Your Toronto Zoo Guest Accessibility Guide & Social Story

toronto ZOO

Land Acknowledgment

The Toronto Zoo acknowledges the land we are on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

We’re going to the Zoo!

The Toronto Zoo is Canada’s premier zoo and one of the largest zoos in the world, caring for 3000 animals and 300 species. The Toronto Zoo is Canada’s national leader in saving wildlife to ensure the rich diversity of nature for future generations.

Our team of passionate experts is committed to providing the animals in our care with the means to live long and enriching lives while living our mission of connecting people, animals, conservation science, and traditional knowledge to fight extinction.

Just by visiting, you are helping us support our mission and our vision of a world where people, wildlife, and wild spaces thrive.

We look forward to welcoming you!

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Meet your Toronto Zoo Team

Your Toronto Zoo team has over 650 staff and over 350 volunteers. Most staff members wear a dark green polo or t-shirt with the Zoo's logo with a green or white nametag and khaki pants/shorts. Volunteers wear white golf shirts, dark green fleeces, or bright green t-shirts.

Planning a Toronto Zoo Visit

New plan-ahead pricing allows Toronto Zoo guests to choose the date and admission price that works best for their visit. Admission prices will change daily based on several factors including weather, day of week, holidays and expected attendance.

Plan-ahead tickets are available to purchase online at www.torontozoo.com. Guests will be able to see the current pricing for each day and can choose their preference. Guests can manage bookings before a visit and can change their ticket to a different date and will be required to pay for or receive a refund for any difference in price.

Guests will still be able to purchase tickets onsite on the day of their visit at the available price for that day. For the best chance to receive the lowest price, guests should plan-ahead and purchase admission early online.

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Closures at the Zoo

When we visit the Zoo, there may be construction or other reasons why we can't visit some areas or see certain animals. Sometimes the reason for the closure will be clear, like making improvements, but other times we won't know why the area is closed. That is okay and we can plan to visit again another time! We can see alerts for current closures on the Zoo's website www.torontozoo.com while planning our visit.

Getting to the Zoo

The Toronto Zoo is set in the beautiful Rouge Valley. The Main Entrance is located on 2000 Meadowvale Road, Toronto, north of Highway 401 (Exit #389).

If parking, follow the signs for Main Lot. If dropping off, follow the signs for drop-off loop. The Zoo is also accessible by public transit seasonally: TTC (year-round; hours vary), Durham Transit, and GO! Full schedules are available online.

Public Transit

If I take public transit to the Zoo, there may be lots of people also arriving and leaving the Zoo and taking the same bus as me. If I feel overwhelmed, I can wait for the next bus. I can find the bus schedule by visiting www.torontozoo.com/tz/transit and following the links or ask at Guest Relations for help.

Parking Lots

The Zoo has a main parking lot divided into sections A, B, C, D and E. If the Zoo is very busy, we might need to wait in line to enter the lot or find a space; sometimes guests will be asked to park in one of the overflow parking lots.

Before leaving the Zoo, we will need to make sure we have paid for our parking pass so we can exit the gates. We can pay at the admissions booth or on the Zoo's website. **We will need to pay attention to cars and will not run in the parking lot.**

Accessibility

Your Toronto Zoo is committed to welcoming all guests to experience the Zoo. The Zoo has an admission package for people with disabilities whereby a guest with a disability receives a 50% admission discount and, if required, one accompanying support worker receives complimentary admission.

We also have many accessible features available including accessible parking spaces, free wheelchair rentals, automated entry systems on washroom and pavilion doors, ramps in lieu of stairs, washrooms for people with special needs, accessible seats available on rides and more!

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Admissions

We can purchase our tickets online in advance and proceed right to the entrance gates when we arrive at the Zoo. We can also purchase tickets on-site at the sales booth when we arrive at the Zoo. Either way, a staff member will scan my ticket at the admission booth before we enter the Zoo. I will do my best to be patient, and I can use my headphones if I want to!

Depending on several factors such as day of week or weather, we may need to wait in line to have our tickets scanned. The wait could be very short like 5 minutes, or it could be longer like 30-45 minutes. If I or anyone in my group has difficulty waiting in line, we can go to the Guest Relations window located to the left of the entrance gates for help.

