

TOUCAN TALK

A TRIP TO THE ZOO THAT COMES TO YOU!

**START 1996 WITH
THE ZOO TEAM**
FUN PROGRAMS AT METROZOO

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BRING A FLOCK!**
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WITH THE BEASTS '96

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Cover Photo: Jack, our new Komodo dragon by Ron Magill

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Toucan Talk
Volume 22, Number 1
January/February, 1996

Published six times each year as a benefit to the members and supporters of Miami Metrozoo.

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Zoo Visitor Information
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HOME SWEET HOME

KOMODOS MOVE INTO THEIR NEW EXHIBIT

By Bill Zeigler

Metrozoo's General Curator

Exhibit design in zoos today is a complex task that has to incorporate the needs of the species, the public, and the keeper involved, and also support conservation efforts for the species.

The Falcon Batchelor Komodo Dragon Encounter—which opens on January 26, 1996—is an example. Designed for maximum viewing enjoyment by the public, the exhibit has many important behind-the-scenes features that allow Metrozoo to continue its contribution to global conservation, research and, of course, the well-being of the species.

On the public side, the exhibit was designed to replicate a typical dry stream bed on the island of Komodo. The island is normally arid with open savannahs, except in the ravines where trees and shrubs provide needed shade and respite from the sun.

What you do not see, however, is as important. In the center of the exhibit is a replica of a large boulder aged and smoothed by the years of wear during the rainy season. Inside the rock is a system of conduits that carry hot water so that, in the winter months, the rock will be a warm spot for the dragons to "self-thermoregulate"—in other words, get warm when they want to.

To the left in the exhibit you'll find an area designed to look as if water had cut into the mud bank and formed a shelter. Komodos are not all that fond of the rain, and this area will provide them shelter. Recessed up in the ceiling of the shelter is an infrared radiant heater that will provide additional comfort on cool, rainy days.

The stream that flows through the exhibit has been specially treated with ozone to help reduce the growth of algae and bacteria. This also means it will need to be cleaned less often by bleach, which can change the color of the concrete to a pasty white. The water also has been treated to take out the South Florida's hardness.

The man-made mud bank (the walls that separate the public from

the animals) also has been carefully designed to prevent escape. The curved walls ensure that as the komodo climbs, its weight passes over its shoulders, causing it to lose its balance and fall back to the floor.

Just as important as the public viewing area, the back facilities are what allow the keeper and the Zoo to provide the care for the animals and the support of research, propagation and conservation programs. The size and holding capability of the total exhibit will allow us to substantially contribute to the North American Komodo Monitor Species Survival Plan (SSP) which is being formed now. This program will continue to work with the Indonesian government regarding conservation programs both in the field (in-situ) and in captivity (ex-situ).

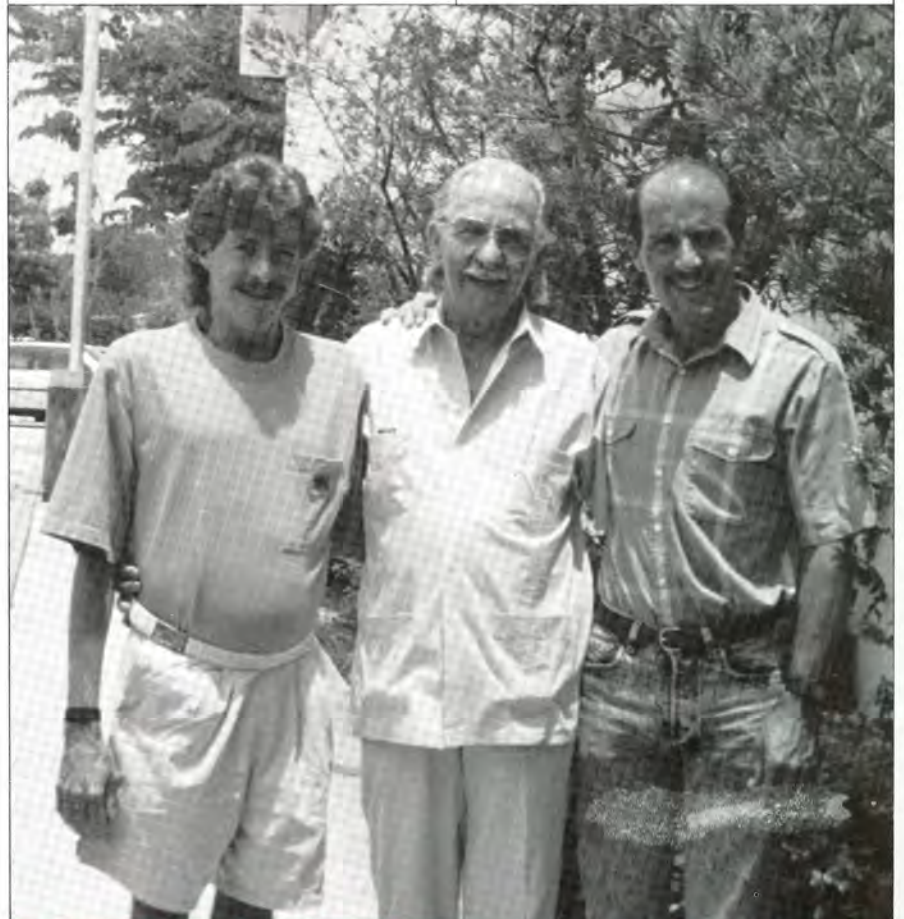
All behind-the-scenes accommodations have taken into account the latest in design and materials, making the Falcon Batchelor Komodo Dragon Encounter the most completely thought-out exhibit thus far at Metrozoo.

