

Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo

# Social Narrative

What to expect during your visit  
to Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo



**Oxbow  
Park**  
and Zollman Zoo

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# VISIT EXPECTATIONS

I am going to Oxbow Park & Zollman Zoo. When I am there, I will:

- Keep my hands and feet to myself
- Understand that only the zookeepers can touch and feed the animals
- Understand that the animals stay in enclosures, and I may not be able to see them at all times
- Use a quiet voice and calm body so I don't scare the animals
- Stay with my group while visiting
- Understand that by following the rules I will have a safe and fun visit!



# STARTING YOUR VISIT

## When to Visit

- The Nature Center and Zoo are open daily 10:00 am – 4:00 pm all year round.
- The only days the zoo is not open are Christmas day, Thanksgiving, New Years Day and Easter.
- Mid April – mid-June is our busiest time

## Admission

- The Nature Center and Zoo do not have an admission fee.
- Donations to the Nature Center and Zollman Zoo are appreciated and can be given in cash, credit card, or check.

## Parking

- Parking is free.
- There are 4 handicap accessible parking spots located near the Nature Center.
- Sidewalk ramps from the parking lot are present for wheelchair use.

## Accommodations

- Restrooms are available indoors and outdoors of the main Nature Center building.
- Water fountains can be found indoors and outdoors of the main Nature Center.
- Food is not allowed in the Zoo or Nature Center.
- Sensory items are available at the front desk of the Nature Center
- An all-terrain Trackchair is available for mobility accessibility upon request.



## Contact Information

We know everyone's experience is unique. For more information contact [oxbow@olmstedcounty.gov](mailto:oxbow@olmstedcounty.gov) or call 507-328-7340.

5731 County Road 105 NW  
Byron, MN 55920



# NATURE CENTER

## Sensory Considerations

- Echoey and loud
- May be crowded
- Can be bright during the day

## Accommodations

- Restrooms – indoors and outdoors
- Water Fountains
- Mother's Room: lactation, changing or quiet space
- Seating in entrance area and Wildlife Viewing Area

This is where there are some reptile, amphibian, and fish exhibit. There are also interactive exhibits, a kid play area, and classrooms.

## Helpful Information

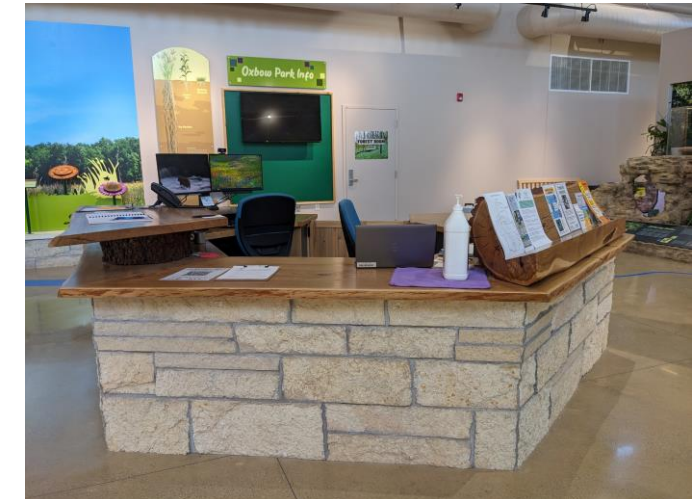
- The place you ask questions at the Front Desk
- Where to check out accessibility items: Action Trackchair, Sensory Kit, wheelchairs



Exhibit Hall



Exhibit Hall



Front Desk

# ZOO

## Sensory Considerations

- Can be loud from people, animals, and insects
- Smells like flowers and animal food

This is where you go to see the outdoor animals.  
There are also insects, native flowers, and wild birds.

