

# **Monkey Care: Psychological Well-Being Policy and Enrichment Program**

## **Philosophy of Care**

At Jungle Friends Primate Sanctuary, our mission is to provide lifelong refuge and compassionate care for New World monkeys released from laboratories, relinquished from the pet trade, or confiscated by authorities. We are dedicated to ensuring every monkey can live an “Almost Wild” life — one that nurtures their physical health, psychological well-being, and natural instincts.

Many monkeys arrive having been species-isolated or deprived of social and environmental stimulation. Our goal is to restore what captivity took away — companionship, freedom of choice, sensory engagement, and the joy of play.

## **Psychological Well-Being and Enrichment Program**

**The Importance and Purpose of Enrichment:** “Environmental enrichment is an animal husbandry principle that seeks to enhance the quality of captive animal care by identifying and providing the environmental stimuli necessary for optimal psychological and physiological well-being.” — *Second Nature: Environmental Enrichment of Captive Animals*

Our enrichment program is designed to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of each monkey. The primary goals are to provide:

- Natural habitats that support species-specific behaviors
- Choices in where and how to eat, rest, and play
- Stimulation through varied activities, objects, and environments
- Companionship with the same or like species

Different species have different instincts and preferences, and our enrichment plans are tailored accordingly. Each caregiver maintains a daily log of every monkey’s physical and behavioral health, noting any changes — positive or negative — so we can respond quickly. All observations and action plans are recorded in the monkey’s individual chart.

Our enrichment program is fluid and evolving. We continually introduce new ideas and adapt to the monkeys’ changing needs and personalities.

## **Socialization**

Socialization is central to psychological well-being. At Jungle Friends, monkeys are introduced and socialized in pairs or small groups to encourage natural behaviors such as grooming, wrestling, cuddling, swinging, and climbing.

When a monkey cannot be fully socialized, they are housed near others of the same or like species so they can see, hear, smell, and interact safely across enclosures — maintaining valuable social contact and stimulation.

### **Live Habitat Design – “Almost Wild”**

Each species-specific habitat is designed to mimic the monkey’s natural environment, encouraging exploration and play while providing safety and comfort.

- **Natural Setting:** Habitats are built on natural ground with dirt, grass, edible ground cover, mulch, or pine straw (mulch promotes growth; pine straw deters growth).
- **Plant Life:** We plant non-toxic trees, shrubs, bamboo, and edible foliage for shade, climbing, bark peeling, foraging, and enrichment.
- **Structures:** All habitats include ladders, ropes, hammocks, barrels, and perches placed at varying heights to encourage climbing, swinging, and brachiation. These are regularly rearranged after cleaning to stimulate mental and physical activity.
- **Eco-System Balance:** Large habitats support their own small eco-systems, providing insects, soil variety, and natural textures for digging and play.

### **Runway System**

Our unique runway network connects habitats and allows safe, stress-free movement of monkeys between areas for cleaning, repairs, enrichment, introductions, or lock downs.

- Runways have diet bowl holders and rain covers attached.
- Drop-down chutes allow safe transfers and medical handling without darting or netting.
- The runway system is also integral to introductions — monkeys can be gradually moved closer together with our forking system until compatibility is established, at which point the forks are removed to create shared access.

### **Edible and Sensory Enrichment**

- **Foraging and Task-Oriented Feeding:** Nuts and seeds in shells encourage natural nut-bashing and problem-solving behaviors. Food may be scattered on the ground to promote foraging — a natural stress reliever.
- **Multiple Feeding Stations:** Every habitat has several feeding areas to prevent food-related dominance or competition.
- **Anointing Opportunities:** Items like garlic and citrus are provided to elicit anointing behaviors, a natural scent-marking ritual common among New World monkeys.

- **Water Play:** Automatic watering systems let monkeys drink, bathe, or shower at will, offering both hydration and play on warm days.
- **Habitat Rotation:** Regularly shifting monkeys through different habitats via the runway system provides new sights, sounds, smells, and neighbors — preventing boredom and encouraging exploration.

## **Monitoring and Documentation**

Caregivers observe each monkey daily and record:

- Appetite, activity level, and physical condition
- Social interactions and behavioral changes
- Engagement with enrichment, new foods, or new stimuli

Behavioral changes are reviewed by staff and management to determine if modifications or veterinary intervention are needed. Each observation contributes to a holistic understanding of the monkey's mental and physical health.

## **Compassionate Care and Hospice Philosophy**

Jungle Friends is committed to allowing every monkey to live a full, dignified life. In cases of debilitating, painful, or incurable illness, we embrace a hospice philosophy that prioritizes comfort and peace.

Hospice recognizes death as a natural part of life. It aims to maintain comfort, awareness, and connection while minimizing suffering. Each monkey is given the opportunity to spend their final days surrounded by familiar caregivers and monkey companions.

Euthanasia is only considered in extraordinary circumstances and always decided by the Executive Director, in consultation with the veterinarian and senior staff. Our philosophy neither hastens nor delays death — it affirms life through compassionate care to the very end.

## **Our Commitment**

At Jungle Friends, the psychological well-being, safety, and happiness of our monkeys is our top priority. Through enriched environments, compassionate handling, socialization, and continuous innovation, we strive to give every monkey the freedom to explore, play, rest, and live “Almost Wild”.