ABOUT

Brought to you by graduate student Jamie Hardcastle, this website is here to help your students have an enriching zoo experience. Unable to get your principle to agree to the trip? School or students can’t afford the field trip? Not enough time in the school year to schedule trips? This website is designed to provide information about the animals you’d see at a zoo so your students can learn more about them.

• Home Page- includes an about me section as well as a translate button
Animal section- starts with primates and includes information about each animal.

**Primates**

**Orangutan / Pongo**

- **Lifespan**: 30-40 years
- **Size**: 4-6 ft and weighing up to 180 lbs
- **Found**: Rainforests of Sumatra and Borneo
- **About**: Spend most of their lives in trees, even constructing sleeping areas in them each night. Primarily fruit eaters though technically omnivores. They are also critically endangered due to habitat loss and hunting.

*Photo by Fabrizio Frigeri on Unsplash*

**Mountain Gorilla / Gorilla beringei beringei**
Aldabra Tortoise / Geochelone gigantea

**Lifespan:** Up to 200 years

**Size:** Carapace reaches up to 4 ft tall and can weigh up to 600 lbs

**Found:** Aldabra Island in the Indian Ocean

**About:** The Aldabra tortoise eats mostly grasses and woody plants but can also go for long periods of time without food or water. They are easily domesticated and can even learn to identify their keepers fairly quickly.

Photo by Jamie Hardcastle

Alligator Snapping Turtle / Macrochelys temminckii

**Lifespan:** 20-70 years

**Size:** 26 inches and up to 220 lbs

**Found:** Southeastern United States

**About:** The alligator snapping turtle is the largest freshwater turtle in the United States which gives them the benefit of having no natural predators. Humans are the most at risk when...
**Lifespan**: Up to 60 years  
**Size**: 34 in and weighing up to 4 lbs  
**Found**: South America  
**About**: One of the more talkative birds, macaws can be taught to repeat words and often make loud vocalizations. They're very social birds and gather in flocks of 10-30 individuals.

Photo by Jamie Hardcastle

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**Hyacinth / Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus**

**Lifespan**: 50 years  
**Size**: 3.3 ft and weighing up to 4 lbs  
**Found**: Central and Eastern America  
**About**: The Hyacinth is the largest of all macaws and endangered. Not only has habitat loss led to the loss of the species but also the parrot trade. Although the largest of the...
Red Kangaroo / *Macropus rufus*

**Lifespan:** 23 years  
**Size:** 5.5 ft and weighing up to 200 lbs  
**Found:** Australia

**About:** The red kangaroo is the largest of the four species and all are found on the continent of Australia. Female kangaroos have the ability to halt their pregnancies while they still have a joey (baby kangaroo) in their pouch. Kangaroos can jump as high as 6 ft and cover a distance of 23 ft. When fighting often, kangaroos will balance on their strong tail and use their powerful legs to kick each other.

Photo by Jamie Hardcastle

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Black Rhinoceros / *Diceros bicornis*

**Lifespan:** 35-50 years  
**Size:** 4.5-6 ft and weighing up to 3,000 lbs  
**Found:** Africa

**About:** Black rhinos graze of bushes and trees and are solitary except for mothers and infants. Infants stay with their mothers up to 3 years of age before going off on their own. Black rhinos are critically endangered as they are hunted for their horn.
Invasive Species

This page is specific to the South Florida area. Florida has the largest number of invasive species in the world as it's a agreeable climate to a lot of species hailing from a variety of different regions. Though you may see these animals on exhibit at the zoo, it's important to know how their existence in Florida affects native species.

Green Iguana / *Iguana iguana*

- **Lifespan:** 20 years
- **Size:** Up to 6.8 ft long including tail and weighing up to 11 lbs
- **Native:** Central America, the Caribbean, and Southern Brazil
- **About:** Green iguanas are the most common lizard to keep as a pet in the United States. Their large size has led to the occasional releasing of this ‘pet’ into the wild and now they’re very common across South Florida. They are considered a nuisance to landscapers as they damage landscape vegetation and also because their burrows can damage sidewalks and other infrastructure. It is illegal to kill iguanas on your own property without a permit as well as in many different public lands.

Photo by Jamie Hardcastle
Activities page- Before, during, and post activities. Based on the premise of beginning with a ‘zoo visit journal’

A great pre-visit activity is to create a Zoo Journal with your students. Provide cut-out pictures of animals, animal stickers, animal washi tape, stamps, and etc to your students and let them create a journal to bring with them on their trip. This way, if interested in completing activities during their trip, they already have something to write in. This is great for making observations about all of the animals they see for post-activities as well!
Animal Kingdom Art Project
This is a project that can bridge pre, during, and post zoo trip. This is a great activity if you're going over the different classes of animals such as Mammalia, Reptilia, Amphibia, etc. This can help students recognize the differences between these classes and help them identify certain traits specific to each. This can be done in their journals or they can use cardboard to create a picture about their class. In either case, old magazines (animal ones in particular) would be good to have unless this is to be completed at home and resources from home used instead:

- Students can be given a class individually or grouped into pairs or small groups.
- Students can then look up information about their animal on the computer.
- Characteristics should be added onto the cardboard or journal page along with any photos or drawings of animals in the group.

