

William A. Xanten Jr.: Curriculum Vitae

Retired

August 1996: Smithsonian Institution (S.I.), National Zoological Park (NZIP), Washington, DC

Rehired

February 2003: General Curator, Department of Animal Programs, Smithsonian Institution, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC

Current position

January 2007 Retired

Education

1965 Associate of arts degree: Montgomery College
1970–1976 Post-graduate courses: Montgomery College and University of Maryland
Zoology, Botany, Wildlife Management

Experience

2003–2007 General Curator, National Zoological Park
1998–2002 Consultant to the Hong Kong Zoo and Botanical Gardens
1996–1998 Aslan Adventures, Wenatchee, WA, Travel Consultant
1992–1996 Deputy Head/Associate Curator of Mammals
1990–1992 Acting Chief, Division of Exhibit Interpretation, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
1988–present Consultant to the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo
1981–1991 Collection Manager/Associate Curator, Department of Mammalogy, Special Assistant to the Director for Exhibits, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
1975–1981 Curator of Mammals, Department of Mammalogy, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
1972–1975 Assistant Curator of Mammals, Department of Mammalogy, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
1971–1972 Biological Technician, Department of Living Vertebrates, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
1970–1971 General Curator, Department of Living Vertebrates, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
1969–1970 Supervising Administrative Officer, Department of Living Vertebrates, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC



Experience (*continued*)

- 1967–1969 Administrative Officer, Department of Living Vertebrates, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
- 1964–1967 Animal Keeper Leader, Division of Mammalogy, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
- 1956–1964 Animal Keeper, Division of Mammals, Birds and Reptiles, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC

Additional experience, design/construction

Actively involved as one of a team or as primary Designer/Consultant for the following projects:

National Zoological Park**Team member**

- 1974 Beaver Valley renovation, including seal/sea lion, beaver/otter, and bear exhibits
- 1975 Lion/tiger facility
- 1976 Monkey House renovation
- 1978 Great Ape House facility
- 1993 Amazonia exhibit
- 1994 Think-tank exhibit
- 1995 Grasslands exhibit, phases one, two, and three
- 2003 Senior member core group, Asia I and II

Primary Designer/Consultant

- 1975 First Elephant House renovation
- 1977 Forest Carnivore exhibit
- 1980 Renovation of the small mammal building
- 1981 Monkey Island exhibit
- 1985 Gibbon Ridge exhibit
- 1988 Second Elephant House renovation
- 1992 Native American Heritage Garden

Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo

Primary Designer/Consultant

- 1988 Master planning
- 1993 Australasian exhibit
- 2000 Caribbean walk-through aviary
- 2003 Master plan revision (one of two primary design team members)

Other

- Advised wildlife organizations and National Geographic; acted as Chief Consultant on seven National Geographic books: *Secrets of Animal Survival*, *The Secret World of Animals*, *How Animals Talk*, *How Animals Care for Their Babies*, *The Big Cats*, *Pop-Up Book on Giant Pandas*, *Rainforest Wildlife*
- Carried out field trapping and tagging of various small mammals, chiefly rodents and insectivores
- Conducted tours, presented lectures, and taught courses for Smithsonian Associates and the Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ)
- Presented papers at the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) national and regional meetings and gave talks to civic and school groups
- Acted as Chief Consultant for Lenox Company in producing two sculptures: *Florida Panther* and *Bridled Nail-Tail Wallaby*

Field experience

- April 1968 **Florida**
Spent two weeks in Southern Florida on reptile collection trip for the National Zoological Park; collected more than 300 specimens of approximately 30 species; recorded data on site location, size, weight, and weather conditions
- September 1974 **European zoos**
Toured zoos in Germany, Switzerland, Spain, and England to obtain information on new exhibit techniques and animal management
- September 1975 **Singapore**
Accompanied Nile hippo to the Singapore Zoo and advised the zoo on construction of new sea lion facility and hoofed stock management
- November 1984 **Peru**
Acted as leader for Friends of the National Zoo to Peruvian Amazon and its tributaries, Napo and Manatee rivers, including jungle walks to observe birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, in addition to river tours for freshwater dolphin observations



Field experience (*continued*)

