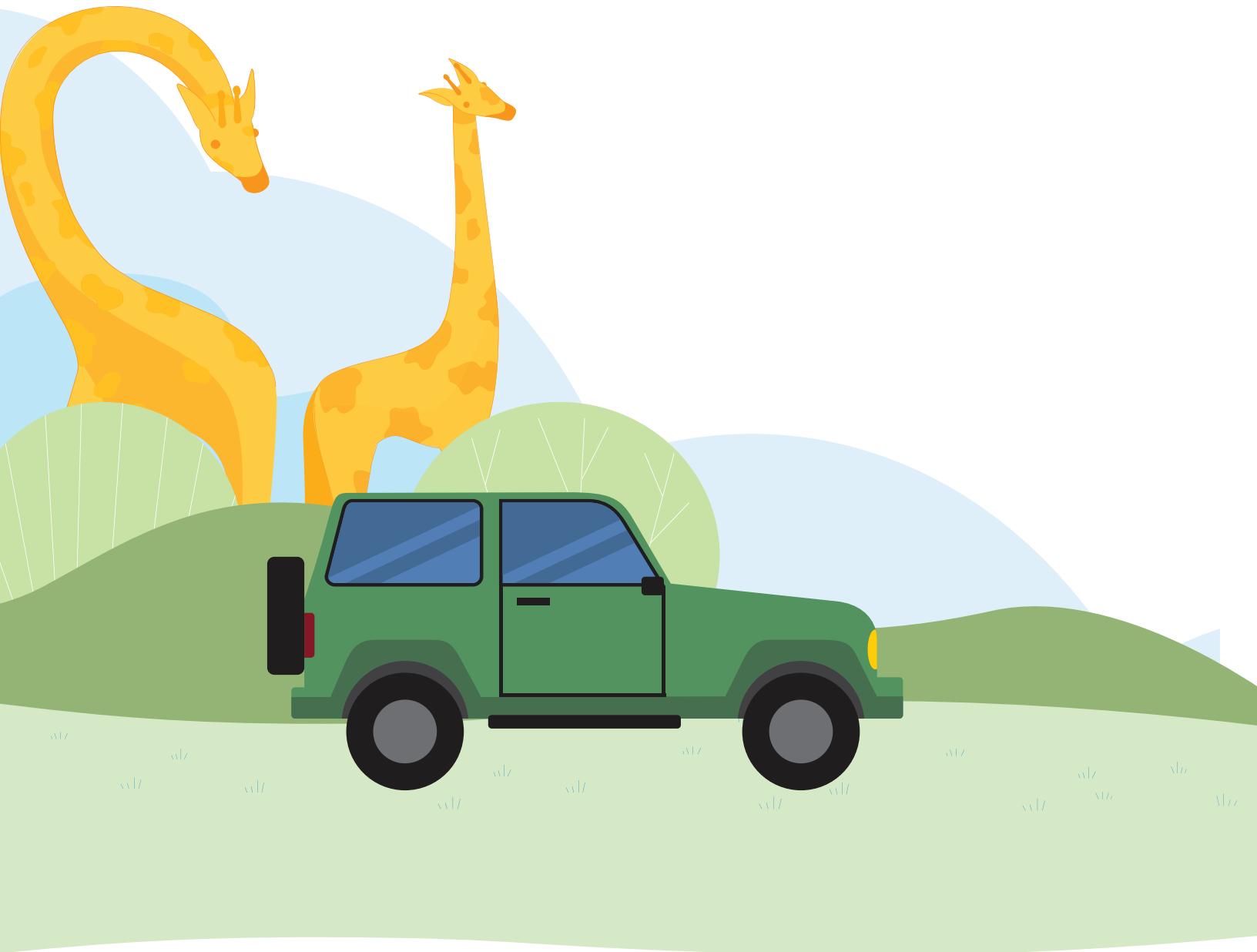




NEW

# SCENIC SAFARI

## AUDIO TOUR SCRIPT



## **PLAY SYMBOL 1 - EXITING ZOO MAIN PARKING LOT GATE**

Hello, and welcome to the Toronto Zoo's Scenic Safari drive thru tour. I'm Dolf DeJong, your Zoo's CEO. Let me start off by saying how grateful we are that you've chosen to join us today for this NEW and WILD experience here at our Zoo.

