

From Tim Tetzlaff, Director of Conservation and Communications

For Immediate Release

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Lions, Giraffes & More Get in Holiday Spirit!

12 Days of Wild Holiday Fun at Naples Zoo Starts Dec 13!



On the twelve days of Christmas, Naples Zoo gave to you twelve gators swimming, eleven siamangs swinging, ten hyenas laughing, nine panthers prowling, eight gibbons singing, seven hogs-a-rooting, six spider monkeys playing, five tigers, four roaring lions, three spotted leopards, two Malagasy fosas, and a lemur in a palm tree.

Although there won't be that many of each animal, for 12 days in December – from the 13th all the way to the 24th – Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens will be delivering special gifts to the wild animals. Naples Zoo guests will watch African honey badgers, Malayan tigers, and South African lions claw into beautifully decorated presents filled with meat treats; alligators swallow a festive turkey leg dinner; apes nibble fruity treats; Red river hogs play with their rolling ice snow globe; and the new giraffe herd will munch into their leafy presents; and many other animals enjoy holiday-related delicacies with a wild twist. The full schedule of events is online at www.napleszoo.org/holiday.

Adding to the community spirit, many Southwest Floridians are contributing to the holiday fun. Recreating a veritable subtropical Santa's workshop, residents at Brookdale Senior Living communities from Naples to Punta Gorda are once again crafting the animal-friendly treats that will add to the animal's holiday cheer. Some of the senior toymakers themselves will also make special visits to Naples Zoo to see their presents get wildly unwrapped. Ice sculpture services for the rolling snow globe are being donated by Cold Cuts, Inc. available at (239) 592-9670.



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Events like this are part of the daily animal enrichment program. Proper animal husbandry by the Zoo's professional animal care staff includes not only thorough cleaning, nutritional diets, veterinary evaluations, and daily record keeping, but also behavioral enrichment. Enrichment begins with exhibit design, number and variety of animals living together, and also includes toys for the animal to play with (or destroy!), supplemental foraging activities, and even the use of scents to increase curiosity about objects. By rotating activities, animals consistently engage in something fun and thought provoking – and the holidays provide a fun twist.

Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has opened six feature exhibits in the last six years including the Giraffe Preview Exhibit where guests can hand-feed the giraffe herd. The nationally accredited zoo is nestled in a 43-acre historic botanical garden founded in 1919 and cooperates in conservation programs both in and outside the wild for endangered species. Naples Zoo offers families a full day wild fun from apes to zebras featuring wildlife shows, cruises and other entertaining educational programming which reached over 300,000 guests in 2010.

Daily presentations include Alligator Bay Feeding; Meet the Keeper Series; and *Jungle Larry™ and Safari Jane's™ Snakes Alive!* featuring venomous snakes. Guests also enjoy two premiere presentations in the Safari Canyon theater where they see live animals from unusual predators and other rare wildlife along with exciting video footage. And one of the zoo's most popular activities is the Primate Expedition Cruise where guests embark on a guided cruise through islands inhabited by monkeys, lemurs, and apes.

The all-day pay-one-price ticket includes admission to both the nationally accredited zoo and historic garden along with all shows, tours, exhibits, and the boat ride. (\$19.95 adults age 13+/ \$12.95 children 3 to 12, under 3 free. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years of age). Annual memberships and the discount tickets are also available online at www.napleszoo.org. Visitors enjoy healthy meals at Wynn's at the Zoo and shop for wild gifts in The ZOO Gift Shop. Naples Zoo welcomes guests daily from 9:00 to 5:00 with the last ticket sold at 4:00 and is located at 1590 Goodlette-Frank Road across from the Coastland Center mall. To learn more, click www.napleszoo.org or call (239) 262-5409. Follow the Zoo at www.twitter.com/NaplesZoo or www.facebook.com/napleszoo.

Print Quality Holiday Images available for immediate download at www.napleszoo.org/press



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