



ANIMAL ABC'S  
Who's Who At The Zoo  
By Wayne Visser

I  
Beginning

If you don't know just what to do  
Or you feel mad or sad or blue  
Why don't you go down to the zoo  
And check what's what and see who's who?  
(This rhyme gives you a clue or two)

II  
A Is For Aarvark

There is no better place to start  
Than with the wacky weird AARDVARK  
With donkey ears and piggy nose  
And monkey tail and claws for toes  
Could there be a stranger beast?  
And that's not all, he likes to feast  
His sticky tongue on termite ants  
(The kind you don't want in your pants!)  
He's rather shy - you would be too  
If you looked like him down at the zoo

III  
B Is For Bear

Now can you see (but please don't stare)  
There is a fuzzy wuzzy BEAR  
She could be black or brown or white  
Or mauve with spots (no, that ain't right!)  
She likes to munch on juicy fruits  
Or smoke a pipe of bamboo shoots





But don't you kiss or hug her tight  
She'll eat your face off in one bite  
(except for teddy bears like Pooh)  
Which bear will you see at the zoo?

IV

C Is For Crocodile

See that log with a toothy smile?  
Don't be fooled, it's a CROCODILE  
With scaly skin and googly eyes  
His wangled teeth should win a prize  
But don't say "ugly", if he hears  
He'll start to cry crocodile tears  
And mind you don't stand on his head  
He'll chomp you like a piece of bread  
He lived when dinosaurs lived too  
And now he's living at the zoo

V

D Is For Dolphin

If you prefer a friendly grin  
Then you should meet the dear DOLPHIN  
You'll find her in the swimming pool  
She thinks her moves are super cool  
She'll flash and splash and show you tricks  
Like fetching balls and doing flicks  
She makes a happy squeaky sound  
And gobbles fish up by the pound  
What's more, she counts to twenty two  
And waves to greet you at the zoo

VI

E Is For Elephant

What's next? Let me give you a hint





What's next? Let me give you a hint  
It's huge, yes it's the ELEPHANT  
He sucks up water through his nose  
Then squirts it out just like a hose  
He likes to bath in dirty mud  
And when he runs his feet go thud  
But if you're quiet, you'll hear him rumble  
That's his language of the jungle  
He's just a gentle giant who  
Gives kids free showers at the zoo

VII

F IS FOR FOX

Now if you look inside that box  
You just might find the wily FOX  
They say she's clever and she's sly  
And you may ask the question "why?"  
It's just because she likes farm hens  
And steals them right out of their pens  
Or maybe it's her bushy tail  
That covers up her secret trail?  
Nobody really has a clue  
But you might spot her at the zoo

VIII

G IS FOR GIRAFFE

A creature that will make you laugh  
Is super-tall, it's the GIRAFFE  
His neck is stretched to touch the sky  
He must get dizzy, it's so high!  
You'll see him eating purple leaves  
Right from the tops of thorny trees  
Since he's so tall you'd surely think  
He'd need a straw to help him drink?  
I have no doubt he will see you





But will you see him at the zoo?

IX

H Is For Hippopotamus

Down by the lake, what's all the fuss?  
My gosh, a HIPPOPOTAMUS  
She opens up her mouth so wide  
You see her breakfast deep inside  
And when her head is not submerged  
She gets her ears cleaned by the birds  
And that's not all, I swear there's more  
She walks across the zoo lake floor  
I bet when she yawns, you do too  
But don't get tired, you're at the zoo!

X

I Is For Iguana

While you're eating your banana  
Why not visit an IGUANA  
You'll find him in the reptile pit  
Counting flies and spitting grit  
His forked tongue licks his lizard lips  
He wants to taste your fingertips  
His other treats are mice and bugs  
And if he's hungry, even slugs  
Imagine finger-mouse-slug stew!  
That's what's for dinner at the zoo

XI

J Is For Jackass

Now tell your mom you're not being crass  
But can you see the wild JACKASS?  
He's not a donkey or a horse  
He's half way in between of course





They say he's stubborn (not just thick)  
He likes the carrot, not the stick  
And if you only feed him straw  
He will protest - "hee-haw! hee-haw!"  
And if you're called a jackass too  
At least you've seen one at the zoo

XII

K IS For Kangaroo

Guess who's hopping glad to see you?  
It's bopping, bouncing KANGAROO  
I'll tell you something, she can box  
She'll knock you right out of your socks!  
And mommy kanga's got a pouch  
Where baby roo can just hang out  
With all that jumping, kanga makes  
The most delicious roo milkshakes  
I'm sure you're mighty thirsty too  
From all your bouncing round the zoo

XIII

L IS For Lion

I hope that you have nerves of iron  
It's time for you to meet the LION  
As you well know, he's king of beasts  
And he thinks kids make tasty feasts  
When he roars, your legs will shiver  
And his teeth will make you quiver  
But in the zoo he's behind bars  
So thank your lucky lucky stars  
He's just a pussy cat that grew  
And now he's king of all the zoo

XIV

M IS For Monkey





Now what's that over there, come see  
The swooping whooping mad MONKEY  
Look! He's making silly faces  
Oops! He's chewing on your laces  
Eew! Now his finger's in his nose  
He's just like you, without the clothes  
Even though he is more hairy  
That's just evolutionary  
He's from your family tree, it's true  
He's like your cousin at the zoo