However, we have not stopped with just the exhibit. Education is a

vital component of any exhibit, and making education a fun adventure is the best way to leave an impact on our visitors.

To get to the exhibit you enter a winding path next to the Asian River Life exhibit and immediately find yourself in a mist-shrouded jungle. For those of you who are daring, there is an opportunity to actually climb onto a life-size bronze of a Komodo dragon created by Tom Tishler and underwritten by a grant approved by the Dade Community Foundation from its Coconut Grove Arts Festival Restoration Fund. As you travel further, newly designed graphics will help you learn the difference between "fact" and "fiction" when it comes to these dragons. They also will provide information about Indonesia and island species in general.

Come visit our Komodo dragons and immerse yourself in a mystical far-away land with the sounds of the jungles and the distant chanting of monks. It is all in the Falcon Batchelor Komodo Dragon Encounter, a wonderful addition to Metrozoo and the community of South Florida.



The Falcon Batchelor Komodo Dragon Encounter is named in memory of George Batchelor's son, Falcon (pictured here at left with his father and his brother Douglas) who died of complications of cystic fibrosis in 1990 at age 35.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK A BIG STEP FORWARD

By Glenn Ekey

Executive Director
Zoological Society of Florida

We have seized every opportunity to rethink as we helped rebuild Metrozoo and rebuilt ourselves from Hurricane Andrew. Our organization's notable success today is attributable primarily to the creativity, staying power and passion of the ZSF staff and volunteers and its Board of Directors and Trustees—past and present. Under Deputy Director Cindy Zeigler's direction, the fund raising team achieved miracles. The tone of the recovery effort was set by then-President Frank Hawkins who, only 90 days after the storm, presented Metrozoo's director with a half-million dollar ZSF check to be used however he and his staff saw fit to help rescue the Zoo.

With the opening of the L. Austin Weeks Center and the expansion of ZSF's education and volunteer offices last November, our staff once again has quarters suitable for the work needed to help move Metrozoo to its next level. We have rebuilt the ZSF organization with committed employees, and our all-volunteer Board of Directors—37 community leaders led by President Sue M. Cobb—is dynamic, generous and more than ever dedicated to a solid partnership with Dade County that benefits all of South Florida.

The Zoological Society of Florida has budgeted this year to provide Metrozoo with nearly two and a quarter million dollars of cash, new exhibits and essential programs that help Metrozoo be the best it can be. Here's how it breaks down:

CASH

Our 1995-96 fiscal year budget calls for \$376,000 in cash to Metrozoo from private contributions as well as from the proceeds of our management of the Zoo gift shops. Among other things, this money will be used to feed our own koalas and to support koala conservation in the wild (\$34,000); to ship a pair of white rhinos to Indonesia

