



Kids go wild for exciting safari-themed playground





Creating an exciting new nature play area

When the City of Parramatta Council decided to upgrade a popular local park, creating a unique safari-themed playground was central to their vision. This exciting nature play area was designed to attract local families and encourage kids to enjoy active outdoor activity.

To bring this vision to life, the Council asked Natureworks to supply safari animal sculptures for the playground.

The new safari-themed playground was just one of many improvements installed at John Wearn Reserve in Carlingford, Sydney. The rejuvenated reserve launched in December 2020 with a range of new recreational facilities. These included a skate park, sports courts, amphitheatre, dog park, picnic shelters, and, of course, the new playground.

Supply of safari animal statues

For this project, Natureworks supplied a set of safari animal sculptures, while the Council managed the playground design and installation as part of the broader park upgrade project.

The animal sculptures we supplied for the safari-themed playground include an elephant, zebra, lion, lion cub, hippo, monkey, and giraffe. All have lifelike features and are either life-sized or scaled down to suit the setting. Their heavy-duty construction and weather-resistant finish help to withstand the rigours of everyday usage, while some have minor modifications to allow for interactive play features.



The playground attracts young families



Animal sculptures and play structures create the safari experience

"The stunning natural playground resembles a mini zoo. Children can engage their creativity by riding on playful animals."

(Visitor comment)



Plan for the upgraded park, showing location of the playground



Safari animal sculptures

Natureworks supplied the following products from our **Safari Animals** collection:

- **African Elephant** (1.2m – other sizes available)
- **Lion King**
- **Lion Cub Sitting**
- **Monkey Hanging**
- **Hippopotamus Calf**
- **Zebra Resting**
- **Giraffe** (8ft - other sizes available)



African Elephant



Lion King



Lion Cub Sitting

*“What an adorable park!
Love the African theme
with animals to climb and
take photos with.”*

(Visitor comment)



Hippopotamus Calf



Monkey Hanging



Zebra Resting



Giraffe



Child pats a happy hippo



Lion stands proudly on the path



Lion cub waits for its dad



Elephant wants to play!



Cheeky monkey hangs about



Peaceful resting zebra



Giraffe in safari setting



Interactive play features

The safari-themed playground at John Wearn Reserve is not just any old nature playground – it's designed to reward interactive play. Some of the safari animals seem to come alive when you pass by!

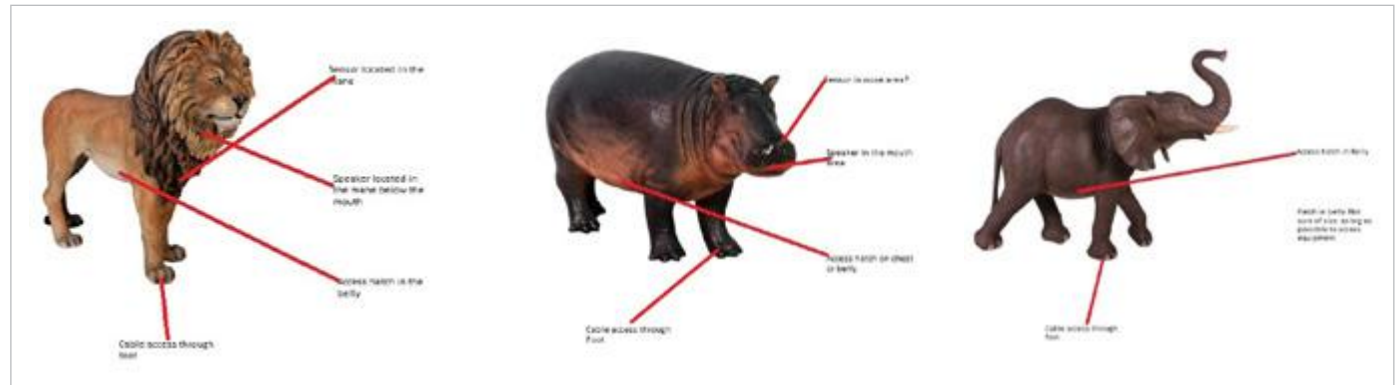
For example, when someone walks past the lion, it roars! Or when a child swings by the monkey hanging from a rope above, they hear it chattering playfully. Similarly, the elephant and hippo reward close encounters with curious young visitors.

Making simple modifications

To allow for installation of interactive features inside the animal statues, Natureworks modified some of our standard sculptures. These customisations to the animals' legs or body enabled a sound technician to fit internal sound devices, sensor activators and cables.

The modifications included:

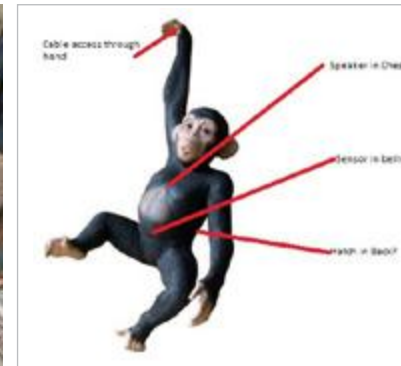
- Access doors in the back or belly of animal statues to allow for the fitting and maintenance of interactive elements
- Internal brackets and conduits to hold cables and sensors
- Elephant's tusk rounded off slightly, so it would not be sharp if a child ran into it
- Extra heavy-duty construction of sculptures, suitable for outdoor playground use.



Initial concept visuals showing options for interactive features



Hatch in the monkey's back for sensors & wiring



Hole in monkey's hand for cable access

Spec for heavy-duty playground items

- Extra heavy-duty fibreglass
- Non-rust steel fixing plate on feet, welded to steel reinforcement for legs and braced strongly to the body
- Steel reinforcing in ears, necks, trunk, tusks, tails etc.
- 2 pack polyurethane paint system for added UV and weather protection.

"Great playground for the kids with some interactive animal statues."

(Visitor comment)



Why choose a safari-themed playground?

Kids love animals! From an early age, kids in English-speaking countries learn 'E' is for 'Elephant' and 'G' is for 'Giraffe', even though most of them live nowhere near a savannah or jungle! They might also learn about traits traditionally embodied in safari animals (such as a brave lion or cheeky monkey) as a way of communicating emotional concepts.

Safari animals showcase nature's incredible diversity, from towering giraffes to huge hippos and stripy zebras. Learning about the distinctive features of safari animals (such as how the giraffe's long neck lets it feed on tall trees) helps kids understand about environmental adaptations and habitats. It makes them wonder about the world and encourages them to engage with nature.

It's this educational aspect of nature play that inspires the team at Natureworks. Our mission is to turn kids onto the wonders of the natural world, to protect it for future generations. We know that interacting with 3D replicas of animals connects children with nature in a safe, exploratory way and promotes a deep-rooted love of nature.

"We knew this park upgrade was going to be good but it's actually WAY better than good! The monkey, elephant, lion and hippopotamus greet approaching children with a roar, cackle and deep bellow!"

(Review by Hills District Mums)



Promoting nature play

Feedback from families indicates the safari-themed playground is a popular feature of John Wearn park.

Having implemented many nature play projects, Natureworks is highly experienced in this area. Whether you need a new play area or simply want to buy props and sculptures, we would love to help.

Contact Natureworks now for a chat!