



The Birdhouse at Riverbanks

In 2001, Riverbanks Zoo and Garden began a new era in bird conservation with the construction of The Birdhouse at Riverbanks. Built to replace the original birdhouse that opened in 1974, the new facility features more than 12,000 feet of exhibit space and continues the tradition of Riverbanks Zoo & Garden as one of the premiere indoor bird exhibitors in the country. During the last 30 years, the staff at Riverbanks has bred countless birds, including many that had never been bred before in captivity.

Visitors enter the new Birdhouse by boardwalk, crossing a lush lagoon filled with flamingos. Once inside, the sights and sounds of the world of birds will dazzle visitors. A sky-lit atrium of towering trees introduces the visitor to the fascinating relationship between dinosaurs and modern-day birds. Just off the atrium are three distinctly geographically-themed bird habitats: Penguin Coast, a multi-sensory habitat for African, Rock hopper and King penguins; Asian Trek, featuring birds such as the giant hornbill and the rare Bali mynah; and Savanna Camp, showcasing the birds of the arid African and South American savannas. At Conservation Crossroads, visitors of all ages can learn about and contribute to specific conservation programs. A separate building, the Bird Conservation Center, features staff offices, off-exhibit housing, breeding areas, a kitchen and a nursery.

Exhibits At The Birdhouse At Riverbanks

Dinosaur Mural

There is now strong scientific evidence that birds descended from dinosaurs. In order to educate visitors about this incredible phenomenon, an original mural by famed dinosaur artist John Agnew was commissioned by Riverbanks. The mural is approximately 9 x 15 feet and depicts several species of dinosaurs in an early morning scene.

Penguin Coast

This extraordinary habitat features three species of penguins, considered by many to be the most popular of all birds. The exhibit is more than 1,350 square feet (64% larger than the penguin exhibit in the old birdhouse) and is destined to be one of the finest penguin displays in North America. These elegant black and white birds "fly" through their underwater environment. Visitors

can view the penguins underwater through a 65-foot-long pane of glass as waves crash across the simulated rocky coast. An interactive area for children allows them to crawl inside a penguin nesting burrow.

Asian Trek

Some of the world's most beautiful and unusual birds can be found throughout Asia. This lush exhibit showcases a number of different Asian habitats:

Rhinoceros hornbill: This magnificent bird is endangered due to the destruction of its natural environment. Like other hornbills, the female rhino hornbill lays her eggs and raises her young while sealed inside a hollowed-out log. Visitors will be able to observe this fascinating behavior via a special video camera.

Tropical Asia: Colorful birds such as the beautiful Victoria crowned pigeon, Malayan peacock pheasant, fairy bluebird and golden-fronted leaf bird are displayed in wonderfully landscaped exhibits. A simulated rainstorm completes the sights and sounds of the tropics.

Bali mynah release center: This exhibit documents efforts by Riverbanks to save the Bali mynah, one of the world's most endangered birds. Under the direct supervision of Riverbanks staff, 12 captive-raised Bali mynahs were released on the island of Bali in 1998. This exhibit re-creates the release site in the Bali Barat National Park.

Savanna Exhibits

The African and South American savannas are displayed in two different exhibits in order to demonstrate the biological phenomenon of convergence – where animals in similar habitats, even when separated by entire oceans, will develop comparable physical characteristics. These naturalistic exhibits showcase birds with similar physical traits and behaviors, such as the African bee-eater and the South American motmot.

The Savanna Camp

Destined to be the most popular children's spot in Riverbanks, the Savanna Camp provides the opportunity to learn in a fun, interactive environment. Located under an authentic canvas tent are various interactive educational tools. Activities include matching the eggs to the birds, a sketchbook and songs identified with the birds that create them. The camp is furnished with authentic safari gear.

Conservation Crossroads

Conservation Crossroads is located near the center atrium and showcases a variety of conservation programs, including those led by Riverbanks staff. After learning about these programs, visitors can make an on-

the-spot contribution to the program(s) of their choice. When money is deposited in a designated slot, that contribution will be displayed, along with the total amount contributed by other visitors to the program(s). Zoos are increasingly involved in international conservation efforts and Conservation Crossroads is designed to let visitors assist in these crucial programs.

Exterior Exhibits

Flamingo Beach

Visitors enter the Birdhouse at Riverbanks via a boardwalk over Flamingo Beach, home to the Zoo's flock of Caribbean flamingos. Flamingo Beach features a large, shallow lagoon and sandy beaches. In addition to the entry boardwalk, Flamingo Beach also features a separate viewing area on the opposite side. Throughout its history, flamingos have been among the most popular animals at Riverbanks and the new Flamingo Beach greatly enhances the visitors' viewing experience of these beautiful pink birds.

Koi Pond

Directly across the boardwalk from Flamingo Beach is the Koi Pond, home to countless numbers of these colorful Asian fish. Like flamingos, koi are extremely popular with Zoo visitors. Visitors are able to purchase food to feed the koi.