



# Cosley Tails

## Inside this issue

Behind the Scenes with Cosley Zoo's Education Department .....	1-2
Congratulations Cosley ...	2
The Science of Animal Nutrition .....	3-4
Programs & Events.....	5-7
Pumpkin Fest.....	6
Membership Matters .....	8



## 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](mailto:CosleyZoo@wheatonparks.org). We welcome your comments and suggestions.



Cosley Zoo is a facility of the Wheaton Park District.



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630.665.5534  
[cosleyzoo.org](http://cosleyzoo.org)

## Behind the Scenes with Cosley Zoo's Education Department By Natasha Fischer, Education Manager

In 2014, Cosley Zoo's Education Department, with assistance from volunteers, interns, and the Animal Care staff, presented programs to over 75,000 participants. Our programs include formal presentations for school, scout, and community groups both onsite and offsite, as well as informal animal visits and amphitheater presentations. While our education staff spends hundreds of hours each year actively teaching, they spend even more time behind the scenes doing the preparation necessary to ensure a high-quality educational experience for each participant.

Preparing live animals for use in education programs is a very important responsibility of Cosley Zoo educators. Live animals are the stars of most of Cosley Zoo's programs. They leave a lasting impression and create a connection our visitors will not soon forget. We add live animal interactions to programs as often as possible; however, our foremost concern is always the welfare of our animals. To ensure that an animal does not undergo stress while being used in a public setting, intensive training on the part of both the animal and the handler must take place. During training, the handler learns how to hold the animal so it is in a comfortable position, identify signs of stress, and safely allow the public to touch the animal when appropriate. Once the handler has mastered these tasks to the trainer's satisfaction, and passed a test covering general information about the species, the handler is then certified to handle the animal for public presentations.



*Educator, Katherine Anderson introduces a guest to a Chaco Golden Knee Tarantula.*

In addition to staff training, individual animals are also trained and desensitized to being handled around people. For several months, one of the most enjoyable parts of my day was handling our young hedgehogs to get them ready for public programs. Holding a hedgehoglet

– continued on page 2

## Behind the Scenes

—continued from page 1

(young hedgehog) is certain to put a smile on your face, no matter how your day has been going! While some animals can be desensitized just by handling, others are trained using operant conditioning (learning through positive reinforcement). Currently, our zookeepers and educators are training Red-tailed Hawks and Great Horned Owls for use in public programs. Our Great Horned Owls, Echo and Marley, were

**Cosley Zoo  
education  
programs  
reach over  
75,000  
people  
each year**

quite popular in their first formal programs, and have provided us with an invaluable opportunity to share this amazing species with visitors and inspire them to help protect nature's birds. Education staff has also trained some of the zoo's chickens in conjunction with Wheaton College, whose psychology students gain first-hand knowledge of learning and behavior by training chickens to complete fun and creative activities such as jumping through hula hoops and knocking over bowling pins.

When not out in the zoo teaching programs or working with animals, our education staff is often busy behind the scenes planning new programs. While we do offer many pre-developed topics for school and scout groups, we also frequently receive requests for specialized programs which must be developed from scratch. Recent examples include a program on local conservation efforts for a nature club, a nature play workshop for preschool educators, and a program on urban wildlife which was presented at several local libraries. All our individual and family programs offered through the Wheaton Park District program guide must also be developed on a weekly or monthly basis. For example, our weekly Bookworms class, which includes a story, animal visit, and craft, keeps me busy searching out just the right book at my local library and perusing Pinterest for simple and fun craft ideas. Our busy education staff also takes reservations and sends confirmations for all of our school, scout, and outreach programs, as well as birthday parties and rentals.

Additionally, education staff members have often served as experts at various events and panels. We have been judges at the DuPage County 4-H Fair, expert panelists in Glen Ellyn's Hadley Junior High's project-based learning projects, and speakers on the benefits of zoos for a persuasive writing class. Educators prepare for these programs by researching content, preparing activities, and gathering supplies. Volunteer oversight and coordination is another important role our education staff takes on. Junior Zookeepers, Summer Teen volunteers, year-round adult volunteers, and education interns assist our department, helping to offer

daily opportunities, especially during the summer months, for visitors to participate in informal education programming. All these volunteers are interviewed, trained, mentored, and provided with information, support, and recognition throughout the year.

