

Bergen County Zoological Park Monthly Newsletter

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THE BEES ARE COMING!

James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive

**Board of Chosen
Freeholders**

James Koth,
Director of Parks

Marianne Vella
Zoo Director

This spring, the Bergen County Zoo, will become hosts to two working beehives. Honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are important pollinators for many food crops, including apples, oranges, cherries, carrots, cucumbers. More than \$15 billion a year in U.S. crops are pollinated by bees and U.S. honey bees also produce about \$150 million in honey.

Since 2006, worldwide populations of managed and wild bees have been declining dramatically. Many factors, combining together, have contributed to the decline—global warming, pesticide use on farms and habitat loss.

The hives that will be located at the zoo are Langstroth hives

and will be started with a queen, worker bees, drones and brood. They consist of a



Checking the hive for eggs
Photo by Carmen Baca

series of stacked boxes containing 10 frames with a bottom board and top cover. In these hives the bottom boxes contain the brood (eggs and larvae) and some stored

pollen, nectar and honey. Excess honey is stored in the upper boxes.

A colony of bees is a living organism that needs very little help from us. Honeybees are generally gentle, wanting only to raise their young. They defend their hive when it is threatened but are not aggressive insects.

Bees need our help to continue to thrive. The Bergen County Zoo will join in those efforts by having these hives at the facility. One way that the general public can help is by planting bee-friendly flowers such as dandelions.

Article by Peter & Lynne Torpie
Docents

FRIENDS OF THE BERGEN COUNTY ZOO

The Friends of the Bergen County Zoo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing financial support to the Bergen County Zoological Park for the welfare of its animals, educational programs and family-friendly facilities. It is the generous support of our sponsors, donors, members and zoo visitors that allow us to meet this mission. The Friends offer a variety of memberships for individuals and families. Please visit www.communitypass.net, choose "Friends of the Bergen County Zoo, NJ" (for Community or Organization) and continue through to either Create an Account or Existing Users can Log in. Visit us at www.friendsofbergencountyzoos.org or like us on Facebook! The Friends look forward to seeing you at the Zoo!

SPOTLIGHT ANIMAL: TWO-TOED SLOTH

Two-toed Sloth are found in the tree tops of tropical rainforests in South and Central America. Sloths are generally known to be slow moving, this is due to their slow metabolism. Sloths can survive on little food because it takes their bodies longer to digest plant material.

Sloths spend the majority of their days hanging upside down in the tress and only descend to the forest floors once a week to defecate.

When they are on the ground, sloths are awkward standing

on their palms and soles to walk around.

Two-toed Sloths are completely nocturnal. So they eat, move and defecate during night tome hours. Sloths are usually covered with algae due to their moist habitat, the algae provides camouflage as well as nutrients through their skin. Sloths play an important role in the rainforest as they help to prune the trees they live in.

Sloths can mate anytime in

the year with the gestation time lasting up to 11 months! Usually a single offspring is born and will cling to the mother for about 5 weeks. The father plays almost no part in the raising of the young.

These herbivorous animals eat leaves, twigs and fruit in the wild. Zoo sloths receive a mixture of fruits and vegetables along with canned primate diet (which is a grain -based protein).



Two-Toed Sloth on Exhibit
Photo by Tricia Gunther

ADMISSION TO BERGEN COUNTY ZOO



Starting May 4th, the Bergen County Zoo resumes charging admission to the zoo. As always, there are two sets of fees which are classified as: Bergen County Residents and Out of Bergen County Residents. In order for a BC Resident to obtain the lesser rate they must show proof of residency at the ticket window (Driver's license, County ID or Utility bill to the home).

Members of the Bergen County Zoo will still be granted free admission to the facility by showing their current membership card. They also have the luxury of by passing the zoo admission line and showing their card to the gate attendant for free access into the zoo. If you want to partake of this benefit, join to become a member, reach out to the Friends of the Bergen County Zoo (information is found on the front page).

BABY WILDLIFE

During these spring months, many animals begin their cycle of life and have offspring. In the event that you come across some of these baby creatures, here are some things to know.

