

Camp Week 4: June 22 - 26

It's been a rainy week, but a little rain couldn't stop us from having a great time at Camp Zoofari! Even though we had some rain, we were able to welcome in a new group of campers to purple camp!

This week was all about the Children's Zoo, and our camper's loved exploring and interacting with all of the animals that we met along the way.

Our first stop in the Children's Zoo was the otters and pelicans. The campers loved sliding down the slide and pretending like they were playing in the water with our north american river otters, Belle and Jack. Otters can stay under water for up to 8 minutes. We tried holding our breath to see how long we could last as an otter, but no one made it longer a minute! Jack and Belle were both very curious and wanted to join Blue Camp!

We then made a quick stop to say hello to our pelicans. The campers learned that pelicans have a pouch under their beak called a gular. This pouch can hold up to 3 gallons of water, which is three elephant trunk-fulls! They use their bill like a fishing net to scoop up the water and catch fish, then tip their heads forward to drain the water and swallow the fish whole. Mr. Nick tried to introduce our campers to the pelicans, but the pelicans were more interested in the video camera. We did think it was interesting to learn that each pelican has a favorite perch, or wooden platform sticking out of their water. When a keeper says, "stations," each pelican goes to their perch and waits happily for a tasty snack!

All of the campers were asking to check out the Mongoose tunnels, especially after seeing how much fun Mr. Nick had! The campers took turns climbing into the tunnels and popping up into the mongoose exhibit to check out what the mongoose were doing. We watched them dig and play and sleep in the shade.

Our next stop was a visit to the burrowing owls and roadrunners. Burrowing owls are different from the owls that we usually find in our backyards. While most owls are only active in the evening, a burrowing owl hunts during the day as well as at night. Burrowing owls make their homes in the ground by taking over holes and tunnels dug by prairie dogs, armadillos, tortoises, and even skunks. The roadrunner likes to walk or run on the ground, and only flies when it's necessary. He spent the day hiding from the rain that started to fall, but we learned that they can run twice as fast as most of our campers, especially if they are chasing down their prey like small lizards. The campers then held a roadrunner race to get out of the rain themselves!

Our campers really wanted to take a quick stop at the goats, and the goats showed their climbing abilities. Our llama, Fiesta, was quick to let the campers know that she wanted to say hello too, and she stopped by for a quick head scratch.

Last but not least on our Children's Zoo adventure was a ride on the wildlife carousel. Everyone got to pick a special animal to ride on, and they even let us ride twice!

This week has been the best one yet, and we have even more in store for next week! We can't wait to see you back for more fun!

- **Ms. Kelly, Mr. Nick and the Camp Zoofari Team**