Our Mission here at the Zoo is to connect people, animals and conservation science to fight extinction, and by visiting today you have become a part of that mission. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge that the land you are driving on today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Cippewa, the Haudenosaune and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples. I also would like to acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

Here are a few rules of the road as you get started on your adventure:

Rule number 1: Please remain in your vehicle at ALL times during the tour – do not exit your vehicle for any reason while you are on the Zoo grounds.

**If you have any problems with your vehicle along the route, please call our amazing security team at 416-392-5901 and someone will be over to assist you as soon as possible.**

Number 2: Please try to keep noise to a minimum so as to not scare the animals – the only horns allowed during the tour belong to our rhinos.

Rule number 3: Please be sure to follow the guided route and DO NOT exceed 5km/h. For the kids in the car, this is one where you can help. Please make sure your parents don't rush through the experience, and you get to make the most of your day.



Number 4: The Zoo remains a smoke and vape-free property and they are not permitted on your Scenic Safari.

Finally, and most importantly, HAVE fun visiting with some of our animals, take lots of photos, and we hope you learn a few things about our conservation programs along the way. Be sure to share your experiences with the hashtag #TZScenicSafari.

Before I hand things over to your Safari Guide Brian, I want to say thank you, again, for supporting YOUR Toronto Zoo, we hope you enjoy this wild ride.

At certain points along your tour we will ask you to press PAUSE then watch for the large "PLAY BUTTON" signage along the route to press PLAY again and continue listening.

**It is time for your first press PAUSE now. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again and have a phenomenal day.**

## PLAY SYMBOL 2 - INDO-MALAYA BRIDGE AFTER CAROUSEL

## Safari Guide Brian:

Hello explorers. Are you ready for your wild adventure to begin? Currently, you are entering the "core woods" of the Zoo. This is a back entrance to Indo-Malaya, home to such animals as the Sumatran tiger, orangutans, white-handed gibbons, and the reticulated python. Watch to the right, where you will see the back of our Sumatran tiger habitat. You may have also noticed some chewed up barrels. Those large holes are actually teeth and claw marks from our tigers. Did you know that a tiger can bite down with the force of 1,000 pounds!

As we come around the corner, passed the main Zoomobile station, you will see the Himalayan tahr. These goat-like creature's have a red-brown coat and both male and females have horns. Checkout the Zoo's Tik Tok to see how majestic their manes can get!



To the right, watch for a rare sighting of the endangered greater one-horned rhino. We have 3 greater one-horned rhinos here at the Toronto Zoo – Vishnu, Ashakiran and our youngest, Kiran. We have two species of rhinos here at the Zoo, the other you may catch a glimpse of on your drive through the African Savanna. An easy way to tell them apart is the armoured look of our greater one-horned rhinos and the fact that they have one horn. When you see our white rhinos, you may notice that they have two horns.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol at the bridge to begin again.**

### **PLAY SYMBOL 3 - INDO-MALAYA STEEL BRIDGE**

As you cross the bridge, take a look left and right to see a glimpse of the Rouge Valley. When the Zoo is open, you can actually take a high-speed zipline down through the trees under this bridge, on our Wild Rouge Zipline and Canopy Tour. Guests are transported down into the heart of the attraction, where you can explore the canopy walk-through, an aerial challenge course high up in the trees. A must try if you haven't already.

As you come to the end of the bridge, you will see the future outdoor space for our Sumatran orangutans. This new, state-of-the-art habitat will be three times the size of their current habitat and a research station where animal behavioural scientists can study these majestic tree-dwellers.

The Toronto Zoo is home to 6 orangutans. This long-haired, orangish primate is found in Sumatra and Borneo and they are highly intelligent. They spend much of their time in trees of their tropical rainforest home. They are much more solitary than other apes and are very vocal to ensure other orangutans stay out of their way. A "long call" from an orangutan can be heard up to 2 kilometres away.

The orangutan is considered endangered in the wild from deforestation and the palm oil crisis.



Be sure to watch for sustainable palm oil products when purchasing packaged goods such as chocolate bars, cookies, cereal and even in personal products such as shampoos, cosmetics and more.

As you come around the bend, you may catch a glimpse of the world's tallest land mammal to the right. Do you know what that is? The giraffe. There are nine subspecies of giraffe, and here at the Toronto Zoo we have what's called the Masai giraffe.

