



ZOOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA

ZAA

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ZAA ACCREDITATION

As part of our core mission, the Zoological Association of America accredits professional zoological facilities.

Accreditation is a multi-phase process and is extremely intensive. The first phase of this process requires an application that may oftentimes reach more than one hundred pages in length depending upon the complexity of the collection. Applications must be sponsored by two existing ZAA members and undergo internal peer review, committee, and full Board approval. A site visit is also required. Following initial approval, a three-month review period is required prior to pursuing the second phase of the application process. During this period applicants are considered “non-accredited facility members” and ZAA works in partnership to ready them for the formal accreditation process.

Similar to the first, phase two of the application process is equally as comprehensive and includes several layers of internal reviews and approvals as well as an additional site visit. Facilities that are approved at the completion of this phase are considered “accredited facilities”. Accreditation must be renewed every five years and is by no means a rubber stamp; it requires reapplying and undergoing phase two in its entirety.

Through this accreditation process, our objective is to establish an extremely high bar with respect to professional standards and best management practices. As a result, ZAA’s standards and practices often go beyond simply mirroring existing federal requirements. Some of the areas that are evaluated during the accreditation process include animal care and husbandry, vet care, nutrition, enrichment, security and safety, facility aesthetics and maintenance, record keeping, and a thorough review of policies, procedures, and protocols.

Accordingly, ZAA accredited members are among the finest facilities in the United States. Our safety record is also the best of any of the major zoological trade associations.

ZAA accreditation has also been recognized by federal, state, and local governments who frequently adopt or incorporate our standards into their respective wildlife requirements.

