

For Release After 9 p.m. on Saturday, 26 October 2002

# **Naples Zoo to Take Small Groups on After Dark Safari Using Night Vision Technology**

## **Night Vision Scopes Reveal Wildlife is Wilder After Dark in the Zoo**

**What:** Zoo Director David Tetzlaff is now leading **Night Eyes** tours, private guided tours of the Caribbean Gardens after dark. Guests will see the nocturnal activities of rare animals using night vision scopes. The zoo issues each person in the group an infrared equipped 5X magnification night scope. After an orientation to night animals on the screens in Safari Canyon and their equipment review, Tetzlaff and staff will take the group into the darkness for a two and a half hour tour which includes a night cruise through islands of monkeys, lemurs, and apes.

Only two to four tours will be offered per month. All guests must be strong walkers in good health and sign a release form. The tour is being initially offered to groups for \$1,500 and can include up to 15 persons. To check date availability and sundown times, call the zoo's education office at 888.520.3756.

**When:** **Saturday Night, October 26, 2002.**

**Please NOTE:** Contact Ron Friedman at the numbers below to reserve a spot on this limited space tour and to receive the arrival time.

**Where:** *Caribbean Gardens: The ZOO in Naples* at 1590 Goodlette-Frank Road

**Why:** Night vision technology now lets guests appreciate a completely different side of the natural world by revealing the nocturnal activity of many animals typically seen resting during the day. The natural jungle like environment of the zoo offers guests an exciting location to explore these wonders.

**Photo Ops:** Guests looking through night scopes at a variety of animals, guests on the cruise , animals moving in the darkness  
*For digital images, e-mail [tim@napleszoo.com](mailto:tim@napleszoo.com)*

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**CARIBBEAN GARDENS**  
**The ZOO in Naples**  
[www.NaplesZoo.com](http://www.NaplesZoo.com)

# Surviving the Night

Nocturnal animals need to find their meals in the dark. And even animals that are only active in the day still need a strategy to make it through the night without waking up in a snake's coils or a carnivore's mouth. As the guests explore the zoo at night, director David Tetzlaff will point out how the various animals are designed for darkness. Below are just a few examples of the type of information that guests will learn on the trip.

**Special Eyes:** Hunting at night enables predators to move in closer to prey with less chance of being seen. But the darkness also reduces the predators' vision as well. Many predators, however, have an advantage when it comes to the night. It's called a *tapetum lucidum*, a reflective layer of cells behind the retina in their eyes. In the human eye, light passes through the retina once. In an animal with a tapetum, the light is reflected back through the retina again. This enables a cat to see in one sixth of the light that we are able to see in. The tapetum is what causes the eyes of a dog or cat in your house to seem to glow in the right light. (Guests will see graphics related to this in the orientation.)

**Antelope Defenses:** The large sable antelope are known for their fighting strength and have been known to kill lions in self-defense. But avoiding a fight is always safer. So sables graze until darkness sets in and then move off to find a hiding place. In this way, predators have to go searching for them instead of just noting where the antelope are bedding down before the sun sets. In a different strategy, zebra herds move to areas with shorter grass during the night so they can more easily see the approach of any danger and at least one zebra stands watch.

**Avoiding People:** Some animals change their behavior based on interaction with humans. During the height of the tiger poaching in India, the rangers in the national parks were not seeing any tigers in the day. As increasing protection came in the 1980s, even tourists were even able to see tigers in the national parks. Recent pressures for tiger parts for the trade in tiger parts pushed them back into the darkness again. Kudu antelope are also being seen to be more active at night from hunting pressures in the daytime.

**Every Monkey for Herself:** Most monkeys are active in the daytime. To keep themselves safer at night, patas monkeys and several other species climb into the trees with only one monkey per tree. This is very effective. If multiple monkeys were in the tree, a shaking branch could simply mean another monkey is moving around and an approaching predator's approach could be accidentally dismissed. But with one monkey per tree, any movement in the tree would immediately indicate danger. And if a predator is successful in sneaking up on a monkey, it would only be able to take at most the one monkey in that tree as the other monkeys would be alerted from the noise.

*For more information, contact Tim Tetzlaff, director of education, at 888.520.3756 or [tim@napleszoo.com](mailto:tim@napleszoo.com)*