

THE ANIMAL IN THE PARK

Animals of many forms are natural, wild, volunteer residents of all parks.

To the park visitor, glimpsing some of these animals is one of the chief delights of park going.

Often these wild animals are shy, hard to view, and sometimes even dangerous if the visitor pursues them too relentlessly or carelessly.

Most parks have as their two chief broad objectives the entertainment or enjoyment and the education of their visitors.

We can help you exhibit animals in an entertaining and educational manner.

As all who deal with animals professionally know, keeping an animal active improves its health and well-being. Animal behavior exhibits provide interesting activity for the animals.

An important by-product of such animal exhibits will be tremendous promotional and publicity possibilities.

For suggestions as to how animals can help your park, and how we can help you, please see the following pages

ANIMAL BEHAVIOR ENTERPRISES, INC.
Hot Springs, Arkansas

THE ANIMAL AS EDUCATOR

The conservation of our natural resources, of which our natural and man made beauty spots and wildlands and their inhabitants are an important part, is a topic of major concern to the public these days, as well as to the professionals for whom it has been a concern for decades. Many recognize that public education is the principal factor in the preservation of these areas and their living creatures, both animal and plant.

The living animal is almost unique in its appeal to all ages and ranges and types of people.

This appeal can well be used for instruction -- see Smoky the Bear, the animals of the Walt Disney nature movies, Ranger Rick, and many other symbolic teachers of the nature appreciation lesson.

Educational talks, nature walks, and the like, are now quite common in many parks. We can prepare animals especially to fit into such series of programs, each with a lesson to teach of great significance to the park and to the conservation effort, but presented with such disarming appeal that the audience will not realize they are being instructed.

Animal skits represent a logical tie-in here: for example, to get across the NO SMOKING message, a man could walk into an area marked by a large "FIRE DANGER CRITICAL-NO SMOKING" sign, nonchalantly light a cigarette and drop the match. A crow flies in, picks up the match, stuffs it into the man's pocket (with much commotion -- the man beating out sparks, etc.), removes the cigarette from his mouth and flies off with it or disposes of it properly. Other skits could be designed around putting out camp fires, anti-littering, etc.

The nature talk, in which animals are often exhibited to the audience, can be amplified in an important way not only by showing the physical features of the animal and describing his life history and habits, but also by showing the people how the animal does certain things, what are his chief abilities, and how does he differ from other species. For example, how many have really seen a raccoon wash his food? How many have seen a deer reach up to pull bark or foliage off a tree (naturally this can be demonstrated without actually harming a growing tree)? Such demonstrations can readily be included in nature talks with a wide variety of animals.

Similarly, natural behaviors of animals can be shown to the public in time-cycled or automated exhibits which do not require a handler. On a regular time interval basis, or when the visitor pushes a button, the animal will go through some given cycle of natural behavior which the public seldom has the opportunity of watching -- a deer leaping from rock to rock, a raccoon stealing an egg, a coatimundi swinging across on a vine, etc.

THE ANIMAL AS ENTERTAINER

Of course, animal exhibits, while educational, are also highly entertaining. However, many parks now feature "pure" entertainments, either regularly or on special occasions. For this situation animals are a "natural" in more ways than one.

ABE can produce animal shows themed to your park -- especially adapted to the surroundings, to the species and situations which are common in your area, and to fit other entertainment features which you may be planning.

Such animal shows may be presented as amphitheatre or stage shows, mounted from portable trailer stages, or worked into your present entertainment format in the manner best suited to your purposes.

They may feature, for example, in farming areas, domestic animals demonstrating their native capabilities (see ABE's show for "Man the Provider" area at EXPO '67 where ducks dabbled for fish in a pool, chickens chased butterflies and rabbits scratched in gardens), dolphins or sea lions in seacoast areas (ABE has produced shows for Marineland of Florida, Marineland of California, ABC Marine World, Redwood City, California, and others), wild animals such as moose, deer, otter, bear, and vast varieties of wild birds.

THE ANIMAL AS PUBLIC RELATIONS "MAN"

Along with pretty girls and babies, animals are the number one appeal in advertising, publicity, and promotions. Parks are becoming increasingly publicity and promotion conscious, for good reasons.

All special animal exhibits are themselves intrinsic sources of good publicity and promotion. By tying their appearance to various special occasions and events, extra promotional zip can be achieved. Given an animal presented in a novel light, as obviously these will be, you are assured of newspaper, wire service, TV and major magazine coverage. All the park executive need do is spread the word.

In addition, animals can be used as special promotional agents -- for example, how about "The Animal of the Week" (or of the month, perhaps). Here each week or month a new animal is featured in the park's publicity and advertising. Not only would unusual animals be featured and put on display to acquaint the public with their natural history and appearance, but each would display some feature of its natural behavior. Such a promotion could be worked as a "mystery animal" on each occasion, or the animal could be named and intriguing puzzles suggested as to what it might be able to do.

HOW TO DO IT

Ideas about animal exhibits may sound intriguing, but every practical park man will be asking, "How do we do all this?"

There are many possible approaches. Again means can be tailored to the specific ends.

Your park personnel, or traveling park personnel assigned to national or regional coverage, can be trained by ABE to handle and care for these animal exhibits. This is a service ABE has perfected over many years experience. No special background is required to handle animals under these circumstances.

Mobile units -- portable trailer-mounted stages -- and the like, with an ABE trained handler, can tour a series of parks carrying special exhibits or shows where change during a season is desired (advisable in parks with heavy local repeat traffic, but unnecessary in parks with high tourist turnover).

ABE has on its staff highly experienced technical personnel who can advise in the optimal physical arrangements for your animal exhibits.