For these endangered birds, life can be precarious even before it begins. Few eggs are fertile, and even if fertile, hatching is no easy feat. Hundreds of blood vessels run just under the shell, so one wrong move by the nesting mom or dad could spell disaster for the chick. Once born, penguin chick immune systems are delicate - many do not make it past their first week of life. Yet, first-time parents Percy and Berry would make you think they’re old pros.

Berry came to the Pueblo Zoo last year. This gave keepers Laura Pilarski and Katie Glatfelter something they had been hoping for. Berry’s arrival meant the possibility of finally raising chicks again here in Pueblo. Due to the age of Pueblo’s penguin colony, egg after egg had been infertile. Your support ensured Laura and Katie were ready when Percy laid her first fertile eggs.

Laura and Katie keep watch over more than just the birds. Every time a penguin lays an egg, they make sure the nest is set up for success. If the birds are putting too much pressure on the eggs, they create a support to spread out the weight of the parents. Keeping watch is a delicate balance. Keepers need to check in to ensure that the chicks have what they need, but they also need to give the parents enough space to keep their stress levels low. The Pueblo Zoo has had a lot of practice with African penguins. We have hatched and raised more than 60 chicks!

Last fall, Percy hatched two chicks within three months. Laura and Katie were skeptical that the new parents would have success with both. Quinn, her first chick, doubled in size most weeks. The new parents were naturals. When Percy hatched her second chick three months later, it grew even faster. If their first chick was big, their second was massive!

“I saw my first penguin chicks while in South Africa to visit SANCCOB. I am thrilled to be working with them again in Pueblo. Our chicks are amazing ambassadors for their wild brothers and sisters. African penguins are losing numbers and habitat at alarming rates. I love that every zoo visit supports our penguins and those at SANCCOB,” explained Katie.
Your Pueblo pride continues to thrive

Three years ago we celebrated our little lion man when Mumford was born. Your support kept Mashavu (Mom) and Taz (Dad) well fed…and it showed in Mumford. He was one plump and spoiled cat! He’s now bigger than Taz and growing a mane of his own. He’s also leading the way for his three younger siblings: Hodari, Kamara, and Zuri.

Beckie Hodgson, lion keeper, has worked with each of the cubs from their births. She spends over three hours with them every time she works. “The triplets are a handful! Now that they’ve grown, they’re a lot more adventurous. At over a year old and weighing more than 150 pounds, they aren’t shy about investigating new items or going on exhibit without Mom.”

“Every cub is different.”

“When I put new enrichment out, Zuri is as likely as Hodari to investigate, but she will still keep an eye on her siblings. Kamara is the lazy one. She’ll be trying to lounge while Zuri and Hodari rush out to play.

Mumford is the big brother. He’s over two years older. The triplets aren’t as ready to train each day because they’re still young. Even though Mumford is the most eager to train now, he’s still sort of that big lovable baby. As a cub, he took much longer to wean off mom’s milk.”

The triplets will remain at our zoo while they mature. Big brother Mumford would have sought a different pride (group of lions) in the wild by now. He is preparing to leave this spring to be a companion to another lion at Como Park Zoo in Minnesota.

“Mumford is my zoo baby. He was a single cub, and the first lion cub I worked with. I’m sad to see him go and I will miss working with him. He’ll always be the little goofball that I’ve known since he was a pudgy cub. I’m glad that he is helping to keep lion populations at AZA facilities healthy. I’m excited to hear stories from his new home,” says Beckie.
Your support leads to successful contribution to species survival plan

African painted dogs are one of the most unique and endangered animals on the planet. With striking coloring and large ears, they are a marvel to look at. Although you might often find them lounging, they are one of the animal kingdom’s best hunters. They’re twice as effective as African lions! But they’re also disappearing at a much quicker pace. In response, zoos across the country have expanded their painted dog programs through a species survival plan (SSP). The Pueblo Zoo is proud to be a part of these efforts. We are even prouder that our first pup is thriving.

Painted dogs have a complex social structure. This makes the arrival of pups both thrilling and challenging. Our staff is acutely aware of the potential for loss. Insight from AZA experts was critical during this transition period and thanks to your donor and member support, our keepers were ready. You send keepers to trainings and fund exhibit updates to provide the best care possible.

JT (pictured above) was born October 15, 2018 to our alpha pair, Akilah and Hunter. He was one of five pups. Shortly after his birth, the zoo mourned the painful loss of JT’s four siblings, as well as our beta male, Minzi. Our staff was heartbroken. Still, they took comfort knowing how important JT’s birth is to the population as a whole.

JT will be full-grown before the year is over. “I can see him playing with passersby on the other side of the glass each day. He’s active and an eager participant in his training,” says area supervisor Gina Gley. Be sure to introduce yourself to JT while he’s still a pup!

“We are lucky to have JT. Our zoo is supporting the genetic diversity of this species by participating in the SSP. Hunter and Akilah are important to the program, and JT is the future of those genes”.  
Hollie David, Pueblo Zoo Keeper & painted dog SSP committee member

Our rainforest exhibit is now OPEN

Thanks for your patience and support
Teaching with tigers

Tiger salamanders reach thousands

Volunteer docents and your donations bring unique animals to students

The smirk above may look adorable, but it belongs to a fierce predator: the tiger salamander. These unassuming animals will eat nearly anything they can fit in their mouths. Tiger salamanders are one of the most successful and widespread salamanders in the wild, living across nearly the entire United States. They’re also the Colorado state amphibian.

