

## What's the Scoop at the Zoo

It's January, it's cold, the Zoo is closed so what happens at the Zoo all winter?

One of the questions we get a lot is what do you do with all of the animals during the winter? The short answer is they stay right here! Trying to move animals to warmer areas would be almost impossible (if you think traveling with your dog or cat is hard, try moving a giraffe!)

Instead, the Zoo is built to have buildings that the animals have access to so they can stay warm. Some of our animals, like our colobus monkeys or our giraffes, are inside for most of the winter, while other animals, like our snow leopards and our red wolves, can go out no matter what the temperature (though they sometimes choose to stay inside too, who can blame them!) And then there are those "nice" days when almost everyone can be outside, anything above 45 degrees and sunny fits the bill for most of our animals.



*Our African Leopard enjoying the snow.*

While the keepers are concentrating on caring for the animals just as they do when we are open, there are all of the other projects that we, as a team, want to work on while the Zoo is closed. The Small Animal building (aka the bird house) is a great example. Walls are being painted for a whole new look, animals are being moved into new exhibits (did we mention that the meerkats are finally here, Zoo Members get a sneak peek at the Easter Egg Hunt!), a new gift shop kiosk has been added in that building so you can purchase fun meerkat merchandise as well as giraffe feeding tickets, new signs are being put up for the animals to give more information.....and that's just one building!

The Zoo also has programs that run all winter for all different ages, from Zoo Tots to scouts. What's especially fun about winter programs is when we do get to head outside, the animals are very interested in what we're doing....you might even be stalked by a big cat if you're lucky!

There are also Zoo Memberships to process, animal records that have to be entered in the database, gift shop buying to do (because who doesn't want to see what new things the gift shop will have in the spring!)

So yes, it's cold outside but the Zoo is getting ready for opening day that is just around the corner. The staff and the animals are counting it down and can't wait to see you April 11 for your first visit to your Niabi Zoo!



*John from Maintenance working on the gift shop kiosk in the Small Animal building. All of the work on this project is being done by our Maintenance staff here at the Zoo.*