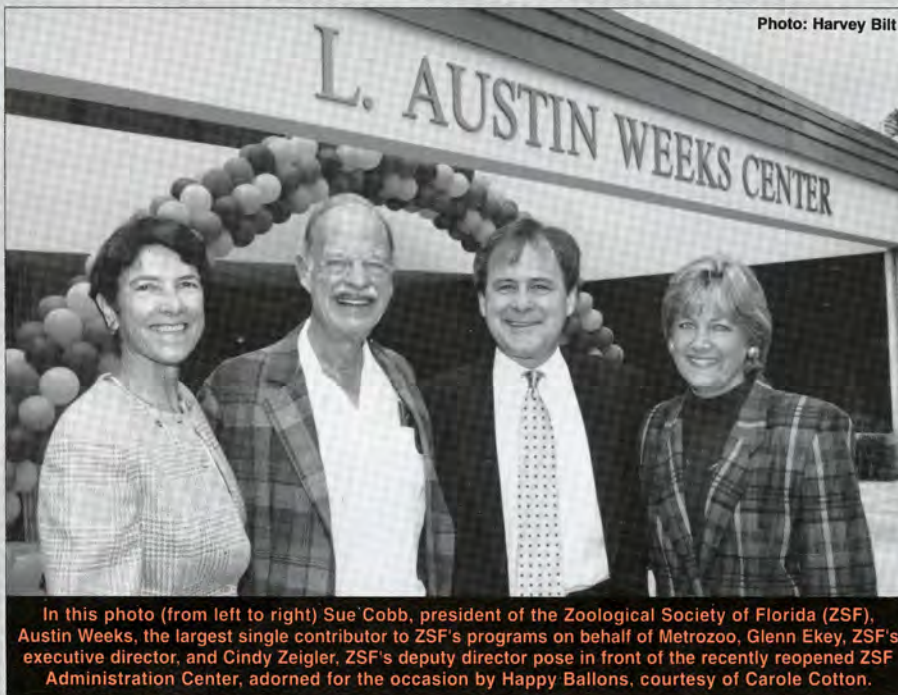


Photo: Harvey Bilt

In this photo (from left to right) Sue Cobb, president of the Zoological Society of Florida (ZSF), Austin Weeks, the largest single contributor to ZSF's programs on behalf of Metrozoo, Glenn Ekey, ZSF's executive director, and Cindy Zeigler, ZSF's deputy director pose in front of the recently reopened ZSF Administration Center, adorned for the occasion by Happy Ballons, courtesy of Carole Cotton.

(\$50,000); to purchase supplies and equipment (\$40,000); and to enable Metrozoo employees to travel to scientific conferences and symposia (\$33,000).

NEW EXHIBITS AND IMPROVEMENTS

ZSF plans to move forward this year with approximately \$840,000 of new exhibits to Metrozoo—the Falcon Batchelor Komodo Dragon Encounter opening this month (\$400,000); Children's Zoo repairs and enhancements (\$415,000); and visitor benches (\$25,000). Our staff works closely with Metrozoo and Dade County Parks officials to design and implement such projects.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

With support from the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, ZSF will invest some \$600,000 this year in education staff, materials and a dazzling array of new Zoo wayfinding and informational signs. ZSF's education employees will provide formal programs to some 18,000 people and help treat several hundred thousand Zoo visitors to a more enriching guest experience.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

At an annual cost of \$130,000, ZSF volunteers return a whopping

\$327,000 (40,000 hours at \$8.18/hour) of services that would otherwise not be affordable. Among the most dedicated of all who labor here, volunteers enhance your Zoo outings with tours, shows and demonstrations. Additionally, our volunteers provide vital behind-the-scenes support which the public rarely sees.

CHILDREN'S ZOO OPERATIONS

From the single species we displayed before the storm, ZSF's zookeepers have enhanced the animal collection at the Children's Zoo to over 30 species of sheep, pigs, lizards, turtles, birds, snakes and bugs. ZSF will spend \$187,000 this year to feed the critters and operate the "petting zoo" because we believe your Metrozoo visit would be incomplete without the kind of close animal contact this unique facility provides.

TOUCAN TALK NEWSLETTER

Beginning with the 28-page Hurricane Andrew commemorative issue, ZSF reworked both the style and the content of this publication to focus more attention on the frequent animal births, acquisitions and exciting events that draw visi-

tors back to Metrozoo. At an annual cost of \$94,000, we publish *Toucan Talk* bi-monthly and mail 18,000 copies to members, news and civic organizations and other Metrozoo supporters.

Much work lies ahead, but the recent opening of the L. Austin Weeks Center marks a turning point for ZSF. We can now close the chapter about getting back on our feet and open one about a new era of prosperity for this great community asset—your asset—known as Metrozoo.