Our education staff would tell you our jobs allow us to experience the best of both worlds; we get to work hands-on with animals on a daily basis while simultaneously having the opportunity to share animal information and important conservation messages with zoo visitors. Our workdays are ever-changing, requiring us to adapt quickly to new situations, and can be overwhelmingly full of tasks to accomplish, but we wouldn't change a thing. We're proud to be the face of Cosley Zoo for our visitors. We believe inspiring people to care about animals and nature is the best possible way we could spend our workdays.

## Congratulations Cosley Zoo!

For 15 years, Cosley Zoo has been accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). We've just taken our first step towards another 15; on September 17, 2015, the AZA renewed our accreditation for five more years!

ACCREDITED BY THE  
**ASSOCIATION  
OF ZOOS &  
AQUARIUMS**

AZA accreditation is the national gold standard for animal care and welfare. The rigorous accreditation process involves a meticulous on-site inspection by trained zoo professionals and an interview of top officials at a formal hearing of AZA's Accreditation Commission.

Because of these ever-rising standards, less than 10% of USDA-licensed animal exhibitors are awarded AZA accreditation. But what does this mean for you?

It means when you step through our gates, you know you're entering a facility where the animals are cared for at the highest standards and our guests are, too, learning conservation lessons they can apply in their everyday lives, and gaining a deeper appreciation for native Illinois wildlife.

It means you're visiting a zoo that maintains the animals of today and fosters new growth for the future. We may be small, but we make a big impact.

## The Science of Animal Nutrition at Cosley Zoo

By Caryn Johnson, Zookeeper

There's a lot more to being a zookeeper than meets the eye! A zookeeper's typical day doesn't only consist of doing the "dirty" jobs around the zoo [although I'm sure you can guess which jobs this might include when it comes to caring for animals!]; it is actually a lot more diverse. Zookeepers generally work long days, which often means early mornings and late evenings, to allow adequate time to complete particular tasks before the zoo opens and after it closes. They typically work weekends and even holidays. It's a job that requires a lot of hard work and dedication 365 days a year. At Cosley Zoo, our zookeeper staff works hard both in the public eye as well as behind the scenes to assure every aspect of care is addressed to provide the best welfare for our animals. In addition to performing daily husbandry, conducting animal training sessions, providing behavioral enrichment to the animals, interacting with zoo guests, and overseeing and providing veterinary medical care as needed, zookeepers are also responsible for the daily preparation of all the animals' diets. There are a variety of considerations zookeepers have to be aware of when it comes to preparing and providing meals for the zoo's wide assortment of residents.

First of all, ensuring that the nutritional needs of the zoo's collection are met is a key component of animal care. Each and every animal has its own specific nutritional requirements. Nutritional guidance and supervision from Cosley Zoo's primary veterinarian help zookeepers determine which types of food items are the most beneficial for a particular animal. Before implementing any type of dietary modifications, zookeepers must consult the zoo's primary veterinarian and/or Cosley Zoo's Animal Collection Supervisor for approval.

Animal diets vary widely; for example, the nutritional needs for one of the zoo's bobcats are not the same as for one of the zoo's White-tailed Deer. When assessing the nutritional needs of the zoo's bobcats Salvatore and Valentino, it's important to understand they are carnivores, or "meat-eaters"; therefore, their diet in the wild would normally consist of small prey items such as squirrels, rabbits, mice, voles, and birds. Bobcats have also been known to take down prey as large as deer! At Cosley Zoo, we work to provide food items that mimic the animals' natural diets as closely as possible by feeding our bobcats similar small prey items such as mice, chicks, rats, quail, and rabbit. To ensure a balanced diet, we also provide a commercially prepared ground beef which is formulated specifically for exotic felines. These same food items would not be appropriate for the zoo's White-tailed Deer, which are herbivores or "plant-eaters." In the wild, White-tailed Deer are considered both "browsers" (animals which eat leaves and twigs) and "grazers" (animals which eat grasses). Seasonally they may also consume corn, acorns, and other nuts as they are available. Cosley Zoo's two female White-tailed Deer are fed a commercial herbivore

diet, hay, and a combination of fresh produce. Both of these species have vastly different nutritional considerations, and zookeepers follow carefully structured dietary sheets while preparing all of our animals' diets every day.

