



Thank you for your interest in CreaCo Texas Outreach - An immersive learning experience that allows the future leaders in conservation and animal enthusiasts to learn firsthand about animal origins, behavior (e.g. instincts, stress signals), and responsible human behavior towards Earth's creatures, fostering long-term conservation awareness and stewardship.

Expectations

All participants must sign a waiver prior to the outreach, and are expected to be respectful towards staff and ambassador animals, listening to the presentation and following all instructions. Should a participant behave in a manner that endangers the ambassador animal, staff, and/or participants, CreaCo Texas will take appropriate action and remove the participant from the premises for the safety of all parties.

Ambassador Animals

- Russian Tortoise
- Severe Macaw
- Silkie Chicken
- Kinkajou
- Fennec Fox
- Black Tailed Prairie Dog
- Rabbits
- Guinea Pigs

Outreach Duration

1 - 2 hours

Outreach Outline

Introductory Presentation:

Staff members introduce themselves, the animals, and the organization, CreaCo Texas, which is a nonprofit that aims to provide sanctuary to and educate the public on the nature of exotic animals, developing a community dedicated to conservation. The public may observe the animals for as long as the animals tolerate up to the entire presentation.

Lesson:

The lesson aligns with TEKS TEA Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Science. The audience (e.g. children, students, animal enthusiasts) are engaged via guided questions throughout the presentation.

Conservation and biological concepts centered on responsible human-animal relationships and wildlife conservation will be thoroughly explained. This may include but is not limited to the following:

- Differentiating between animals that are domesticated, exotic, or considered wildlife.
- Explain when and how such animals should be handled or appreciated.
- Provide information on how to practice good conservation techniques (e.g. using reusable materials, relevant apps)

Describe why they should be respected in this manner by answering the following questions:

- Where do these animals come from?
- What happens if such animals receive improper care?
- What happens if such animals are released into the wild?
- Why is this important?

Answers to the previous questions may include the following:

- Obtaining companion exotic animals (e.g. rabbits, guinea pigs, etc.) from responsible breeders or considering fostering them prior to owning and becoming fully responsible for such animals.
- Consulting a professional in the appropriate biological/wildlife field if wildlife or an exotic animal are encountered. For example, if injured wildlife are found, calling and taking the animal to a nearby wildlife rescue for proper care may be necessary.
- Responsibly appreciating exotic animals at zoos and understanding that they should not be kept as pets since their needs are not able to be met in the average household.
- Consequences of obtaining wildlife or zoo exotic animals as pets regarding legalities, inability to meet the needs of the animals, and the effects they may have on personal life (time, resources, finances, etc).

Guided Interaction:

The ambassador animals are re-introduced and their unique stories are told. If the animals are willing, guided interaction is offered. Rules for the interaction participants consist of the following

and will be carefully iterated prior to the interaction.

1. All participants must sanitize before and after the interaction.
2. Participants must remain calm, cannot conduct any restrictive handling, and must only pet with two fingers on the ambassador animal's back.
3. If there are multiple people, a single file line must be formed and only one participant may pet at a time.
4. The ambassador animal is to be facing away from the participant and the keeper will keep the animal secure and calm during guest interaction.
5. Photography is allowed, but no flash.

Interaction:

During outreach sessions, staff will bring out the ambassador animal(s) from the enclosure for the encounter. If the animal seems highly distressed, staff will put them away and may try again later if time permits. As long as the animal will tolerate the interaction, during the encounter the animal is to be facing away from the participant and the staff member will keep the animal secure and calm during guest interaction. The ambassador animal may come out and remain out until behaviors indicate they would like to return to their enclosure.

In the event of a bite or scratch, a keeper will provide the material for the participant to clean the affected site. The participant will be inquired if they wish to seek further medical attention. The directors will report the incident with the appropriate authorities.

Close:

Staff summarize key concepts regarding respecting exotic animals, protecting wildlife, and how the community can contribute to conservation efforts. Educational materials will be made available at the end of the outreach session (e.g. QR code, pamphlets, merchandise).