

TOUCAN TALK



SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER / VOL. 10, No. 5

YOUR ZOO NEEDS YOU!

As members of the Zoological Society of Florida, we enjoy many benefits associated with Metrozoo. Aside from a modest membership fee, little is asked of us in return. But now Metrozoo really needs us, and we must show our support in a visible and vocal manner.

The occasion for a show of strength is Dade County's annual budget hearing, set for 5 p.m. on September 11th and 20th. These hearings are absolutely crucial for the future of our zoo.

As you know, each year the Metro-Dade County Commission decides the budget for various departments, institutions and programs throughout Dade County. In recent years, available funds have been very tight, and once again this year the commission must make some difficult choices in deciding where the money will go.

We have to make sure that the money goes in the right direction. Metrozoo's monetary needs must be met because right now the zoo is suffering a budget crisis.

Zoological Society's executive board members will be speaking on behalf of Metrozoo at the budget hearings. Other special interest groups will also be present, arguing for their own projects, possibly even objecting to funding for the zoo. Your presence at these hearings is crucial to demonstrate to the commission that Metrozoo is strongly supported by the community.

We will provide transportation from Metrozoo to the budget hearings at Dade County Auditorium for those of you who are interested. To help Metrozoo remain one of the world's finest zoos and South Florida's premier attraction, please plan to attend. The Zoological Society of Florida came through in 1972 when we recognized Dade County's new zoo. Let's do it again!

WHAT: Dade County Budget Hearings

WHEN: 5 P.M., Tuesday
September 11 & September 20

WHERE: Dade County Auditorium,
2901 Flagler Street

For more information about the hearings or about transportation, please contact the Society's Volunteer Services at 255-5551.



Thank You

When the Zoological Society moved, along with the zoo, from Crandon Park to its present site, Society members were reluctant to spend a lot of money on new accommodations, knowing that Metrozoo would need their full financial support in its formative years. Instead of fancy buildings, we chose to invest in three used trailers. In these rather spartan surroundings, we have seen our membership soar and our commitment deepen. Recently, some of our members volunteered to make our home away from home more attractive and welcoming. Willing hands made light work of the project, and we'd like to thank all the people who were involved in one way or another.

- **Matrix Construction** and John Little for providing skirting for the trailers.
- **Carpet World of Miami** and Gary Friedman for donating and installing new carpet in the offices.
- **Honeywell Communications Service** and Norm Kublin for a sophisticated new phone system that allows us to better serve our members.
- Members of the **Men's Garden Club of Miami** and Nelson "Slim" Condon for a beautiful job of landscaping and planting around the trailers.
- Jack and Katie Bateman for the many hours they spent building the decking around the trailers.
- **KFM Construction** and Fred Masterson for sprucing up the trailers with fresh paint.
- All those who offered advice and encouragement at every step.

Thank You.



SHELL-TERED LIVES

What's the difference between turtles, tortoises and terrapins? Well, generally, "turtle" is the inclusive term for the entire group of shelled reptiles, which include turtles, tortoises and terrapins. "Tortoise" is the restrictive term for land-dwelling shelled reptiles excluding box turtles. And "terrapin" is a specific term reserved for the Diamondback terrapin, an aquatic turtle found in various parts of the southeastern & south-central U.S.

At Metrozoo, two types of giant land tortoises are displayed: the Galapagos and the Aldabra.

The Galapagos tortoise, largest of the land tortoises, is found on several islands of the Galapagos Archipelago, some 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador. On the larger islands, these tortoises may weigh well over 500 pounds, with a carapace length of over four feet. ("Carapace," incidentally, is the term used for the top shell, while the bottom shell is called "plastron.") On the drier islands, the tortoises are much smaller, weighing only 120 lbs. or so. In both cases, the males are usually larger than the females.

We find two basic shell shapes among the Galapagos tortoises, varying slightly among the sub-species. The shapes are the saddle-backed and the dome-shelled. On islands with dense vegetation, the dome-shelled tortoises are predominant because their shell shape allows them to walk through the vegetation without getting caught in the undergrowth. On the more arid islands, we find the saddle-backed tortoises. Their shell shape enables them to stretch their necks high enough to browse on vegetation that would normally be inaccessible to them. The open shell front also acts as a temperature regulator, very useful in the extreme heat of their surroundings.