Zoo docents visit thousands of students every year and tiger salamanders are often along for the adventure. These amphibians are a perfect partner for reaching the next generation - they’re cute, they’re local, and the kids can have an impact on the welfare of the small salamanders. When kids are face to face with these small creatures, they feel a connection to them. They may bring home stories about making responsible choices to protect those small, sensitive salamanders they met that week. Or they may think back to those interactions and choose to study more, volunteer with the zoo to get hands-on experience, or step into a conservation career as they grow.

When kids are face to face with these creatures, they feel a connection with them.

Many of the smallest animals in the zoo are part of our animal ambassador team. They’re the ones who break through the barriers of the zoo and reach kids who otherwise may not make those connections. These smallest of animals are often cared for by that next generation of zoo staff inspired from education visits. The Pueblo Zoo’s ZooALIVE leadership program helps teens empower themselves with animal knowledge, animal care responsibilities, and the role of taking that knowledge and passion to the paths of the zoo to inspire visitors. These tiger salamanders may be small, and our ZooAlive volunteers may be young, but their conservation and education impact is mighty.

Volunteer at the zoo!

Special Events • Education • Gift Shop • Gardens

Learn more at: pueblozoo.org/volunteer
Holiday Events Sustain Zoo Mission

Fall and winter events raise critical off-season funding for animals and mission

Senior Safari presented by Health Solutions and ZooBoo presented by The Shandy Clinic set attendance records this past year. Thanks to ZooBoo supporting sponsors R Buck Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc., Ent Community Fund of the Pikes Peak Community Foundation, Beastsie, Black Hills Energy, ChickfilA Pueblo, Children’s Hospital of Colorado, Great Clips, Health Solutions, Kid’s Crossing, KIND, Mauro Farms & Bakery, MGA Home Healthcare, and Smile Doctors Braces.

In November, we brought out our holiday spirit at ElectriCritters presented by Black Hills Energy. Visitors enjoyed an all new opportunity to visit the Islands of Life building during the event, and Santa delighted hundreds of boys and girls every week. Thanks to supporting sponsors Pueblo Electrics, Colorado Lottery, Wagner Rents, Neil & Lynne Wainwright, Concentrix, Solar Roast Coffee, The Pueblo Chieftain, KOAA 5, Smile Doctors Braces, Parkview Medical Center, Eileen Arnot, Beverly Brill, PCC Skills USA Welding Club, and Thatcher Avenue Storage.

Zoo Camps

**Elementary** (entering grades):
- June 10-14 - Kindergarten, 1st-2nd
- June 24-28 - 1st-2nd, 3rd-4th
- July 8-12 - 3rd-4th, 5th-6th
- July 15-19 - Kindergarten, 3rd-4th
- July 22-26 - Kindergarten, 1st-2nd
- July 29-Aug 2 - 1st-2nd, 3rd-4th

**Middle & High School:**
- June 17-21 Zoo ALIVE - 9th-12th

**Register Today!**

**Zoo Hikes**
**Keeper Talks**
**Animal Games**
**Wild Crafts**
**And More!**

More details at [pueblozoo.org](http://pueblozoo.org)
Letter from the Director

A first plunge, tentative steps, adventuring out further away from our parents. It’s all much the same whether the next generation supports to feel safe, space to discover and learn and then confidence and freedom to set off alone. You’ve seen examples throughout this issue. The challenges, excitement and rewards our animals face in raising families and growing up is not far off from our own human experience. We take pride in making the zoo a place to explore, learn, stretch, wonder, be enriched, and be nurtured – for humans and animals alike. We see kids taking first steps, creating dishes at the garden’s mud kitchen, climbing the camel statue alone, and going to their first camp. We watch families track the growth of babies like Mumford and tell stories about how they knew him as a cub and have grown together. Many life lesson conversations happen in front of exhibits where children find connection with the face on the other side. They ask questions that often help them understand life just a little bit better. It’s those connections and lessons that help us make sense of life on this big blue marble. They help us form empathy and a sense of caring that will serve future generations – whether those generations are two or four footed; furry, feathered or naked. Thank you for making that important investment in the future of our children and our planet.

- Abbie Krause, Pueblo Zoo Executive Director

Upcoming Events

March 15: Safari cafe open spring hours
10am - 4pm, March 15 - 24, Friday - Sunday March 29 - May 24

April 5: Painted Dogs in the Wild
Join us at noon for talks on how our staff and volunteers are bringing our mission to life.

April 27: Brew at the Zoo
Join us for the wildest brew fest in Colorado! Enjoy brews, live music, games, food trucks, & more! Visit pueblozoo.org/brew

May 1: Early Mornings for Members
Members get early access to wake up with the zoo! 8am, Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 1 - September 3

May 3: Conservation Talk
Join us to learn how staff and volunteers are bringing our mission to life.

May 11-12: Mother’s Day Weekend
Mothers and Grandmothers get in free with purchase of child ticket!

May 24: Safari cafe open daily
10am - 4pm daily through mid August

June 7: A clearer picture of Fountain Creek
Learn about conservation work with the Fountain Creek and what you can do to support this local waterway.

June 15-16: Father’s Day Weekend
Fathers and Grandfathers get in free with purchase of child ticket!

June 21: Zoofari
An evening of casual elegance, animal encounters, tours, and auctions. Find out more at www.pueblozoo.org/zoofari

August 10-11: Overnight with the Animals
Enjoy the thrill of camping at the zoo! Includes meals, activities, tour, and admission all day Sunday. Pricing and full info: www.pueblozoo.org/overnights

August 2: Conservation Talk
Join us to learn how staff and volunteers are bringing our mission to life.