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Sandra Scott Travels: Zoo Treks Offer A Glimpse Of Wildlife

Last week I asked: Where is the best place to see animals?

In a zoo.



Giraffes search for a snack

I, like many people, enjoy seeing animals in their natural habitat and have done so in many places.

John and I went on safari in Kenya where we saw thousands of wildebeests and zebras migrating.

I was most impressed with the height of the giraffes.

When I tell people that we have spent a lot of time over the years in the rainforest I always add that we have more wildlife in our backyard than we ever saw in the jungle.

John saw a snake once in Costa Rice and we had to pay for a tour to see a sloth.

The best place to really see and observe animals is in a zoo.



Feeding time at the zoo

We have been to many zoos in the United States and in several countries.
There is always something new and interesting to see and learn.
One of the best zoos is in Syracuse, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, and it is open 362 days a year.
They have lions and tigers and bears and more.
One of the most unique primates at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo is the Golden Lion Tamarin from the coastal forests of Brazil.
They are on the endangered species list with an estimated wild population of about 3,200 and less than 500 in zoos.
They are small with beautiful red manes hence the “lion” name.



A panda goes for a stroll

The zoo offers a variety of programs for all ages.

The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, a 183-acre zoo in Cleveland, is another all-season zoo.
The zoo is divided into several areas: Australian Adventure; African Savanna; Northern Trek; The Primate, Cat and Aquatics Building; The RainForest; and Waterfowl Lake.
Along with gorillas, big cats, and all the expected zoo animals, the Australian Adventure is a fascinating eight-acre exhibit.
A train ride takes visitors past kangaroos and wallabies that roam freely in Wallaby Walkabout and by Kookaburra Station.
The Reinberger Homestead is fashioned after a traditional 19th century sheep station offering a peek into Australian home life.



An elephant decides she wants to sit a while

Cleveland is always a good destination choice with many museums and attractions.
One of the largest and most progressive zoos in the world is the famous San Diego Zoo in California with more than 4,000 animals and 800 species.
The Skyfari aerial trip offers spectacular views of the zoo but it is just one way to tour the zoo.
There is also a miniature train and guided bus tour.
There are many programs and unique things to do such enjoying a buffet breakfast while watching the koala colony in their home, the Australian Outback.
Watch the keeper feed the koalas their breakfast while you enjoy yours.



Leaping lemurs

The Alabama Golf Coast Zoo is called “The Little Zoo that Could” because is the only zoo in recorded US history that has ever staged a full scale evacuation for a natural disaster (they actually completed three zoo evacuations – for hurricanes Ivan, Dennis and Katrina).
During our visit to the zoo I loved the close encounters with the baby white Bengal Tigers and playing in the enclosure with lemurs.
They really are “leaping lemurs.”
You can’t do that in the wild.
When we were in Nebraska we visited the Lincoln’s Children’s Zoo.
I don’t think there is any such thing as a children’s only zoo.
In fact, sometimes places that promote to children offer the best learning opportunities.



Some penguins relax in the sunshine

They let visitors pet critters like turtles and lizards plus there are usually animal feeding stations.
Trivia Tease™: What presidential site is in East Aurora, New York?
Look for the answer next week.
Sandra and her husband, John, have been exploring the world for decades, always on the lookout for something new and unique to experience. We have sailed down the Nile for a week on a felucca, stayed with the Pesch Indians in La Mosquitia, visited schools in a variety of countries, and — to add balance to our life — stayed at some of the most luxurious hotels in the world. Let the fun continue!