Who Designs Zoos?



A zoo designer creates NATURAL homes for animals in zoos and aquariums

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Nelson Literacy Directions

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Designing aquariums is a challenge that Chuck and his team enjoy. People can see sharks and sea lions up close!

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What will your views be on the topic?

TEXT TYPE Discussion

Geography Feature

Top Zoos in the World

There are thousands of zoos and sanctuaries around the world – find out our top choices!

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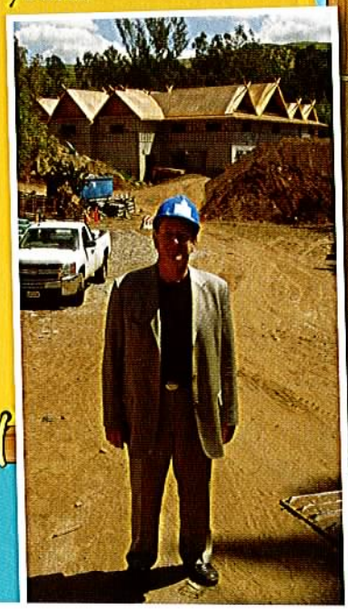
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1 Designers of Zoos and Aquariums

Meet a Zoo Designer

Chuck Mayes is a zoo designer who lives in Seattle, USA. He has been designing zoos and aquariums for many years.

Before he could design zoos, Chuck had to study many subjects at university. Two of the subjects that Chuck studied were science and architecture. Science helped Chuck to learn a lot about animals. Architecture helped him to draw and design zoos, aquariums, museum exhibits, parks and playgrounds.



Chuck supervises construction work for the Pachyderm Forest exhibit at the Los Angeles Zoo.

CHUCK TODAY

Chuck works in an office with staff who perform many kinds of jobs – from creating designs to construction to landscaping. But he also enjoys stepping out of the office to visit zoo sites under construction.

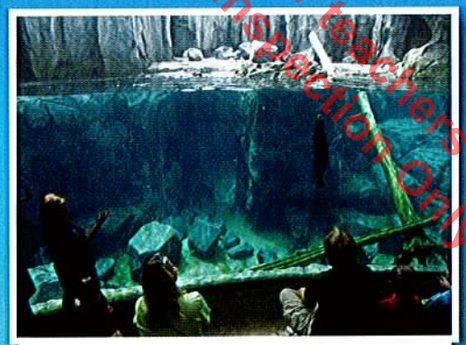
PACHYDERMS

Pachyderm animals include the elephant, rhinoceros and hippopotamus. The term "pachyderm" means "thick-skinned".

WHY IS **DESIGNING ZOOS** A GREAT JOB?

Chuck says, "I love my job because we create homes for animals in many kinds of zoos."

"We design homes where animals are stimulated by lots of things to see and do. They are fed well and protected from predators. Most animals live longer in zoos than in the wild," says Chuck.



Chuck enjoys seeing the looks of amazement on people's faces at the zoo. At this aquarium, people are amazed by the playful sea otters.

SEA OTTERS

Sea otters are the smallest marine mammals in the Northern Hemisphere. Some of its human threats in the wild are overfishing, oil spills and poaching.



Chuck's team created the Rainforest Exhibit at Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle, USA for threatened species, such as the blue poison-arrow frog.

A POISON FROG

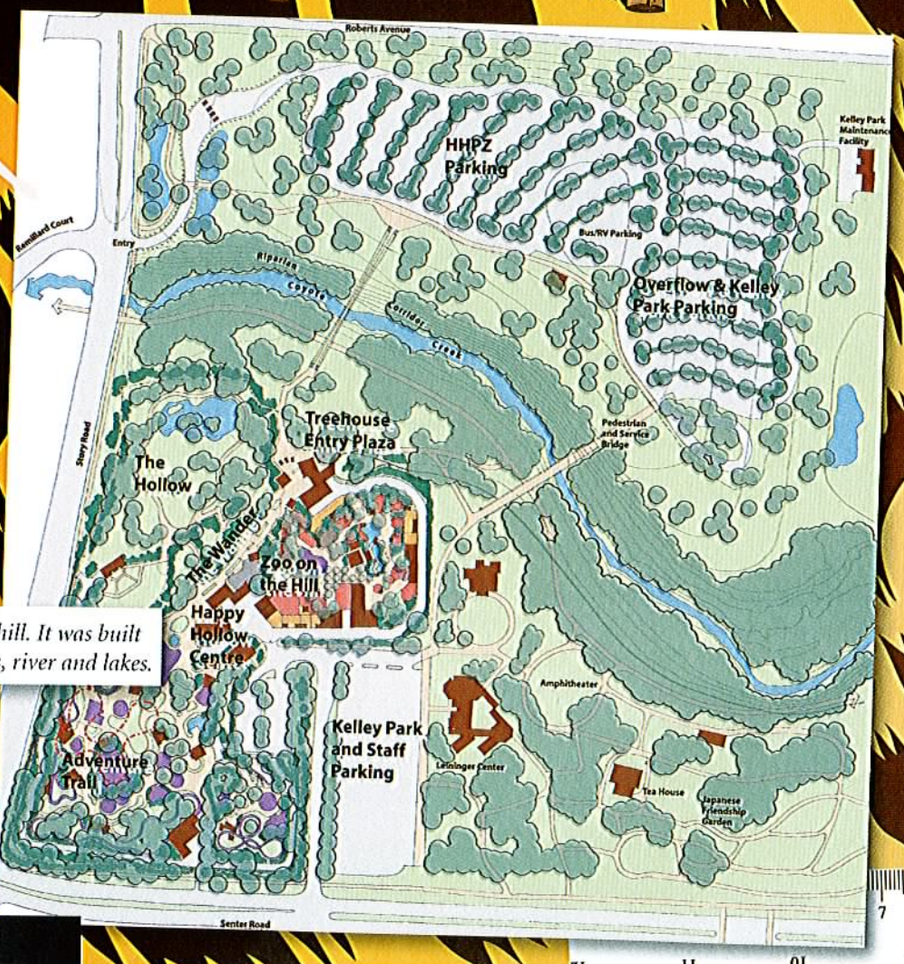
The tiny, blue arrow-poison frog is important in a South American rainforest ecosystem. Two threats to its survival in the wild are the logging of rainforest trees and forest burn-offs.

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2 Designing a Zoo on a Hill

Research First

Chuck and his team do a lot of research and planning before they start designing animal exhibits at a new zoo. They will also ask the zoo staff questions about what they want in the zoo.



A plan of the zoo on a hill. It was built around the existing trees, river and lakes.

A ZOO SITE AND ANIMALS

When planning a new zoo, the zoo designers need to see how much space there is for the animal enclosures and exhibits. They prefer to design the zoo around the existing environment.
Chuck and his team learn about the animals that will be in each part of the new zoo. They ask scientists and animal experts to help them, too.



A zoo designer's sketch for a zoo's entrance. Zoo staff will check this sketch before the plans are drawn up.

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FEEDING AREA

One important consideration for the design team is to see where the animals can be fed, how they will be fed and when they need to be fed.



WATER AND SEWERAGE

The zoo design team need to find out where the water supply will come from and where it is needed in each enclosure. They also find out where the zoo's sewerage pipes are so they can hook up the pipes to the enclosures and exhibits.

ELECTRICITY OR NATURAL LIGHT?

Animal enclosures need power for lights and heating. The zoo designers observe where the sun shines during the day and in each season. Where possible, they use the sun for light and heating.