

Philadelphia Zoo to Open New Big Cat Exhibit

Twelve endangered big cats from around the world will live in Big Cat Falls.

On May 25, the Philadelphia Zoo will unveil its new \$20 million dollar large cat exhibit, the Bank of America Big Cat Falls. The new attraction features lush habitats and waterfalls that will house 12 animals, including three snow leopard cubs, three puma kittens and a black jaguar cub. Other residents will include an Amur tiger, African lion and Amur leopard.

Visitors to the attraction will come face to face with the big cats as they walk down an outdoor path among the exhibits. Each viewing area is connected by three educational pavilions, named Africa, the Americas and Asia. Big Cat Theatre will hold regular showings of a wide-screen movie that highlights the big cats behaviors. Other features of the attraction include demonstration areas where visitors can view training exercises; a 12-foot waterfall where visitors can cool off; and computer stations that allow zoo-goers to experience the challenges these big hunters face.

Big Cat Falls is designed to represent the animals natural range wherever possible. Working with the Morris Arboretum, zoo staff planted seeds of plants from the Russian Far East for the Amur leopard and tiger exhibits. Water features such as pools and streams will allow the jaguars to keep cool during warmer months. Areas of artificial rockwork will work as hot rocks, allowing the animals to stay warm during cold weather.

The new exhibit opens to the public May 25.

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