Galapagos tortoises are primarily vegetarians, munching on various plants, with a special fondness for certain cactii which are found in abundance. They also enjoy wallow-

ing in the mud, which cools them off, keeps the skin from becoming too dry and protects them from annoying insects.

The courtship of these tortoises is a rather rough affair. The male batters the female with the front of his shell, bearing her to the ground with his superior mating. Breeding can take place at any time of the year, with certain seasonal peaks. Depending on the sub-species, the female usually lays 5-17 eggs, each about the size of a tennis ball, which take several months to hatch.

The Aldabra tortoises are found on the Aldabra islands, about 700 miles off the coast of Tanzania, just north of Madagascar. The four islands are actually one large coral structure, about 18 miles long, divided into four sections by a mangrove-bordered lagoon. Typically, the Aldabra tortoise has a much thicker shell than most of the Galapagos tortoises, but it also has a single nuchal scute or scale (between the margins of its shell, right behind its head) a feature not found among Galapagos tortoises.

As with Galapagos tortoises, the Aldabra male is considerably larger than the female, growing to a length of 40 inches, while the female is around 30 inches long. These tortoises reach sexual maturity at the age of 20 or 25. They are usually very shy and when approached, withdraw into their shells with a loud hiss. Because the terrain is practically impenetrable on the Aldabra islands, we can only estimate the population of the tortoises there; the estimates range from 33,000 to 100,000.

Though the number of the giant tortoises was drastically reduced in the 1800s by sailors who captured them for food, the tortoise population seems to have stabilized, even increased in recent years. We hope that through proper management, protection and the combined efforts of zoos around the world, these extraordinary animals may be preserved for generations to come.



Education Outlook

We'd like to raise three cheers for Laura Rose, our lady of the archives. For the last three years, she has put in countless hours piecing together the jigsaw puzzle of our accomplishments, arranging our records so that in the future our past will always be at our fingertips--and that's a wonderful present. It's dedicated volunteers like Laura who make the Society what it is, and the Education Department is particularly grateful.

Another volunteer who had a whale of a time with a jigsaw puzzle is docent Tony Colon, who volunteered many hours and much artistic talent to fabricate a full-size puzzle of a killer whale. Thanks also to Lisa Harrenstein and Donna Natalie for their assistance, and a special thank you to Rex Art Supplies and Palmetto Hardware for making Tony's brainwave a reality. Our zoo campers succeeded in putting two and two together to form a 32-foot whale. That was no fluke and it's certainly something to spout off about.



Patch. Patch. Patch. The Metrozoo Scout Patch Program is in full swing again after a short summer vacation. The A.I.R. Patch stands for Awareness, Interest and Respect. Boy Scout and Girl Scout leaders are invited to contact the Education Department for details about participating in this exciting program, which brings a breath of fresh A.I.R. to the zoo.

Another program with a successful air about it is **FIU at the Zoo**. The Spring session received such a terrific response from over 40 participants that we've decided to let history repeat itself from Sept. 6th to December 13th. The **Fall classes** will offer teaching methods utilizing outdoor settings and special environments, as well as entirely new sessions with zoo staff. The program has been prepared by the Zoological Society's Education Department and by Dr. Ed Reichbach of FIU. The classes will meet every Thursday from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. To register or to find out more about the program, call Dr. Reichbach at 554-2561 or call the Education Department at 255-5553. The classes are offered for graduate as well as undergraduate credit.

Credit of a different sort goes to Katie Murray and Murray Printing for donating the education flyers that were distributed to the community. Thank you for a valuable service regarding our summer programs.

And now, read on for our fall programs:

Program Lineup

September 14-November 3

Metrozoo Inn

Night life at a zoo is really something and you get a rare chance to observe it. Bring your sleeping bags for this special slumber party which includes a monorail ride, dinner, a night walk and a light breakfast the next morning. Registration is limited to the first 15, so hurry if you want to be in on the Metrozoo Inn.

