GILCREASE
Nature Sanctuary

CONTACT US

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Las Vegas, NV 89131

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(702) 645-4224

EMAIL
info@gilcrease.community

WEBSITE
www.gilcrease.community

OFFICE HOURS

WEDNESDAY - FRIDAY
9:00 AM–3:00 PM

WEEKEND HOURS
Saturday: 9:00 AM–3:00 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM–3:00 PM

VOLUNTEER

Please check our Website for more information.

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OUR MISSION

At the Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary, our mission is to educate individuals about responsible exotic pet ownership. Our goal is that no animal be adopted without thorough research and deep consideration of the lifetime commitment. We care for over 150 rescued residents including parrots, reptiles, pigs, donkeys, emus, and so much more.

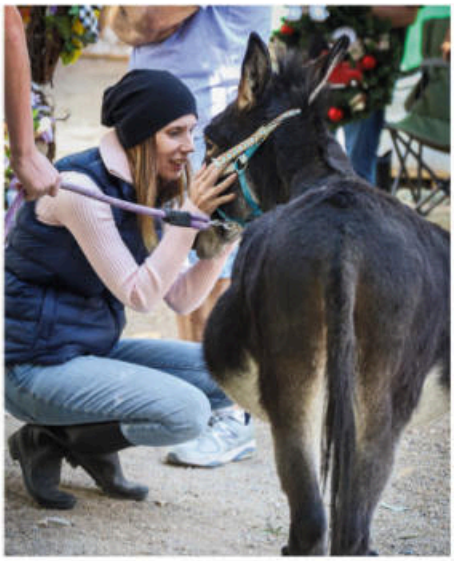
PLEASE BE KIND

Our animals are ambassadors for rescue. Some carry physical reminders of neglect, injury, or trauma. We invite you to see beyond those scars and appreciate the incredible journeys that brought them to safety.

ABOUT US

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit sanctuary committed to the care and protection of rescued exotic and farm animals. From birds to barnyard friends, our mission is to provide a safe, loving environment where animals can thrive – and where families can learn, connect and be inspired.

SEPTEMBER 2026



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SEPTEMBER MUSINGS

MORE THAN A NUMBER

This month, I want to take my letter in a little bit of a different direction.

As we worked on our World Conservation News feature about the axolotl, I kept hearing the same question: **How can an animal be critically endangered when there are so many of them in captivity?**

It is a fair question. Axolotls are incredibly popular. You can find them in homes, classrooms, pet stores, and aquariums all over the world. So, let me explain.

When we talk about a species being endangered, we are looking at what is happening **in the wild.** An animal can be common in captivity and still be disappearing from the place where it naturally belongs.

The axolotl is not the only species where this happens. Captive breeding can be an important conservation tool and, in some cases, can help prevent a species from disappearing completely. But saving individual animals is not always the same thing as saving a species.

A species is more than a number.

It is part of an ecosystem. It has a home, relationships with other species, and a role to play. If wild populations disappear, we lose more than the animals themselves. We lose part of the natural system they belong to.

That is why protecting habitat matters so much. Thousands of animals can live safely in human care, but if the lakes, forests, deserts, rivers, and grasslands they depend on disappear, the species is still in trouble.

This is why education matters.

I believe **people protect what they are connected to.** When we learn about an animal, understand what makes it unique and discover the role it plays in nature, we begin to care about what happens to it.

And that is where the hope begins.

Learn about a species you have never heard of. Share what you learn. Support responsible conservation efforts. Pay attention to the habitats and ecosystems around you, and take the time to understand why protecting them matters.

Conservation does not always begin with a huge action. Sometimes it begins with curiosity.

The more we learn, the more we connect. And the more we connect, the more we care.

Warmly,

Jennifer Langford
Executive Director





BACK WHERE THEY BELONG

STILL PART OF THE FAMILY

Ray and Robyn Errington have been part of Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary family for many years. Both previously served on our Board of Directors, and after recently retiring, they have returned to Las Vegas.

And they came back bearing quite a gift!

Ray and Robyn generously purchased a brand-new six-foot chest freezer, filling a very important behind-the-scenes need on our animal operation.

So much of caring for nearly 200 animals happens where visitors never see it, and having the right equipment makes a tremendous difference for our staff and the animals entrusted to us.

We are incredibly grateful for Ray and Robyn's continued friendship, generosity, and support of the sanctuary. **Welcome home, and thank you for continuing to be part of the Gilcrease family!**

Advertise in Our Newsletter!