Welcome Area

Inside the front entrance and down the ramps, there are restrooms, places to purchase food and drink, gift shops, rentals, and the Zoomobile main station. There are lots of Zoo staff and volunteers in this area who can help me plan my visit. If I don't want to talk, I don't have to. If I have any questions, I can ask!

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Rentals & Accessibility Hub

After we've arrived at the Zoo, we can visit the Accessibility Hub, just inside the front entrance, for:

- Accessibility device rentals
- Adventure Access Passes
- KultureCity® Sensory Bags

Accessibility Device Rentals

Wheelchair: FREE

ECV*: $40.00 (plus tax)

Double Stroller: $15.00 (plus tax)

Safari Car Wagon: $15.00 (plus tax)

Carry-All Wagon: $15.00 (plus tax)

**Electric Convenience Vehicle*

KultureCity® Sensory Bags: FREE

Adventure Access Pass: FREE

KultureCity® Sensory Bags

Inside each KultureCity® Sensory Bag there are all kinds of tools to help me stay calm if I start feeling overwhelmed. There are headphones to help with noise, fidget tools to keep my hands busy, and there is a feelings thermometer I can use to let the people around me know what I need or how to help. I can borrow a Sensory bag from the Accessibility Hub during my visit.

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Headphone Zones

Headphone Zones are the louder areas:

- Consistently or abruptly loud areas
- Busy or high traffic areas
- Popular areas; any areas prone to echo
- Areas where a PA could be loud
- Cafeterias or food courts
- Children play areas

Headphone Zones are indicated on the sensory map and/or with signage on site.

Quiet Areas

Designated spaces on site that are typically quiet or lower traffic. It is not expected to be a "Silent Space" but our best effort at identifying a potentially *quieter* zone guests can visit on site.

- Weston Pond/Indigenous Knowledge Trail
- Dr. Schofield Memorial Garden (Eurasia)
- Savanna overlook at the back of the African Rainforest Pavilion
- Anywhere else you see a free quiet space!

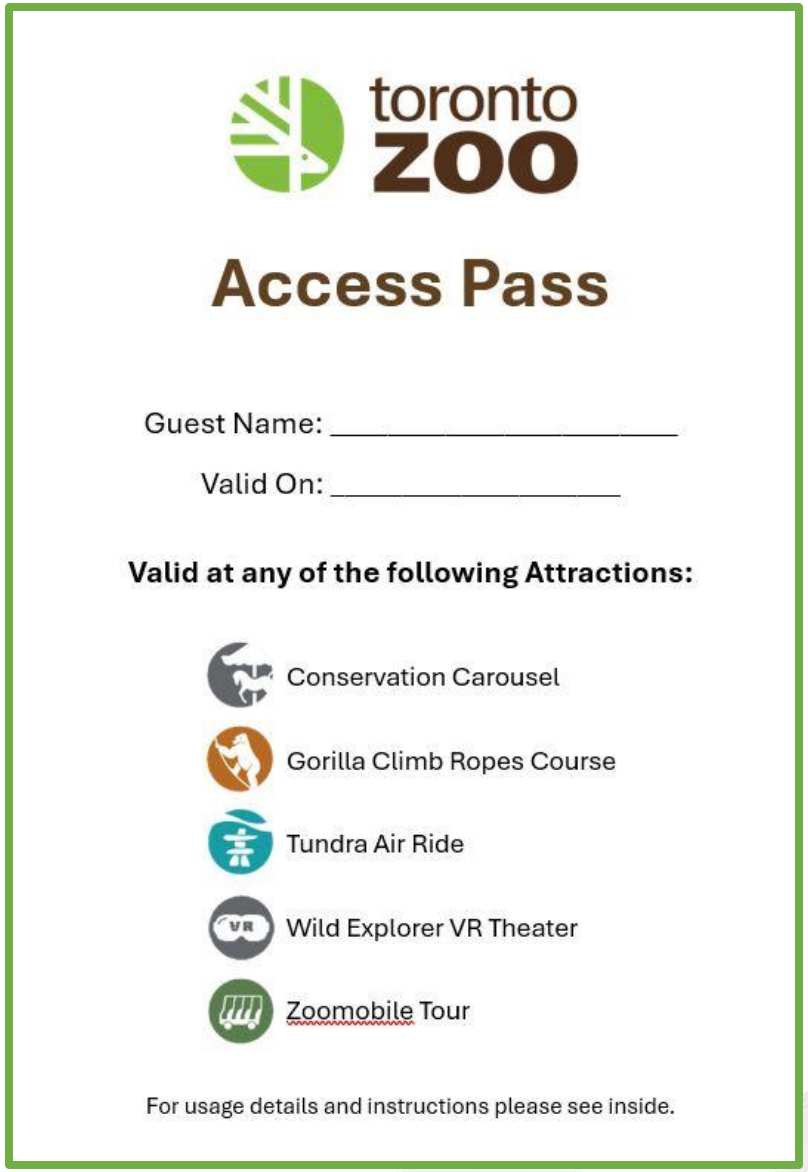
Quiet areas are indicated on the sensory map and/or with signage on site.