Friday-Saturday • Sept. 14, Oct. 5
5 P.M.—9 A.M. • Grades 4-6
\$17.50—Members / \$20—Nonmembers

Night Owls

A night out for adults only. Find out what the kids have been raving about. Spend a night at the zoo and discover a whole new world of sights and sounds. Bring your sleeping bags, we'll provide dinner and a light breakfast! For all you night owls, this will be such a hoot!

Fri.-Sat. • Sept. 28, Oct. 26 • 6 P.M.-9 A.M.
\$17.50—Members / \$20—Nonmembers

Junior Zoologist

Learn almost everything you always wanted to know about Metrozoo but were afraid to ask. Get your information straight from the horse's mouth during our animal discovery days for Junior Zoologists. T-shirt included.

6 consecutive Saturdays • Sept. 15-Oct. 20
9 A.M.—Noon • Grades 7-9
\$35—Members / \$40—Nonmembers

Animal Crackers • Part I

An exciting way for children to learn about differences and similarities among Metrozoo's animals. Two hours crammed with new sights and sounds and activities that kids delight in. In Part 1, they'll learn about the zoo's wildcats, let their imagination fly with the birds and scratch their heads over horns and antlers. In fact, they'll have such a great time, they'll want to come back for more in Part II.

3 consecutive Saturdays • Oct. 13—Oct. 27
9:30-11:30 A.M. / 1-3 P.M. • Sign up for mornings or afternoon sessions • Ages 3, 4, 5
\$30—Members / \$35—Nonmembers

Zoo Searchers

Rose Krubsack will lead an exciting journey of exploration into the animal world—past & present. Each week you'll examine a new topic, ranging from fossils to insects to birds. Animal parts will be analyzed under a microscope. All materials are provided.

4 consecutive Saturdays • Oct. 20—Nov. 10
9 A.M.—Noon • Grades 5 & 6
\$30—Members / \$35—Nonmembers

Breakfast With The Beasts

Experience the tranquil beauty of the zoo in the early morning. Enjoy a continental breakfast while learning about the food habits and nutrition of the zoo residents, then meet some of our popular animals closeup. Did you know, instance, that a baby elephant can consume 50 pounds of hay, 20 pounds of alfalfa and several pounds of apples in just one day? Now that's really a jumbo appetite! Pre-registration required.

Sunday, October 28

8 A.M.—10 A.M. • Families—Adults
\$8—Members / \$10—Nonmembers

Animal Crackers • Part II

Children will be surprised to discover that learning can be such fun! They'll go ape over a program that teaches them about Metrozoo's apes, the tallest and the biggest animals at the zoo, and about bears. Singing, crafts and other activities will make the two hours go by in a flash.

3 consecutive Saturdays • Nov. 3—Nov. 17
9:30-11:30 A.M. / 1-3 P.M. • Sign up for morning or afternoon sessions • Ages 3, 4, 5
\$30—Members / \$35—Nonmembers

Toucan Team

A challenging opportunity to delve deeper into the study of animals and zoos. Participants will use all the resources available in our Education Department to make what they've studied in books come alive. Comparative anatomy and microscopy are only some of the offerings in this program. T-shirt and all required materials are provided. Participants completing this course become eligible for our teen volunteer group - Service Team.

6 consecutive Saturdays • Nov. 3—Dec. 15
9 A.M.—3 P.M. • Grades 9-12
\$50—Members / \$60—Nonmembers

Enroll Me In The Following Programs.

Programs _____
Session Dates _____
Program Fees \$ _____
Membership \$ _____
(If Desired)
Total \$ _____

CLASS REGISTRATION

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Home Phone _____ Bus. Phone _____
Parent's Name _____
Student's Age _____ Grade _____

Member Nonmember

Membership entitles you to free admission to Metrozoo and 70 other zoos, special events and the Society's publications. Family \$35 / Dual \$25 / Individual \$15. Annual memberships are tax deductible. All registrations must be paid in advance. Refunds will be made up to 1 week prior to class starting date.

Mail to: **Education Dept. ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF FLORIDA**
12400 S.W. 152nd Street • Miami, Florida 33177

Reaching Out

For those who cannot always come to the zoo, the Zoological Society's outreach programs take a little bit of the zoo to them. Conducted by dedicated docents, the outreach programs are a free service provided to schools, libraries, summer camps, hospitals and other organizations in the community. Docents talk about the zoo and the animals and people in it. But the real stars of the outreach are the animals they take along, animals that have become very popular through these outreaches and through television coverage.