- January 1986 **Pakistan**
Acted as Consultant with U.S. Fish and Wildlife International to establish a national zoo in Islamabad and a provincial zoo in Peshawar
- India**
Consulted with the Bombay Zoo and Bombay Natural History Society on establishing two zoos near Bombay
- August 1986 **Sabah**
Aided in trapping, maintaining, and shipping a collection of small mammals numbering eight species for return to NZP collection; data collected on site locations; consulted with Forestry Department on small zoo exhibits at Sepilok Nature Reserve
- September 1987 **Ecuador**
Attended seven-day symposium and presented two papers on zoo management; spent seven days surveying Ecuadorian wildlife around the Quito area
- January 1988 **Australia**
Traveled throughout Eastern Australia, visiting zoos, museums, and wildlife offices, for data-gathering and fundraising for the Australia Pavilion
- April 1988–ongoing **Bermuda**
Acted as Chief Consultant to the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo for its mammal area master plan, Australasian exhibit, walk-through aviary, primate exhibit, children’s zoo, and penguin exhibit
- July 1989 **Sabah**
Aided in the trapping, care, data collection, and shipping of six species, 44 specimens of tree shrews and squirrels for exhibit and research at NZP
- March 1998–1999 **Hong Kong**
Consulted with the Hong Kong government on five zoological parks/aviaries, on collections, staffing, exhibits, safety, fundraising, and veterinary support

Additional responsibilities

- One of three primary Planners/Coordinators for NZP Australia exhibit
- Special Assistant to the Director for Exhibits, responsible for coordinating the various departments in planning and design of new and renovated exhibits
- Member of Master Plan Committee, the Olmsted Walk Committee, and primary Consultant on the Wetlands exhibit, the Gibbon exhibit, the Elephant House renovation, Monkey Island, and the small mammal building renovation
- Consulted closely with the Director and the Assistant Director for Support Services on exhibits and was the primary contact person on animal matters with the architectural/engineering firm responsible for the various projects at the National Zoological Park

- Liaison between the Animal Department and the Support Facilities
- Chief for the newly formed Exhibit Interpretation Division, responsible for directing the division staff in producing educational and interpretive graphic programs for the visiting public, including the writing, design, and production of all signs, graphics, brochures, and guidebooks for visitors
- International conservation programs:
 - Placement of pygmy hippos (an endangered species) into zoos in South America and Southeast Asia—an ongoing project that led to placement of pygmy hippos in Argentina, Jakarta, and Singapore
 - An Eld’s deer project, which resulted in a joint program with the New York Zoological Society, placing Eld’s deer into a preserve for study by the Thai Game Department, with long-range plans to reintroduce them into protected preserves
- Primary Consultant and Designer for the Australasian exhibit and the Caribbean walk-through aviary in the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum & Zoo

AZA activities

1993–1996	Chairperson, Rodent and Insectivore Taxon Advisory Group (TAG)
1991–1994	Bat TAG
1987–1993	Small Carnivore TAG
1985–1996	Otter Species Survival Plan (SSP) Committee
1985–1993	Special Advisor, Membership Committee
1984–1987	Animal Health Committee
1982–1984	Chairman, Honors and Awards Committee
1978–1982	Member, Honors and Awards Committee
1975–1979	Wildlife Conservation & Management Committee

Honors and awards

1994	Outstanding Performance Award—S.I.
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1992	Outstanding Performance Award—S.I.
1990	Outstanding Performance Award—S.I.
1988	Outstanding Performance Award—S.I.
1987	Diploma, Museum of Science, Quito, Ecuador, Zoo Management Course
1986	Outstanding Performance Award—S.I.



Honors and awards (*continued*)

- 1984 American Association of Zoological Parks & Aquariums, Exhibit Award—Monkey Island
- 1984 American Association of Zoological Parks & Aquariums, Outstanding Service Award
- 1984 Outstanding Performance Award—S.I.
- 1983 American Association of Zoological Parks & Aquariums, Outstanding Service Award
- 1982 AAZPA Outstanding Service Award

