



San Diego Zoo
Safari Park

Unique Challenges and Opportunities with Training in Large, Multispecies Field Habitats

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San Diego Zoo Safari Park

- Opened to the public in 1972
- Established as a breeding facility, mainly for hoofstock
- Historically many births and shipments annually
- Facilities built for primarily breeding and shipping

San Diego Zoo Safari Park

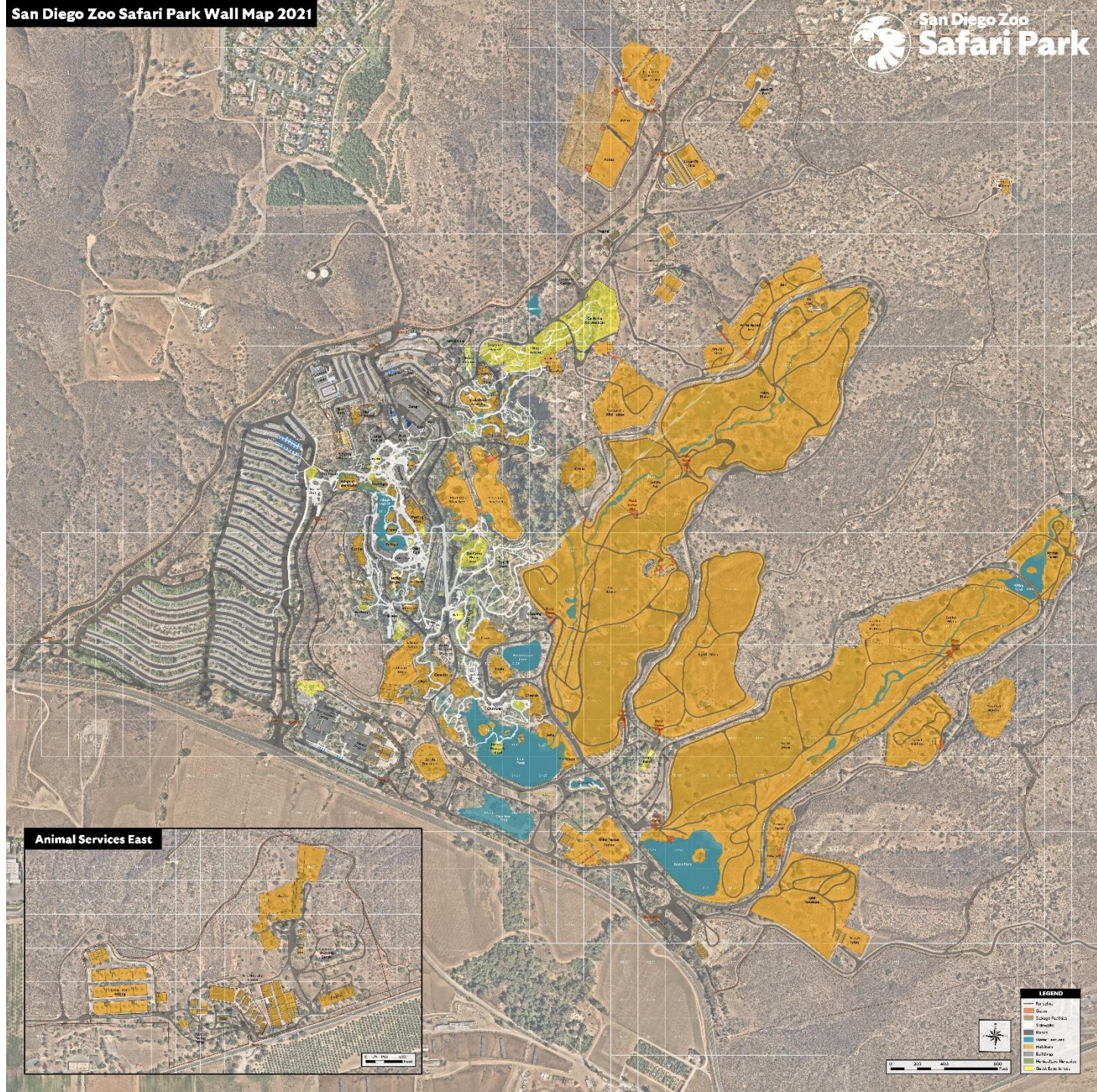
1800 acres

800 acres of managed habitats

Largest habitats 50-60 acres

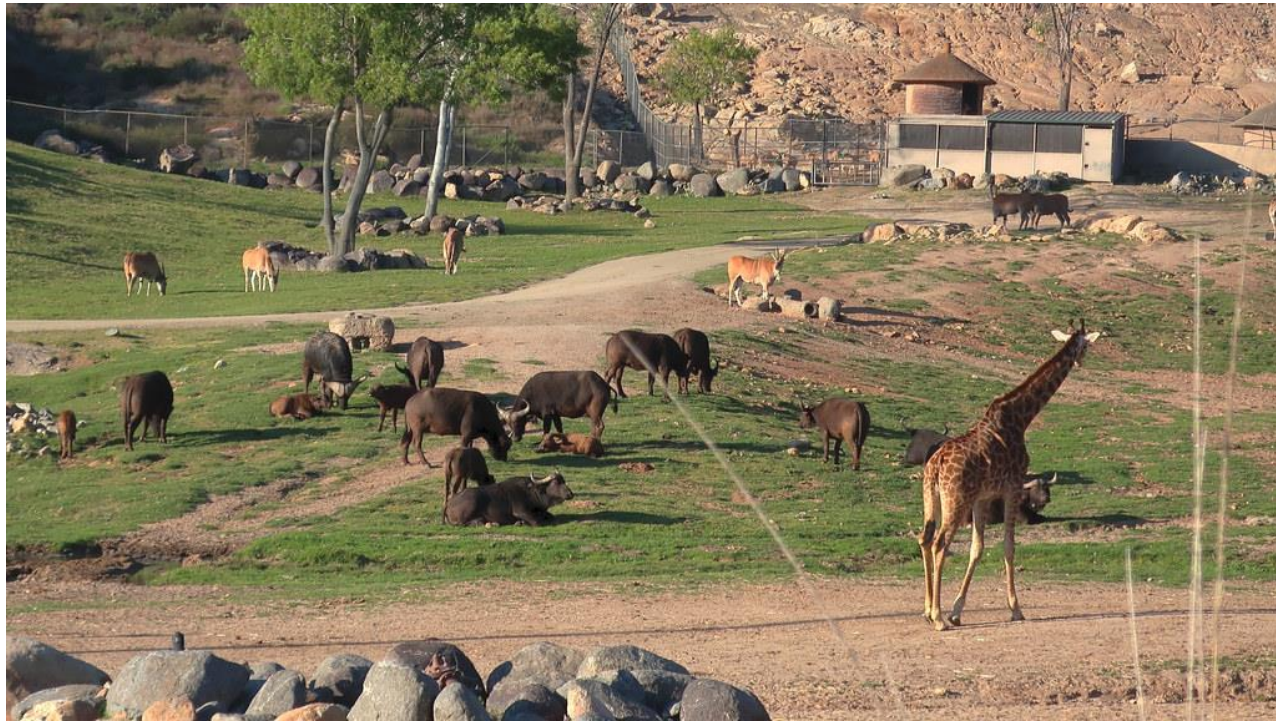


San Diego Zoo Safari Park Wall Map 2021



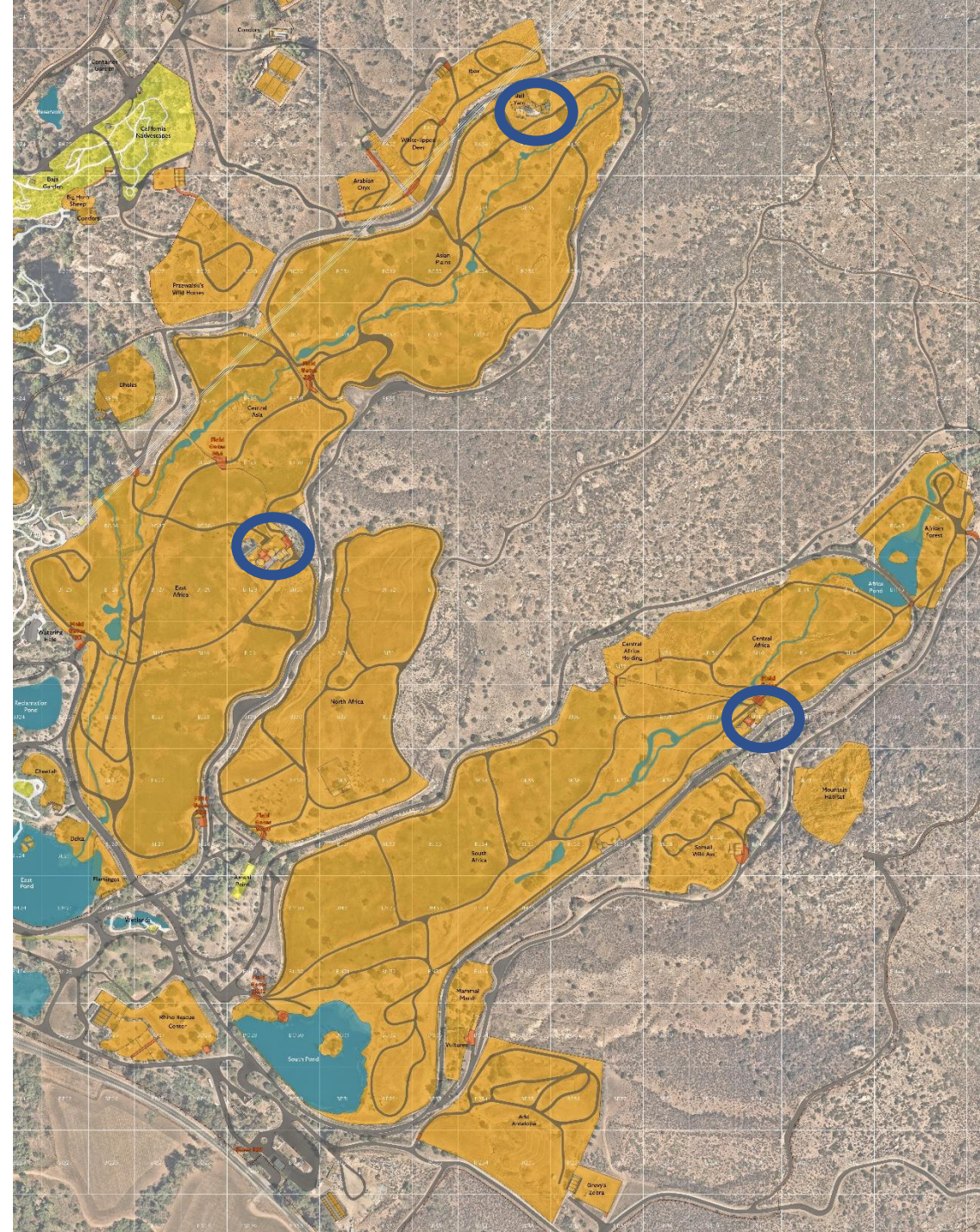
Field Habitats

- Mixed species
- Large herds



Field Habitats

- Large habitats
- Mild climate eliminates the need for large barns
