

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Jennifer Wilson
Director of Marketing and Communications
Office: 614-715-8150
Cell: 740-398-8371
jwilson@fpconservatory.org

EXPLORE GARDEN SAFARI AT FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY

COLUMBUS, OH – This summer guests visiting Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens will be immersed in a world where animals, created from plants, come alive at *Garden Safari*, on display June 3, through September 10, 2023.

This exhibition, primarily focused in the Conservatory's courtyards, features thirty lifelike topiaries representing animals of the land, air and sea. These topiaries use live plants to mimic the colors and textures of feathers, fur, scales and skin.

Garden Safari was conceived, designed, constructed and largely grown by the Conservatory's Horticulture and Exhibitions staff. The exhibition is completely unique to Franklin Park Conservatory.

Fun facts about the creation of the Garden Safari include:

- Instead of pruning an existing plant structure to create an entirely new shape, the topiaries at the Conservatory are based around steel frames that are fabricated in house. The frames are filled with sphagnum moss to retain moisture and then adorned with plants which are trimmed and trained to fill in overtop the topiary form.
- All of the work done to build and maintain the animal topiaries is done in-house by the Conservatory's talented horticulture team.
- The animal faces are sculpted with epoxy clay, while the animals' eyes are taxidermy or glass blown by the gaffers in the Conservatory's hot shop.
- Many of the animal topiaries have irrigation systems hiding inside to water the roots of the plants; or the topiaries are watered manually with a hose.
- The horticulturists trim and pin back the plants on the topiaries as the plants continue to grow to keep the shape of the animal topiaries. Trimming also benefits the plants themselves as it encourages lateral branching and growth so that the plants grow back fuller and thicker.

Garden Safari is included in admission and guests are encouraged but not required to reserve tickets in advance. For more details, visit [Garden Safari](#), and follow the Conservatory on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

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Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens offers world-class horticulture, art and nature-based exhibitions, and educational programs for all ages. Situated on 40 acres on the eastern side of Franklin Park, the Conservatory features the historic 1895 John F. Wolfe Palm House; 83,000 square feet of glasshouses; botanical gardens including the Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation Children's Garden; and meeting and event spaces. The Conservatory owns the largest collection of glass artwork by Dale Chihuly in a botanical garden and is home to internationally recognized light artist James Turrell's Light Raiment II, which illuminates the John F. Wolfe Palm House every evening from dusk until dawn.