

**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**It's Christmas in July at the Montgomery Zoo for Animal Enrichment Day**

**MONTGOMERY ZOO** (Montgomery, AL): Join the Montgomery Zoo Saturday, July 22, 2017 from 10am – 2pm, for Animal Enrichment Day. Tour the Zoo during the “Christmas in July” themed event and observe how animals respond to an assortment of new creative and behavior-stimulating enrichment items.

More than 20 species will take part in the semi-annual event, including the sloth bear, lemurs, cheetahs, and elephants. Presented in the form of special toys, unique scents, puzzles, boxed goodies or food treats, the enrichment items provide Zoo animals with both mental and physical exercise.

“Our animals’ well-being, health, and happiness is supported through opportunities to smell novel scents, taste different flavors, and explore new puzzles,” said Zoo Director, Doug Goode. “Enrichment keeps them active and engaged while reproducing their natural behaviors.”

The festive Christmas in July theme will play out at each enrichment session and includes holiday must-haves such as yule logs, stockings, candy canes, and a gingerbread house. The cheetahs will cool off with frozen gift boxes and ornaments made of ice and treats. The lemurs will bring the holly jolly to their habitat when they “Deck the Halls.”

The Zoo consults with national animal enrichment databases developed by government agencies and other zoos for assistance in selecting enrichment items. Zoo staff members evaluate enrichment items and approve them based on certain requirements.

The goal of Animal Enrichment Day is to safely stimulate and reproduce behaviors that are natural for each animal in the wild. Placing different stimuli in the animals’ environment allows animals to use their five basic senses while they exercise. It is a lot of trial and error, but it is always fun.

The Montgomery Zoo provides enrichment to its animals on a daily basis, but this often takes place out of view from the public. Animal Enrichment Day allows the Zoo to share a daily activity with our guests and present it on a grander scale.

Guests are encouraged to join in the holiday spirit by wearing green and red and donning their favorite Santa hats, jingle bells, and reindeer antlers. Individuals dressed in red or green or wearing holiday accessories will receive complimentary admission to the Mann Museum on the day of Animal Enrichment.

**Mayor**

*Todd Strange*

**Zoo Director**

*Doug Goode*

**Deputy Zoo Director**

*Marcia Woodard*

2301 Coliseum Parkway  
Montgomery, AL 36110

(334) 240-4900  
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[www.montgomeryzoo.com](http://www.montgomeryzoo.com)



**Animal Enrichment Day Schedule**

10:00	Sloth Bear	Yule log with meal worms
10:15	Squirrel Monkey Spider Monkey	Stocking filled with favorite treats
10:30	Capybara	Frozen treats
10:45	Ring-Tailed Lemur	“Deck the Halls”
11:00	Maned Wolf	Gift box filled with favorite treats
11:15	Jaguar Ocelot	Holiday ornaments filled with favorite treats
11:30	Cougar Lynx	Holiday ornaments filled with favorite treats
11:45	North American Hoofstock	Christmas trees decorated with treats
12:00	Black Bear	Snowman
12:15	Lion	Holiday ornaments filled with favorite treats
12:30	Cheetah	Gift boxes filled with treats and frozen ornaments
12:45	African Hoofstock	Christmas trees decorated with treats
1:00	Siamang	Gingerbread house and gingerbread men
1:15	Elephant	Large gift boxes and Christmas trees filled with treats
1:30	Tiger	Frozen meat ornaments
1:45	Asia Hoofstock	Christmas trees decorated with treats
2:00	Red River Hogs	Candy cane treats

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Animal Enrichment Day is free for Zoo Members. Memberships can be purchased at [www.montgomeryzoo.com/memberships](http://www.montgomeryzoo.com/memberships) or by calling 334-240-4900. Most members recoup the cost of their membership in as little as three visits.

The Montgomery Zoo and Mann Wildlife Learning Museum is open daily from 9am-5:30pm with the last ticket being sold at 4pm. Animal exhibits begin closing at 4:30pm. Discount combo admission to the Zoo and Mann Museum is Adults \$20, Children (3-12 years) \$15, and Toddlers (2 years and under) Free. Regular admission to the Zoo only is Adults \$15, Children (3-12 years) \$11, and Toddlers (2 years and under) Free. Military and senior discounts and annual memberships are available.

The Montgomery Zoo and Mann Wildlife Learning Museum is a 42-acre zoological facility located minutes from the heart of historic, downtown Montgomery.

*The Montgomery Zoo is a Department of the City of Montgomery, Alabama*

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