- Few holding areas or bomas



Boma Designs

- Built for rhinos and giraffe primarily
- All protected contact areas built inside bomas
- Limited space for medical holding, shipments, births, training..

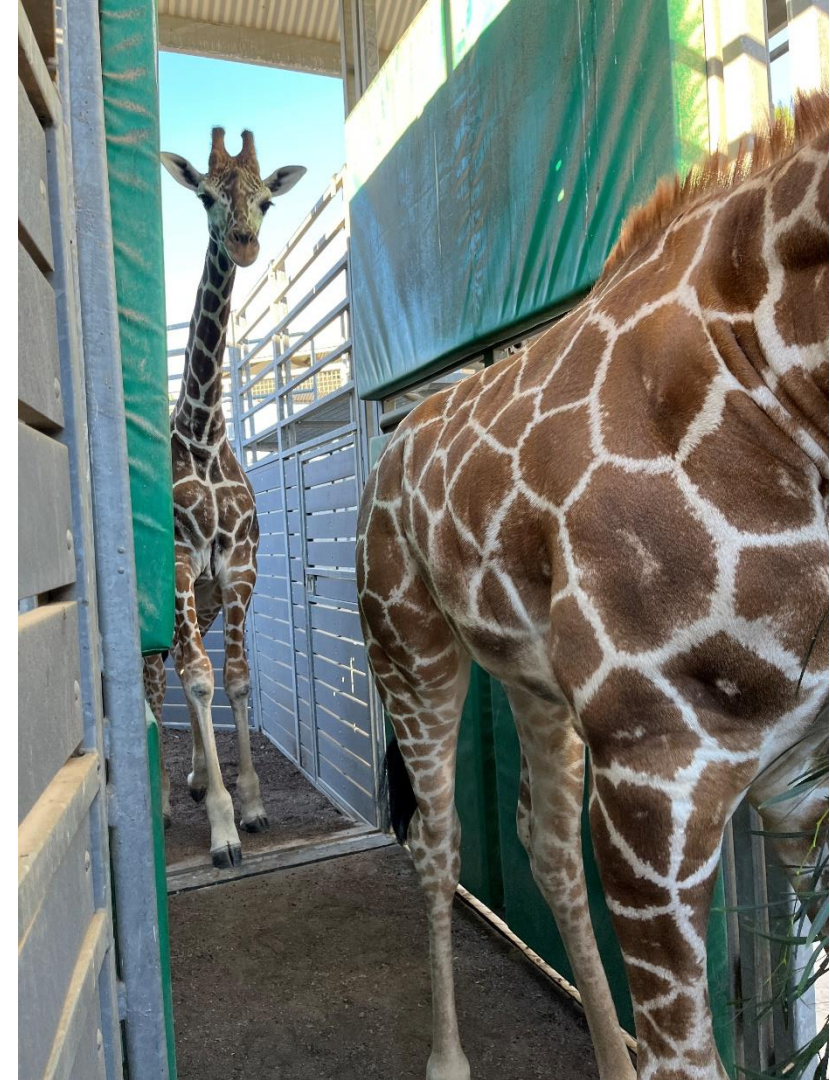


Boma Designs

- Most species live year-round in field habitats
- Desense to boma needed before training could begin