## Accommodations

- Paved blacktop pathways
- Benches for those who may need breaks

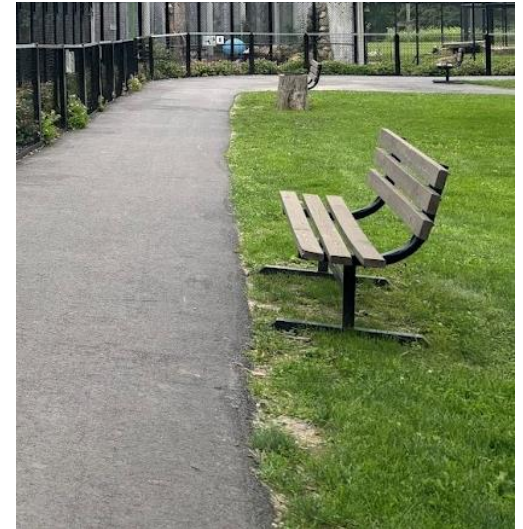
## Helpful Information



Entrance



Pathways



Benches

## RIVER OTTERS

### Sensory Considerations

- Water sounds splashing of otters
- Strong smells like fish

### Helpful Information

- The otters like to nap on the ledge of their tank so you may not be able to see them at all times



## WOLVES, BEAR, COYOTES

### Sensory Considerations

- Sudden loud noises – howling & barking
- Smells from fish and raw meat



## WILD CATS – LYNX, BOBCAT & COUGAR

### Sensory Considerations

- Strong smells
- Raw meat
- May be sudden movements

### Helpful Information

- The cats sometimes like to hide in their logs so you may not be able to see them at all times





## FISHER, FOXES & PORCUPINES

### Sensory Considerations

- Strong smells from all the animals

### Helpful Information

- Don't worry, the Porcupines can't shoot their quills at you!



# BADGERS, PRAIRIE DOGS, SKUNKS & WOODCHUCK

## Sensory Considerations

- Possible loud noises when badgers hiss or Prairie Dogs bark
- May be sudden movements

## Helpful Information

- Don't worry, the skunks can't spray you! Their scent glands have been removed.
- Badgers and Prairie Dogs can dig and may be in their tunnels underground so you might not be able to see them all the time.
- Skunks and Woodchucks like to hide in their stumps so you might not be able to see them all the time.



## DOMESTIC ANIMALS

### Sensory Considerations

- Loud noises – Donkey braying, horses whiney, goats bleating
- Strong smells
- Can be lots of flies around
- May be dusty in dry weather or muddy in wet weather

### Helpful Information

- Please do not pet the animals – they have fly spray on
- Please do not feed the animals. They have a special diet and can bite.



## RAPTORS – EAGLES, HAWKS & OWLS

### Sensory Considerations

- Loud noises – especially the Bald Eagles, owls clacking beaks or hissing
- Sudden flight and movements
- Full prey items like gophers and mice
- Can be lots of flies on leftover food



## WHITE-TAILED DEER, ELK & AMERICAN BISON

### Helpful Information

- The ground can be uneven when walking between exhibits
- There are outlooks and benches for each of the exhibits – they have an incline and it's important to be careful when walking up them
- The animals have hiding spots from the sun and wind so you may not be able to see them all the time.



## PLAYSCAPE PATH OF IMAGINATION

### Sensory Considerations

- Loud noises – gong and musical chimes
- Sometimes there are lots of kids here all at once



## ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

### Action Trackchair

- Ultimate all-terrain wheelchair
- Free use, available 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Inquire at the Front Desk

### ADA Swing Seat

- Located at the playground farthest to the left at the Main Picnic Area

### American Sign Language Interpreter

- Available during public programming
- Email [oxbow@olmstedcounty.gov](mailto:oxbow@olmstedcounty.gov) or call 507-328-7340 to request
- Please request at least 2 weeks in advance

### Companion Care Restrooms

- Available in the Nature Center
- One indoor is available 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Two outdoor are available 8:00 am – 8:00 pm

### Sensory Kit

- A variety of stimulating and calming items to borrow during your visit
- Free use while at the park
- Check out and return items at the Front Desk from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

### Quiet Spaces

- The “Mother’s Room” can be used as a quiet space, located near the restrooms in the Nature Center
- The Wildlife Viewing Area has a seated area away from the main area of the Nature Center

### Wheelchairs

- Two folding wheelchairs are available inside the Nature Center to use indoors or out
- Free use, available 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

# ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS



Action Trackchair



Sensory Kit



Mother's Room/Quiet Room



Wildlife Viewing Area Seating



Wheelchairs