

Visitors to Columbia's Riverbanks Zoo have long enjoyed watching the graceful gait of the giraffes, the self-assured swing of the siamangs and the playful pageantry of the penguins. Now, all of these views and more are available around the globe thanks to the SCE&G ZooView Webcam.

With the webcam, observers have more opportunities to see the true nature of the animals, something that might be missed during a zoo visit, especially if the animal is sleeping or inactive.

Early in 2005 the webcam was installed in the Zoo's Koala Knockabout offering "ahh-inspiring" streaming video of the cuddly marsupials. SCE&G's ZooView was perfectly suited for koalas because of their sporadic levels of activity and was ranked as one of the 2005 Top 25 most interesting webcams in the world by *earthcam.com*.

Since the average amount of time spent in front of a zoo exhibit by a visitor is less than 45 seconds, ZooView offers a significantly more intimate observation of an animal's behavior. SCE&G and Riverbanks Zoo have a long history together of cooperation and respect.

This latest venture together began when Sharon Jenkins, SCE&G's senior vice president of marketing and communications, joined Riverbanks Society's Board of Directors and saw the potential of another partnership.



AN INSIDE VIEW



photo by Robert Clark

SCANA, through its telecommunications business, owns and operates a high capacity, fiber optics network in South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia.

Since the network, capable of carrying millions of telephone conversations and data at one time, is located in the vicinity of the zoo, the company was able to expand the line directly into the zoo and broadcast ZooView images through live video feeds.

Concerning the ZooView's impact, Jenkins said, "The SCE&G ZooView project is representative of SCE&G's ongoing commitment to education and community service.

"We love that this gives people who either can't get to the zoo or want to experience the zoo from the convenience of their own desktop the

opportunity to invite some of the world's most treasured animals into their homes."

In an effort to showcase more of the creatures of Riverbanks, the decision was made in May 2006 to move the webcam each month and highlight different exhibits in the park.

"The next 12 months should be eye-opening, to say the least," said Satch Krantz, Riverbanks Zoo and Garden's executive director. "We're excited about this camera giving guests a unique view of the zoo."

As SCE&G's ZooView moves throughout the park, viewers are treated to unique perspectives of the exhibits as keepers tend to their animals, with most cameras running 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

During July the focus is on a rare, white alligator whose story is nearly as fascinating as

his striking eyes. The alligator, which hatched in a Sea Pines Plantation lagoon on Hilton Head Island, has been cared for at the zoo's Aquarium and Reptile Complex for the past two years. It is being held there for the S.C. Department of Natural Resources.

The alligator, *Alligator mississippiensis*, is thought to be the only white alligator in the state.

The animal is leucistic, a rare genetic mutation that causes a lack of color pigments in the skin, although unlike an albino, it has brown eyes and a brown patch on its head.

White alligators rarely survive in the wild since they lack the camouflage necessary to protect themselves from predators and to hunt prey.

In October viewers will be treated to the antics of the young Grizzly Bears, *Ursus arctos horribilus*.

Grizzlies are most active in the morning and early evening with long rests in the middle of the day. So, ZooView will offer a supplemental benefit to a zoo visit if you miss the bears in action.

And if you want to see more of your favorite animal when the camera moves on, just visit scegzooview.com to view stored video.

SCE&G is proud to provide a limitless ZooView, offering not only entertainment but insight into animal behavior and husbandry reaching far beyond Columbia.

BY MARY MARLOWE LEVERETTE



SCE&G ZooView tentative schedule

July 6, 2006 - White Alligator

Aug. 3, 2006 - Amur Tigers

Sept. 7, 2006 - African Lions

Oct. 5, 2006 - Grizzly Bears

Nov. 2, 2006 - Sea Lions

Dec. 7, 2006 - Gorillas

Jan. 4, 2007 - Meerkats

Feb. 8, 2007 - African Elephants

March 8, 2007 - Reticulated Giraffes

April 5, 2007 - Koalas

May 3, 2007 - Siamangs

June 7, 2007 - Lorikeets

Schedule subject to change. Visit www.scegzooview.com for the latest information.