Since 1956, our valued members (now 15,000 households representing approximately 45,000 people) have played an indispensable role in helping ZSF provide all of our services. We depend heavily on your membership dues and contributions and we deeply appreciate your support. I hope you will display your toucan membership decal proudly on your car window, and that when it's time to renew your membership this time next year, your card will be well worn from enjoying Metrozoo's outstanding wildlife exhibits and programs many times over.

BIRTHS & HATCHINGS

September 19 - November 16

East African crowned crane
Balearica regulorum gibbericeps
1 sex unknown September 29

Sable antelope
Hippotragus niger niger
1 female
October 24

Angolan black-and-white colobus monkey
Colobus polykomos angolensis
1 sex unknown October 29

Yellow-backed duiker
Cephalophus sylvicultor
1 sex unknown November 8



Sable antelope.
Photo by Ron Magill



Photo: Dolora Batchelor

Did You Know...

- ◆ Komodos are the largest true lizards on earth, weighing up to 300 pounds and growing to lengths of over 10 feet. Their scientific name is *Varanus komodensis*.
- ◆ The Komodo dragon is only found on three small islands of Indonesia: Komodo, Rintja and Flores. The country of Indonesia has over 13,000 islands.
- ◆ Although early explorers to the region heard tales of giant fire-breathing dragons, Komodo dragons were finally "discovered" by outsiders in 1910. Their long, forked, yellow tongue may be the source of the fire-breathing legend.
- ◆ Scientists estimate the current population of komodos to be 5,000-10,000 individuals. In the wild, males outnumber females 3 to 1.
- ◆ Komodo dragons are regarded as Indonesian national treasures and have been under special "presidential protection" since 1959.
- ◆ Komodo dragons fill the same "niche" that tigers do in other parts of Asia, stalking and hunting other animals to eat. These large lizards are both predators and scavengers and will eat almost anything they kill or find.
- ◆ Komodos have over 60 sharp teeth to help them bite and grasp their prey, but that's not their most deadly weapon. Once bitten, an animal may get away, only to die shortly from the massive infection caused by germs in the dragon's mouth.
- ◆ You can tell when a komodo has been around by the tell-tale "drag mark" their long tail leaves in the sandy soil. Komodos move by lifting up on their four legs and carrying their body high above the ground.
- ◆ Young Komodo dragons spend much of their time up in the trees to avoid being eaten by larger komodos. Female komodos will lay clutches of 18-22 eggs that hatch 9 months later. Once hatched out, the babies are on their own.

START THE NEW YEAR WITH OUR ZOO TEAM!

Mysteries of the Komodo Dragon

Adults

The Falcon Batchelor Komodo Dragon Encounter will open this month and we are honored to welcome **Dr. Walter Auffenburg** for a special kick-off evening. As one of the world's foremost experts on these fascinating creatures, Dr. Auffenburg has spent years in Indonesia studying the lifestyle of komodos in the wild. His book, *The Behavior Ecology of the Komodo Monitor*, is regarded as the definitive work on the subject. Dr. Auffenburg has served as curator of herpetology at the Florida State Museum and professor of zoology at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He has presented lectures and seminars on the Komodo dragon throughout Europe and the United States. We are pleased to have him join us at Metrozoo for this event.

Date: Jan 26
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Cost: Members \$10.00
 Non-Members \$15.00

Breakfast with the Beasts

Families

The early bird gets the worm, so what do ZSF members get? Breakfast with the Beasts at Metrozoo! A continental breakfast will be followed by a special look at one of our zoo residents. A few animal guests may join us, too.

FAST-A Feb 24 - Koalas
Time: 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
Cost: Adult Member \$10
 Adult Non-Member \$15
 Child (12 and under) Member \$6
 Child Non-member \$8

Mini-Camps for School's Day off

Ages: 7-10
 What a day away from school! Dade County schools may be out, but classes are in at Metrozoo. Spend your day off with our "wild bunch" learning about the amazing residents of the Zoo.

