



HISTORY OF THE ZOO KEY MILESTONES

- 1978 The Minnesota Zoo opened on May 22, 1978.
- 1980 The *World of Birds Show* opened.
- 1981 The Minnesota Zoo was featured on the cover of *Smithsonian Magazine*. The cover caption read “Japanese macaque mother and baby in Minnesota’s Zoo for all seasons.”
- 1982 The Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ (AZA) Tiger Species Survival Plan is started at the Minnesota Zoo by Ulysses S. Seal.
- 1990 The Minnesota Zoo “adopted” the last refuge of the endangered Javan rhino, Ujung Kulon National Park in Java, Indonesia.
- 1991 The Coral Reef exhibit opened, providing guests with a unique floor-to-ceiling view of marine species from the South Pacific.
- 1992 The Weesner Family Amphitheater opened and kicked off the first “Music in the Zoo” outdoor concert.
- 1995 The Minnesota Zoo received the AZA Top Conservation Award for the Sumatran Tiger Project in Way Kambas National Park, Sumatra, Indonesia.
- 1997 The *Discovery Bay: UnitedHealthcare Marine Education Center* opened. In this spectacular exhibit, over 1.1 million gallons of water provide a home for sharks, rays, dolphins, and other marine life.
- 2000 Lee Ehmke became the sixth director and CEO of the Minnesota Zoo.
- The Wells Fargo Family Farm opened. This exhibit provides guests with a real look into a working family farm and won the AZA top exhibit award in 2001.
- 2002 The Tiger Lair exhibit opened. In this exciting exhibit, guests get a “whisker close” look at tigers while learning about tiger conservation.
- 2005 The Zoo was awarded \$20.6 million by the State of Minnesota for the building of a new major exhibit, *Russia’s Grizzly Coast*, featuring bears, sea otters, and leopards from the Russian Far East.
- The Minnesota Zoo was awarded the AZA International Conservation Award for the partnership in the Sumatran Tiger Conservation Program.
- 2007 After a year-long major renovation, the Zoo opened a new Minnesota Trail.
- 2008 *Russia’s Grizzly Coast*, a one-of-a-kind, multi-million dollar exhibit featuring bears, sea otters, Amur leopards, and wild boars, opens.
- The Minnesota Zoo celebrates 30 years!