

NEWS RELEASE



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NEW AT THE ZOO – TAMANDUAS

NORFOLK, Va. – Visitors to the Virginia Zoo can now see the tamandua habitat inside the Zoo's Exhibit Building.

Tamanduas are a species of anteater from South America, where they inhabit both forests and savanna. Adults range from 28 to 62 inches long, including a 15 to 26-inch prehensile tail, and weigh from 3 to 19 pounds. They have a gland at the base of their tail, similar to a skunk's, that releases a very unpleasant odor used to deter predators.

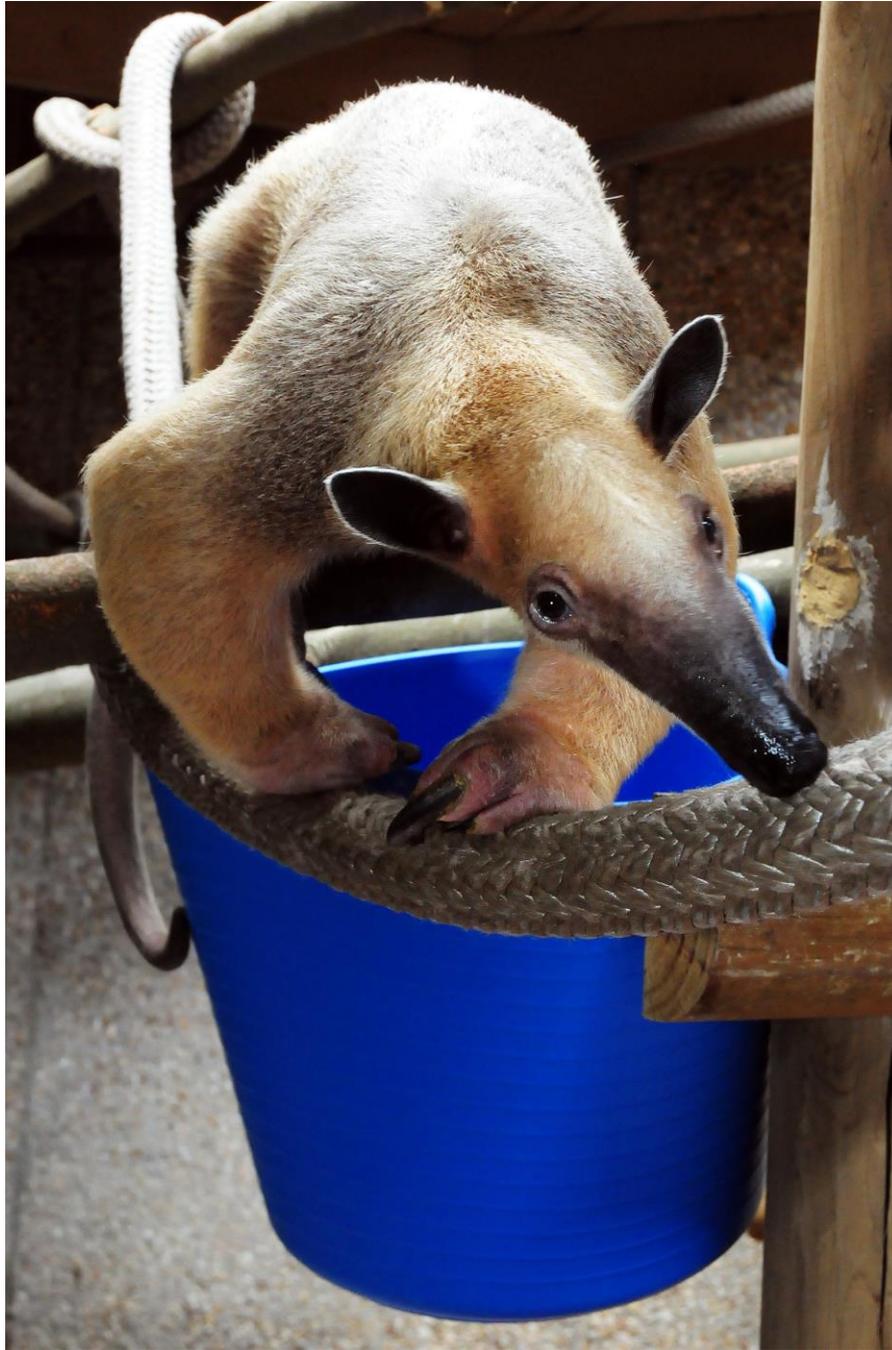
A solitary animal, tamanduas feed on ants, termites and bees. They have long claws they use to break into insect nests or in self-defense. Tamanduas are mainly nocturnal and spend much of their time foraging in trees. They nest in hollow tree trunks or in the abandoned burrows of other animals. Amazonian natives sometimes use tamanduas to rid their homes of ants and termites, but the Zoo has no plans to rent out its tamanduas for residential pest control.

The Zoo has two tamanduas: a male named Felipito and a female named Grace.

"Tamanduas are really exotic-looking and the kids love them," said Greg Bockheim, the Zoo's executive director. "Felipito is really interactive and can often be seen at the habitat's window, checking out his human visitors."

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TAMANDUAS AT THE ZOO, 2 OF 2



Felipito, the Virginia Zoo's male tamandua, explores his habitat inside the Zoo's Exhibit Building for the first time May 10, 2013 (Virginia Zoo photo by Winfield Danielson).

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As an accredited Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) facility, the Virginia Zoo exhibits more than 400 animals on 53 beautifully landscaped acres. For more than a century, the Virginia Zoo has demonstrated a commitment to education and conservation, and offered a fun-filled day for visitors of any age. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and located at 3500 Granby Street in Norfolk. Daily admission prices are \$11 for adults, \$10 for seniors (age 62 and over) and \$9 for children ages 2-11. Children under 2 get in FREE! Visit www.virginiazoo.org or call (757) 441-2374 for more information.