CAMP-A: Jan 15 - Koala Kids!
CAMP-B: Jan 26 - Reptile Kids!
CAMP-C: Feb 19 - Komodo Kids!
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Cost: Members \$25
 Non-Members \$30

Educators Day

For teachers only!
 Attend "Educators Day" to get a first-hand look at all the options for your visit to the Zoo. All teachers are invited to this orientation session. We recommend you attend if it has been more than three years since you last brought a group to Metrozoo. A lot has changed! The program includes: sample classroom lessons, themes for visit, pre- and post-visit class work, information about the Zoo "stars" and free "How to Zoo It" teacher materials!
Date: Feb 10
Time: 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Cost: \$5.00 (box lunch included)

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____
 I'm a Member: Membership # _____ I'm not a Member _____

For children's programs, complete the following:
 Parent's or Guardian's Name: _____
 Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Method of Payment (Please do NOT send cash):
 Credit cardholders may register by phone.
 Check American Express MasterCard Visa
 Card _____ Expiration Date: _____
 Customer Signature: _____

Program/Session	Name of Participant	Age/Grade	Fee

Mail this completed form with your payment to:
 Education Department / Zoological Society of Florida
 12400 SW 152nd Street
 Miami, FL 33177-1499

TOTAL: \$

GET READY TO RECRUIT

The 1996 Zoological Society's Membership Drive is right around the corner, and we're looking for enthusiastic people to spread the word about our great membership prices and benefits. Any company or individual wanting to help the programs at Metrozoo and qualify to win incredible prizes—including two round-trip tickets anywhere in the continental U.S. courtesy of **American Airlines**—has to call the Membership Services Department at 305-255-5551. The Membership Drive kicks off at the end of January and runs for six weeks, so sign up today!

GAME, SET, TRUSTEE!

Do you LOVE animals? Are you and the Zoo a MATCH made in heaven? Then show your tennis skills and score big for Metrozoo. The Zoological Society of Florida, led by new member of the Board of Directors **James Hawkins**, will stage the Trustee Tennis Tournament and fundraiser at Grove Isle, to "court" potential Trustees and introduce them to the Zoo. It all takes place February 8 (tournament 4-6 p.m., cocktail and award reception 6-8 p.m.), and participants can attend both or just one of the events. Trustees give us a big ADVANTAGE in our fund raising efforts, so sign up today!

(Registration is limited to the first 50 players. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more information, call the Development Department at 305-255-5551.)

"LOVE THY ZOO NEIGHBOR"

The Zoological Society of Florida is thrilled to start **Zoo Neighbors**, a new program through which donors may underwrite Zoological Society (ZSF) Family Plus Memberships for distribution in various South Florida neighborhoods.

American Bankers Insurance Group, Inc. has kicked off the

program with a generous corporate gift. "As true neighbors of the Zoo, we are proud to be part of such a wonderful initiative," said **Jason Israel**, American Bankers' representative to the ZSF's executive committee. "We encourage other companies to join the Zoological Society in its efforts to make Metrozoo available to new families."

Membership in ZSF will make Metrozoo available for families to use as a vital resource for education, recreation, and "quality time" with one another. It is a great opportunity for the whole family to learn, play and be together.

We look forward to welcoming our *Zoo Neighbors!*

LAST CHANCE TO GO WILD ON PHASE I OF "WALLS OF THE WILD"

Don't miss this last opportunity to purchase your engraved bricks or Endangered Species Tiles for Phase I, around the Flamingo Lake. These bricks and tiles will be placed on an extension of the existing *Walls, Phase I*.

Spaces are limited, and we will take orders only until these spaces are filled. Don't delay—ORDER NOW!



"Zippy the Zebra" zoomed to Miami Acura to pick up a generous year-end gift to the Zoological Society (ZSF) from Ron Esserman, President of Esserman Automotive Group.



Then "Zippy" galloped to SunTrust, where Executive Vice President Lynn Cambest wrote a BIG check to renew SunTrust's sponsorship of the Sun Bear Exhibit at Metrozoo.



At the Board Installation Picnic in November, Board members proudly posed with beautiful Charles Fracé prints presented to them by ZSF President Sue Cobb saluting their service on the Executive Committee. From left to right: Edward Soto, Peter Roulhac, Michael Greif, Sue Cobb, William Galloway, Frank Hawkins, and Sam Verdeja.

Photos: Harvey Bill

ANIMAL TILE/BRICK ORDER FORM

TILE (\$250) _____ BRICK (\$50) _____

If ordering a tile, please select animal desired:

- RHINOCEROS TIGER GORILLA
- ELEPHANT PANTHER

This tile/brick is:

For Myself In Memory A Gift _____
(Occasion)

Confirmation will be sent to you if it is for yourself or, if it is a gift, directly to the recipient you indicate below.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Recipient Name: _____

Recipient Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

ANIMAL TILE/BRICK INSCRIPTION

Maximum 20 characters per line. Capital letters only. One character per box. Please leave a space between each word.

