



TORONTO ZOO'S WILDLIFE HEALTH CENTRE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY

Leaders in Wildlife Care and Conservation Open Doors to new State-of-the-Art Facility



Left to Right: John Tracogna, CEO, Toronto Zoo, His Worship, John Tory, Mayor of Toronto, Paul Ainslie, Chair, Toronto Zoo Board of Management
Photo Credit: Toronto Zoo



Left to Right: Dr. Christopher Dutton, Senior Veterinarian, Toronto Zoo, His Worship, John Tory, Mayor of Toronto, Paul Ainslie, Chair, Toronto Zoo Board of Management, Dr. Pauline Delnatte, Veterinarian Toronto Zoo and John Tracogna, CEO, Toronto Zoo microchipping a Blanding's turtle.
Photo Credit: Toronto Zoo

TORONTO, ON Monday, June 26, 2017: The Toronto Zoo Board of Management and invited guests attended an official opening event for the Toronto Zoo's new state-of-the-art 50,000 square foot Wildlife Health Centre. The event took place at the newly unveiled Public Viewing Gallery in the Wildlife Health Centre, which is scheduled to be opened to the public on Saturday, July 1, 2017. Present on this occasion were: His Worship, John Tory, Mayor of Toronto, Paul Ainslie, Chair, Toronto Zoo Board of Management, and John Tracogna, CEO Toronto Zoo.

Starting Saturday, July 1, 2017, the Zoomobile ride-all-day wristband or Zoo Membership card will provide guests exclusive access to a viewing gallery in the Wildlife Health Centre – the only one of its kind in Canada. The public viewing area provides a glimpse into the Windows of Wildlife Science including the following rooms: Diagnostic Imaging, Treatment, Surgery, Clinical Lab and Endocrinology Lab. Guests will disembark at the Tundra Zoomobile Station for access to the Wildlife Health Centre.

The Toronto Zoo is extremely proud and excited about this significant and much-anticipated infrastructure renewal. The new state-of-the-art facility lays the foundation for the Centre's current and future mission: high-quality wildlife health, nutrition, and reproductive and conservation research. We are privileged to have in our care over 5,000 animals representing almost 450 species and with this privilege comes great responsibility to ensure the highest level of care is provided by our veterinary staff, scientists, researchers, nutritionists, and wildlife care staff.

"As part of our recently released Master Plan, the new Wildlife Health Centre and its professional and talented team, further enhances the Toronto Zoo as a centre of excellence in high-quality animal care through leading-edge veterinary and reproductive sciences, nutrition, conservation and wildlife research programs," says John Tracogna, CEO, Toronto Zoo.

"On behalf of the Board of Management, I want to congratulate the Zoo on this momentous occasion," said Paul Ainslie, Chair, Toronto Zoo Board of Management. "The opening of the new Wildlife Health Centre provides an opportunity for staff to continue providing the highest quality of care for animals at Canada's premier Zoo."

In addition to the health care services, the Wildlife Health Centre is also home to the Zoo's reproductive physiology lab, numerous conservation breeding programs, turtle head-start programs, Amphibian Rescue Centre (ARC), high school co-op programs and many research projects with universities, colleges, government and non-government agencies and a veterinary zoo residency program. This vet residency program is a partnership between the Zoo and the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph and it started in 1979. Since then, 24 residents have trained at the Toronto Zoo and many of them have subsequently gone on to become Diplomats in either the American College of Veterinary Pathology or the American College of Zoological Medicine (+/- the European College of Zoological Medicine).

"Each year, Zoo staff in the Wildlife Health Centre conduct more than 5,000 procedures including exams, treatments, sample collection, medication administration, processing, immobilizations and surgeries," says Dr. Chris Dutton, Head of Veterinary Services, Toronto Zoo. "We are very excited and proud to be able to provide our guests with the opportunity to see firsthand some of this great work that has historically taken place behind-the-scenes," he added.

For the design of the new facility, the Toronto Zoo engaged Diamond Schmitt Architects of Toronto in partnership with DesignLevel Inc., an architectural firm specializing in animal healthcare facilities. These consultants worked in close cooperation with Zoo project management and veterinary staff to ensure that the new Wildlife Health Centre responds precisely to our wide range of animal health needs. The design provides state-of-the-art animal medical facilities which includes leading-edge sustainable construction techniques, materials and technology, green roof, cooling roofing (heat island reduction), insulated foundation walls, low flow fixtures, LED lighting, heat recovery systems, bird friendly glazing, removal of suspended solids in storm water and native, permeable pavers and water efficient planting. In total, the new Wildlife Health Centre is approximately 50,000 square feet (4,600 square metres) in size, which includes the over 32,000 square foot (3,000+ square metres) of new interior space, plus 17,000 square feet (1,600 square metres) of the original animal hospital that houses conservation breeding programs and quarantine facilities.

This expansive new building will be used to facilitate many conservation breeding and research programs, will be easy to maintain in a hygienic state and provide ample room for treating the 5,000 animals in our care, providing post-operative care and modern diagnostic and scientific research equipment. The Windows on Wildlife Science Viewing Gallery will provide a behind-the-scenes look into several areas of wildlife health and conservation research areas, including the following rooms: Diagnostic Imaging, Treatment, Surgery, Clinical Labs and Endocrinology Lab. The Toronto Zoo Board of Management awarded the contract to Gillam Group Inc. and construction commenced in January, 2015.

This project is an investment in the care and well-being of the animals at the Toronto Zoo. Creating a state-of-the-art animal healthcare facility is at the heart of our expanded vision and will position the Toronto Zoo as a world leader in wildlife care and conservation. The Toronto Zoo is grateful for generous donations from the Estate of Mary Millard, Pizza Pizza Limited and Barrick Gold Corporation, which helped make the new Wildlife Health Centre a reality.

Visit torontozoo.com for more information on the new Wildlife Health Centre or how you can make a donation to support the ongoing care of our animals in this new state-of-the-art facility.

About Toronto Zoo

The Toronto Zoo is Canada's premier zoo and a national leader in saving wildlife to ensure the rich diversity of nature for future generations. More than a tourist attraction, the Toronto Zoo boasts a number of leading programs for helping wildlife and their natural habitats – from species reintroduction to reproductive research. A world-class educational centre for people of all ages, the Toronto Zoo is open every day except December 25 and attracts approximately 1.3 million visitors each year. Toronto Zoo is accredited by CAZA (Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums) and AZA (Association of Zoos and Aquariums). Look for these logos whenever you visit a Canadian zoo as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. For more information, visit caza.ca and aza.org

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CURRENT ZOO HOURS:
9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. daily

**Last admission one hour before closing.
The Toronto Zoo is open year round (except Dec. 25th).**

ADMISSION FEES:
General Admission (13-64): \$29
Seniors (65+): \$24
Children (3-12): \$19
Children (2 and under): FREE
Members: FREE
Prices include tax as applicable
Parking is \$12 year round

For more information, contact Amanda Chambers at [\(416\) 392-5974](tel:4163925974).

Events and admission prices subject to change without notice.

For general information visit torontozoo.com.

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