

Wild About Health at the El Paso Zoo

Scavenger Hunt
Grades K-3

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Suggestions for Teachers

1. Allow your children about 60 minutes for this scavenger hunt. The activities take you to different areas of the zoo and focus on healthy living while encouraging kids to exercise and eat right. As you walk through the Zoo, look out for 12 new Wild About Health signs with additional messages.
2. Zoo daily hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Group rates are available. Register online at <http://www.elpasozoo.org/Education-Groups-Form.php> or call 915-521-1850.
3. Divide your class into small groups with an adult to help each group. This scavenger hunt is intended to be adult led.

Printed Scavenger Hunt Brochures

1. After making reservations for your class, look for a zoo staff member or volunteer when you arrive. If you are not greeted at the front gate ask for your printed Scavenger Hunt Brochures at the Zoological Society Office located to the right and across the way from the ticket booth. These printed brochures are only available for Grades K-3. To view a copy of the actual scavenger hunt prior to your visit contact Rick LoBello at lobellorl@elpasotexas.gov

Suggested pre-visit activities

1. Look over the following pages with your students ahead of time so that you can learn about some of our animals and can have an idea of what they will be doing at the zoo. Many animal pictures and more information can be found at www.elpasozoo.org and at www.facebook.com/elpasozoo

Suggested post-visit activities

1. Extend these activities to the senses. Compare and contrast human senses with animal senses.
2. Compare foods people eat with foods that animals eat.
3. Compare the ways animals move and get their exercise to the ways people move and get exercise.
4. Compare animal swimming and running records to records for people. For example, the world's fastest human can average 23 miles/hour in the 100 m dash. An African lion and a Thomson's gazelle that can both run 50 miles/hour. The world's fastest swimmer can swim 5.34 miles/hour compared to a sea lion that can swim 30 miles/hour.
5. Use the following thought-provokers for group discussions:

Something I saw at the zoo....

My favorite animal at the zoo...

If a meerkat (lion, zebra) could talk, it might say...

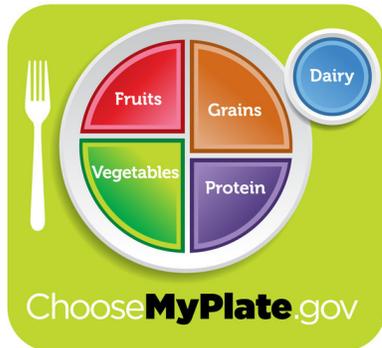
If I were a prairie dog, I would...

For more information

Questions and comments can be directed to the El Paso Zoo Education Curator by email or phone. Contact Rick LoBello at 915-521-1881 or by email at lobellorl@elpasotexas.gov

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

My Plate



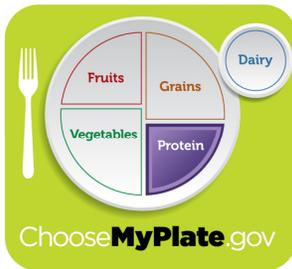
The federal government's new food icon, *MyPlate*, serves as a reminder to help people make healthier food choices. *MyPlate* is a new generation icon with the intent to prompt people to think about building a healthy plate at meal times and to seek more information to help them do that by going to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. The new *MyPlate* icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups. For print materials and interactive tools visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov

Zoo Animals

Please remind your students to do their best to complete the hunt by carefully observing the animals they find. For each animal a MyPlate picture is included highlighting the food the animal eats.

Facts about the animals in the scavenger hunt

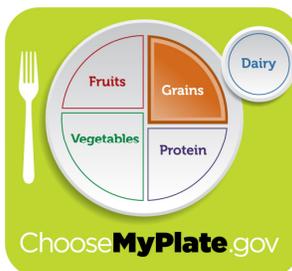
African Lion - Male African lions can reach 500 pounds and most females (lioness) weigh about 300 pounds. Lions are the only cats that live in groups called prides. Groups of females usually hunt together for preferred prey species including wildebeest, zebra, Cape buffalo, and various species of antelope. A single female can kill smaller animals, but when they hunt larger animals like Cape buffalo and kudu the pride is more successful when they hunt as a team in cutting off all avenues of escape and in helping to bring the animal to the ground.



