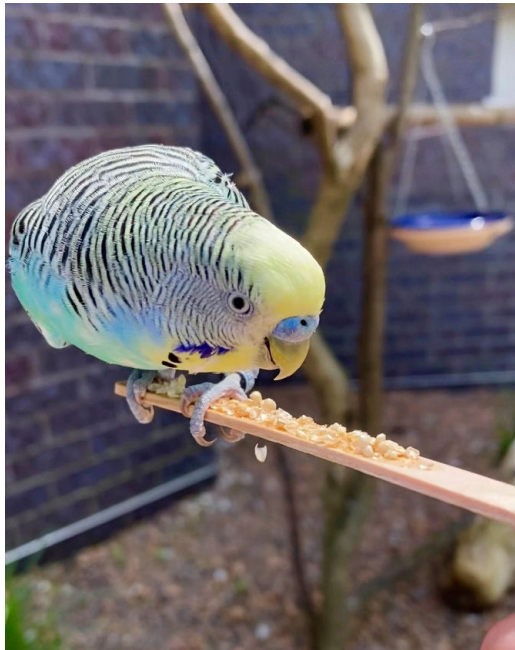


Look No Feather. The Budgies are Back!



Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden's Budgie Walkabout is home to over 300 Australian Budgies. Due to cold sensitivities the budgies are only in their outdoor aviary from around Memorial Day to fall.

Before releasing the budgies (short for budgerigars) for the season, they are examined by our veterinarian technician, Kristie. Testing all 300 budgies would be an almost impossible task, so Kristie will examine roughly 30% of the flock for common aviary illnesses. This requires a few quick swabs as budgies are easily stressed when held. She also weighs them by placing each budgie in a small container to prevent them from flying (a problem when attempting to weigh a bird).

During the outdoor aviary season Keepers Rachel and Kaitlyn regularly monitor the flock as a whole, watching for food and water intake, unusual behavior, or changes in fecal matter. If one is behaving not quite like the others, they will quarantine it for examination and closer monitoring. As budgies are very social creatures, even the quarantined budgie will be housed with a group to keep it company.

The Budgie Walkabout was opened in 2019. Since budgies live anywhere from 5 to 8 years, the Zoo has a blended flock of the original and new. Only two chicks have hatched here in that time, Falafel and Hummus. With this many budgies, they rarely get names like the other animals at the Zoo.

The variety of colors and patterns within the flock is stunning. Most bird species' genders are distinguished by one solid color (ex. red and brown cardinals). With budgies, however, males have a blue cere, which is a band of tissue between the base of the beak and the start of the feathers.

How do you move such a large flock when they need to get inside? From the Spring Wild Tidings, you might remember that zoo animals are trained for just such an occasion. The budgies, like most animals, are food motivated. Their high value food is seed. Nutritious but less exciting pellets are kept outside. The budgies are quickly learning that they can get that extra special seed by flying indoors at night. Keeper Rachel is also adding a tambourine into the training hoping that sound will increase their response.

Enrichment for all of our animals is very important. (Come to Animal Enrichment Day!) Even birds like to have fun. Budgies love to shred things so the keepers provide plenty of wooden perches, grapevines, and boxes to rip apart.



Now that the Budgie Walkabout is open for the season, families can become completely immersed in the exhibit up close with the budgies. For two tokens, you can feed the budgies with a seed stick. All the proceeds from the budgie feedings go to the Evansville Zoological Society.

Camp ZOOfari!

See you at Camp Zoofari?

Camp Zoofari begins June 5! Camp Zoofari is a themed summer day camp for children ages 4-13. We have a half day camp for minis ages, 4-5, a full day camp for ages 6-10, and a full day series for tweens ages 11-13. All camps offer a variety of fun and educational activities, and always include exploration through the zoo, animal encounters, hands-on activities, and time with friends.

Claim your spot before we sell out. (Psst - Zoo Members get 15% off.) **Register today!**



Upcoming Events



Zoo Brew June 10, 5pm-8pm

It's five o'clock somewhere-- at Zoo Brew!

On Saturday, June 10th, join us for happy hour from 5pm-8pm for Mesker Park Zoo's annual Zoo Brew. Tickets are \$45 which includes a tasting mug with this year's newest logo. There will be unlimited tastings from five breweries, three wineries, and locally brewed coffee while supplies last. Have your pick from six popular, local food trucks. Enjoy live music and games of all kinds while you walk through the Zoo, or sip back and relax while you take a ride on the Party Tram. When the event ends, get home safely with a

\$25 Lyft credit sponsored by Logan's Promise. We want you to have fun, drink responsibly, and get home safely. Don't make pour decisions! We have put in a lot of effort working with local brewers and wineries to make this year's event even better for them and for you. Zoo Brew is one of our largest fundraising events with all proceeds directly helping the mission of the Evansville Zoological Society.

Thank you to our Zoo Brew Sponsors!



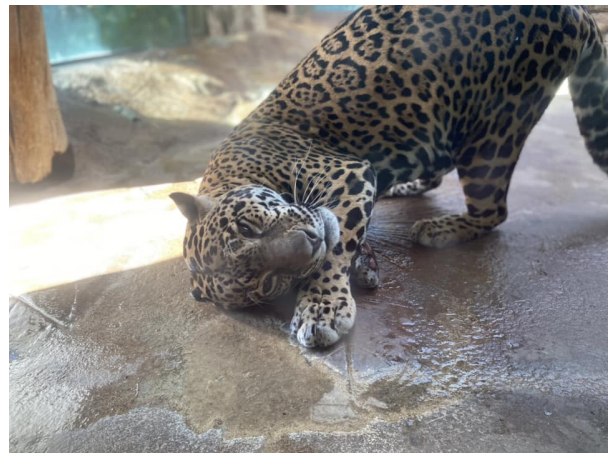
Animal Enrichment Day July 29

Learn how the animals are enriched in their zoo environment by enjoying a variety of games and activities for the entire family including zookeeper talks, docents with ambassador animals, games, music, and much more. Event included in cost of admission. Members get in FREE!

Beliza Blog

How is Beliza?

Early this year, Keeper Jackie began to notice some subtle changes in Beliza, our 17 year old female Jaguar. She was scheduled for her annual exam in April, but after noticing some frequent nosebleeds and lower energy, the vet team decided to move up her exam. The cancer medication Beliza is on can have side effects like bloody noses, so we needed to know if this was the cause and what our next steps should be.



On March 15th, the vet team did Beliza's exam. Fortunately, the bloody noses were not caused by the medication, but rather possibly from the humidity and colder winter. Keeper Jackie has been monitoring her closely and noticed a decline in the frequency of these nosebleeds. Our concern has subsided as she has returned to normal behavior. This July will be 4 years since Beliza was diagnosed with cancer and underwent surgery to remove large masses. In August, it will be 4 years that Beliza has been on her cancer medication. It is important to note that this medication does not cure the cancer, but rather slows down the progression. Keeper Jackie believes that this medication is why this sassy cat is still around today, and we need YOUR help to keep this medication available. The medication costs on average \$1,200 a month. Please consider donating to Beliza's medication [here](#). Follow along as we continue to give you updates in our seasonal newsletter. On your next visit, stop into Amazonia and say hello to our strong and gorgeous Beliza.

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