A giraffe's legs alone are taller than most humans, about 6 feet. These long legs and long neck allow them to keep watch over the Savanna to alert other animals when a predator is near. They also use their height to browse on leaves and buds in trees that few other animals can reach. Did you know a giraffe's tongue can be up to 21 inches long? They use this tongue to strip branches to get as much leaves as they can. Acacia trees are their favourite.

As we drive towards the African Savanna, you may notice our Serengeti Bush Camp on the righthand side. This is a program you have to check out when the Zoo reopens; you actually get to spend a night at the Zoo, falling asleep to the sounds of the Savanna.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again.**

#### **PLAY SYMBOL 4 - NEAR SIMBA SAFARI RESTAURANT, ENTERING SAVANNA**

We are now entering the African Savanna, home to such animals as the cheetah, white rhino, marabou stork, zebra, lions and hyenas. Get your safari eyes peeled as you can look both right and left to potentially spot animals from all angles. To the right in the distance, you may see the White rhino. Remember how I said you can tell? Look for those two horns.

The white rhino is a grazer and can often be found grazing on grass in the open plains. They are the second largest African animal (after the elephant) and weigh between 3,000 and 6,000 lbs.



White rhinos have two horns, which have been known to grow up to five feet long. Sadly, this majestic horn is what has caused their population decline in the wild, and the rhinos are at risk of extinction. Organizations like the Toronto Zoo are working hard to protect species like the rhino to ensure they are here for generations to come.

Next, watch for the zebra. There are three different species of zebra, the plains, mountain and Grevy's which we have here. The Grevy's zebra can be found in dry, semi-desert areas of Kenya and Ethiopia. Closely related to horses, their most famous feature is their black and white striped coat, of course.

Why do they have stripes, you ask? It has been said that their stripes perhaps confuse predators as they run away. Like fingerprints, each individual's stripes are unique.

Zebras are social animals – no, that doesn't mean they have Facebook! They live together in large groups called herds. Within a herd, zebras tend to stay together in smaller family groups.

If your eyes are fast enough, you may see a cheetah to your left, but remember, they are the fastest land mammal on Earth. Cheetahs can run up to 113 kilometers an hour. They can only hold this speed for a short distance, to catch prey. They actually run so fast, that after a chase they often need a half hour to catch their breath before they can eat. Their prey includes hares, impalas, wildebeest calves, and gazelles.

The cheetah has that nice spotted coat to blend in with the tall, dry grass of the African plains.

Watch to the left for the olive baboons. They live in groups called "troops" and can range from 15 to 150 baboons. Although they are omnivores, eating both meat and fruit and veg, they have very heavy, powerful jaws with large canine teeth.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again, we heard there might be a lion sitting up ahead.**



## PLAY SYMBOL 5 - ENTERING LION CAVE

Are you ready for a very unique experience? We are about to enter the lion cave. We heard a pride of lions was spotted here from the tour ahead.

This area is home to the white lions, Fintan, Makali and Lemon. They may be hard to spot, as they are often seen 'lion' around – they sleep up to 20 hours a day!

Lion prides can be as small as three or as large as 40 lions. They will hunt prey, raise cubs, and defend their territory together. Did you know that in prides, the female lionesses do most of the hunting? The lionesses are also usually all related in the pride and will give birth at about the same time, so the cub can nurse from other females as well as its mother.

The lion, known as the King of the Pride lands, has a mighty roar. Usually heard at sunset, it can carry for as far as 8 kilometers away.

If you have seen the Lion King, [you know that] where there are lions, there are likely hyenas.

Watch to the left to spot one of our spotted hyenas, the largest of three hyena species.

Hyenas live in large groups called "clans," which can include up to 80 hyenas. After catching their prey, hyenas celebrate by making a sound like a laugh. This lets hyenas know that they have found food to share. They are quite vocal, which is why they have often been associated with laughing.

They have a very powerful jaw with a vise-like grip and specialized teeth to help slice through thick skin, meat and even bones. They can crunch up bones, digesting the organic content and excreting calcium – so a hyena's poop is actually similar to chalk.

On your righthand side, you may see our Watusi cattle. Their large horns have an inner structure similar to a honeycomb. Unfortunately, Watusi in Africa are source of major conflict for lions, as lions



see them as an easy meal, and farmers do not appreciate that.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again.**

## **PLAY SYMBOL 6 - CROSSING BRIDGE NEAR TUNDRA AIR**

As we cross the bridge on your righthand side, you'll catch a glimpse of one of our old monorail stations. And the large white structure ahead is Tundra Air, a ride that takes you soaring through our Tundra Trek. Look far into the distance and watch for a large, white mound. You might catch a glimpse of one of our polar bears.

