



At Audubon Zoo in New Orleans, Louisiana, we presently hold a crash of 1.2 Southern white rhinoceros comprising Saba, Yvonne, and Bonnie. Within our holding and exhibit space we can provide a fairly dynamic habitat from both a rhinoceros and guest perspective. Being a relatively new team, we are presently working on reestablishing old behaviors and using those as a foundation for new ones.



Audubon Nature Institute

We established our present crash in 2014 with the arrival of Bonnie and are presently running them in two separate groups sharing an approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ acre habitat with a pair of Eastern white-bearded wildebeest bulls. Historically they have also shared space with a pair of plains zebra mares before their passing in 2021. Saba our bull was born in 1991 and Yvonne is our older female, born in 1990. Both arrived at Audubon Zoo in 1993 to begin our present crash, as well as producing our only calf Nane (aka Satchmo) in 2003 before he was transferred out

in 2006. Bonnie was born in 1998 and joined us in 2014. Before Bonnie's arrival, we had an additional older female, Macite, born in the wild and coming to live at Audubon in 1999 until her passing in 2016. At present, we are running our crash in single-gender groups due aggression between Saba and Yvonne, though we have not ruled out intros between Saba and Bonnie, or possibly reevaluating Saba and Yvonne's relationship in the future.

Our indoor holding space consists of a five-stall rhino barn with an approximately 1,500 square foot holding yard. Two of our stalls are set up to hold a calf should we decide to breed again in the future. The stall leading out into the holding yard has a padded floor, with the remaining four being concrete. All gates are manually operated with a short chute leading out into the exhibit. Our exhibit space consists of an approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ acre yard with two wallows (one maintained by keeper staff adjacent to the guest overlook, the other having been dug and maintained by the rhinos), a lagoon, shade tree enclosed in a corral, and an encircling ring of bollards that allows for perimeter management.



With regards to behavioral management, we are working to modify old behaviors to allow for more choice and control on the part of our charges. Presently, we are focusing our efforts on blood draws, open mouths, and rectal desensitization to build towards blood, dental, and reproductive work. We face the traditional challenge inherent in working with white rhinos: disinterest in both enrichment and novel food items. Ways we are working around that problem include incorporating more novel environmental enrichment, such as adding different types of soils and substrates to the yard and adding and moving large deadfall pieces to allow "new" rub spots.

Going into the future, we are hoping to expand our program in many ways such as reconfiguring the layout of the chute system, adding exhibit access points for keepers, and implementing more seasonal environmental enrichment. Recent major changes to the yard include the removal of an enormous oak tree that had previously taken up an enormous footprint in the yard and effectively blocked half the exhibit from view, and clearing out underbrush and lower hanging tree branches to allow the animals to access more shaded areas while not impacting guest visibility. Our team is quite excited about the direction our program is heading, and can't wait to see what the future holds.



Chris St. Romain
Audubon Nature Institute

IT IS BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE

2023 R.K.W. Silent Auction success!



Another successful RKW is in the books and it was a fantastic one!

The fundraising committee would like to send out a huge thank you to all of the delegates who participated in the silent auction and raffle.

Due to your huge hearts (and desire to have cool rhino stuff!) we were able to raise **\$7,300.00!!!**

The funds raised at the rhino keeper workshop goes back into the IRKA's scholarship fund. This means we are able to support our members who might need some funding for transportation, registration or accommodations for the workshops. For more information be sure to check out the IRKA website: www.rhinokeeperassociation.org.

We had a lot of amazing items donated to us for this event and we wanted to thank all of the people who donated an item (or 2) to our fundraiser. We also wanted to include the IRKA members who were not able to attend the workshop and encourage everyone to check out the websites / ETSY artists who stepped up to help us out. This list may also help anyone who was out bid or did not win in the raffle, acquire an item directly from the vendor.

If there was an item that you wanted, but did not see a website / description please reach out to [Christine rhinoqueen64@gmail.com](mailto:Christine.rhinoqueen64@gmail.com) or [Angie iheartrhinos@gmail.com](mailto:Angie.iheartrhinos@gmail.com) and they can connect you!