Gift Card
Inscription: _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT (PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH)

- Check (Payable to the Zoological Society of Florida)
- American Express MasterCard Visa

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

(Not valid without signature)

MAIL OR FAX TO:
WALLS OF THE WILD

Zoological Society of Florida

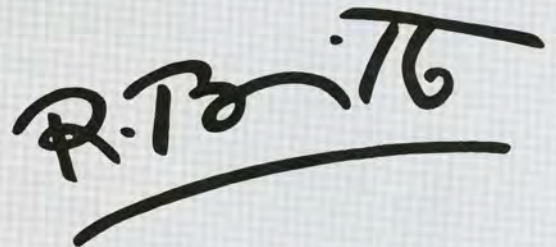
12400 SW 152 Street • Miami, FL 33177-1499

Phone: 305-255-5551 • Fax: 305-255-7126

TELL A HERD, BRING A FLOCK

IT'S FEAST WITH THE BEASTS '96

South Florida's "wildest" fund-raiser, *Feast With The Beasts*, is sure to herd new blood, offer exceptional entertainment, and let you "graze" on sumptuous food served by over 40 of the best restaurants in South Florida. This year's colorful and festive look features artwork by renown artist Romero Britto. (Beastkeepers will sport fabulous Britto cummerbunds and ties!)



Presented by American Express, chaired by Susan Abraham and vice-chaired by Cathy Blank, the *9th Annual Feast With The Beasts* will take place Friday, March 1, 1996. So pull out that tux n' tails (or that fabulous beaded ballgown) and your most comfortable walking shoes and make your reservations today! For reservations mail or fax this form, or call 305-255-5551.

PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS 1996 FEAST WITH THE BEASTS

Afternoon Tea Bake Shop
 Bernie's Coffee and Tea Company
 Bijan's on the River
 Restaurant and Raw Bar
 Cafe Abbracci
 Cafe Tu Tu Tango
 Captain's Tavern
 Casa Juancho
 Charade Restaurant
 Christy's
 Cisco's Cafe
 Courtview Club/Special Events
 Catering by Les
 Doc Dammer's
 The Fontainebleau Hilton
 Gaviña Coffee Company
 Giacosa Ristorante
 Godiva Chocolatier
 The Grand Cafe
 at the Grand Bay Hotel
 Hooligan's Liquor Locker
 Hooligan's Pub & Oyster Bar
 Island Oasis
 Gourmet Frozen Cocktails
 i Paparazzi Ristorante
 JoAnna's Marketplace
 JohnMartin's
 Los Ranchos Restaurants
 The Melting Pot
 Málaga Restaurant
 Mike Gordon Seafood Restaurant
 The Olive Garden
 Italian Restaurant
 The Old Cutler Oyster Company
 Outback Steakhouse
 Parrot Cafe at Parrot Jungle
 and Gardens, Inc.
 Prezzo
 Restaurant St. Michel
 Roasters 'N Toasters
 Ruth's Chris Steak House
 Tutti's Trattoria & Bakery
 Tutto Matto
 Uva Wine Bar and Eatery
 Victor's Cafe

*Portofino Tower Is the Official
 Beastkeeper Sponsor for Feast '96.*

Beastkeeper Restaurants:
 Chef Allen's Restaurant
 Creative Tastes Catering
 Le Festival
 Norman's New World Cuisine

This year's *Feast* will offer great entertainment including live music by China Doll, The Goods, Sandy González & Co., Orpheus, and many others. And, for the second year, the *Feast With The Beasts* raffle will give winners the chance to enjoy exciting prizes.

You don't need to be present to win. To enter and receive your tickets by mail, simply fill out the form below and mail it to the address indicated. Or call 305-255-5551.

Some of the fabulous prizes include:

- Jewelry courtesy of Mayor's Jewelers
- A seven-day cruise courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line
- Two first-class, round-trip tickets, courtesy of American Airlines, to any of its domestic destinations
- One-year membership to the Wine Cellar Club at the Biltmore Hotel
- Two orchestra tickets to the New World Symphony
- Complete beauty makeover by Jessie Briggs at the Yellow Strawberry Salon
- Gift certificate to The Falls Shopping Center
- Framed piece of art from Rudma Picture Co. Coral Gables

FEAST WITH THE BEASTS RESERVATION FORM

Yes, I would like to attend *Feast With The Beasts '96*.