Adventure Access Pass

The Adventure Access Pass supports guests and members who may have significant trouble standing or waiting in line at the Zoomobile, Conservation Carousel, Tundra Air Ride, or Gorilla Climb ropes course.

To use an Adventure Access Pass, ask an employee at the Rentals & Accessibility Hub or one of the Zoo's rides for a pass: they will give you a booklet with an entry time based on current line-up times for that ride or adventure.

To learn more, ask one of our staff members at the Rentals & Accessibility Hub or a ride.



Bathrooms

There are bathrooms throughout the Zoo for when I need a bathroom break. Most of the bathrooms have automatic flush toilets and air hand dryers. If it is too loud, I can use headphones or cover my ears.

- Front Entrance Welcome Area beside Peacock Café
- Zootique Gift Shop and Education Building (gender neutral)
- Discovery Zone beside Splash Island
- Eurasia Wilds near Amur tigers
- Tundra Trek behind Caribou Café
- Wildlife Health Centre through rear doors
- African Rainforest Pavilion beside Multi-Faith Space
- Africa Restaurant near Gorilla Climb
- African Savanna beside Simba Safari Lodge
- Canadian Domain Zoomobile Stop
- Canadian Domain by Weston Pond Overlook

Zoo Rules

- ✓ I will follow the Zoo rules to help keep myself, the animals and other guests safe.
- ✓ I will travel only on the paths (no service roads).
- ✓ I won't run or climb except in play areas.
- ✓ I will follow directions from Zoo staff if I am asked to do something during my visit.
- ✓ I will not feed or touch any of the animals unless I have been given permission by a Zoo staff member.
- ✓ I will try to use a quiet voice while visiting so I don't scare the animals.
- ✓ If it is crowded, I might need to wait for my turn to see an animal or do an activity and that is okay. I will be patient.
- ✓ I will stay with my family or group when visiting the zoo. If I get separated, I will ask a Toronto Zoo team member for help.

Asking for Help

If I cannot find my family or group, I will find a Toronto Zoo Staff or Volunteer and ask for help.

Even if a staff member or volunteer seems busy, they are still happy to help me.

I can also call 416-392-5901 any time to reach the Zoo's Health & Safety Control Office!

Food & Beverage

There are many different restaurants where we can purchase food or drink. We can also choose to bring our own food from home. We can sit anywhere that's available to enjoy our food. There are garbage, recycling, and compost bins available nearby. We can fill up a reusable water bottle at various places around the Zoo.

I will not share my food with wildlife or throw my litter anywhere on the site.

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Exploring the Zoo

The Toronto Zoo is home to more than 300 species of animals! We can plan which animals we want to see using the Zoo map or Zoo App, and we can use the wayfinding signage on site to help us navigate the Zoo during our visit. The Toronto Zoo is divided into eight Zoogeographic regions including five indoor tropical pavilions:

- Indo-Malaya & Malayan Woods
- African Savanna & Rainforest Pavilion
- Canadian Domain
- Americas Pavilion & Mayan Temple
- Tundra Trek
- Eurasia Wilds
- Australasia Pavilion & Kangaroos
- Discovery Zone & Splash Island

We might not have time to see all the animals, and some animals might not be visible while we are at the Zoo. There are many reasons for this, and I may not get to know the answer. That's okay. Maybe we can see more animals the next time we visit our Toronto Zoo!

Outdoor and Indoor Animal Habitat Viewing Areas

Many animals will be viewable in their outdoor habitats during our visit. Depending on the weather, some animals will only be viewable in their indoor habitats.

