POTTER PARK

Zoo

Social Story

My day at Potter Park Zoo!

FALCONERS

Potter Park Zoo is a 20-acre zoo located in Lansing, Michigan, within Lansing's 102-acre Potter Park.

This is the entrance to the park.
During the spring and summer we will have to stop at the parking booth before entering.

Potter Park Zoo has accessible parking in the zoo parking lot. They are marked by a sign and painted blue.

If I decide to play on the playground in the park before I enter the zoo or after my visit, I will find a communication board.

What is a communication board?

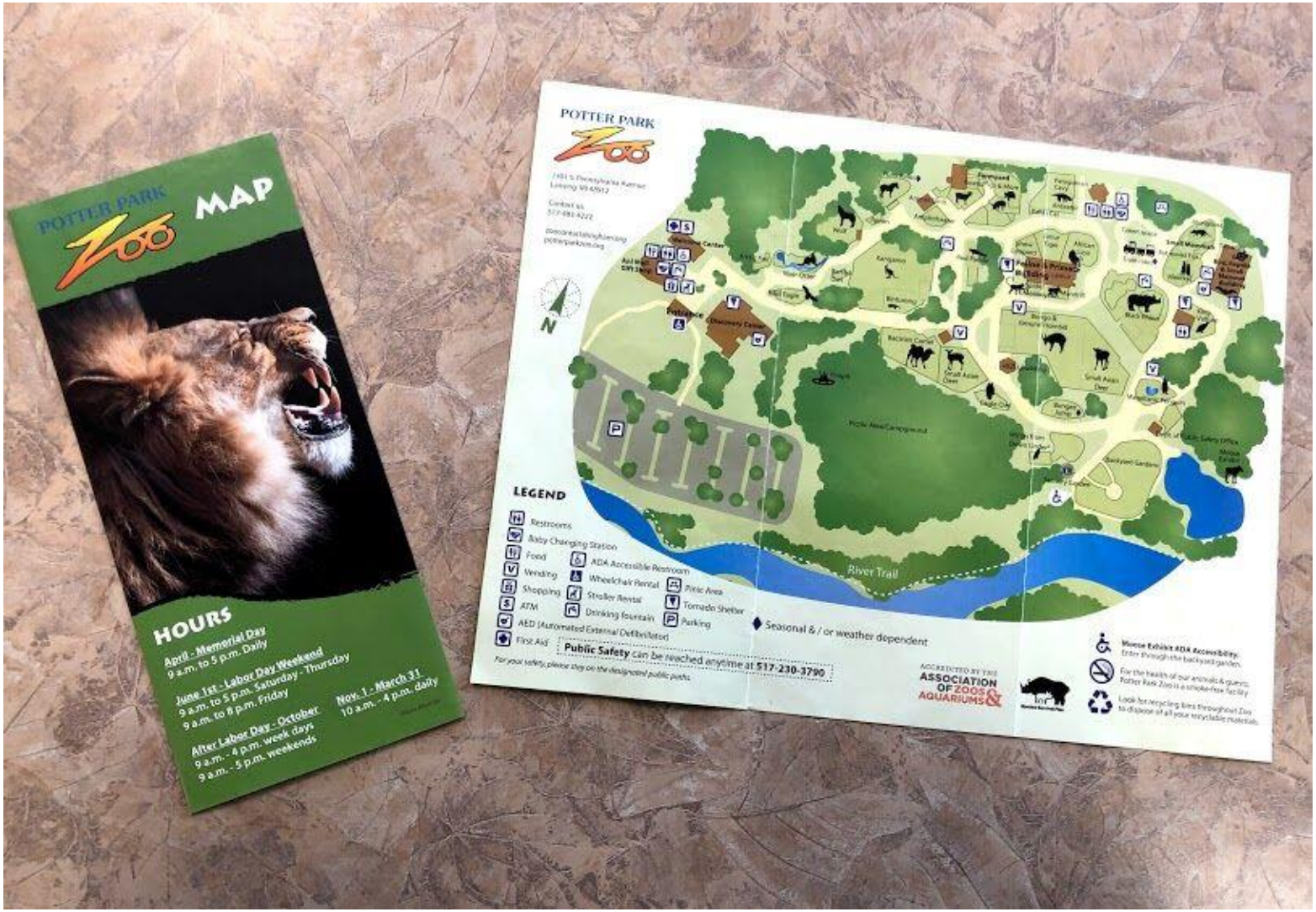
It is a picture symbol board that can be used to support interaction in the playground area. The pictures of the board can be used to enable child to child or child to adult interactions when making comments, asking favors, or giving directions to each other.

