



Cosley Tails

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**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**

Cosley Tails

Information about Cosley Zoo and The Cosley Foundation, Inc. is available by calling 630.665.5534 or by writing to Zoo Director, Cosley Zoo, 1356 N. Gary Avenue, Wheaton, IL 60187. You may also e-mail us at CosleyZoo@wheatonparks.org. We welcome your comments and suggestions.



Cosley Zoo is a facility of the Wheaton Park District.



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FrogWatch 101

By Alison LaBarge, Zookeeper

It may seem hard to believe, but February has more to offer than just snow storms and frigid weather.

For many species of frogs and toads throughout the United States, February signals the start of breeding season. And to the amphibian enthusiast, that means one thing: the beginning of another FrogWatch USA season!

FROG WATCH | USA™

What is FrogWatch USA?

FrogWatch USA is a citizen science program that seeks to identify species diversity and population density of frogs and toads at wetland sites throughout the country. It was started in 1998 by the United States Geological Survey as a way for research scientists to study amphibians. By utilizing volunteers, these scientists could gather information from a vast geographic area over a long period of time – something they would be unable to do on their own. The program was adopted by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in 2009, with the goal of increasing volunteer participation through the creation of local chapters that could provide volunteer training and assistance.

FrogWatch USA volunteers learn to recognize and identify the breeding calls of frogs and toads in their local area. Then, at least 30 minutes after dusk (the peak time to hear frog and toad calls), volunteers travel to a local wetland area and sit silently for three minutes, listening. They record the types of frogs or toads they hear calling, as well as whether each species they hear is calling individually or within a group. This information is then recorded in an online database, which can be accessed by other volunteers or by amphibian researchers. The database allows viewers to compare the types and approximate numbers of frogs and toads in a single location from month to month or even year to year, as well as observe the types of frogs and toads being heard in other sites around the country.

Why Monitor Frog and Toad Populations?

Amphibians such as frogs and toads are very important for a number of reasons. Firstly, they serve as bioindicators, which means they respond to environmental changes before other organisms. Because of their permeable skin, which allows for both gas and water exchange,

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FrogWatch 101

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they are especially sensitive to pressures from pollution, habitat destruction, and climate change. Also, because they live out their youth in the water as tadpoles and their adult lives on land as mature frogs and toads, they can be indicators of both aquatic and terrestrial environments. This sensitivity can provide valuable clues about the health of an ecosystem – a healthy amphibian population means a healthy environment, whereas an unhealthy amphibian population might be a sign of as-yet unknown environmental problem.

In addition, amphibians play a crucial role in providing balance to ecosystems, acting as both predator and prey. Tadpoles, as well as adult frogs and toads, are staple foods for numerous types of fish, reptiles, birds, and mammals. As predators themselves, frogs and toads feast on an enormous number of insects and arthropods and are responsible for keeping agricultural pests and disease-carrying bugs in check. Amphibians also play a role in modern medicine. Diverse compounds have been discovered in the unique skin glands that frogs and toads possess, and are currently being studied for use in treating diseases such as depression, stroke, and dementia.

Despite the numerous ways in which frogs and toads are valuable, they are currently in trouble. Of the 6,000 known amphibian species in the world, nearly one-third are now threatened with extinction, and at least 160 species have gone extinct in the past 100 years. In addition, almost half of all amphibian species' populations are in decline, meaning that the number of endangered amphibian species is sure to rise in the future. In fact, the extinction rate of modern amphibians is about 200 times the historical rate, and amphibians are presently experiencing higher extinction rates than any other group of vertebrates.

How Can I Help?

To help conserve amphibian populations, scientists need to better understand the causes of amphibian decline. By assessing amphibian populations and seeing how these populations change over time, they can develop and implement long-term conservation programs. The data collected by FrogWatch USA volunteers is extremely valuable in informing scientists of amphibian population trends.

Cosley Zoo is one of 127 FrogWatch USA Chapters. If you are interested in becoming a FrogWatch USA volunteer, we are hosting an upcoming volunteer training on Friday, May 1st, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Please call 630-665-5534 or e-mail jboquist@wheatonparks.org to sign up. We hope you will join us by helping to conserve our local frogs and toads!

How Our Mission Drives Us

By Katherine Anderson, Educator

Everyone has a mission in life. We strive to do well in our studies and work, to raise happy families, and to meet those personal and individual goals we set for ourselves. Organizations have missions too, and they are laid bare for all to see – an organization's mission statement defines its goals, explains its purpose, and gives its team members a maxim to champion in everything they do.

