



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Columbian Park Zoo to open for 2025 season on Saturday, April 12

LAFAYETTE, IN – April 9, 2025 - At 10:00 am this Saturday, April 12, 2025, Columbian Park Zoo will open to the public for the 2025 season. The zoo will operate under Spring hours, opening at 10:00 am and closing at 4:30 pm daily. On May 24 peak season begins, at which point daily hours will extend to 10:00 am – 7:00 pm.

Admission fees will remain the same as last year's; those ages three years and up will be \$3.00, while those two years and younger will be free. Members will also be free.

"We are thrilled to open the gates for the 2025 season," said Neil Dale, Zoo Director. "Our staff has been working hard to prepare the grounds for Opening Day and we can't wait to invite our community back to Columbian Park Zoo."

Assistant Zoo Director Caitlin Laffery said visitors can expect to see a few temporary changes. Due to concerns surrounding the highly-pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreak affecting wild birds and livestock, Animal Care staff will keep the resident penguins, eagle, and turkey vulture inside for the time being, out of an abundance of caution. "In prioritizing the health and safety of our birds, we have made the difficult decision to keep them inside and off public display at this time," said Laffery. "Once temperatures start to warm up, we will reassess our HPAI risk levels and reevaluate at that time." Information from the USDA indicates that detections of avian influenza tend to decrease in the warmer months of May, June, July, and August.

Avian influenza is a disease found in wild and domestic birds. Wild birds can shed the virus into the environment through oral and nasal secretions, and also bird droppings, which can accidentally be transported on boots, equipment, and even food. Avian influenza can cause severe illness and even death. "The best way to prevent avian influenza is through biosecurity measures – that means reducing



opportunities for wildlife to spread the virus to our resident birds.," said Laffery. "We appreciate your patience and understanding as we make tough decisions to keep our birds safe." Avian influenza is a virus that usually only affects birds and the CDC considers the risk of HPAI to the general public to be low.

In addition to zoo admission fees staying the same, Columbian Park Express Train ride fees will remain unchanged at \$3.00 for all guests ages three years and up. The train will begin operating for the season this Saturday, weather-permitting. As far as the ever-popular pedal boats, guests can expect those to be back up and running Memorial Day Weekend.

For more information about the Zoo, please call 765-807-1540 or visit columbianparkzoo.org. Stay up to date on Zoo happenings at www.facebook.com/cpzoo and www.twitter.com/ColumbianPrkZoo!"

About Columbian Park Zoo

Founded in 1908, Columbian Park Zoo is the second oldest zoo in Indiana. It is approximately 6 acres in size and is located in historic Columbian Park. The Zoo features several "immersion" exhibits and the animal collection consists of nearly 200 animals representing approximately 90 species.

About Lafayette Parks and Recreation

The Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains 700 acres of land within the City of Lafayette. This includes the maintenance of more than 32 miles of paved trails. The city's trails are open to the public and can be used for a variety of activities including walking, running, biking, rollerblading, and more.

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