Preparing the diets themselves is no small task! At Cosley Zoo we start preparing them first thing in the morning to ensure that every animal's food is ready to be given at the appropriate time. Each animal has a carefully constructed diet sheet, (much like a recipe), which is used by the keeper preparing diets on any given day. Just like people, animals' diets should include a variety of food items. To provide diversity, each animal has certain food item options that are specific to the species in question. Every animal's diet sheet includes dietary considerations specific to that individual animal or species. If a certain species cannot receive a particular food item for any reason (toxicity, allergic reaction, personal taste, or other considerations) that would be noted on that animal's individual diet sheet. An example of such a restriction for both of the zoo's canid (dog-like) species (coyote and foxes) is they cannot be offered grapes or raisins. Many people may not realize grapes are considered highly toxic to canids, including domestic dogs, and can cause severe kidney failure when consumed in any amount. This is a critical piece of information for any zookeeper preparing diets!

Providing the animals with food items from reputable sources is also a key element to an effective zoo nutrition program. At Cosley Zoo, we only purchase the freshest produce. We make weekly shopping trips to local grocery stores to purchase the food items that we need for preparing diets. We also receive weekly donations from Costco and Caputo's, who have a surplus of particular food items. After picking up food items, zookeepers are responsible for unloading, sorting, and organizing all the fresh produce into our large refrigerator for use throughout the week. It's also critical that zookeepers rotate through the existing supply of produce in the refrigerator, being sure to place the newest and freshest items towards the back, while ensuring the oldest items get rotated towards the front so they're used up first. Additionally, Cosley Zoo works with different reputable suppliers for our frozen food deliveries [mice, chicks, quail, and rats] and our live insect deliveries [worms, mealworms, crickets]. Each and every one of these items, whether they're plant- or animal-based, must be supplied by a responsible vendor, as they play an essential part in having a well-balanced, nutritionally diverse feeding program.

The manner in which the food item(s) are presented to the animals is another vital component. Since animals in captivity don't have to find their own food like their wild

– continued on page 4



## The Science of Animal Nutrition

—continued from page 3

counterparts do, it is critical that zookeepers provide food options in more naturalistic ways, which allows the species in question to forage, or “hunt” for their food. Zookeepers often use behavioral enrichment items to provide food options which encourage more naturalistic behaviors. Behavioral enrichment itself can be defined as “a process for improving or enhancing animal environments.” Incorporating enrichment items in conjunction with meeting the animal’s nutritional needs encourages the zoo’s residents to use their intelligence and actively make decisions within their environment. An example of a behavioral enrichment item offered for encouraging foraging behavior could be something as simple as hiding food items inside a box with shredded paper in it for the zoo’s coyote, or something as complex as providing a puzzle feeder with small pieces of fruit inside for the zoo’s raccoons. In either instance, the animal would have to seek out, investigate, and forage in order to receive the food item.

At Cosley Zoo we provide a properly balanced nutritional plan for all the zoo’s species under the careful supervision of a licensed veterinarian as well as under the guidance of knowledgeable staff. That being said, it’s important to note how critical it is that people do NOT offer food to wild animals in their own backyard. Although it may be fun to do, it will actually cause more harm than good. Since learning how to hunt and/or forage is an essential skill an animal needs to acquire at a young age, making wild animals dependent on humans for food deprives them of the ability to learn those crucial skills, which causes them to lose their ability to survive independently. Feeding also encourages the animals to come into closer proximity to humans, and this can cause potentially unsafe encounters. Much of what people provide is also not nutritionally sound and can cause big problems for the animal. Although feeding bread to the ducks at the park seems innocent enough, it can actually lead to serious complications. Consuming items like bread can be extremely dangerous to waterfowl. Bread provides very little nutritional value, and although it may seem tasty to the birds, it causes them to fill up without receiving any beneficial nutrients. A lack of these essential nutrients can then contribute to the development of a deformity known as “angel wing.” If the “angel wing” is severe enough, it permanently prevents the duck from flying, which can be fatal. This is just one example of why it is harmful to feed wild animals, despite best intentions.

