

WHAT DOES BEHAVIORAL ENRICHMENT LOOK LIKE?

FORAGE



A forage enrichment activity can include several things such as puzzle feeders, varied feeding schedule, hiding food, browse, and food presentation.

A puzzle feeder can be a wire basket, plastic jug/container, box, bag, PVC structure or boomer ball. Stuffing puzzle feeders with the animal's daily diet is an activity that can stimulate the animal's mind and challenge them physically. The animal must figure out how to get the food out of the puzzle feeder!

Filling hay nets and hanging them high up in the elephant yard exercises the animals by encouraging them to reach up high with their trunks and bodies. A varied feeding schedule would keep an animal guessing when it would be fed, keeping the animal active. Hiding food around the exhibit brings out natural foraging/hunting behaviors that they would use in the wild.

Whether it's bark off a tree branch, tree logs, rose petals, pansies, grass flats or stalks of bamboo, plant material is very important to zoo animals for several reasons. Browse gives animals something natural that they would eat in the wild, extends eating time, and breaks the normal daily feeding routine. After eating, the animal may use the leftovers (tree branches or logs) to play with or scratch on. Food can be presented to animals in different forms such as fruit ice blocks for the elephants or meat ice blocks for the lions.