were missing the zoo and other daily outings. My husband, Tim, suggested we make our own zoo. Ben loved the idea. Ben chose which animals we should make and the order. I drew each of the animals on butcher paper. It was mostly Ben and Tim's job to color them. We cut them out and we cut out lots of grass and water for the animals. Of course the giraffe had to be eating lettuce just like when we feed them in person! We were going to name the zoo Turtle Back Zoo, but Ben's Aunt suggested we name it Turtle Ben Zoo.



The Westervelt Family

What is your favorite exhibit or animal at the Zoo?

Ben loves visiting the penguins and watching them swim under water right in front of him. He also loves to watch the sea turtles. I love watching the sloth, especially when he is eating.

What are your dreams for the Zoo?

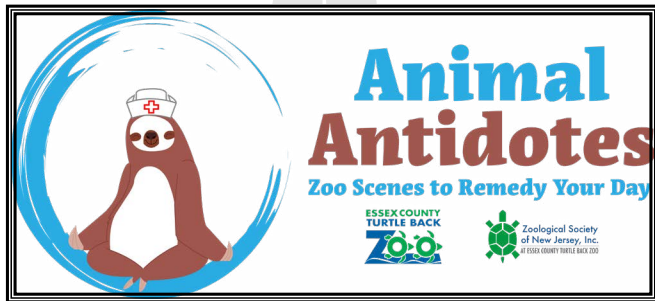
We can't wait to be able to visit the zoo again! We hope the animals are well as well as their caretakers! If you mean our zoo, we have taken Ben's class on a Zoom field trip of the zoo. Tim and I have even showed our classes through our online meetings.

We would like to thank Jean Marie, Tim, and Benjamin Westervelt for their support of Essex County Turtle Back Zoo and the Zoological Society of New Jersey and for sharing Turtle Ben Zoo with us! We encourage you to make your very own arts and crafts Zoo at home and to share the pictures with us at info@zoologicalsocietyofnj.org or with #TBZAHome on social media.

If you would like to be considered for our donor and member spotlight, please contact info@zoologicalsocietyofnj.org.

ZOO NEWS

Educator Shay and Jared's #LetsTakeAWalk series is taking off. This series is great for anyone who wants to learn more about our ambassadors. If you haven't caught one yet, check out our social media and stay tuned for more content.



New to TBZ:

We have some new additions to our zoo family that we're excited to share!

Amur Leopard Cub

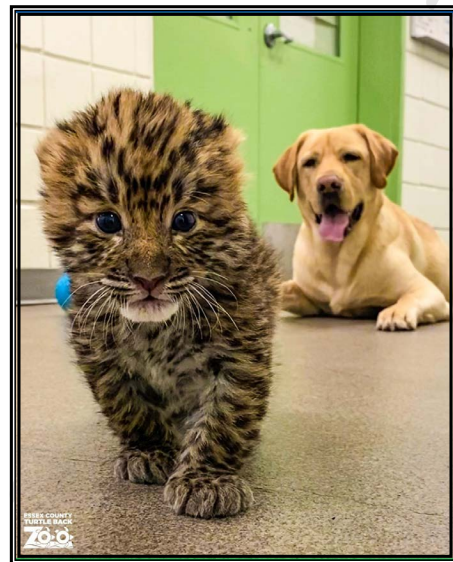
A female Amur Leopard, named Nadya, was born on Friday, March 13th to parents Annika (mother) and Valeri (father). Nadya means "filled with hope" in Russian. When Annika didn't nurse the cub, TBZ veterinary staff and management, and the species survival plan (SSP) coordinator decided to hand-rear the cub.

As part of an SSP, Nadya's birth is crucial to the future of this critically endangered species, which has less than 100 individuals in the wild due to habitat loss and human-animal conflicts such as poaching. Stay tuned to our social media for updates about Nadya!



Last but not least, we want to say a HUGE thank you to our Docent family! Thank you for everything you do, from donating enrichment for our animal ambassadors to teaching our guests about wildlife. From all of us, we miss seeing you at the zoo and can't wait until we're together again.

For a breath of fresh air, check out our "Animal Antidotes" series from the Zoological Society of New Jersey. These quick clips will give you a sneak peek at what your favorite animals are doing while we're closed. Watch them via this link: <https://bit.ly/2Wm3EYg>.



At Essex Farm, we're excited to announce the addition of spring lambs! Born to Damien and our female Jacob Sheep in mid-April, the lambs are just starting to explore the farm. The lambs are healthy and we can't wait to watch them grow. According to the Livestock Conservancy, Jacob sheep are an important part of English and American culture, where their fleece (wool) was highly sought after by weavers for its unique black and white pattern. Though they have decreased in popularity within North American farms, the Livestock Conservancy is acting to connect Jacob sheep owners and maintain this heritage breed. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/35lCOni>.



SUPPORT YOUR FAVORITE WILD ANIMALS AT ESSEX COUNTY TURTLE BACK ZOO

We appreciate your generosity in strengthening Essex County Turtle Back Zoo's commitment to conservation, education, & inspiration. All donations to the Zoological Society of New Jersey support the Zoo by providing necessary funds for new habitat design & construction, general zoo improvements, operating support, and conservation programming. There are many ways to donate: Adopt an Animal, Adopt a Bench, Living and Memorial Tributes, Corporate Matching, Amazon Wish List, Monetary Donation, or Becoming a Member of the Zoological Society of New Jersey and Essex County Turtle Back Zoo.



Visit www.zoologicalsocietyofnj.org/support to get started!

Zoological Society of NJ Board of Directors

The Zoological Society of New Jersey, Inc. is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) corporation, organized under the laws of the State of New Jersey. Its purpose is to promote the general welfare of Essex County Turtle Back Zoo, a facility of the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs; to stimulate the public's interest in the growth, improvement, and development of Essex County Turtle Back Zoo through education and research with an emphasis on natural conservation of all species of animals; to support and sponsor fund-raising events to help in the financing of new facilities, purchase of equipment, and acquisition of animals; to encourage membership in the Society by persons interested in the promotion of the physical and aesthetic qualities of Essex County Turtle Back Zoo; and to stimulate the public interest in the development and enjoyment of Essex County Turtle Back Zoo and of animals everywhere.

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