Some animals are behind a glass wall. The glass is very thick, and it keeps me and the animals safe. I might be able to see an animal very close up! Sometimes animals may not be viewable, but that's okay! We can try to see them during our next visit.

Other people may be standing in front of me. I will wait my turn to see the animals. I will keep my body to myself and be patient.

When looking at an animal, I will not not make loud noises or bang on the glass! This might make some animals unhappy.

Indo-Malaya

In the Indo-Malaya Pavilion, we can see lots of different animals! Some of the animals include white-handed gibbons, Burmese star tortoises, a concave casqued hornbill, and more! Outside, we can see animals such as the babirusa, a greater one-horned rhino, and we might even get to see the Sumatran orangutans in their brand-new outdoor habitat!

The inside of the pavilion is currently under construction. It may be very loud and dusty. The pavilion is open, but you might have to enter through the entrance or exit to see different animals. Once at the construction, you will be turned around to go back the way you came.

Some areas of the pavilion are smelly, and some areas are dark. The floor of the pavilion may be uneven, sloped or difficult to navigate. The pavilion can get very busy and crowded. I can use my headphones if I need to. I will make sure I wait my turn if there is a crowd waiting to see an animal habitat. The pavilion is tropical, and I may find the temperature or the humidity uncomfortable.

African Rainforest Pavilion

In the African Rainforest Pavilion, I can see lots of different animals! Some of the animals include Aldabra tortoises, ring-tailed lemurs, red river hogs, pygmy hippopotamus, western low-land gorillas, West African dwarf crocodile and more!

Some areas of the pavilion are smelly, and some areas are dark. The floor of the pavilion may be uneven, sloped or difficult to navigate. The pavilion can get very busy and crowded. I can use my headphones if I need to. I will make sure I wait my turn if there is a crowd waiting to see an animal habitat. The pavilion is tropical, and I may find the temperature or the humidity uncomfortable.

African Savanna

In the African Savanna region, we can see animals such as Masai giraffes, African lions, river hippo, white rhinos, Grevy's Zebras, and more! Because this region of the Zoo is outdoors, some animals may not be viewable depending on the weather or where they like to hang out in their habitat. If I have any questions about any of the animals, I can ask a Zoo Employee or Volunteer for help! Some of these species are more comfortable in warm climates and may not be viewable in their outdoor habitats during the winter months, but we can still see some of them in their indoor viewing areas, such as the Masai giraffe.

Americas Pavilion

In the Americas Pavilion, we can see lots of different animals! Some of the animals include Saki monkeys, North American river otters, Banding's turtles, alligators, insects, spiders and more!

Some areas of the pavilion are smelly, and some areas are dark. The floor of the pavilion may be uneven, sloped or difficult to navigate. The pavilion can get very busy and crowded. I can use my headphones if I need to. I will make sure I wait my turn if there is a crowd waiting to see an animal habitat. The pavilion is tropical, and I may find the temperature or the humidity uncomfortable.

Australasia Pavilion

In the Australasia Pavilion, we can see many different species! Some of the animals include kookaburras, emerald tree pythons, Komodo dragons, tree frogs, Southern hairy-nosed wombats, Thorny devil stick insects, and more!

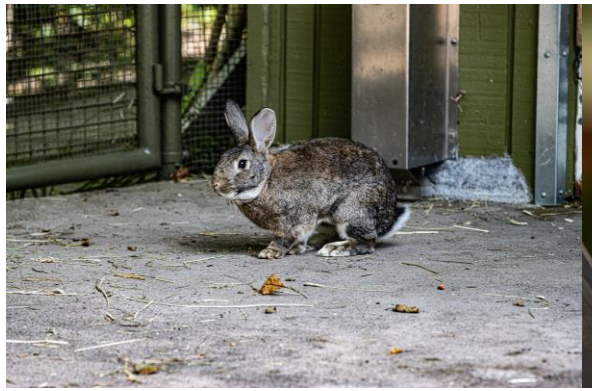
Some areas of the pavilion may be smelly or dark. The floor of the pavilion may be uneven, sloped or difficult to navigate. The pavilion can get very busy and crowded. I can use my headphones if I need to. I will make sure I wait my turn if there is a crowd waiting to see an animal habitat. The pavilion is tropical, and I may find the temperature or the humidity uncomfortable. I can also check out the Great Barrier Reef exhibit which includes moon jellyfish, seahorses, lionfish, longnose butterfly fish, and more! This area is air conditioned and has low lighting.