The lion's color helps it blend in with its grassland environment. African Lions are generally tawny in color. The tuft of the tail is generally black.

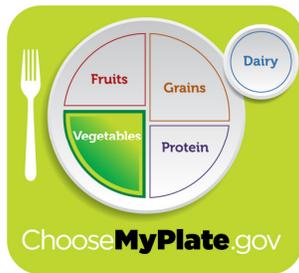
Zebra - Every zebra has a unique pattern of stripes. A zebra's stripes are much like our finger prints, no two zebras are the same. Wildlife biologists believe that the combined stripes of a herd of zebras help to protect them from predators. When they are running away from an attacking lion the movement of so many stripes makes it more difficult for the lion to focus on any one animal. The Grant's zebra lives in family groups lead by a single male (stallion), but when moving across the savanna to new feeding areas, a dominant female (mare) leads the way.

The zebra is able to survive eating tougher grasses that many other species of animals are unable to digest. As it feeds on these grasses, the zebra opens up the grassland benefiting other animals like gazelles that are looking for more tender vegetation growing closer to the ground.



Giraffe - The giraffe is the world's tallest land animal. Giraffes can grow 19 feet tall and weigh up to 3,000 pounds. Their necks can extend up to 6 feet long. Compared to the neck of a human there is a surprising similarity – both humans and giraffes have the same number of vertebrae – seven!

Giraffe feeding habits help to maintain the open woodlands inhabited by other animals on the savanna. On the African savanna, the giraffe can reach higher in the trees than an outstretched elephant trunk. Using a special joint at the base of the skull they can also extend their necks vertically.

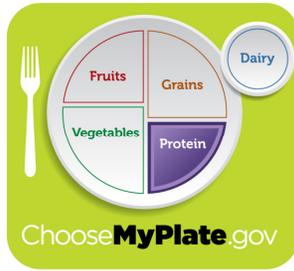


Getting a drink is not so easy for a giraffe. With its long neck one might think that getting a drink would be a simple task. The neck of a giraffe is not long enough for the animal to simply bend down for a drink. To do so, the giraffe has to awkwardly spread apart its legs or kneel down on the pads of its front legs.

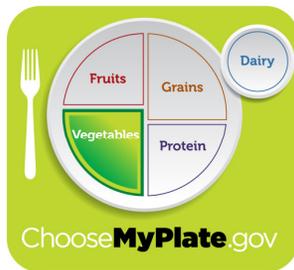
Meerkat - Meerkats live in family groups. They are tan, brown and gray in color with a silver tint. Short stripes on the back are unique to each meerkat like a human finger print.

Like people, meerkats are very social animals and live in groups called clans. Look for some of the following common behaviors: (a) a meerkat on guard duty watching out for the others, (b) a meerkat on guard duty making a peeping sound, (c) a meerkat making a growling sound while searching for food, (d) a meerkat marking its territory with scent using a gland near its rear with which it will rub on anything and everything, (e) meerkats rubbing against each other to help express affection and share scents.

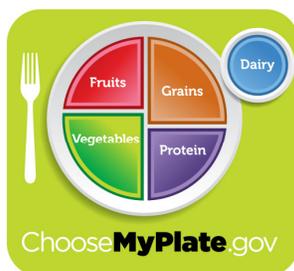
Meerkats eat a wide variety of invertebrates including crickets, grasshoppers, beetles, scorpions and millipedes similar to those found in El Paso's Chihuahuan Desert. They also eat larger animals like lizards and small rodents.



Spider Monkey - Spider monkeys live from Southern Mexico to Bolivia and Brazil in South America. They live in rainforests and eat a diet of 90% fruit and seeds. They also eat young leaves, flowers, roots, bark, decaying wood and honey. A very small part of their diet consists of insects, insect larvae and bird's eggs. These monkeys spent most of their time in the trees. They have a prehensile tail that is muscular and tactile and is used as an extra hand. When the animal is on the lookout, it stands or walks on two feet, using the tail to hold on to a support. When swinging by the tail, the hands are free to gather food. As they swing from branch to branch they can reach up to 40 feet.