Once I am in the park I will walk up to the entrance. This is where my zoo-venture will begin!

Note: Please visit our website to find out what you can bring into the zoo: https://potterparkzoo.org/plan-your-visit/

At Potter Park Zoo, I will walk through the front entrance. I must remember to wait in line for my turn to enter.

Note: Wheelchairs, electric carts, strollers and wagons can be rented here.
Please call to reserve an electric cart and check on wheelchair availability: 517-342-2765



To help me visit all the different animals at the zoo, I can download a zoo map online. At this time the zoo does not have them on-site.

You can find the map here: https://potterparkzoo.org/zoo-map/

At the beginning of my zoo walk I will find a braille map to the left of the plan your day board. Braille map booklets can be checked out in the Welcome Center.

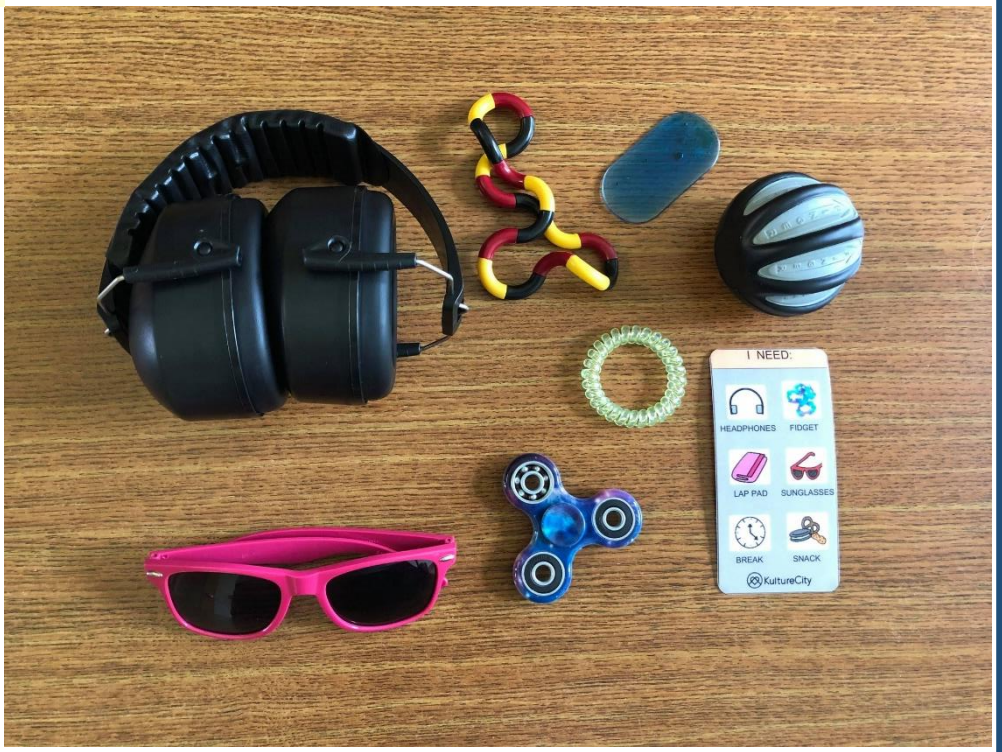
When I enter the zoo, I will see the gift shop on the left. A limited number of people are allowed in at a time, so I may have to wait my turn.

You can now take a virtual tour of the gift shop! Click here.

Next to the gift shop is the Welcome Center. Sensory bags are located here.

If I want to check out a sensory bag I can at the front desk. There is always someone at the desk to help me.

I will find headphones, sunglasses, fidgets and more in the sensory bag! I can bring my own bag if I want too.



Find out more information about our sensory inclusive initiatives at:
https://potterparkzoo.org/falconers/

Included in the sensory bag is a sensory map that may be easier for me to read while I walk around the zoo.

Note: A sensory map can also be downloaded and printed from home.
Find it on our accessibility page here.

If I need to use the restroom there are many bathrooms in the zoo. There is a family restroom located in the Welcome Center.

Note: Most bathrooms have air dryers. The family restrooms in the Welcome Center do not!

I can also visit the Discovery Center to check out a sensory bag!

Note: The sensory bags can be checked out at the front desk during normal business hours Monday – Sunday.