- If you find a baby bird on the ground and you see the nest that it fell out of, it is ok to return the bird. The mother will be back to feed her baby birds
- If you come across a baby deer or a rabbit that is alone, that does not mean that the mother has abandon it. Until their young are strong enough to walk and travel with them, the mother will leave them in a secured spot while she looks for food.
- If a baby squirrel has fallen out of a tree and remains near it. Do not approach or handle the young animal. The mother will smell a human scent and either abandon or attack her young.

If you come across a different baby animal and wish to inquire how to proceed, please contact 201-634-3114/3105.

SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE: CINDY NORTON



Foot Exam on the Bald Eagle

When a person has a passion for the animal field and wishes to promote the animal care aspect, they typically begin as an animal keeper. Then with hard work and dedication that individual can rise up the ranks and begin to work more thoroughly in regards to the veterinary care of the animals. One such example is that of Cindy Norton.

Cindy Norton began her employment at the Bergen County Zoo as an animal keeper over 30 years ago. As is the case with animal keepers, she dealt with the husbandry and diet preparations of all the animals in the collection. Within six years, Ms. Norton realized that she had a strong passion for the welfare of these animals and decided to pursue a more specific career. When asked why she chose to work at the zoo, Ms. Norton stated, "Like everyone else in this field, I loved visiting zoos when I was young and always dreamed of working with animals. As I got older and realized that I could make zoo work my career, that was the path I chose to follow".

Cindy continued to pursue and learn more

about the animal field and this led her to enter the animal hospital at the zoo where she had more hands on task such as administering medical treatments, doing parasite testing and assisting with laboratory procedures. Once entering the animal hospital staff, Cindy looked at every scenario through the lens of how will this affect the animals within her care. Whether it was moving them, breeding them, revamping an exhibit etc., the first most thing on her mind was the welfare of the animals. With that mentality and dedication, it wasn't long before Cindy Norton was given the top position at the hospital: Zoo Curator.

As Zoo Curator, Cindy had the added responsibility of acting as a zoo registrar, she will maintain all of the animal records and correspondence with other institutions involved in animal transfers. When transfers of any kind takes place at the zoo, Cindy will arrange and prepare for that; she arranges the transportation, prepares the paperwork and follows the quarantine protocols. Working at the zoo is not simply being able to 'hang out and play with the animals' a lot goes into being in this field. Cindy would like the public to know that zoo work is a very specialized field—its not just about feeding animals and cleaning the pens. Zoo staff, like herself, must be educated in various areas, such as: biology, natural history, animal behavior (to name a few). It also requires a serious commitment to the

animal collection, being available 24hrs a day, 7 days a week.

Ms. Norton has been instrumental during the AZA accreditation inspections, she has assisted the zoo with a total of 6 accreditations. Due to some of the information that has resulted from these accreditations, it has lead Ms. Norton to create programs for animal care, institutional collection plans, as assisting in the creation of the environmental enrichment program and the zoo's animal training program.

So, why did Cindy Norton choose to work at the Bergen County Zoo? " In larger zoos, many animal care employees only work with a specific species or group of animals. Working at a smaller zoo, like Bergen County, everyone is cross-trained to work with all of the animals at our zoo. This allows me to learn about and work with so many different species, and makes every day exciting and different".

The Bergen County Zoo thanks Ms. Cindy Norton for her dedication, commitment and exemplary work over these 30 years!



From Left to Right:
Exam on a piglet, Administering medication to a goat, Exam on a sedated spider monkey

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE ZOO

There are numerous ways to support the Bergen County Zoo:

- Consider becoming a zoo member
- Sponsor an Animal
- Enroll in our docent/volunteer program
- Purchase Animal Art

Information on all of these programs is available at the Zoo, our website or by calling 201-634-3110



Bergen County Zoological Park
216 Forest Avenue
Paramus, NJ 07652
201-634-3100

Bergen County Zoological Park



www.co.bergen.nj.us/bcparks

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ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS & AQUARIUMS

The Bergen County Zoo is proud to be an AZA Accredited Zoo.

The Association of Zoos & Aquariums provides its members with the services, high standards, best practices, and program coordination to be leaders in animal welfare, public engagement, and the conservation of species.

Reminders:

Bergen County Residents must provide proof of residency to receive the discounted rate. Forms of proof are: Driver's License, Utility bill to the residence, Bergen County issued ID Card.

Zoo Members must show their membership card to enter the zoo for free.

James J. Tedesco, III

County Executive

Board of Chosen Freeholders