Activities During

Meet a tree activity (From Zoo Idaho).
South Florida teachers, this is a great activity for helping your students see the difference between native and invasive plants:

- Students group up in small teams or pairs and they select a tree found at the zoo. Most zoos will have a nameplate for most of their trees so students should be able to identify them.
- Students should be given perimeters of where to look for their tree so they are all in the same general area.
- Allow students 10 minutes or so to answer the questionnaire about their tree.
- The print out can either glued or taped into the students notebook or the questions (or some of them) can be written into the notebook before the trip.
Scavenger Hunt
This is a great activity to keep your students interested during their time at the zoo. I've provided a general scavenger hunt that can be used successfully at most zoos. This is a print out that can be stapled or glued into the Zoo Visit journal. Students can compare their scavenger hunts at the end of the trip or back in the classroom as some may have found different answers to complete it.

Post-Activities

Animal Presentation
This activity can be used in conjunction with the animal observations made at the zoo. Each student should choose an animal to observe during their time at the zoo and when they arrive back to the classroom this will be the animal they will share with the class.

- Students should create a presentation about their animal using whatever tool they choose: PowerPoint, skit, song, poem, story, poster board.
- Students should include information such as the traits that put them in their respective classes, adaptations that have made them successful, general observations, and any other interesting facts they’ve learned.
- Students will not only use their observations but should spend some time researching their animal more fully after the trip.

My Trip to the Zoo
If the presentation doesn’t work for you and your students, this is another way students can put onto paper about what they saw and learned while at the zoo.

- Students should be instructed to use their journals to draw different animals they saw. They should have a page for each of the following: Amphibian, Mammal, Primate, Reptile, and Bird.
- Students will draw a picture of their favorite animal they observed from each category and write a fact or two they learned...
Contact page-
Name, email, and feedback that teachers can leave.
This page is dedicated to the resources that were used to create this website. As more content is added, this list will continuously be updated.

- Bing Translate
- National Geographic
- Defenders of Wildlife
- The Audubon Society

• Resource page-
  Where resources used to create the page can be found.
PREPARING TEACHERS FOR THEIR ZOO TRIP WITH AN INTERACTIVE WEBSITE.

by

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education: Natural Science and Environmental Education.

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Capstone Summary

Every year zoos and aquariums host some 50 million visitors, with about 12 million of those being student learners on field trips (Association of Zoos and Aquariums, 2018, Annual Survey Results, Informal Science Education). Djonko-Moore and Joseph (2016) explain that field trips can help students to connect what they’ve learned in school with their real-life experiences. Those connections can be important in helping to reinforce content, concepts, and ideas. To ensure that students are making connections and learning during a field trip, some preparation is important. Bitgood (1989) has found that a successful visit is more likely when teachers know the content of the lesson, know how to assist museum staff, and are informed about the details of the agenda of the trip. Thus, the research question my capstone seeks to answer is how can an interactive website help teachers plan a more effective field trip to the zoo?

I created a website that could be a ‘one-stop-shop’ for teachers to help them plan an educational, fun field trip to the zoo with their students. As there is a lot of planning that goes into setting up a field trip—logistics, information for students, relevant pre- and post-activities—the website serve as a resource that encompasses it all. The website was built on Weebly and includes various sections for teachers and their students to browse. It was created with a 3rd to 5th grade teachers and their students in mind but could be used up to 6th grade as well. There is a section on the different animals that might be seen with information about their lifespan and habitat. There is also a section with pre- post- and activities to be done during the field trip. As the website was created in South Florida and based on a zoo trip that would be done in the area, it also includes an invasive species section as South Florida boats one of the highest numbers of invasive species in the country (Prothero and Henry, 2013). The most important part is a contact page for interested teachers to provide feedback on how the website worked for them and any additional information they might like to see for future field trip purposes.
Your Zoo Visit

The website, Your Zoo Visit, was built using the website builder, Weebly. The official link is zoovisit.weebly.com. There are different sections, Animals, Invasive Species, Activities, Contact, and Resources. The Animals section includes animal pictures and descriptions including lifespan, size, location, and interesting facts. The Invasive Species section similar information but also the effects invasive species have on their native environments. The Activities page includes various activities that can be done before, during, and after the field trip. The contact page is where teachers using the resource or who are interested in the resource can reach out to provide feedback and additional items, animals, or activities they’d like to see added for future use. The Resource page includes information about the resources that were used to help build the website.
References