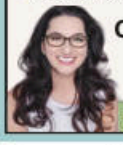
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04 PROTECTORS OF TULE SPRINGS

Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary

SEP 19

NIGHT HIKE: HOMECOMING

Location: IAFSP **Time:** 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Our high school neighbors are celebrating homecoming! Enjoy the park after dark on this self-guided hike with a nostalgic theme. Registration required.

SEP 20

POP-UP SCIENCE: THE BUG LIFE

Location: IAFSP **Time:** 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Learn about the incredible phases of life for different bugs.

SEP 27

TIE-DYE BUTTERFLIES

Location: IAFSP **Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Learn about butterflies and make a butterfly craft with a tie-dye effect.

SCAN TO SUPPORT THE PROTECTORS OF TULE SPRINGS!

DONATE, VOLUNTEER, AND HELP PROTECT OUR PARKS!



PROTECTING TULE SPRINGS

VOLUNTEERS HELPING PRESERVE OUR PARKS

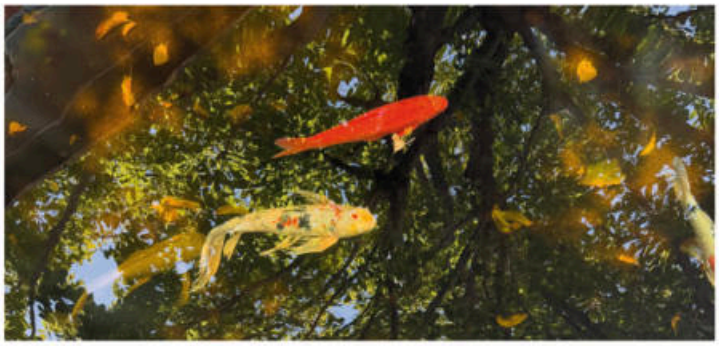
The Protectors of Tule Springs (POTS) is the official nonprofit philanthropic partner and "Friends Group" for Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument (TUSK) and Ice Age Fossils State Park (IAFSP). We are dedicated to supporting these parks by fulfilling their vital volunteer and philanthropic needs.

For nearly seven years, the volunteer Mounted Horse Patrol (MHP) has been a crucial asset to TUSK. Acting as the "eyes and ears" for park rangers, volunteers ride their own horses onto the monument, monitor trail conditions, report observations, and engage with visitors. Additionally, the MHP proudly participates in local parades and community events to promote the park.

Protectors is always seeking new volunteers to assist with our operations and outreach efforts. Whether you want to patrol TUSK on horseback or on foot, or represent Protectors at public events, your involvement directly contributes to responsible stewardship of the parks.

If you are interested in joining the Mounted Horse Patrol or want more details about being a volunteer of any kind for either park, please contact desire@protectorsoftulesprings.org.

The Protectors of Tule Springs also helps connect the community to the unique natural and cultural history of the Las Vegas Valley. Through volunteer service, public outreach, and support of local parks, POTS plays an important role in helping preserve these special places for future generations.



OUR KOI

COLORFUL, CURIOUS AND RIGHT AT HOME

This month, we are giving the spotlight to an entire group of residents: our koi!

Koi may look like fancy goldfish, but they are actually a type of domesticated carp. They come in beautiful combinations of white, orange, red, yellow, black, and even metallic shades, with no two looking exactly alike.

Koi can also live for decades with proper care. They quickly learn routines, recognize feeding time, and may even swim right up when they see familiar people approaching the pond.

Our koi now have a beautifully rebuilt home designed to give them more space, cleaner water, and a healthier environment. Their new pond was made possible through an incredible community effort, and we are so excited to watch these colorful residents enjoy it for years to come.

Koi Fun Fact: Their bright colors were developed through generations of selective breeding, turning ordinary carp into the living jewels we know today.