Training in the Boma

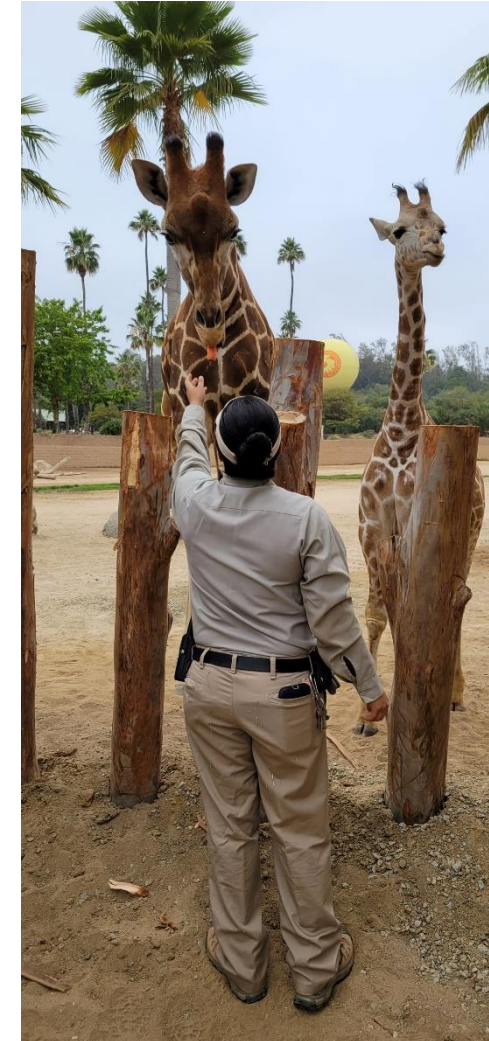


Hand Feeding



Keeper-led Solutions

- Start with low-cost materials
- Start training right away
- Demonstrate the need!