You can find Cosley Zoo's mission statement on our website at cosleyzoo.org/mission.htm: **To promote the understanding of the relationship among humans, animals, and the environment through recreation, education, and wildlife conservation.**

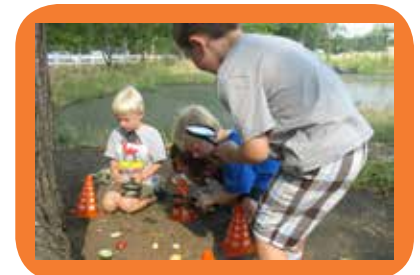
In this issue, we'd like to break down Cosley Zoo's mission to give readers an in-depth look at how we are driven to provide unsurpassed fun, learning, and animal care.

“Promote the Understanding of the Relationship among Humans, Animals, and the Environment”

This is Cosley Zoo's ultimate goal and what we strive to do every day. Humans are inextricably tied to animals and the environment; we rely on them for food, labor, shelter, energy, and the very planet on which we live. In turn, ecosystems exist in a fragile balance of plants, animals, and climate that depend on ethical environmental stewardship by people to survive. When communities use resources responsibly and protect the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices, they are being good environmental stewards. But asking people to cut back on fossil fuels, avoid unsustainable products, and volunteer their time and money to conservation efforts is a tall order. How does Cosley Zoo work to promote the understanding of our connection to animals and the environment and encourage widespread environmental stewardship?

“Recreation”

Although it may at first glance seem at odds with our goal, having fun is an important part of learning. Playing to learn helps solidify knowledge and allows young learners to practice what they've been taught. Learning through play may also help develop creativity and problem-solving skills, and children who have fun learning will enjoy it and feel eager to learn more. At Cosley Zoo, we want to initiate a lifetime of learning about nature, so there is fun everywhere you look.



A Zoo Investigators class at Cosley Zoo.

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How Our Mission Drives Us

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Cosley Zoo holds various fun events and activities throughout the year, including daily duck and chicken feedings from spring to fall, the autumn Spooktacular, and the winter Festival of Lights.

“Education”

Cosley Zoo is bursting with information to share. Did you know that a blue-tongued skink can drop its tail when in danger and it will grow back, or that a Barred Tiger Salamander can lose a whole leg and it will regenerate completely? Researchers are studying how this process works in order to advance medical science. Cosley Zoo education runs the gamut from interesting animal facts to suggestions for how you can help protect the environment. Did you know that palm oil, a common ingredient in many foods, cleaners, and shampoos, is directly linked to deforestation, loss of animal life, and economic turmoil for the people where it is grown? You can make a difference by buying products made from certified sustainable palm oil.

When you visit or choose programs to attend at Cosley Zoo, you will be sure to learn something new. We at Cosley Zoo are passionate about sharing the natural world with our guests and inspiring them to get involved in their communities and encourage environmental action.

A few great educational experiences at Cosley Zoo include our summer camps for kids, outreach programs for schools and scout groups, and Bobcats Backstage, where you can go behind-the-scenes to visit the bobcats and learn about their care.



Once a threatened species, Bobcats now thrive thanks in part to AZA zoos like Cosley Zoo.

“Wildlife Conservation”

One of the greatest goals of every zoo accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is to take part in wildlife conservation, and Cosley Zoo is no different. Many of our animal residents come from rehabilitation centers after being kept as pets or suffering injuries that leave them unable to survive in the wild, so Cosley Zoo took them in to give them lifelong homes. We also participate in the Blanding’s Turtle Recovery Program, which serves to protect the native habitats of this endangered species and helps repopulate those habitats through breeding and rearing projects.

You can participate in wildlife conservation by volunteering for FrogWatch USA, helping to monitor frog and toad populations. See page 4 of this newsletter for more information and training dates at Cosley Zoo.

Although we are proud of what these efforts do to help conserve wildlife, one of the greatest things zoos can do for the future of the natural world is inspire visitors to take an active role in conservation. Zoos are not simply places where animals are kept for guests to view, but learning centers where animal ambassadors help ignite a passion to save species and their habitats. When a child comes into the zoo with a fear of snakes and leaves with a sense of wonder for them, we know that we have taken a small step toward preserving these species vital to pest control and habitat health. When one of our young volunteers or Junior Zookeepers chooses Environmental Science or Zoological Research as their field of study in college, we hope that Cosley Zoo played some part in the inspiration of these future environmental leaders. That is, after all, our mission. We hope that you can make a passion for conservation leadership part of your mission too.

