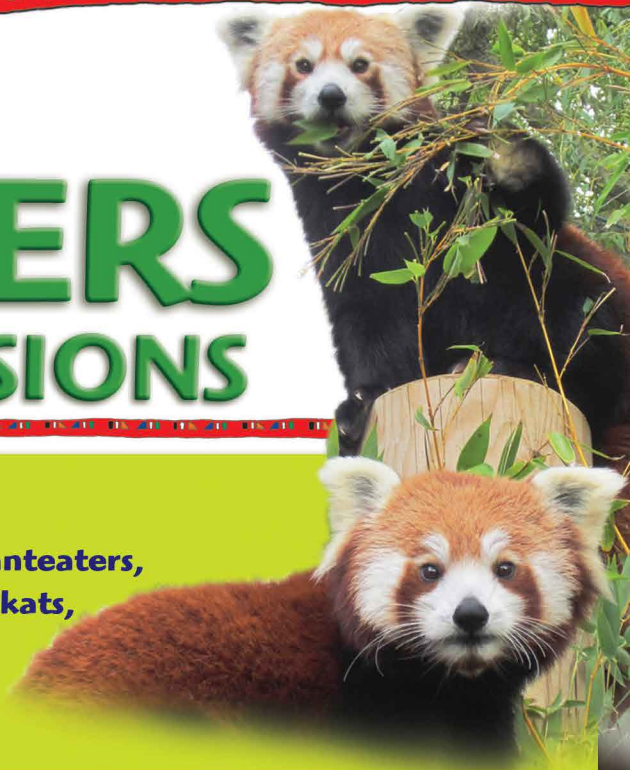


ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS and EDUCATION SESSIONS

Animals at Drusillas Park

Drusillas has over 75 species of animal including sloths, anteaters, monkeys, lemurs, red pandas, penguins, flamingos, meerkats, otters, fruit bats and beavers. These can be viewed around the Park but can not be brought into classes or introduced to groups.



Our lemurs, lorikeets, sloths and bats can be found in walk-through enclosures - but cannot be stroked.

Animal handling

Drusillas has a collection of education animals that are used for Animal Encounters; please see inside for further details.



Caring for our animals

At Drusillas Park we pride ourselves on the high level of care that our animals receive. All of our exotic animals have been captive bred and acquired from other zoological collections. Zoos donate surplus animals to each other free of charge, in order to maintain healthy populations.

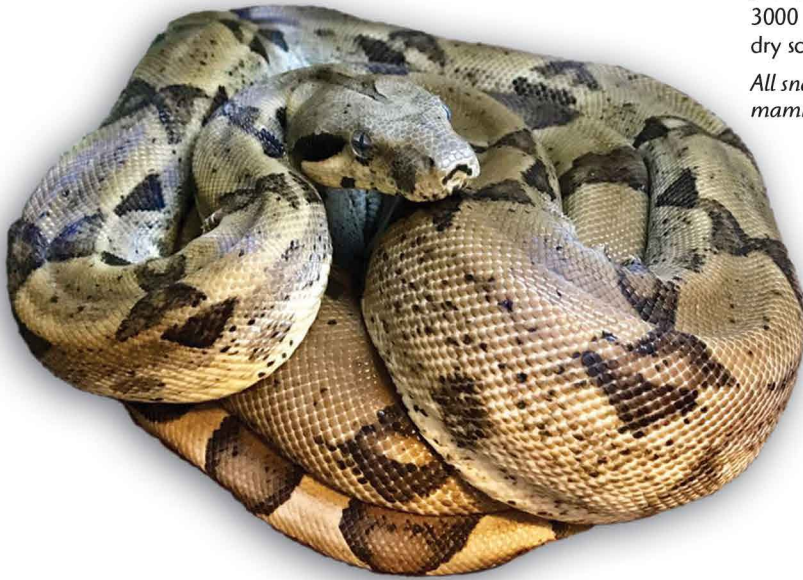
The Animal Welfare Act forms the basis of animal care and makes owners and keepers responsible for meeting the welfare needs of their animals. These include the need:

- For a suitable environment (*place to live*)
- For a suitable diet
- To exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- To be housed with, or apart from, other animals (*if applicable*)
- To be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS animals at Drusillas

These are some of the animals that are used in our education sessions. Animals encountered vary, but will usually include four of the following:

Reptiles are ectothermic (cold-blooded) animals covered in dry waterproof scales.



Snakes (various species)

Snakes have been around for over 100 million years. There are more than 3000 species of snake. All snakes have a spine and ribs and are covered in dry scales. All snakes are carnivorous and most lay eggs.

All snakes used in education sessions are constrictors that naturally eat small mammals – we do not use any venomous snakes.

Milk snake – found from northern South America to southern Canada, mainly in forested areas.

Corn snake – from central and south-east USA, live in woodland, grassland and urban areas.

Boa constrictor – from tropical areas in Central and South America, can grow up to 4 metres and weigh up to 45kg.

Royal python – from West and Central Africa, live in savannah and sparsely wooded plains.

Lizards

There are over 4,500 species of lizard in the world, ranging in size from 1.6cm (dwarf gecko) to 3 metres (Komodo dragon).