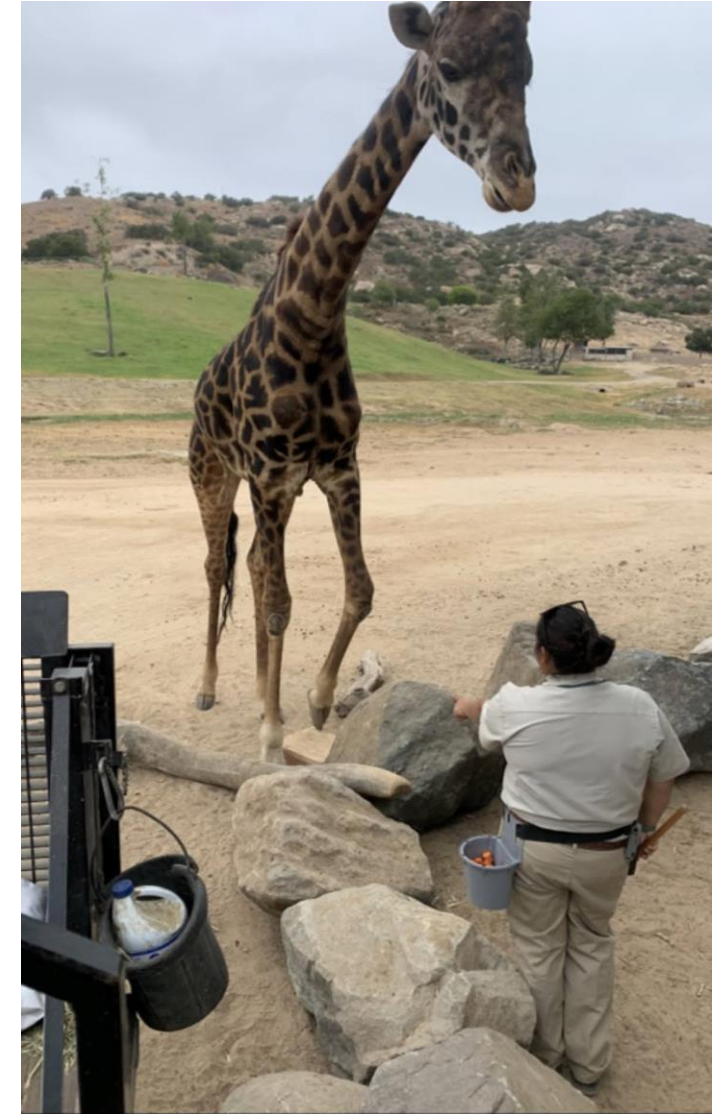
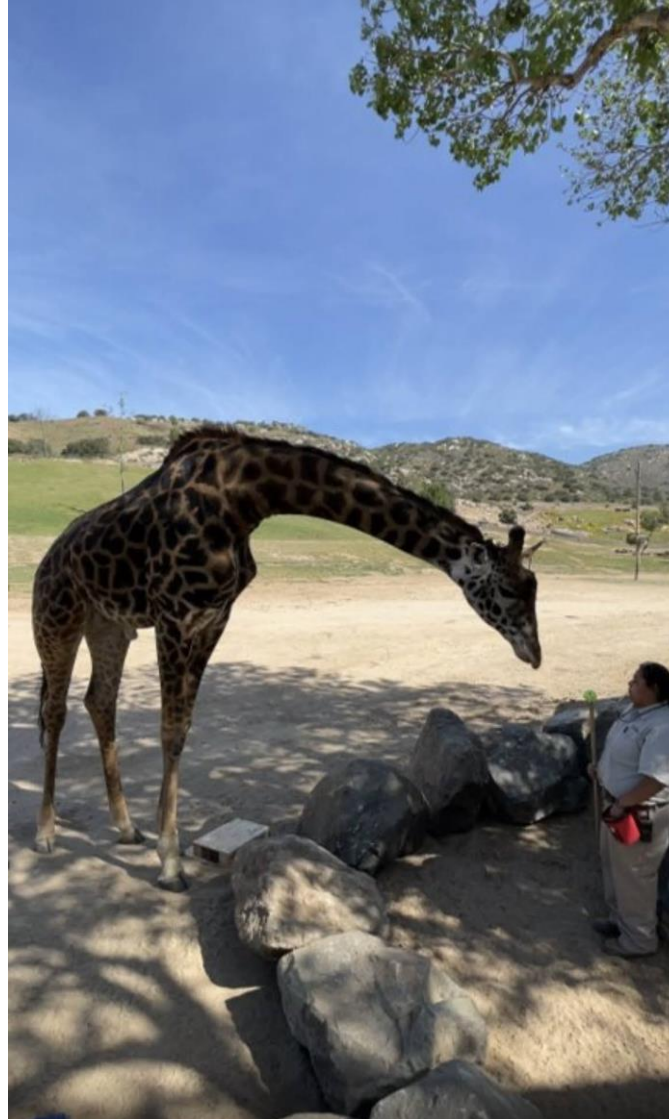