To learn more about the conservation efforts and events conducted by Cosley Zoo, visit our website at cosleyzoo.org

PARTY FOR THE PLANET

COSLEY ZOO | Saturday, April 25 | 10A-2P

Celebrate Earth Day at Cosley Zoo!

cosleyzoo.org

Programs & Events

Bookworms Series

Do you and your child love stories and animals? Come read a story, meet an animal, and try an activity. Children must be accompanied by a nonpaying adult. Meet your instructor by the gift shop. Please note: Class is held in our Kiebler Room which is accessible only by stairs. *Cosley Zoo members: Register at the Community Center in person or by mail to take advantage of reduced fees for members.* (TR)

Limit: 12

Age	Dates	Day	Time	R/NR Fee	Class #
18 mos-4	4/8-5/27	W	9:30-10A	\$52/\$72	206502-01

Register online at wheatonparkdistrict.com for Bookworms

Zoo Tots

Curious toddlers experience learning through play in this special class for ages 2-4. Led by a Cosley Zoo educator, our class features a live animal visit, and animal-themed activities. Each session is different. Meet the instructor by the gift shop. Child must be accompanied by a nonpaying adult. *Cosley Zoo members: Register at the Community Center in person or by mail to take advantage of reduced fees for members.* (TR)

Limit: 12

Age	Dates	Day	Time	R/NR Fee	Class #
Body Coverings 2-4	4/14	Tu	8:30-9:30A	\$9/\$12.50	206510-01
Birds 2-4	5/12	Tu	8:30-9:30A	\$9/\$12.50	206510-02

Register online at wheatonparkdistrict.com for Zoo Tots.

Zoo Investigators

Use all your senses to experience the world as an animal would. Hands-on activities and animal interactions will guide your exploration of animals and nature. Drop-off and pick-up children in front of the admissions booth. (TR)

Limit: 12

Age	Dates	Day	Time	R/NR Fee	Class #
5-7	4/10-5/15	F	4:15-5:15P	\$66/\$90	206203-01

Register online at wheatonparkdistrict.com for Zoo Investigators.

FrogWatch USA training session

Do you have an interest in frogs and toads? Become a FrogWatch Volunteer! You do not have to be a frog or toad expert to be a FrogWatch USA volunteer! All you need is:

- An interest in frogs and toads
- Willingness to participate in a volunteer training session at Cosley Zoo, your local FrogWatch USA Chapter
- Commitment to monitor a wetland site for 3 minutes multiple evenings throughout the breeding season. (February-August)

2015 Training Date for FrogWatch Cosley Zoo

When: Friday, May 1, 2015; 6-8P

Where: Cosley Zoo

Fee: \$7/person; \$20/household (or group)*

*One person per household or group must attend training but all are encouraged to attend.

Email jboquist@wheatonparks.org to RSVP or for more information.

FrogWatch USA™

FrogWatch Cosley Zoo is a local chapter of FrogWatch USA, AZA's flagship citizen science program that invites individuals and families to learn about the wetlands in their communities and help conserve amphibians by reporting the calls of local frogs and toads.

FrogWatch USA volunteers play an important role in amphibian conservation. Over 2000 amphibian species are currently threatened with extinction and many more are experiencing sharp population declines. This alarming trend may be a sign of deteriorating wetland health because amphibians can serve as indicator species.



Experience animals and nature from dusk till dawn without ever leaving the suburbs. We'll provide the activities, an evening snack, continental breakfast and tons of fun!

Two ways to stay...

Sleep indoors in the climate controlled upper level of the Vern Kiebler Learning Center!

- Available year-round

Pitch your tents on the zoo's front lawn!

- Available April-October

Details at cosleyzoo.org/overnight.htm

Programs & Events

Party for the Planet

Saturday, April 25, 10A-2P

It's a party for the planet! Join us as we take part in the largest combined Earth Day celebration in North America with more than 100 other accredited zoos and aquariums. Come and visit with representatives from area businesses and organizations and learn about a wide variety of conservation efforts. Stop by and help us celebrate conservation successes, enjoy a piece of Earth Day Cake, and take home ideas for ways you can make a difference!

- Regular admission rates apply.



Turtle Day

Saturday, May 23, 10A-2P

Come and experience all things turtle (or chelonian)! Learn about the zoo's efforts to protect the Illinois Endangered Blanding's Turtle, meet live turtles and tortoises, and take part in themed activities.