Canadian Domain

The Canadian Domain is home to species such as wood bison, grizzly bear, bald eagle, cougar, raccoon and more. I can get to the Canadian Domain by walking through the African Savanna, past the African Grasslands barn and the ostrich, and down the big hill. I can also get to the Canadian Domain on the Zoomobile by getting off at the Canadian Domain Zoomobile Station and walking down the hill. The hill to get to the Canadian Domain is steep and the walk up and down may be difficult or tiring. We will plan carefully before deciding whether we want to go to this area during our visit or if we want to save it for another time!

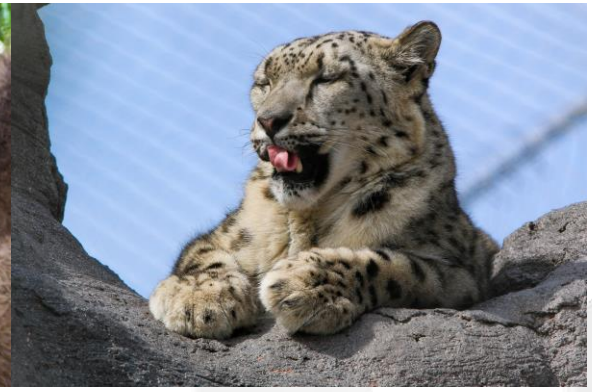
Discovery Zone & Kids Zoo

In the Kids Zoo, located within the Discovery Zone, we can see animals such as Guinea Pigs, domestic Rabbits, Marabou stork, and more! There is also a play area and an interpretive station where we can talk to Zoo Volunteers and learn more about the animals we might see in my own backyard.



Eurasia Wilds

In the Eurasia Wilds region of the Zoo, we can see animals such as the Amur tiger, Bactrian camel, Steller's Sea Eagle, Snow leopard and more! Because this region of the Zoo is outdoors, some animals may not be viewable depending on the weather or where they like to hang out in their habitat. If I have any questions about any of the animals, I can ask a Zoo Employee or Volunteer for help! Some of these species are more comfortable in cold climates and may not be viewable in their outdoor habitats during the summer months.



Tundra Trek and Mayan Temple

The Tundra Trek and Mayan Temple are connected in an outdoor loop! We can see animals such as the polar bears, arctic wolves, capybara, flamingos and more!

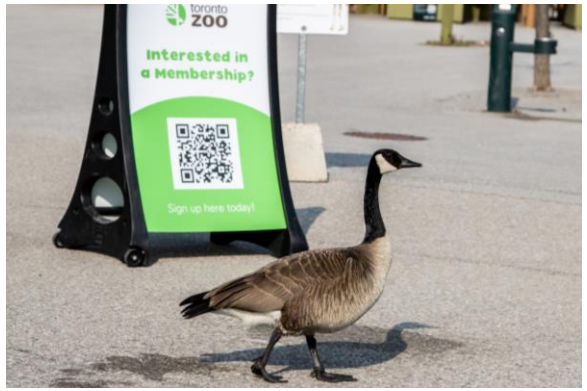
The Mayan Temple has a waterfall that is open seasonally and can be loud or overstimulating for some guests. If I want to use my headphones I can! The path up to the waterfall can be uneven, steep, or slippery. Please use caution while exploring this area.

Casual Animal Encounters

Some animals may be walking around the site during my visit. I might be allowed to touch one of them if a Toronto Zoo staff person with the animal gives me permission.

If I am not allowed to touch, that is okay. I will respect the animal and follow the directions from the staff. I will always follow the rules when touching animals to make sure I am safe, and the animal is safe.

The Zoo is also home to many species that are native to the Rouge Valley Urban National Park, which surrounds the Zoo! I will not feed or touch any of these animals.



Behind-the-Scenes Experiences ($)

We might be able to enjoy a behind-the-scenes experience with an animal at the Zoo. We can see the available options and times for Wild Encounters and VIP Tours on the Zoo website. There is an extra fee for these experiences, and I might not be able to do them during my visit. That is okay, I will still enjoy my visit seeing lots of animals!