XV

### N IS For Night-owl

Let's not forget the feathered fowl  
That fly the skies, like Miss NIGHT-OWL  
She likes to hunt for squeaky mice  
And scoffs them without thinking twice  
Her head can turn the whole way 'round  
(Just like some mothers' heads, I've found)  
She sees so much with those big eyes  
That's probably why she's very wise  
She's knows ta-whit, ta-what, ta-who  
She is the brains behind the zoo

XVI

### O IS For Octopus

It sure would be a shock to miss  
The multi-coloured OCTOPUS  
Go shake his hand (don't hesitate)  
He's holding out not one but eight!  
His skin can change to different hues  
(It's hard to find him matching shoes!)  
And watch him close, or when you blink  
He'll squirt your shirt with purple ink  
He's got not one heart or just two





But three, as you'll see at the zoo

XVII

P IS For Platypus

If there's a prize for wackiness  
It goes to the cute PLATYPUS  
He has a bill just like a duck  
But cannot quack (what rotten luck!)  
He swims in streams just like a fish  
But has no fins (to swash and swish)  
His tail is like a beaver's (flat)  
But he lays eggs (imagine that!)  
It's like his parts are stuck with glue  
From other creatures at the zoo

XVIII

Q IS For Quagga

To spot the next one will be tougher  
Have you ever seen a QUAGGA?  
Half her body's streaked with straight stripes  
Like the zebra, in blacks and whites  
The other half is brown and faint  
As if she just ran out of paint  
And even though she's so distinct  
The sad thing is, she's gone extinct  
(That means there's less than just a few)  
But still, her photo's at the zoo

XIX

R IS For Rhinoceros

There's still a few treats left for us  
Can you find the RHINOCEROS?  
He's got two horns upon his nose  
(But not the kind a jazz band blows)





And if you tried to tickle him  
He wouldn't feel it through his skin  
His eyesight is not very good  
I bet he thinks you're made of wood  
(Let's tap your head, see if it's true)  
Now what else is there at the zoo?

XX

### S Is For Snake

I'm ssssure there can be no misssstake  
That ssssilky rope is Mrssss ssssnake  
She likes to sssslither in the ssssun  
Or sssshed her sssscaley sssskin for fun  
Ssssilently she ssschemes and plots  
To tie her ssssupper up in knots  
And then she sssswallows as they ssssquirm  
Like sssucking up a ssslimy worm  
Sssso sssstep back if she sssstares at you  
Or you'll be ssssnack food at the zoo

XXI

### T Is For Tortoise

Slow down, you wouldn't want to miss  
The peaceful plodding Sir TORTOISE  
If you're patient and kind as well  
He may just come out of his shell  
It's true he's slow around the track  
Because his house is on his back  
But still he won the rabbit race  
By sticking to his steady pace  
His slowness helps him grow old too  
So he's the grandpa at the zoo

XXII

### U Is For Unicorn





What magic beast has just one horn?  
Of course, the fabled UNICORN  
It's possible to see her, but  
Only if your eyes are shut  
And only if you have been kind  
Then she appears there in your mind  
Her mane is laced with pretty flowers  
And you can ride her back for hours  
I've heard all wishes can come true  
If you just glimpse her at the zoo

XXIII

V IS For Vulture

Now here's a bird that's lacking culture  
Have you ever seen the VULTURE?  
His beak is hooked, his shoulders hunch  
He likes a bag of bones for lunch  
I hope at home you never eat  
The way he does (on rotting meat)  
He's always fighting over food  
Quite simply put, he's vile and rude  
But give a bird respect that's due  
He's cleans things up around the zoo

XXIV

W IS For Whale

Look over there, a mighty tail  
I bet that's from the big blue WHALE  
She's bigger than a car or house  
So big that you feel like a mouse  
And have you ever heard her song?  
Sometimes it's several hours long  
I wonder if she dreams big dreams  
And if she's happy as she seems  
Why don't you ask her if it's true





When next you see her at the zoo?

XXV

X Is For X-Thing

I'm sure you're wondering what is next  
Well, so am I, it's called an "X"  
That means it's anything you like  
Maybe a monster nicknamed Mike?  
Or dinosaur without a head?  
Or peanut butter fish called Fred?  
It could be just your favourite cat?  
Or zog from space, come for a chat?  
Whatever you decide to choose  
We'll see that X-thing at the zoo

XXVI

Y Is For Yak

It's nearly time for going back  
But first let's go and see the YAK  
He used to live in far Tibet  
(A place you've never seen, I'll bet)  
He's like a cow, but he's more bold  
His woolly coat's made for the cold  
His milk is used for buttered tea  
I think that's weird, would you agree?  
It's good to find out something new  
What better place than at the zoo

XXVII

Z Is For Zebra

Last but not least is dear Debra  
She's the stripy friendly ZEBRA  
She made the trip from Africa  
Where wildlife is fantastica





She'll tell you how when she got flyin'  
She'd outrun the fastest lion  
Now she lives a life more tranquil  
And she's secretly quite thankful  
She's always happy to see you  
And hopes you'll come back to the zoo

XXVIII

Ending

So now you've done the thing to do  
(I hope you're not still sad and blue)  
And since you've been down to the zoo  
To check what's what and see who's who  
Why don't you tell a friend or two?

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