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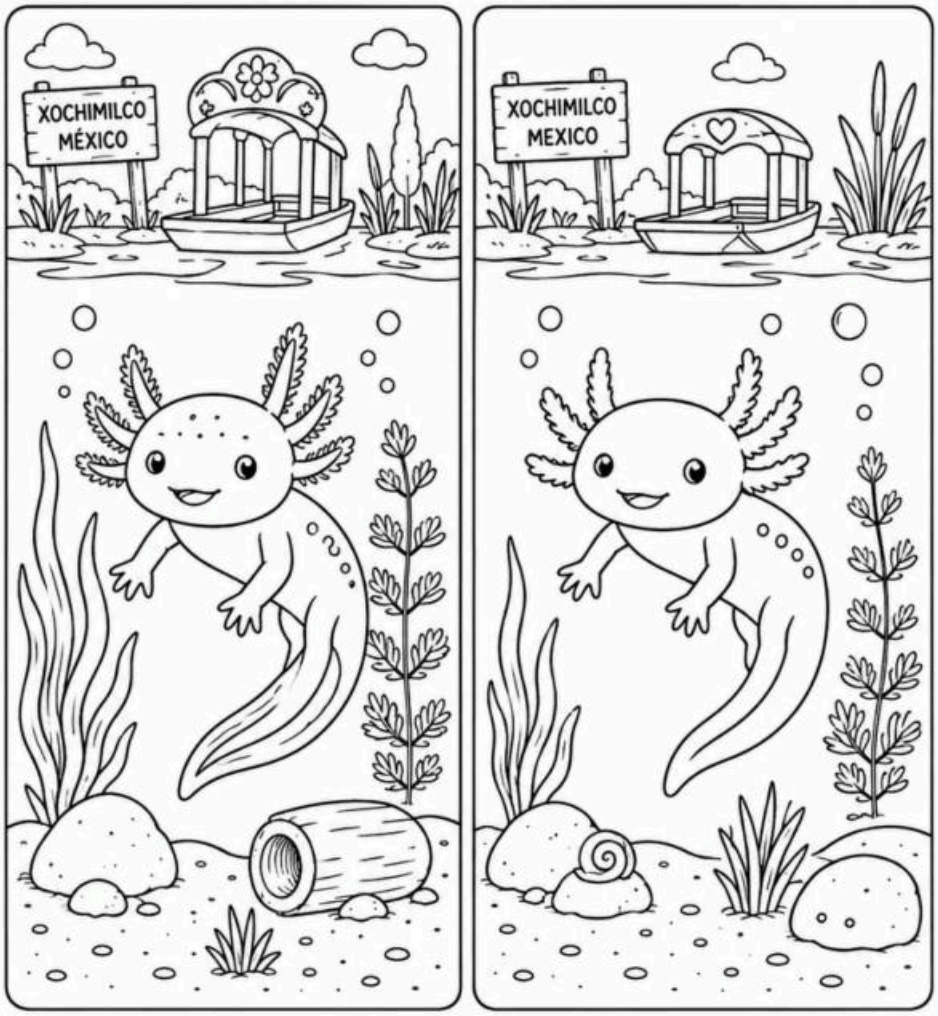


06 SANCTUARY SMARTIES

Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary

Find 8 Differences

• Axolotl Adventure •

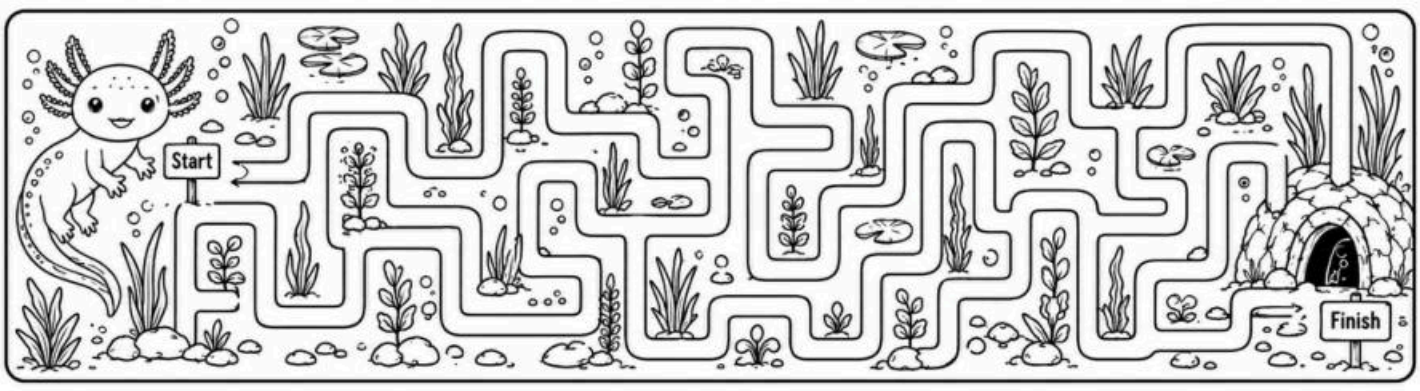


MINI CONSERVATION TIP

Healthy water means healthy axolotls! Keeping waterways clean and protecting native plants and animals helps axolotls and the entire ecosystem they call home.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE AXOLOTL