Please reserve the following:

- _____ General Admission tickets (\$150 per person)
- _____ Herd of Hippos (10 General Admission tixs - \$1,500)
- _____ Beastkeeper tickets (\$500 per person)
- _____ Pride of Lions (10 Beastkeeper tixs - \$5,000)
- _____ Raffle Donation (\$20 each or 6 for \$100)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone:(day)_____ (evening)_____

My/Our guests: _____

No, I cannot attend *Feast With The Beasts '96*, but I have enclosed my gift of \$_____

Please make your check payable to the Zoological Society of Florida, or charge your tickets by completing the information below:

American Express MasterCard Visa

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

Print Cardholder Name: _____

Acknowledgement of your participation as Beastkeeper should appear in the *Feast With The Beasts* program as follows:

_____ (e.g. Susan & Tom Abraham)

Please consider your contribution as a donation; there will be no refunds.

According to IRS guidelines, only contributions over the value of dining & entertainment are tax-deductible. Tax-deductible amounts Beastkeeper \$380/ticket, General Admission \$100/ticket.

IT'S ALWAYS TURKEY SEASON!

By Bill Zeigler

Metrozoo's General Curator

The table is set with the sweet potato pie, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes and hot rolls. The masterpiece is sitting in the middle of the table. Oven-baked for three hours, guaranteed juicy and golden brown...the majestic turkey, still a fresh memory of the recent holiday season!

But memories from my school days also come to mind. Pictures always showed this plump and round bird, tail feathers fanned out, with the first pilgrims. I remember seeing my first live turkey. There it was in all its glory, white feathered, fat and with its neck and head adorned with wattles.

I was amazed at first that all turkeys were white, very much unlike the waxed turkey candles set out on the tables on special holiday, or the pictures in all of my history books. I also was amazed that after reading that Ben Franklin wanted to name the turkey our national bird, all I could see was an uncoordinated, fat wobbling bird that seemed to have no brains at all! What had happened to the wily animal that Ben had described? And what about the hunters who talked about the difficulty of hunting turkeys, the hours of sitting behind blinds, dressed in camouflage, faces hidden under ski masks of brown and green, and the weeks spent perfecting the right call? Had they all lied to me? Obviously turkey hunting had to be a well-staged play that allowed men to get out of the house, enjoy each other's company while downing that famous bourbon named after the bird that provided the excuse to escape household tasks. How hard could it be to hunt down an obese, white bird that would walk up to anything it thought offered food?

But that was years ago and now I understand what all the stories and folklore are about.



Photo: Dolora Batchelor

Very few people ever get the chance to see wild turkeys, even though they range over most of the United States, and even fewer Floridians have seen these wonderful birds despite their occurrence from the panhandle to the Everglades. The American turkey, or *Meleagris gallopavo*, is a member of the family "Meleagridide" and is the largest game bird in North America. It is indeed wily and difficult to hunt and considered to be the greatest challenge to hunters who want to pit themselves against them.

Of course, the wild turkey is not the bird I described earlier. It has dark brown and black plumage which aid in camouflaging this tall,

thin and quick master of illusion. The turkey's keen sense of hearing and sight keep it usually one step ahead of all but the most experienced hunters. Traveling in flocks or gaggles (as they are called) of up to 30 birds, the toms stay separate from the hens until spring, when they go into their flamboyant courtship rituals. Each male sets up a small territory to strut his stuff and fight off other males.

After collecting four to six hens for his harem, breeding takes place. The hens then wander away to build their nests. Laying from eight to fifteen eggs, sometimes two hens will share a nest taking turns incubating for the twenty-eight days it takes to

hatch them. Called "poult," the young chicks roost beneath the mother's wings for weeks until they are able to roost in the trees with other adults. Their day normally consists of feeding on insects, nuts from trees like oak and beech, along with grass seeds and berries.

But what about the turkey that most Americans know? Is the grocery store turkey a man-made product, another example of how genetic tampering can create a "better" product? Well, in a sense, yes. Today's domestic turkey produces more meat than any wild turkey would ever want to carry around in the woods. The domestic turkey business is a very efficient process of creating a plumper, juicier table turkey always available in your supermarket counter. Unlike its wild cousin, the domestic turkey's sole purpose for existence is to feed people. It is bred and raised on large turkey farms that may house as many as 5,000 animals at a time. And though not sporting at all, the trip to the store and fighting the crowds in line may be just as difficult as it is to hunt a wild turkey.

To obtain more information on turkeys go to your local library. There are a number of books available on North American game birds. Or contact the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission for questions regarding the turkey population in your area.

