

Enrichment at the Zoo

The welfare of our animals relies on us keeping them mentally, as well as physically active. To do this, we create 'enrichment'. Enrichment enables the animals to:

- Display natural behaviours
- Have choices about how they behave in their environment
- Be mentally and physically stimulated
- Do interesting things for our Zoo visitors to watch!

So how can you help us enrich our animals?

Before your school group comes in, have a look at this guide and see whether you'd like to make some enrichment for us to give to our animals. You can discuss how to incorporate this into your learning session with the Zoo Educator when you have your pre-visit phone conversation.

*For a lot of our enrichment we like to use recycled materials. You can do the same!
It's a great way to care for our environment as well as our animals.*



Here are some enrichment ideas that are always a hit!

- Newspaper or cardboard boxes folded up to make it difficult for animal hands or paws to get inside to find the food treats.
- Woven flax rafts or baskets.
- Papier-mâché covered balloons (with the balloon popped and removed) or papier-mâché creations using cardboard tubes and boxes.
- Toilet rolls or egg cartons stuffed with leaf litter for the animals to rummage through.



On the following page is an enrichment materials guide. Take a look and see what imaginative ideas your class can think of to help us enrich our animals.



Enrichment Materials Guide

Below are lists of the objects that can and can't be used for enrichment at Wellington Zoo. For the health of our animals, we will only use food stuffs provided by the Zoo. Not all enrichment needs to be food-based though, and we appreciate other creative ideas for enriching our animals!

Good materials to use are:

- Cardboard boxes
- Newspaper
- Toilet rolls
- Cardboard tubes
- Paper Bags
- Egg cartons
- Flax
- Pine cones
- Cabbage tree leaves
- Papier-mâché
- Sacking
- Wicker baskets
- Coconuts (just shells)
- PVC Pipe
- Bamboo
- Untreated wood
(check the 'plants to avoid' section and not MDF)
- Old clothing
- Old sheets and pillowcases
- Interesting smells!

Plants/wood we can use:

- Willow
- Pohutukawa
- Mahoe/ Whiteywood
- Dandelion
- Rose
- Lemonbalm
- Parsley
- Mint
- Lavender
- Thistle
- Camellia
- Grapevine (without the grapes)
- Nasturtium



Things to avoid:

- Any plastic tape
- Sharp items
- String
(rope is ok if it's thicker than an adult's finger)
- Food products
- Metal (including staples)
- Plastics (except PVC piping)
- Any fungus

Plants we can't use:

- Any stone fruit wood
- Ngaio
- Rhododendron
- Kowhai
- Titoki
- Karaka
- Tutu