Health & Safety Services – First Aid & Family Centre

The First Aid & Family Centre is located between the African Rainforest Pavilion and Africa restaurant. It is available for:

- Baby changing and feeding along with privacy for nursing mothers
- Reuniting lost guests with their families
- First aid with private treatment areas available for guests who require personal care

The Toronto Zoo's Health & Safety Services team is first aid trained and includes a Registered Nurse on staff. We can call the First Aid & Family Centre at 416-392-5924.

We can always reach the Health & Safety Services office at 416-392-5901 or 416-392-5902 for on-site emergencies.

Adventures & Attractions

There are many attractions at the Zoo that our group can enjoy if we choose to, including Carousel, Tundra Air, Gorilla Climb Ropes Course, Face Painting, Wild Explorer VR Theatre, Zoomobile, and more! These experiences may cost extra money, and we may not be able to enjoy them every time we visit, and that's okay! We may also need to wait our turn. We can ask staff for an Adventure Access Pass if someone in my group or I have trouble standing in line.

Zoomobile

We might be able to ride a Zoomobile during our Zoo visit. We need to buy a ticket and may need to wait our turn if we are going to ride the Zoomobile.

Zoomobiles usually come every 15 minutes, but sometimes they might be delayed. I will be patient and wait for the next one to arrive.

If I need any help getting on or off the Zoomobile, I will let a Zoomobile staff know, and they will help me.

After our Zoomobile ride around the Zoo, if we want to ride again, we might need to get off my Zoomobile at the main station and get in line to join another ride. That is okay and I will be patient.

Depending on when we visit the Zoo, we might get to ride either the winter Zoomobile (top left) or the summer Zoomobile (bottom left)!

Greenhouse

The Toronto Zoo Greenhouse boasts plants from all over the world. The Greenhouse is now open to the public during Zoo operating hours, and we can take a self-guided tour during our visit! We can also talk to the Zoo volunteer stationed just inside the guest entrance to the Greenhouse if we want to. The Greenhouse is warm and humid. We can stop and smell the flowers but please don't touch them or pick them.

Wildlife Health Centre Viewing Gallery

We might be able to watch the Wildlife Health staff doing a procedure on one of the animals. There will be thick glass separating me from the animal and the staff. If need to wait my turn to get a better look, I will be patient.

If we don’t want to watch anymore, that is okay, and we can visit another part of the Zoo.

Splash Island

If my group agrees, we might be able to visit the splash pad! Splash pad entry is free with Zoo admission. We will need to follow special rules to help keep me and others safe. The splash pad area and change room might be very crowded and noisy. I can wear my headphones if I get overwhelmed, as long as they are allowed to get wet. Or I can take a break. If the splash pad is too busy for me, I can save it for another time or Zoo visit.

The splash pad may not be available during our visit, depending on the weather and other factors.

Gift Shops

There are Zoo gift shops throughout the site. If my group agrees, we can look in the gift shops. I may not be able to buy something at the gift shop every time I visit. That is okay. The gift shops, especially Zootique, can get crowded and loud. I can use my headphones if I need to.

Going Home

When we are ready to go home, we can make our way back to the front entrance admission area. If we borrowed a sensory bag or any other rentals, we will make sure to return them to the Accessibility & Rentals Hub. If we drove, we will make sure we have a parking pass before exiting! If you don't have a parking pass, be sure to stop by Guest Relations on your way out to buy one before you leave.

Keeping in Touch

After our visit, we can follow the Toronto Zoo on social media!

Facebook.com/TheTorontoZoo

@TheTorontoZoo

@TheTorontoZoo @TZGreenhouse

Toronto Zoo Channel

www.torontozoo.com

Become a Member! Upgrade the price of your daily admission to a Zoo Membership. Visit, call, or email the Membership office for more information.

416-392-9101

membership@torontozoo.ca

Helpful Contact Numbers

General Inquiries	416-392-5900	info@torontozoo.ca
Online Ticketing	416-392-5932	info@torontozoo.ca
Education	416-392-5947	programs@torontozoo.ca
First Aid	416-392-5924	nurse@torontozoo.ca
Lost & Found	416-392-5905	info@torontozoo.ca
Membership	416-392-9101	membership@torontozoo.ca
Zootique	416-392-9110	retail@torontozoo.ca
Health & Safety Control	416-392-5901	
Health & Safety Control EMERGENCY	**416-392-5902**	