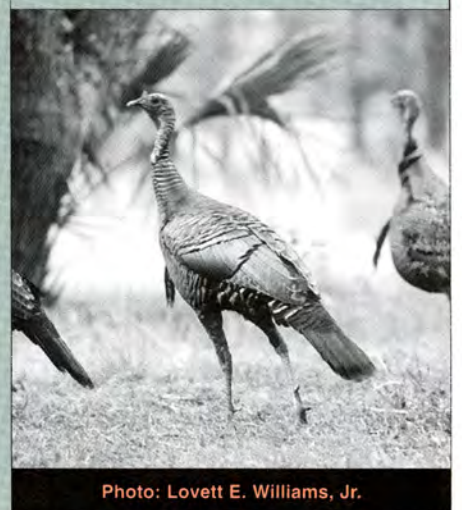


Photo: Lovett E. Williams, Jr.

JANUARY

26 friday

**OPENING OF THE FALCON
BATCHELOR KOMODO
DRAGON ENCOUNTER**

31 wednesday

**VOLUNTEER-SPECIALIST
PROGRAM**

Class #1 - 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
For information call 305-255-5551.

BE MY VALENTINE!

It's possible through the
Adopt-An-Animal Program.
For information call 305-255-5551.



Photo: Ron Magill

FEBRUARY

3 saturday

VOLUNTEER-SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Class #2 - 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
For information call 305-255-5551.

10 saturday

SEX AND THE ANIMALS

7:30 p.m.
Back by popular demand, Metrozoo's personality
Ron Magill presents "Sex & The Animals," a hilari-
ous-yet informative-presentation for adults only.
Members \$12, Non-Members \$15. For more infor-
mation call 305-251-0401.

VOLUNTEER-SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Class #3 - 9:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
For information call 305-255-5551.

10-28

**INDY CARS: THE SCIENCE OF SPEED
AT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE**

As members of the Zoological Society of Florida,
you receive discounts at other South Florida attrac-
tions, so don't forget to take advantage and visit the
Museum of Science for this exciting exhibition. For
information call 305-854-4247.

24 saturday

DOCENT PROGRAM BEGINS

(Volunteers attending the Specialist Program
are eligible for the Docent Program. Eight
classes through April.)

9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
For information call 305-255-5551.

28 wednesday

GORILLA GOLF TOURNAMENT

1:00 p.m.
Take a swing for conservation! The 9th Gorilla
Golf Tournament, held at The Links of Key
Biscayne, offers a day of "wild" fun while bene-
fitting Metrozoo's conservation programs. For
information on registration and sponsorship
call Debbie at 305-279-2298.

A MESSAGE FROM...

From Metrozoo's grand opening to our rebuilding from Hurricane Andrew, and from Kenya to Komodo Island, Bill Zeigler, our general curator, has been part of everyday life at Metrozoo for over 20 years. That will come to an end January as Bill leaves to pursue other opportunities.

He has represented the Zoo on a local, national and international level, and at count-
less meetings of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association. He also has dealt with
many state officials regarding issues affecting conservation programs in Florida.

As head of the animal management section of the Zoo, Bill has had a hand in the
acquisition of almost every animal you see at Metrozoo today, unless it was born or
hatched here.

As you can see from our cover photograph, Komodo dragons are now at Metrozoo.
Their exhibit is scheduled to open January 26. A long-time reptile enthusiast, Bill has
worked on getting these magnificent animals for our Zoo for ten years. Their arrival is the
culmination of a great effort.

We wish him well in his new endeavors.

Eric Stephens
Metrozoo's business manager

ZOO NOTES

- ▶ Do you have a special occasion coming up and you are tired of the same old picnic areas? Metrozoo's facilities are what you need! You can have your best picnic ever. Enjoy our beautiful picnic area, tents, tables, chairs, games such as volleyball and private animal presentations, plus the convenience of security and clean-up personnel. For information and reservations call the Sales Department at 305-251-0403.
- ▶ When you visit the Zoo you have different ways to learn more about the animals than just by observing them. At selected animal exhibits, zookeepers make daily appearances to interact with Zoo members like you and to answer any questions you might have. Also, you can have fun and obtain some interesting wildlife facts in the Ecology Theater (Children's Zoo, 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.) or in the Wildlife Show (Amphitheater, noon, 2:00 p.m., and 4:30 p.m.). For specific keeper talk times call 305-251-0401.

TOUCANTALK



Zoological Society of Florida
12400 SW 152nd Street
Miami, Florida 33177-1499

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