- Regular admission rates apply.



Run for the Animals: 5/10K and Zippity Zoo Run

Saturday, June 6, 7:30A (5/10K start time)

Voted Best 5k/10k in Midwest/Competitor Magazine

Don't miss this community run that supports Cosley Zoo! The first 2,500 runners receive a long sleeve Tech T-shirt and all are invited to stay for post-race refreshments and awards ceremony. Be sure and stick around and enjoy the Taste of Wheaton festivities.

The ½ mile Zippity Zoo Run, for children ages 5-10, steps off at 8:45 AM. All Zippity Zoo participants receive a shirt and medal.

**COSLEY
ZOO**
2015 **RUN
FOR THE
ANIMALS**

5K/10K & 1/2 ZIPPITY ZOO

For information and to register, please visit cosleyzoo.org.

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Zoo Nightlife!

Friday, June 19, 7-10P; rain date June 26

Ever wonder what it's like at Cosley Zoo after dark? Zoo Nightlife will include family activities, animal encounters, a guided zoo night hike and lots of family fun complete with a campfire and s'mores!

- \$6 ages 2-12; \$9.00 ages 13-Adult; Free for those under the age of 2.
- Cosley Zoo members receive \$1.00 off per person based on membership level.

Programs & Events

Eco-Exploration Backpack Tours

Cosley Zoo is offering backpack tours for families. These eco-friendly packs are filled with a combination of activities and discovery items that families can utilize while at the zoo. Each pack focuses on a different theme and will act as a “tour guide” as you make your way through the zoo, highlighting various exhibits and promoting animal and habitat conservation messages. Backpack tours are a great way for parents and children to explore the zoo together.

- \$2 per pack.
- Successfully complete your adventure and receive an official Eco-Explorer button. Complete each theme to collect all 8 buttons!
- Packs can be checked out from the Wild Side gift shop.

Fun-damentals of Zookeeping (Ages 14 & up)

Do you want to be a zookeeper? Come spend part of the day and work side by side with one of Cosley Zoo’s Animal Care staff. Assist with routine cleaning and care, provide enrichment to the animals, and be a part of a training demonstration. Participants will also receive a certificate, special souvenir, and photo.

- Available on a Sunday or Friday all year from 9am-1pm.
- Ages 14 and up.
- \$75/Cosley Zoo Member; \$95/nonmember.
- To sign up, call the Cosley Zoo Education Department at 630.665.5534.

Morning Chores

Have you ever wanted to help take care of animals on a farm? Well, now is your chance to get a first-hand experience. Join the staff as you help clean and bed stalls, feed some farm animals, and try your hand at grooming.

- Available on Saturday mornings April-September from 7:15-9:15 am.
- Ages 8-adult (Ages 8-13 must be accompanied by a paying adult).
- \$15/Cosley Zoo Member; \$20/nonmember.
- To sign up call the Cosley Zoo Education Department at 630.665.5534.

Bobcats Backstage

A unique experience with the bobcats! Join our zookeepers for an exclusive behind the scenes visit with the bobcats. Learn about this amazing feline as you enjoy a close-up view of a training session where the bobcats learn how to participate in their own care.

- Available daily 11-11:30 am.
- Sign up (630.665.5534) by 10:45 am in the Wild Side gift shop during your zoo visit or call ahead. First-come, first-served; maximum of 6 participants each day.
- \$10/Cosley Zoo Member; \$12/nonmember.



Daily Activities

Duck Feeding

Offered daily from 10-10:30 AM and 3-3:30 PM, weather permitting

April 18-October 12

Cost: \$1/serving

All proceeds benefit Cosley Zoo.

Chicken Feeding – NEW!

Offered daily from 11:30-11:45 AM and 1:30-1:45 PM, weather permitting

March 28-October 31

Cost: \$1/serving

All proceeds benefit Cosley Zoo.

Discovery Stations

- Offered on weekends at 10:30 and 2:30, weather permitting, in April, May, September, and October
- Offered daily at 10:30 and 2:30, weather permitting, June-August

Programs are free, open to all ages, and may include animal encounters, amphitheater presentations, or animal training sessions. Look for the Discovery Station sign located on the walkway into the zoo.

Cosley Zoo is a busy place during weekends. When our parking lot is full, please park in our office lot, located directly south of Cosley Zoo on Prairie Avenue.