Blue-tongued skink

(*Tiliqua scincoides*)

From deserts, grasslands and forests in Australia, their blue-tongue is thought to confuse predators. Skinks are ovoviviparous, incubating eggs inside the body before giving birth to live young.



Bearded dragon (*Pogona vitticeps*)

From woodlands, forests, scrubby areas and deserts in Australia. They feed on insects and other small animals, and vegetation. They are spiky (like a dragon) and if threatened erect their throat frill (beard) and open their mouth wide. Lay clutches of 15-25 eggs throughout the breeding season.

Invertebrates are animals without backbones. Approximately 97% of the world's animal species are invertebrates.



Giant African millipede (*Diplopoda sp.*)

Live on the rainforest floor in West Africa. These millipedes grow up to about 400 legs, but one species in Australia can have over 1000. Most species are completely brown but some have white or red legs. They can live for up to ten years and grow by shedding their skin. They lay around 20 eggs at a time.



Giant African land snail (*Achatina sp.*)

Originally from East Africa, they have been introduced to many other countries. They have one foot which they move on. They can live for ten years and can grow to 30cm. Grow by adding a new layer to the entrance of the shell. Lay 100 eggs at a time and are hermaphrodite (both male and female). They have around 100 teeth which they use like a cheese grater to eat.

Madagascan hissing cockroach

(*Gromphadorhina portentosa*)

They live on the forest floor in Madagascar, eating rotting fruit and vegetation. They have several different hisses – they hiss if threatened, or during courtship to attract a mate. Cockroaches are one of the oldest terrestrial species, having been around for well over 300 million years.



Mammals are endothermic (warm blooded) animals that are covered in fur or hair.



Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*)

Pet rats are domesticated from the brown rat, which is thought to originate from south-east Asian forests. They are now found almost all over the world. Rats can breed very quickly (up to ten babies every four weeks), will eat almost anything and can swim for three days without stopping!



Chinchilla (*Chinchilla lanigera*)

From the Andes mountains in South America. Can be kept as pets but are endangered in the wild because of hunting for fur. They have the softest fur of any animal in the world with 70 hairs per follicle. They normally have two babies, twice a year. Babies are born covered in fur, with teeth and eyes open. They can eat plant food immediately and run after one hour.



Guinea pig (*Cavia porcellus*)

From grassland areas in South America. Can live for up to 12 years in captivity. They are social animals that live in large groups in the wild; they were domesticated by the Inca's thousands of years ago. Babies are fully furred when born and can run after only a few hours.

Gerbils (various species)

Gerbils are from Africa and Asia where they live in deserts and dry grasslands. There are about 50 species of gerbil, they are usually sandy coloured, live in burrows and are nocturnal.

Large hairy armadillo
(*Chaetophractus villosus*)

Found in found in forests and grasslands in central and southern South America, armadillos eat a variety of plants, insects and other small animals. The word 'armadillo' means 'little armoured one' in Spanish. Of the 21 species of armadillo, only three-banded armadillos can curl into a ball. The others (such as large hairy armadillos) run into burrows or squat into the ground for protection.



African pygmy hedgehog
(*Atelerix albiventris*)

Naturally found in grasslands across central Africa from Senegal to Kenya. Pygmy hedgehogs are like a smaller version of European hedgehogs - they are nocturnal and feed on insects and other invertebrates.

Your Animal Encounters session @ DRUSILLAS PARK

Your 30 minute session will enable children to meet four live animals. In addition, we often show some HM Customs seized artefacts to groups Key Stages 2 and above, as well as SEN groups.

If you have a KS1 group and would like to handle these artefacts please inform us before your visit.

Naturally, health and safety is considered throughout and everyone is asked to clean their hands after touching animals and artefacts.

Please note that we cannot guarantee specific animals.

EDUCATION SESSIONS at Drusillas Park

At Drusillas Park we hold a number of artefacts that are on loan from H.M. Revenue & Customs. The majority of these have been purchased by holiday makers as souvenirs and then confiscated on their return to this country, chiefly at Heathrow Airport. If showing these artefacts, we believe that it is necessary to briefly explain why we have these items. Ultimately we hope that visiting children and adults will not buy wildlife souvenirs in the future.

These artefacts allow an opportunity for children to touch animal artefacts that they may not otherwise come into contact with. Children may be able to encounter animals but they are unlikely to ever feel a bear or crocodile skin otherwise. A turtle shell reveals how the skeleton is attached, whilst an elephant tooth indicates how large they are.



We have a range of animal artefacts including turtles and their shells, crocodiles and crocodile handbags, elephant tusks, teeth and skin, hippo teeth, zebra skins, leopard skin, rainsticks, antelope horns, sawfish blade, pinned insects, spiders and scorpions, snake skins, conch shells and traditional medicines.

Drusillas offers a wide range of education sessions; many involve some dressing up and all (apart from Maasai Life) include meeting two animals.

Sessions offered are:

- Habitats & Adaptations
- Tropical Rainforests (Jungle Fun for Early Years groups)
- Fur, Feathers & Scales
- Life Cycles
- Maasai Life
- Minibeasts
- Endangered Animals & Conservation
- Caring for Animals
- Penguins
- Chomp, Munch, Chew
- Dinosaurs
- Sustainability
- Deadly Animals
- Storytime sessions



Please visit

www.drusillas.co.uk/education-at-drusillas

for further details



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