The reptiles, birds and mammals used specifically for outreach are housed in the Lecture Animal Building, or LAB, as it is known, at Metrozoo. The newest resident of LAB is Pe-Te, a squirrel monkey. He is a lovable fellow with large eyes set close together and large ears shaped like a human's. He is quite attractive, with distinctive white markings around the eyes, ears and throat, contrasting with the black around the lips and nostrils. In the wild, squirrel monkeys are arboreal creatures living in bands of a dozen to a hundred, feeding on insects, spiders, bird's eggs, fledglings, fruit and nuts. They are diurnal and usually silent but let out a loud cry when they are alarmed.

Two other recent acquisitions at LAB are African hedgehogs, easily recognized by their prickly spines, which are actually modified hairs on their backs. The rest of the body is covered by a normal coat of hair. Under the spine-covered skin is a sheet of muscle, especially thick at the edges where it forms a band that passes over the neck and the root of the tail. When confronted by danger, instead of running away, the hedgehog rolls itself up, contracts the band of muscle like a drawstring and is encased in a spine-covered bag. Unfortunately, a consequence of this defense mechanism is that a large number of hedgehogs are killed on the roads.

Many of the animals at LAB are often on the road in cars belonging to docents, heading for outreaches. If you would like them to head in your direction, book an outreach by calling 255-5567.

If you would like to donate a vehicle to be used as the official zoo-mobile for outreaches, please call 255-5551.

If you would like to donate your time and talents as a docent for the Zoological Society, please call 255-2214.

Toucan Tidbits

Picture Perfect

The year seems to have gone by in a flash, but for members of the Zootography Club, there's still plenty of excitement developing in the months ahead. As you probably know by now, the Zootography Club is for people who like to shoot animals in the kindest way possible--with their cameras. The club offers its members exclusive photo opportunities at the zoo and also arranges trips to places like the Everglades.

Meetings are made informative and entertaining by guest lecturers who are usually professionals in the field, while competitions add spice to picture-taking. The club also offers opportunities to exhibit and sell your photographs.

To sharpen your skills, join us for a special event in October and November. In October, the Zootography Club and the Kendall Camera Club will join forces at the zoo, shooting under the instruction of a professional photographer. At the November meeting, the instructor will critique the results from the shoot and give us tips on taking better photographs.

To find out more about this special event, or about future events, come to the next meeting of the Zootography Club-- we meet on the third Wednesday of every month unless otherwise indicated.

You are welcome to bring guests but only members can participate in competitions and shoots. Membership is open to all Zoological Society members and dues are \$10 per person. Come in and join the Zootography Club--you're sure to click with us!



Zootography Calendar

Wednesday, Sept. 19th	Meeting: 7:00 p.m. End of year competition.
Wednesday, Oct. 17th	Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Critique of Sulawesi shoot.
Saturday, Oct. 27th	8:00 a.m. Zoo shoot with Kendall Camera Club. Limited enrollment.
Wednesday, Nov. 28th	Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Instructor to critique zoo shoot with Kendall Camera Club.
Saturday, Dec. 8th	Photographic Show and Sale at Metrozoo.
Wednesday, Dec. 19th	Brag Night. 7:00 p.m. Past judges and speakers will join us for an appreciation night and holiday party. Bring your favorite photos.



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Paging All Book Donors!

Metrozoo's library needs books, so if you have any that are just lying around, they would be most welcome. Any books or magazines about animals, wildlife and nature will make valuable additions to Metrozoo's collection. The zoo library is a community resource, used for reference and research by the staff, volunteers and students. Help Metrozoo out and bring your donations to the Book Drive on Saturday, September 22nd. Zoo librarian Frank Rivera will be on hand in the zoo's library/conference room to accept your donations from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Your books are bound to be appreciated.

Prints Charming

If you've been hoping some day your prints will come, you're in luck. By popular demand, world-renowned artist Charles Frace and his wildlife prints will be back at the zoo this Thanksgiving weekend.