We are now entering the Americas, home to jaguars, flamingos, capybara and more. Watch on your right for our jaguars, Sambuca and Luca. Jaguars are the largest of South America's big cats and the third largest cats in the world.

If you have a cat at home, you probably know that most cats don't like water... Well, not these cats. In fact, they are quite good swimmers. They will use swimming to catch such prey as fish, turtles or caimans. Jaguars have an amazingly powerful jaw and can often kill their prey with just one bite.

Next to the jaguars, you might see our black-handed spider monkeys. Spider monkeys do not have thumbs. This helps them hang as they don't have to use their hands to grasp. Their tail is also prehensile, which is also a benefit when you are just swinging around all day!

Those flashy pink birds are called flamingos. There are actually about six different species of flamingos, and these are known as the American or Caribbean flamingo.

Flamingos don't start out with those beautiful pink feathers; they are actually born white. They get the pink colour from the food that they eat, either blue green algae or small shrimp that feed on that algae, which contains small red pigments called carotenoids and these pigments are



what turn their feathers pink. Without proper elements in their environment they will actually lose that pink colour and begin to turn white.

Take in the scenery to your right as we pass a hidden gem of the Toronto Zoo, the Mayan Temple waterfall, home to capybaras and macaws.

Look closely and you might spot the capybaras, a semi-aquatic mammal that is actually the largest rodent on Earth. These mammals can be found throughout much of northern and central South America and are closely related to guinea pigs and rock cavies.

Their toes are partially webbed for paddling and their fur is long and brittle which makes it easier to dry quickly on land.

Fun fact- they actually eat their own poop in the morning. This is when it is rich in protein, and since the grasses they eat are hard to digest, eating their waste allows them to digest it twice.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again.**

## **PLAY SYMBOL 7 - CROSSING ROAD TO AMERICAS PAVILION**

You have arrived at our Americas pavilion, home to river otters, beavers, Eastern loggerhead shrike and more. Watch for the great horned owl that may be watching you near the entrance.

In this pavilion, you can catch a glimpse of the amazing work we do with our Blanding's turtles. On site, we raise them from the size of a Loonie to a baked potato, giving them a head-start at an opportunity to thrive. We have released over 200 into the Rouge National Urban Park. In Ontario, 7 of 8 species of turtle are at risk.

Along the righthand side, you may spot some little monkey friends, such as the golden lion tamarin, common marmoset or Saki monkey. You may even spot a two-toed sloth if you're lucky. These little



primates live in the forests of South America.

Next up, enjoy a journey through our Core Woods. Take in the scenery, I'll be back with you soon.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again.**

## **PLAY SYMBOL 8- NEARING SPLASH ISLAND**

We are now entering the Eurasia Wilds, home of the Amur tiger, red panda, Bactrian camel, snow leopards and more.

As we drive past Splash Island, our 2-acre splash pad on your right, keep your eyes peeled to the left for one of our Amur tigers, the largest of tiger species.

There are fewer than 4,000 tigers left in the wild today, and fewer than 500 are the Amur tiger. Tiger populations have sadly been in a rapid decline due to hunting and deforestation. There were once nine tiger subspecies, but three have become extinct during the 20th century. All six of the remaining subspecies are currently threatened.

The Amur tiger, also commonly known as the Siberian tiger, live primarily in eastern Russia's birch forests. They are solitary animals and scent-mark large territories to keep their rivals away. They are powerful hunters and their distinctive markings act as camouflage so they can slowly stalk and sneak up on their prey. The Amur tiger actually has the palest orange coat with fewer stripes to help blend in with its sometimes-snow-covered habitat.

Like the zebras, every tiger has its very own stripe pattern.

They also have amazing night vision, up to six times stronger than a human's.

On your right, you will see part of our Outreach & Discovery area. The paddock on your righthand side holds some of our alpacas, and if you're lucky you might actually catch a glimpse of our donkey, Stirling.



Make sure to come back and visit us once we're open. In the summer season, Outreach & Discovery puts on a great bird demonstration, and you'll sometimes see our Keepers walking around with different animals on site.

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again.**

## **PLAY SYMBOL 9 - EURASIA DRIVE THRU**

We are now entering an area of the Zoo that you wouldn't normally see on your visit, unless you are on the Zoomobile.