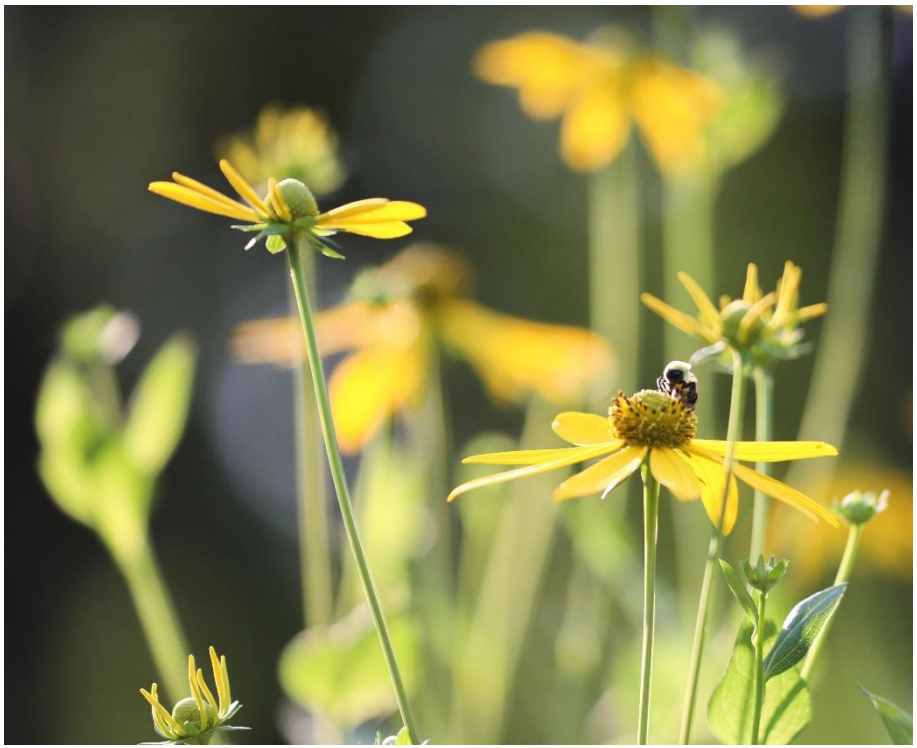
Contents of a sensory bag above.

You can now take a virtual tour of the Discovery Center! Click here.

In the Discovery Center is a Quiet Room that I can visit if I need to take a quick sensory break to decompress and then go back to enjoying my zoo visit.

The Quiet Room is available during all zoo hours.

Location: Down the hall and to the right of the public bathrooms.



Outside of the Discovery Center is the Pollinator Garden. I will stay on the path so I can protect the plants in the garden.

As I walk through the zoo I will see many fences like these. They are for my safety and/or the animals safety. I will stay on the path at all times.

Other fences that I will see.

For my safety I will not climb on the fences.

Some of the exhibits will have big windows. I might get to see these animals up close. I want to be nice and not scare them, so I will remember to not bang on the windows.

Some areas or buildings of the zoo might get a little loud. Signs like this let me know I might want to wear my headphones.

You can now take a virtual tour of the Feline/Primate House! Click here.

Here is another Quiet Area I can visit if I need a sensory break. It is located at the back of the zoo and can be found on the sensory map that is in the sensory bag.

At the back of the zoo is the Savanna Grill, a place where I can get food and drinks and sit down with my family!

Nature Play

At the back of the zoo is an area where I can leave the path and play. I need to stay in this area when I am playing. I also need to listen to my guardian so I stay safe.

Another Quiet Area is available in Nature Play.

In the middle of the zoo is the farmyard. I might get to interact with animals. I can pet them gently but cannot feed them.

Find out when attractions are open, like the farmyard, here:
https://potterparkzoo.org/todays-attractions/

At Wings of Wonder, I can see different kinds of birds like parakeets and cockatiels. This area can get very loud and the birds will be flying around. I can use my headphones here.

*This exhibit is seasonal. Please check our website to see when it opens:
https://potterparkzoo.org/todays-attractions/

At the Pony Express I can see the ponies up close!

