

Camp Week 9: July 27-31

Happy Friday Everyone!

This week our campers ventured through the African forest. Campers enjoyed visiting all of the apes, as well as the animals that call the African forest home. We enjoyed cooling off in the newly reopened Arrival Building as well!

When we entered the African forest we of course had to stop and spend some time hiding among the leaf and thatch huts and playing the tribal drums. Everyone had a great time trying to stay hidden from Mr. Nick.

With our trek out to the forest, we decide to next cool off in the Arrival Building, where we were able to spy the **red river hogs**. Neptune, our only boy in a family with four girls, was easy to spot. Both males and females have upper and lowers tusks, but Neptune has warts near his eyes. We learned that all male red river hogs share these warts. Ms. Leia then shared with us that a group of red river hogs is called a “sunder!” With their long ears, the question was asked if they could hear well. A red river hog’s hearing is so strong, they can hear an earthworm digging around in the dirt!

Sharing their habitat, we also kept our eyes open for any of our **gorillas**. With two troupes, a family troupe and a bachelor troupe, we hoped we would get to see the gorillas playing. We were not disappointed. The bachelor, or all-boy, troupe was in the yard, and some of those boys are becoming teenagers. They like to play and rough house together, and we got to watch as TJ ambushed his best friend, Leom. Though TJ and Leom are not related, within two days of meeting each other they were sharing their nest at night and wrestling together all day long! The first time they met the red river hogs, both were very scared and did not want to go near the fallen tree at all. Even though they have gotten used to the hogs, sometimes you can see Leom or TJ trying to peek down into the hog’s wallow, or mud pit, to make sure they are not getting too close.

Just across from the gorillas, our campers found our **chimpanzee** troupe. Even though there are 14 chimpanzees in the troupe, we could only find a few of them. Chaos was easy to spot, since he loves to watch the people walk past at the window. Sometimes he carries his blankets right up to the window so he can relax as he people-watches! Some of the other chimps, like Maizey and Annie, enjoyed lounging out of the heat in their hammocks instead.

Moving on from the gorillas and chimps, we found the **white rhinoceros**. Though we have two, George and Indy, we could only spot one of them. Both of these boys are almost 10 years old and are starting to play more roughly with one other, just like rhinos in the wild. Rough play for the rhinos looks like pushing each other through the mud and trying to nudge one another with their horns. Luckily for the rhinos, they have thick skin! Can you tell which one we saw? George has ears that curl at the end, while Indy’s ears are more rounded.

Our last stop was the **giraffe** barn, where we saw giraffe, zebra, and ostriches too! All three animals spend their time together in the yard. Our zebra, Kapuki, likes to chase our youngest giraffe, Bobbie, around. Bobbie, in turn, will then chase after all three of our ostriches. All of the older giraffes try to stay out of the way when this happens, preferring to browse on leaves and hay. To help them grab their food, all of the giraffes make use of their incredibly long tongues. Their tongues are a deep purple or black, which can help keep their tongues from getting sunburned! Since they use their tongues like we use our fingers, this is a very helpful trait.

We can’t wait for next week when our campers join us for a swim with the sea lions and a journey through the mythical realm of dragons!

Ms. Kelly and the Camp Zoofari Team