Training Areas on Habitat

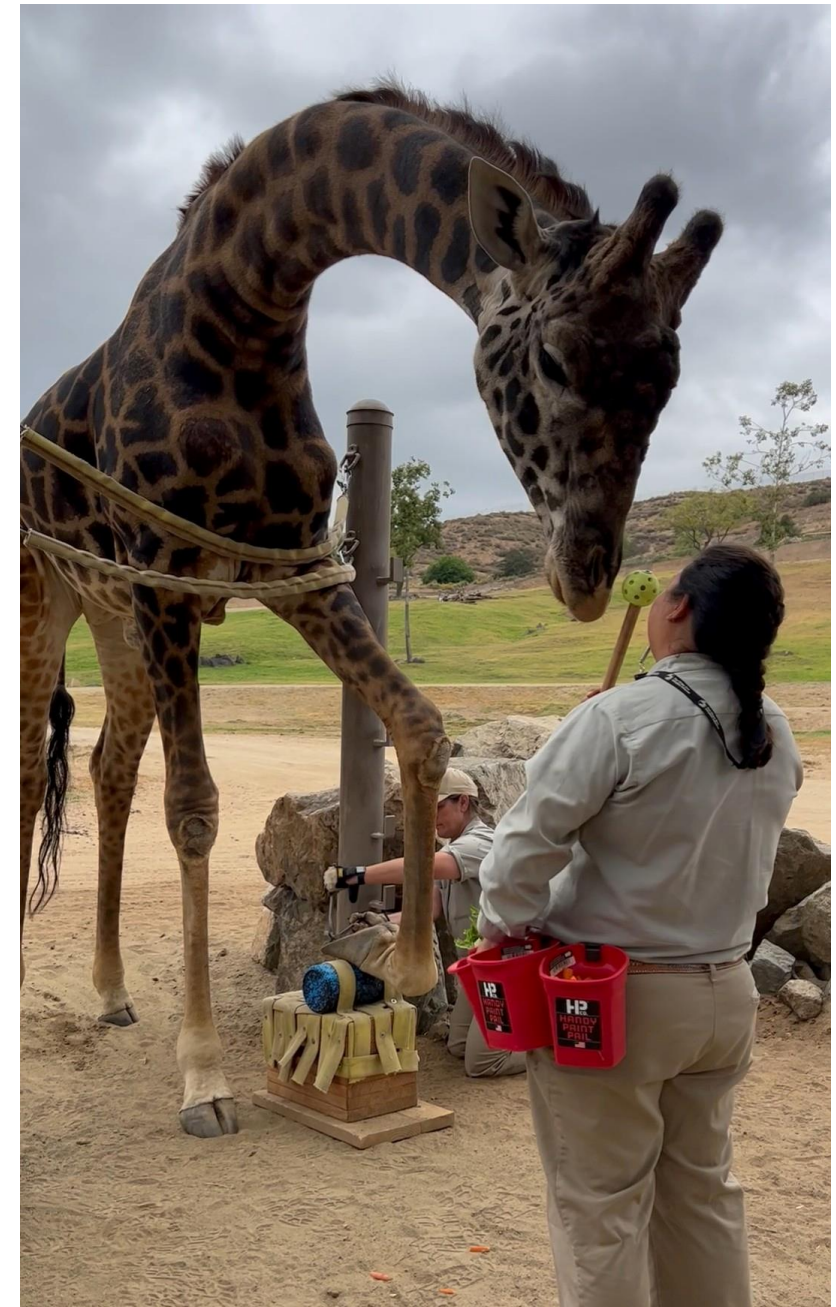
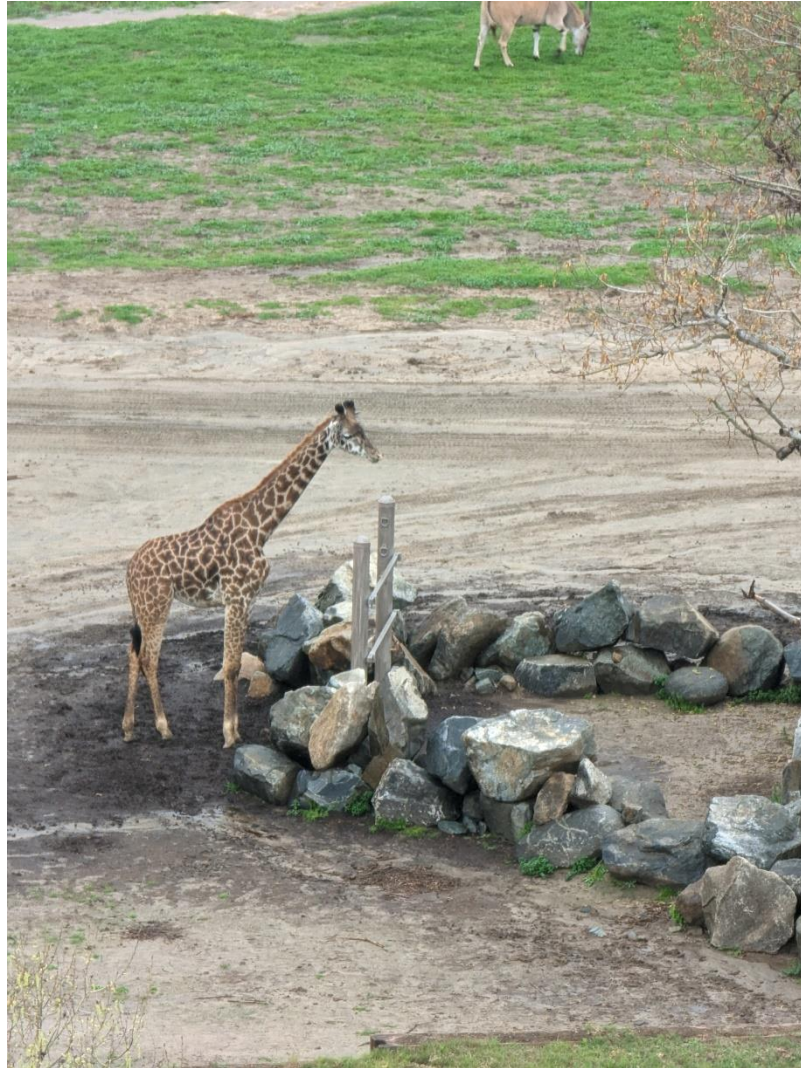


Giraffe Training on Habitat

- Training started when a need was identified... not when there was a permanent structure