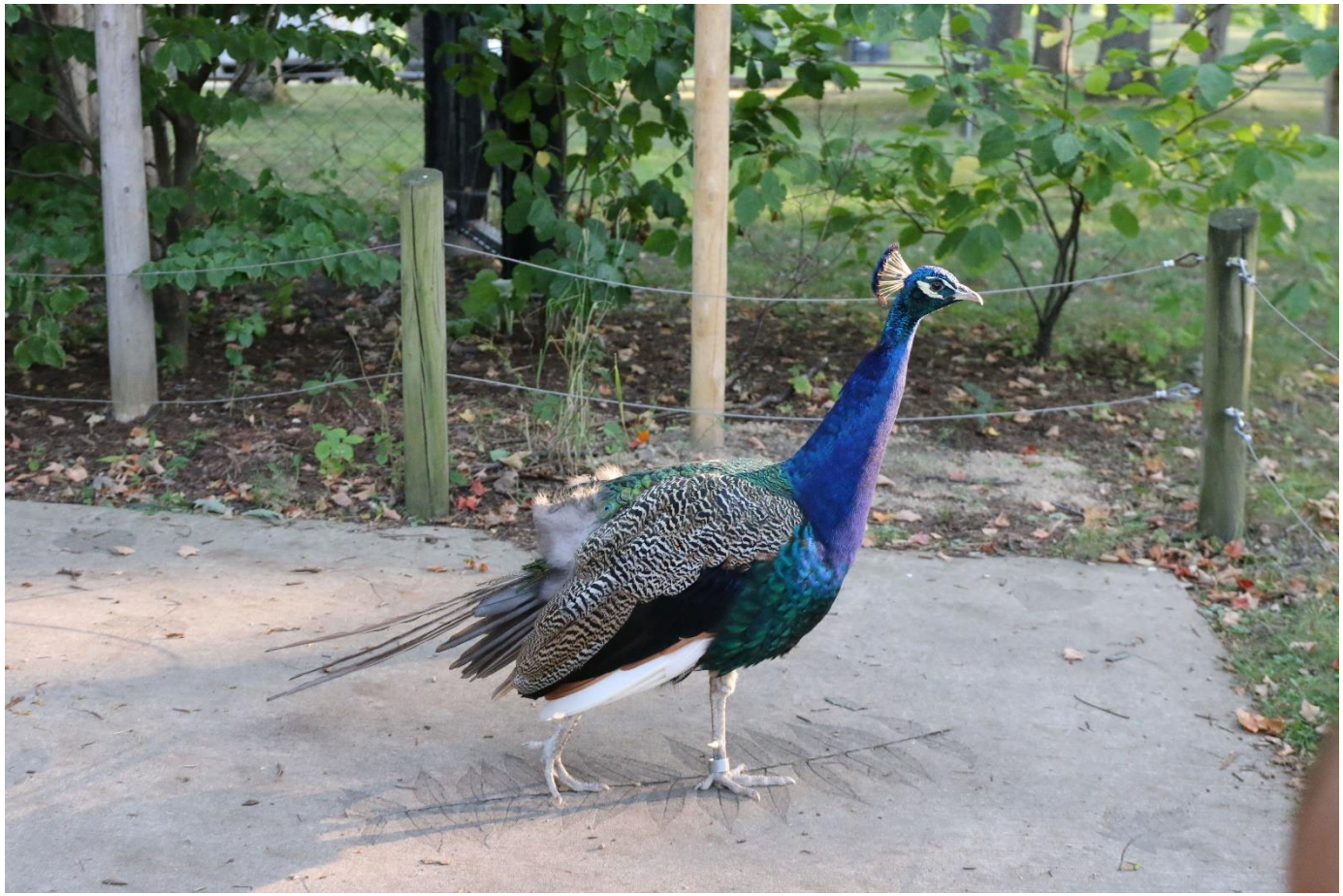
The zookeepers wear green uniforms. I can ask them questions about the zoo or the animals. I will wait my turn to ask my question. This will make everyone feel happy.

Zookeepers will often be in or around the animal exhibits. They are trained to go into these areas. I will stay on the path to keep myself and the animals safe.

I may see a lot of people with red Potter Park Zoo shirts on. They can help me if I have a question about where to go or where I can find something to eat. They work all around the zoo.

If I need help I can always ask our Public Safety Officers and they will help me with any problem, big or small!

During the summer time I may see a mister that is spraying out water. On very hot days, I can use this mister to cool down.



I may see peacocks walking around the zoo. They are allowed to do this but they do make a loud noise at times. They are also on special diet so we do not feed them or touch them.

Reptile/ Small Mammal House

This building is located at the back of the zoo.
You can take a virtual tour of this building.
Click here.

I had a great day! Knowing what to expect helps me have a great day at Potter Park Zoo! I can’t wait to come back.

KultureCity®

Mid-Michigan
AUTISM ASSOCIATION

Able Eyes
Know Before You Go
WWW.ABLEEYES.ORG
CERTIFIED
THIS BUSINESS HAS A VIRTUAL TOUR AND IS ABLE EYES ACCESSIBLE

Did you know?

Potter Park Zoo staff has been trained by KultureCity and Mid-Michigan Autism Association to better serve our community.

Questions? Please email Community Engagement & Inclusion Specialist, Mariah Martinez, mmartinez@ingham.org.