Cosley Zoo staff take pride in providing a balanced, comprehensive nutritional program for all the zoo’s residents. Careful considerations are made to provide every individual animal with the proper food choices. Addressing the animal’s nutritional needs and ensuring they are met are essential components of high-quality animal care. So the next time

you’re visiting the zoo, take a peek through our feed prep room viewing window, located in the Kiebler Barn, and see if one of our zookeepers is hard at work preparing one of our animal’s diets.



## Holiday Wish Tree



Help the animals at Cosley Zoo have an extra special holiday season by purchasing an ornament from our Wish Tree. It’s easy! Visit the Wild Side Gift Shop, pick the ornament that lists a special gift for your favorite animal, and we will do the shopping!

Many of the items on the tree provide enrichment for our animals. Enrichment is the process of creating a challenging environment to address an animal’s social, psychological, and physical needs. Enrichment aims to enhance animal activity and provide mental stimulation. Enrichment is as critical to an animal’s well-being as having the right food and medical care.

If you would like to shop for the animals, please visit Cosley Zoo’s Wish List on Amazon. Go to [amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/ref=wish\\_list](https://amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/ref=wish_list) and enter Cosley Zoo.

## 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 Duck Pond Pavilion, which is a covered outdoor space. *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	10/28-12/9*	W	9:30-10A	\$39/\$54	406505-01

*Series 2*  
\*No class 11/25.

### Zoo Tots

Curious toddlers can 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. Please note: Class is held in our Duck Pond Pavilion which is a covered outdoor space. Children 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 #
2-4	10/13	Tu	8:30-9:30A	\$9/\$12.50	406510-02
2-4	11/10	Tu	8:30-9:30A	\$9/\$12.50	406510-03

### 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 11:00-11:30A.
- Sign up by 10:45A in the Wild Side Gift Shop during your zoo visit. First come first served, maximum of 6 participants each day.
- \$10/Cosley Zoo Member; \$12/nonmember

Register online at [wheatonparkdistrict.com](http://wheatonparkdistrict.com) for Bookworms, Zoo Investigators, and Zoo Tots at Cosley Zoo.

### Fun-damentals of Zookeeping

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 Friday or Sunday all year from 10A to 1P.
- Ages 14 & up
- \$75/Cosley Zoo Member; \$95/nonmember

To sign up, call the 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 Saturday mornings April-September from 7:15-9:15A.
- 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

### Eco-Exploration Backpack Tours

Cosley Zoo has 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.

## Programs & Events

### Daily Activities

#### Duck Feeding

Through October 12

Offered daily through October 12 from 10-10:30A and 3-3:30P, weather permitting.

- Cost: \$1/serving

*All proceeds benefit Cosley Zoo.*

#### Chicken Feeding

Through October 31

Offered daily through October 31 from 11:30-11:45A and 1:30-1:45P, weather permitting.

- Cost: \$1/serving

*All proceeds benefit Cosley Zoo.*



## October 1–31

**Pumpkins | Gourds | Cornstalks  
Straw Pyramids | Cornstalk Tunnel  
Carnival Rides**

Register for **Spooktacular** at [cosleyzoo.org](http://cosleyzoo.org)  
**Friday, October 23**

Wear your costume and trick or treat through the zoo.

Sponsored by  

### Thank You to our Cosley Classic Sponsors, Participants, and Volunteers!

Event Co-Sponsored by



A Xerox Company



Lunch Sponsor

**Jan Kiebler**

*In Memory of Vern Kiebler*

Driving Range



Beverage Carts Sponsor



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## Programs & Events

### Pumpkin Fest

October 1-31

Taking in the beautiful fall colors at Cosley Zoo is a must! Come see the animals in the crisp fall air, listen to the squeals of excitement from the children conquering the straw pyramid or finding their way through the corn stalk tunnel, and take in the thousands of pumpkins scattered on the zoo's lawn.