Notice the cement grid below us? This is a cattle grate. The uneven ground is uncomfortable for hooved animals, which discourages them from following the Zoomobile out.

**RULES:** As you enter the gates, please put your WINDOWS UP, close sun roofs, drive slowly, and do not exit your vehicle. A reminder if you need assistance, please stay in your car and contact security at 416-392-5901.

This is the only area of the Zoo where you can actually drive into the animals habitat for a very up-close look at this mixed species area.

Watch out for our Przewalski's horses. These are the only true wild horse. Extinct in the wild since 1968 due to competition with domestic herds, these animals existed for a time only in zoos. Successful captive breeding has enabled a small herd of Przewalski's horses to be reintroduced to a reserve in the Gobi Desert. Another successful herd also lives in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone, a de facto wildlife reserve, where they have been very successful thanks to lack of human interaction and limited predator population.

Przewalski's horses are shorter than domesticated horses and weigh up to 300 kilograms. You also may notice the West Caucasian tur. This is an endangered species with horns that can



reach up to 74 centimetres in length. They are also great climbers. They are also known to make great seasonal migrations, up and down mountaintops.

Also, keep an eye out for our Yaks. I've got a trivia challenge for you! What colour do you think a yak's milk is? Take a guess and I'll have the answer for you in just a little while. These animals are found in mountain pastures and fields throughout central Asia; especially the Himalayas and Tibetan Plateau. Excellent climbers, they can negotiate steep mountain cliffs with ease.

The domesticated yak requires very little food and can withstand extreme cold (up to -40C) making it the best suited domesticated animal for work in the high, cold Himalayas.

The lifespan is about 25 years and while domesticated yak are common, the wild Yak are listed as vulnerable.

Okay adventurers, time for the answer to our trivia question – what was your guess? If you said pink, you are right! A yak's milk is actually pink!

**It is now time to press pause. Watch for the PLAY symbol to begin again.**

## **PLAY SYMBOL 10 - AFTER EXITING EURASIA DRIVE THRU**

Watch on your right-hand side for a wattled crane. They are Africa's tallest flying bird getting up to six feet tall! And those of you who may have visited in the past may remember this is the first home of our giant pandas when they arrived in the 1980s.

On the left hand side, you may catch a glimpse of one of our Old World monkeys...the lion-tailed macaques. You may spot them up high, checking out their surroundings. Their key feature is the silver-white mane.



All around the Zoo, there are areas like these, that you may not see on your visit where behind-the-scenes work is being done to keep animals happy, healthy and thriving both here in the Zoo and in the wild. Accredited Zoos, like the Toronto Zoo, follow what is called a Species Survival Plan (SSP). In consultation with our partners, this plan (SSP) helps guide which species we have here at the Zoo, and actually determines which animals should be paired for breeding.

Well, travellers, that wraps up our adventure today. Thank you for joining me on the Scenic Safari. We can't wait to welcome you back to Your Toronto Zoo. We hope you enjoyed your adventure. Over to you, Dolf!

Dolf:

Thanks for that incredible tour, Brian. We hope you all have enjoyed your Scenic Safari tour and learning more about our Zoo. We would be grateful if you would consider sharing your experiences and the amazing conservation work being done right here in your community.

If you haven't already, please check out our Toronto Zoo social media accounts @TheTorontoZoo, and also take in our YouTube channel, our Wild For Life podcast, or the information available at [torontozoo.com](http://torontozoo.com).

If you are a Zoo Member, thank you for your support! If you're interested in joining our Zoo family, Membership is a great way to help support our critical conservation work. You will receive free admission to the Zoo year-round, discounts at our gift shops, and so much more. Visit [torontozoo.com](http://torontozoo.com) for more information.

As you are exiting the Zoo, you can see our Wildlife Health Centre, which is the home to many of our conservation and breeding programs. This work is critical to our mission, and I'm so proud of what happens here every day to save species here and around the world.



When we are open again, I encourage you to come in and visit our Wildlife Health Centre Public Viewing Gallery, where you can see our world-class Wildlife Care teams and learn more about the critical research taking place here, every day.

I'll leave you with this: we believe conservation is a team sport, and we need more players. By visiting today, you are now part of our team. Thank you for being a conservation champion, joining our fight against extinction, and helping protect wildlife and wild spaces. Stay safe, stay healthy, and we hope you've enjoyed your adventure today at Your Toronto Zoo.