Led to Permanent Solutions



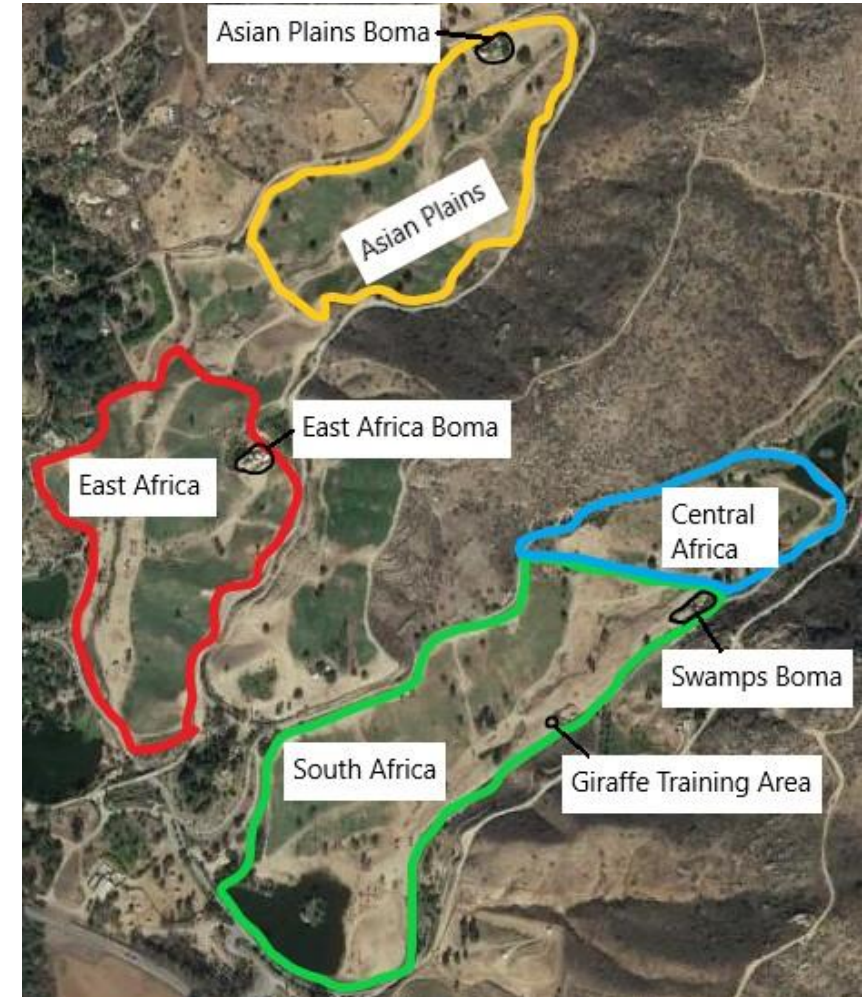
Management Support

- Support training when it's needed, not when just when it's convenient
- Support small-scale, innovative trials
- Support with funding and permanent structures as soon as solutions are found
- Support with resources and increased staff



Husbandry in Field Habitats

- East Africa run and South Africa run
- Split into feed runs and cleaning crew
- Transportation by trucks between and within field habitats
- Feed runs involve driving between feeders and adding pellet and hay, usually trying to do it fairly quickly
- Medical or management procedures usually involve darting for field sedations
- Variety of species cohabitating in each habitat



Training Programs

- Masai Giraffe
 - Gowon – History of overgrowth to medial digit of front, left hoof; trained for trimming and foundational behaviors
 - Females – Various stages of foundational behaviors, injections
- Bumble (Common Eland)
 - History of losing condition when housed with females, missing medial claw on front, right hoof; will need to be removed from field in the future; in process of training recall and foundational behaviors
- Greater One Horned Rhino
 - Capone – History of interacting with keeper trucks and caravans, as well as access gates
 - Trained recall to Boma, permanent training area built on habitat
- Previously: Eastern Black Rhino (Aria and Kendi)
 - Recall from habitat to Boma, foundational behaviors at bars, blood draws in chute, and crate training for transport