Publications

- 1972 Xanten, William A. Jr. "Gestation period in the bongo." *Journal of Mammalogy*, 53:232.
- 1973 Xanten, W.A., L.R. Collins, and N.M. Connery. "Breeding and birth of a Bongo (*Boocercus erycerus*) at the National Zoological Park." *International Zoo Yearbook*, 13:153–154.
- 1974 Buechner, H. K., H.R. Stroman, and W.A. Xanten. "Breeding behaviour of Sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*)." *International Zoo Yearbook*, 14:133–136.
- 1974 Montali, R.J., M. Bush, R.M. Sauer, C.W. Gray, and W.A. Xanten. "Spinal Ataxis in Zebras, Comparison with the Wobbler Syndrome of Horses." *Veterinary Pathology II*, pp. 68–78.
- 1975 Buechner, H.K., S.F. Mackler, H.R. Stroman, and W.A. Xanten. "Birth of an Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) at the National Zoological Park, Washington, DC." *International Zoo Yearbook*, 15:160–165.
- 1975 Xanten, W.A., A. Hughes. "Pandas at the National Zoological Park." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 4, No. 6.
- 1975 "Zookeeping." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 4, July/August 1975.
- 1976 Xanten, W.A., H. Kafka, and E. Olds. "Breeding the binturong (*Arctictis binturong*) at the National Zoological Park, Washington, DC." *International Zoo Yearbook*, 16:117–119.
- 1977 "Bicentennial baby elephant arrives." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 6, No. 1.
- 1978 "Elephant training." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 7, No. 3.
- 1978 "Zoo News: 60 pound Rhino born." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 6, No. 6.
- 1979 "The Natural Habitat Habit." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 8, No. 4, July/August 1979.
- 1980 "Zoo News: A Washington Soap Opera." *Zoogoer*, Vol. 9, No. 3, May/June 1980.
- 1984 Xanten, W.A. "The renovated Small Mammal Building at the National Zoological Park." American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums 1984 annual proceedings.
- 1985 Kranz K., W. Xanten, and S. Lumpkin. "The Dorcas gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*) at the National Zoological Park; a twenty-year history." *International Zoo Yearbook*, Vol. 23, pp. 195–203.



- 1987 Xanten, W.A. "Collection Management."
- 1987 Xanten, W.A. "Zoological Staff Responsibility." Papers presented at Museum of Natural Sciences Symposium, Quito, Ecuador. Proceedings published by the Museum.
- 1988 Xanten, W., and D. Kessler. "The Management and Breeding of the Prevost's Squirrel, (*Callosciurus prevosti*) at the National Zoological Park." *International Zoo Yearbook*, Vol. 27, pp. 283–286.
- 1990 Xanten, W.A. "Captive Management, Reproduction and Exhibition of Selected Insectivores at the National Zoological Park, Washington, DC." 5th Annual Thereological Congress, Rome, Italy, August 1990.
- 1990 Xanten, W.A. "Learning from Your Mistakes or How to Get Small Mammals to Survive the Stress of Shipping." AAZPA Northeastern Regional Conference Proceedings, Washington, DC.
- 1990 Xanten, W.A. "Marmoset Behavior in Mixed Species Exhibits at the National Zoological Park." *International Zoo Yearbook*, Vol. 29, pp. 143–148.
- 1992 Xanten, W.A. "Mixed Species Exhibits—Are they Worth it?" AAZPA Northeastern Regional Conference Proceedings, Baltimore, MD.
- 1994 Xanten, W.A. "Management of Insectivores in Captivity; and Management of Old and New World Porcupines (*Hystricidae*) in Captivity." AZA Captive Management Protocols.
- 1995 Rosenthal, Mark, and Xanten, W. "Structural and Keeper Considerations in Exhibit Design." *Wild Mammals in Captivity*, Chapter 22. University of Chicago Press.
- 2001 Xanten, William. "Animal Disposition." *Encyclopedia of the World's Zoos*, Vol. 1, pp. 368–371.
- 2001 Xanten, William. "Animal Staff." *Encyclopedia of the World's Zoos*, Vol. 1, p. 32–34.
- 2007 Murphy, James B., and Xanten, William A. "Seventy-Five Years of Herpetology at the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park: The Facilities, Collections, People and Programs." *Herpetological Review*, Vol. 38, Number 3, September 2007.
- 2007 Rosenthal, Mark, and Xanten, W. "Structural and Keeper Considerations in Exhibit Design." *Wild Mammals in Captivity*, Chapter 22 (revised). University of Chicago Press.