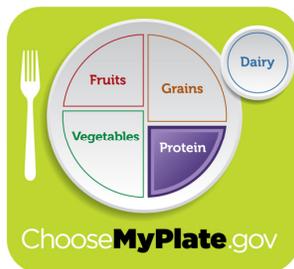


Geoffrey's Marmoset - Did you know that some monkeys like gum? Perhaps the first creatures on earth to start chewing gum were monkeys. Geoffrey's Marmosets will dig their teeth into tree trunks, branches and vines to stimulate the flow of gum so that they can eat it. Also called the tufted-ear marmoset or Geoffrey's marmoset they eat all kinds of leaves, fruits, insects and small vertebrates like lizards and tree frogs. They live in groups called troops where there is one breeding pair and other members help to care for the young. Two baby marmosets were born at the Zoo in 2011.



California Sea Lion – Two sea lions live at the Zoo. Sunny is our only male sea lion. He was born at the Zoo on June 12, 1986 and is the star attraction at our daily sea lion encounters at 10:45am and 2:45pm. As an “Ambassador for Ocean Conservation” Sunny encourages visitors to participate in the Sea Food Watch program. He also helps to encourage recycling with his 75% free throw average when tossing a plastic jug into *the Blue*, the city’s curbside recycling container.

Sushi is our most playful and curious sea lion and is often seen interacting with people at the underwater viewing window. She has big round eyes and is grayer in color. Born in the wild sometime in 1998 Sushi was found alone on the beach late in 1999. The California Marine Mammal Center came to her rescue and after an unsuccessful attempt to return her to the wild transferred her to Six Flags Marine World before she moved to El Paso.



Asian Elephant – We have two Asian elephants, both females. Savannah is about 60 years old. She came to the El Paso Zoo from Louisiana. Juno is about 45 years old. Juno used to be in the circus. The easiest way to tell them apart is that Juno has little holes in the bottoms of her ears. Savannah and Juno have a big space at the zoo where they live. It is called an exhibit. In the elephant's exhibit there is a lot shade for the elephants so they can stay cool when it is hot outside. There is a lot of room for Savannah and Juno to play and explore in their exhibit.

The people who take care of the animals at the zoo are called zookeepers. Savannah and Juno have zookeepers who take care of them everyday. One thing the zookeepers do is to always make sure that the elephants have clean water and a clean exhibit. The zookeepers will hide special treats in the exhibit for Savannah and Juno. The elephants like peanut butter and like to chew and eat different kinds of leaves. Juno and Savannah enjoy looking for the treats. The zookeepers will also dig up the dirt in the elephant’s exhibit to keep it soft. The soft dirt feels good on the elephant's feet.

Behind the elephant exhibit is an area where the elephants go at night or when the weather is too cold for them to stay outside. It is called the barn.

Every morning inside the barn the elephants get a bath. Elephants in the wild will take a bath everyday if they can find water. To give Savannah and Juno a bath the zookeepers use a big brush and a lot of baby shampoo.

Elephants will eat about 100 pounds of hay everyday and sometimes they get a lot of fruits and veggies to go with their hay.

Inside the elephant's exhibit there is a watering hole where Juno and Savannah can play and splash in the cool water. The water feels good on a hot summer day. An elephant can hold 2 1/2 gallons of water in its trunk.

All elephants in the world are endangered species. When a species is endangered, that means that there are very few left in the world and they could become extinct, like the dinosaurs.

It would be very sad if there were no more elephants in the world. One reason that elephants are endangered is that their natural habitat is being destroyed. In a place called Sumatra, where elephants live, their natural habitat is being destroyed. Sometimes people cut down trees so they can use the wood. People also cut down the trees so they can make farms. Palm oil is a product used in many of the foods we eat and is very unhealthy. Learn about palm oil and ask your family not to buy products with palm oil or palmitate listed as an ingredient. The Zoo's website at www.elpasozoo.org/takeaction will help you and your family discover other ways you can help animals.