Gowon Hoof Training



Hoof trimming set-up



March 3, 2022



March 17, 2023

Gowon Hoof Training



Bumble Training



Training from back of truck



Recall from back of truck



Trailer training attempt

Capone Recall



Black Rhino Recalls



Black Rhino training areas



Boma door



Kendi station feeder

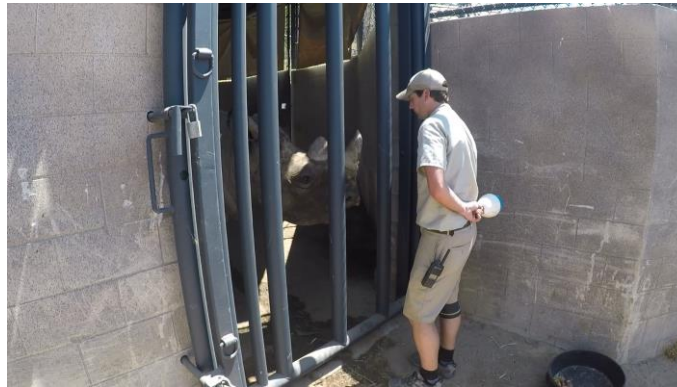
Black Rhino Boma Training



Aria chute training



Kendi chute training



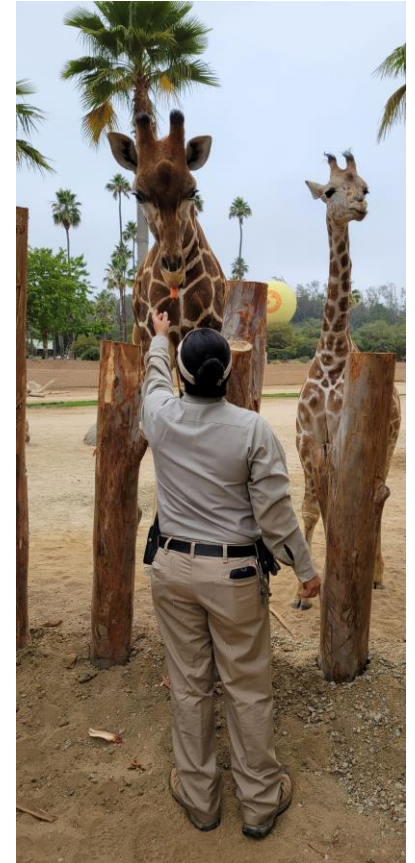
Aria at training/crate door



Kendi training at bars

Challenges and Considerations

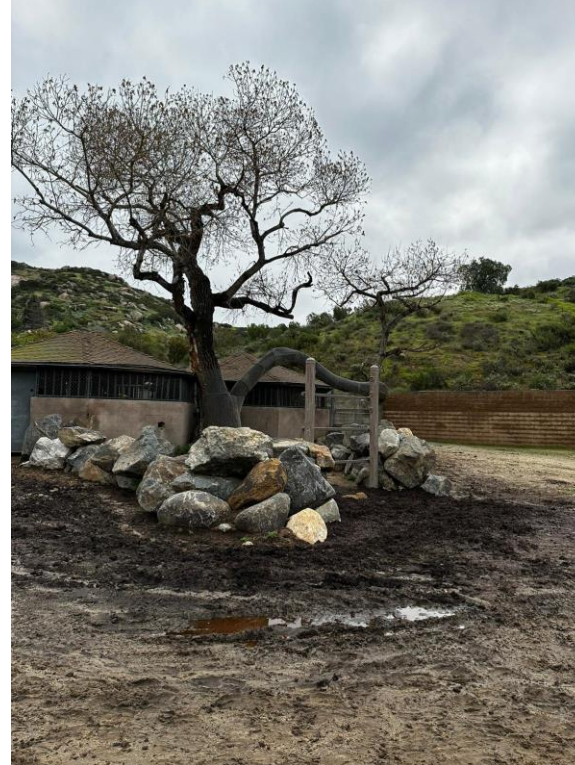
- Few protected contact areas, especially for species besides giraffe + rhino
- Medical/management procedures involve potentially negative experiences, can result in progressively more difficult/time consuming procedures
- Multispecies exhibits, including dangerous species and other animals in training
 - Low motivation – Free access to hay/pellet/grass and conspecifics
- Staffing – both timing and buy-in
- Initial training success dependent on species and individual animal/herd temperament
- Public: trams, caravans, cart tours



East Africa giraffe training area

Solutions

- Training from truck
- Identifying and creating field training areas
- Careful consideration during planning process
- Communication
- Buy-in from team and management
- Make it fun!



Giraffe training area



Bumble recall kazoo



Eland training area

Future Possibilities

- Expanding current programs
 - Hoof work, injections, blood draws, trailering/crating, medication, etc.
- New training areas/facilities for current programs
- Different species or individuals
 - New species: Southern White Rhino, Sitatunga, Bongo, Ugandan Kob, Grevy's Zebra, P. Horses etc.
 - New individuals: Common Eland herd
- Future facility improvements
 - Giraffe Barn
 - North Africa Catch Pens



Adult female Eland at trailer



~10 month old Eland taking produce from back of truck

Thank You!

- Leadership
- Wildlife Care team



Questions?



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