Apples, gourds, pumpkins, cider, cornstalks, and various sizes of straw bales will be available for purchase. Be sure and check out the fall merchandise in the Wild Side Gift Shop too! *Proceeds from your purchases benefit Cosley Zoo.*

- Regular admission rates apply



Pumpkin Patch Sponsor



Straw Mountain Sponsor



### Spooktacular

Friday, October 23, 5:30-7P and 7-8:30P

Don't miss this fall festival full of Halloween fun! Come dressed in costume to enjoy loads of activities. Take a stroll through our "not so scary" straw maze and a gander around the spooky pond path, meet live animals, carve or decorate a pumpkin, play games, enjoy refreshments, and make crafts. Stop at various stations along the Trick or Treat Trek to collect your supply of holiday goodies. Pre-registration is required. Space is limited so register early. Non-refundable payment due at time of registration. Call 630.665.5534 or stop in the Wild Side Gift Shop to sign up today!

- Cosley Zoo member fees: \$5 ages 3-14; \$2 ages 15-adult; Free ages 2 and under
- Non-zoo member fees: \$10 ages 3-14; \$5 ages 15-Adult; Free ages 2 and under

Sponsored by **BAUER** DENTISTRY  **BAUER** ORTHODONTICS

### Festival of Lights and Tree Sales

November 27-December 30

A winter visit to Cosley Zoo has become a family tradition for many. Make sure it is one of yours! Cosley Zoo is transformed into a winter wonderland with 20,000 twinkling lights creating spectacular displays, an amazing selection of Christmas trees for you to purchase, hot chocolate, and holiday gifts. The Festival of Lights and Tree Sales begin the day after Thanksgiving (11/27/15) and continue through December 30. The zoo is open 9A-9P daily; lights come on at 3P. All proceeds support the zoo, its animals, programs and development.

- Zoo admission is free during the Festival of Lights and Tree Sales. Donations are greatly appreciated.
- Cosley Zoo is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day
- Cosley Zoo is open 9A-Noon on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve



### Santa's Craft Corner

Saturday, Nov. 28, Dec. 5 & 12, 10A-2P

Can't make it to the North Pole? Do the next best thing and come to Cosley Zoo where you can see Santa *and* the animals! While visiting Santa, make a craft or two and enjoy refreshments.

- \$5/family donation
- \$3 for printed photo with Santa



# MEMBERSHIP MATTERS – SUPPORT COSLEY ZOO

Members provide essential financial support for Cosley Zoo.

Our members:

- Keep admission free for all children
- Provide quality care for our animals
- Update and add new exhibits
- Participate in conservation efforts, like the Blanding's Turtle Recovery Project
- Maintain national recognition as an Association of Zoos & Aquariums accredited facility.
- Provide important education programming for more than 75,000 people each year.



## MEMBERSHIP PLANS & BENEFITS



Cosley Zoo Membership Levels	\$39 Eagle	\$59 Wild Bunch	\$79 Wild Bunch Plus	\$99 Keepers Club
Free Adult Admission/Membership Cards*	1 Named Adult	2 Named Adults	3 Named Adults	2 Named Adults & Guest
Free or Discount Admission to More Than 160 North American Zoos and Aquariums				
10% Discount on Pumpkins & Christmas Trees				
Two Bobcats Backstage Passes (must be used together)				
Special Zoo Event Discounts				
10% Discount on Birthday Party & Rental Packages (Basic Level)				
10% Discount on Zoo Programs & Camps				
Free Membership Gift				
10% Discount at Wild Side Gift Shop				
Invitation to Signature Zoo Events				
Subscription to Cosley Tails E-newsletter				
Guest Passes			2	4
Duck Feeding Passes			2	4
Free Backpack Tours			1	2

\*All members are required to show a valid membership card and photo ID to receive admission benefits.