Mr. Frace is famous for his lifelike and graceful paintings of animals, many of which are displayed in museums around the country. Prized by collectors, original Frace canvases sell for \$35,000 and up, and will be on display at Metrozoo. Here's your chance to start your own Frace collection with prints that range in price from \$12 to \$800.

Although Charles Frace limits himself to five original paintings a year, this year he has created a special painting of a coyote, exclusively for the Zoological Society.

Two hundred prints of this painting will be sold at the Zoological Society exhibition for \$135 each. This is a unique offer and you won't find these prints anywhere else.

If you can't make it to Metrozoo for the Frace exhibit on November 23rd, 24th and 25th, but would like one of these signed, limited-edition coyote prints reserved for you or a friend, just make your donation for \$135 to the Zoological Society and send it to the Special Events department. We'll send you a letter of confirmation and set aside a print for you.

When you buy a Charles Frace print, you are investing in art as well as nature, because proceeds from the sales benefit the zoo. So get one for yourself. Or give it as a gift...one from the 'art!



Saks & Violins

People are always complaining about too much sex and violence in modern times, but we think Saks and violins make an unbeatable combination. Join us for Saks Fifth Avenue's grand opening ball at Dadeland on November 2nd and you'll have a roaring good time. What's more, it'll be to our benefit. In fact, SFA's black-tie bash will benefit the Zoological Society, the Vizcayans, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Young Patrons of the Opera and Liga Contra el Cancer.

This will be the 40th Saks Fifth Avenue store nationwide, and the fourth one in Florida. Bright and airy, the Dadeland Saks will occupy 75,000 square feet, filled with the elegance that stands for Saks appeal.

We're sure you'll want to be one of the first in town to see it. Naturally, you'll be sent a personal invitation in the mail. We just wanted you to mark your calendar now for what promises to be one of the highlights of the social season. At the Zoological Society, we set great store by Saks.



The Hunt

*Here's a cordial invitation
(And a handy application)
To ensure participation*

In the Hunt that's on its way.

*October 27th is the date
Come before the clock strikes eight,
So you know you won't be late
(That's how all good hunters play).*

*Then at 12 we'll find the winner
And provide a picnic dinner
Just to satisfy your inner
Needs, and cap a super day.*

*Sixty dollars for each twosome
(You'll need 3 per car), so woo some
They'll be glad you did, so do some
Quick recruiting right away.*

*For the Zoological Society,
And an evening of variety.
To avoid undue anxiety
Mail your check out today.*

The Hunt is an annual event to benefit the Zoological Society of Florida. This one will be held on Saturday, October 27th, at 8 p.m., starting at the Miami Dade Community College South Campus.

The fee is \$60 per couple and there must be three couples per car. Make your checks out to the Zoological Society of Florida (yes, they're tax-deductible!) and mail them to:

Dr. and Mrs. Monroe Scheiner
7325 S.W. 162nd Street
Miami, Florida 33157

After we receive your checks, we'll send you details and specific instructions for the Hunt. The deadline for the applications is October 1st. The Hunt will be limited to the first 60 applications, so hurry!

If you are unable to attend in person, be there in spirit by mailing in a tax-deductible contribution to the Zoological Society.

If you plan to be there, bear in mind that you're in for a wildly exciting evening; and we'll do our best to panda to your desire for adventure.

Application Form

Couple #1
Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____
Couple #2
Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____
Couple #3
Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____



Upon My Word!

How many words can you make from the letters in the word **ENDANGERED**?

If you really put your mind to it, we're sure you can come up with several. Just for starters, there's "deer". But remember, you can use a letter in each new word only as many times as it appears in the parent word, "endangered". Oh, and prefixes, suffixes, slang and proper names don't count.

So, what are your words worth? In this case, a beautiful animal poster. The 10 people with the longest list of words will each receive a Zoological Society poster.

The contest is open to Society members' children, ages 7-12. After completing your list, send it with your name, age and address to the Zoological Society of Florida, 12400 SW. 152nd Street, Miami, Florida 33177. Then, watch the next issue of *Toucan Talk* to see if you're one of the winners.

• CONTEST WINNERS •

Congratulations to the winners of our last contest:

Adam Davis	Jaime Sigl
Alex Schneider	Kristina Bryan
Ben Sternbaum	Megan Falk
Dana Dolgos	Douglas Vogel
Philip Altemus	Christina Ceballos
Karen Stoquert	Jeffrey Johnston
Maia Sternbaum	Kyle Castillo
Adam Sadowski	Cathy Frigo
Elizabeth Vanderwyden	Jennifer Pinder
Cindi Doham	David Belin
Laurine Bergman	Steven Hodgetts
Miguel Diaz	Jenny Manfra
Vanessa Wright	John Sullivan

Be A Dear Volunteer

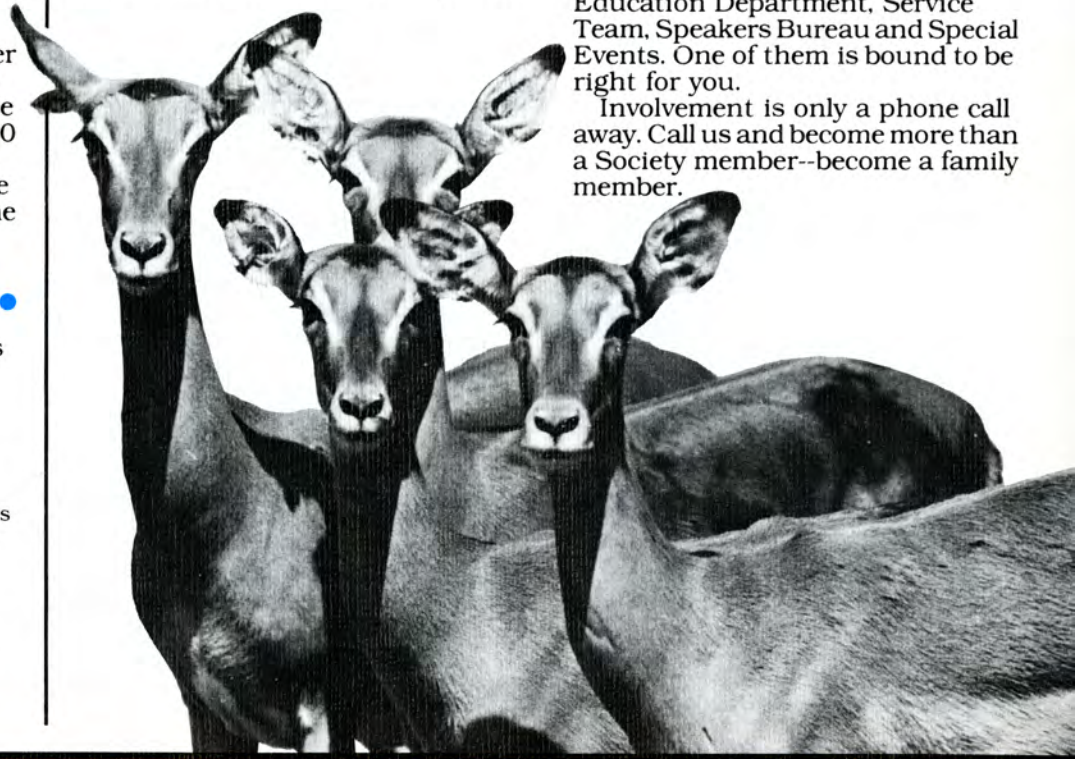
The "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love" that William Wordsworth wrote about are just what we're asking of you. Become a volunteer at the wildest place in town--Metrozoo.

As a volunteer, you become one of a close-knit family, involved in the day-to-day life of a zoo. You could give tours for school groups, go to schools and libraries with live animals, answer questions at the front gate, recruit new members or work on special events. Whatever you do,

you'll discover unusual experiences and rewards. And you'll be working with unusual people.

What qualifications do you have to be a zoo volunteer? Just some spare time and the ability to care about animals and people. If you have special skills and interests--research, public speaking, typing, teaching--you can make a valuable contribution to the zoo. Just call the Society at 255-5551 and we'll send you a volunteer brochure, telling you about the Docents, ZIP, the Education Department, Service Team, Speakers Bureau and Special Events. One of them is bound to be right for you.

Involvement is only a phone call away. Call us and become more than a Society member--become a family member.



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