- **Axolotls stay aquatic their entire lives and usually never move onto land.**
- **Those fluffy "feathers" on their heads are actually external gills that help them breath underwater.**
- **Axolotls can regrow lost limbs, as well as parts of some organs and tissues.**
- **Wild axolotls are found naturally in only one small area of the world, the waterways of Xochimilco in Mexico City.**
- **Axolotls can come in several different colors, but wild ones are usually dark brown or gray with speckles, which helps them blend into their habitat.**
- **They are amphibians, making them salamaders and relatives of frogs.**
- **Even though they are famous pets around the world, wild axolotls are critically endangered.**





THE JACK GREENBERG GROUP

TURNING COMMUNITY INTO SUPPORT

Jack Greenberg and the Greenberg Group have found creative ways to support Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary while bringing people together in the process.

Jack has hosted events at the sanctuary that help introduce new people to our animals and our mission, while also helping raise funds for their needs. Most recently, he organized a raffle featuring a 75-inch television and Vegas Golden Knights tickets. The raffle raised $1,360, and Jack generously donated an additional $600.

Support like this goes beyond a single event or donation. It creates new connections within our community, brings more people through our gates, and helps provide the resources needed to care for the animals who call the sanctuary home.

THE JACK GREENBERG REAL ESTATE GROUP



We are incredibly grateful to Jack Greenberg and the Greenberg Group for continuing to find meaningful ways to support Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary.

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WINDY'S RANCH AND RESCUE

STEPPING UP WHEN ANIMALS NEED IT MOST

We have highlighted Windy's Ranch & Rescue before, but some organizations are worth recognizing more than once.

Earlier this summer, the heartbreaking animal cruelty case involving **Pinto the horse** left numerous animals needing immediate help. Among them were several pigs, and once again, **Janice Ridondo and Windy's Ranch & Rescue stepped up.**

Located in Overton, Windy's provides safety, care and second chances to pigs that have been neglected, abandoned or simply have nowhere else to go. Their work is often difficult, expensive and urgently needed.

Gilcrease Nature Sanctuary will also be welcoming two of the rescued piglets once they are old enough. Before coming to the sanctuary, they will be spayed or neutered and vaccinated, giving them the healthiest possible start to their new lives.

Stories like this show just how valuable small rescue organizations can be. When an emergency happens, groups like Windy's are often the ones saying, **"We'll help."**

That is why we want to shine a light on them again.

If you are looking for a way to help animals in our community, we encourage you to learn more about Windy's Ranch & Rescue and consider supporting their work. Donations help provide food, veterinary care, safe housing, and everything else these animals need while they begin again.

Scan to support Windy's Ranch & Rescue





Born after rescue. *Their mother was one of the pigs saved from the neglect case, and these piglets were born shortly after she arrived safely at Windy's Ranch & Rescue.*



AXOLOTL

EVERYWHERE ON OUR SCREENS, DISAPPEARING IN THE WILD

Axolotls have become surprisingly famous. They appear in videos, games, toys, and memes, and their feathery gills are almost permanent-looking smiles make them easy to recognize. But behind that popularity is a conservation story many people do not know.

The axolotl (Ambystoma mexicanum) is a salamander that usually keeps many of its juvenile features throughout its entire life. Unlike most salamanders, it remains aquatic as an adult and keeps its external gills and finned tail. Axolotls are also famous for their remarkable ability to regenerate lost limbs and repair certain tissues.

In the wild, axolotls are found naturally in the waterways of Xochimilco in Mexico City. Their habitat has been greatly reduced by urban growth, pollution, changes in water quality, and invasive fish such as carp and tilapia. As a result, wild axolotls are Critically Endangered.

And that is what makes their story so important. Axolotls are common in homes, laboratories, and aquariums around the world, but captive animals cannot replace a healthy wild population living in its natural ecosystem. Protecting wild axolotls means protecting the unique ecosystem that made them possible in the first place.



Photo by Nathan Guzman on Unsplash

Conservationists, scientists, farmers and local communities are working to restore habitat and protect areas of Xochimilco. Saving the axolotl means protecting more than one unusual salamander. It also means protecting the wetlands, water, and other species that share its home.

NOT ALL AXOLOTLS ARE PINK

The pale pink axolotls most people recognize are often leucistic, a genetic trait that reduces pigmentation while usually leaving the eyes dark. Wild axolotls generally look very different, with darker brown, gray, or black mottled coloring that helps them blend into vegetation and muddy bottom of their habitat.

An animal can be common in captivity and still be disappearing in the wild.

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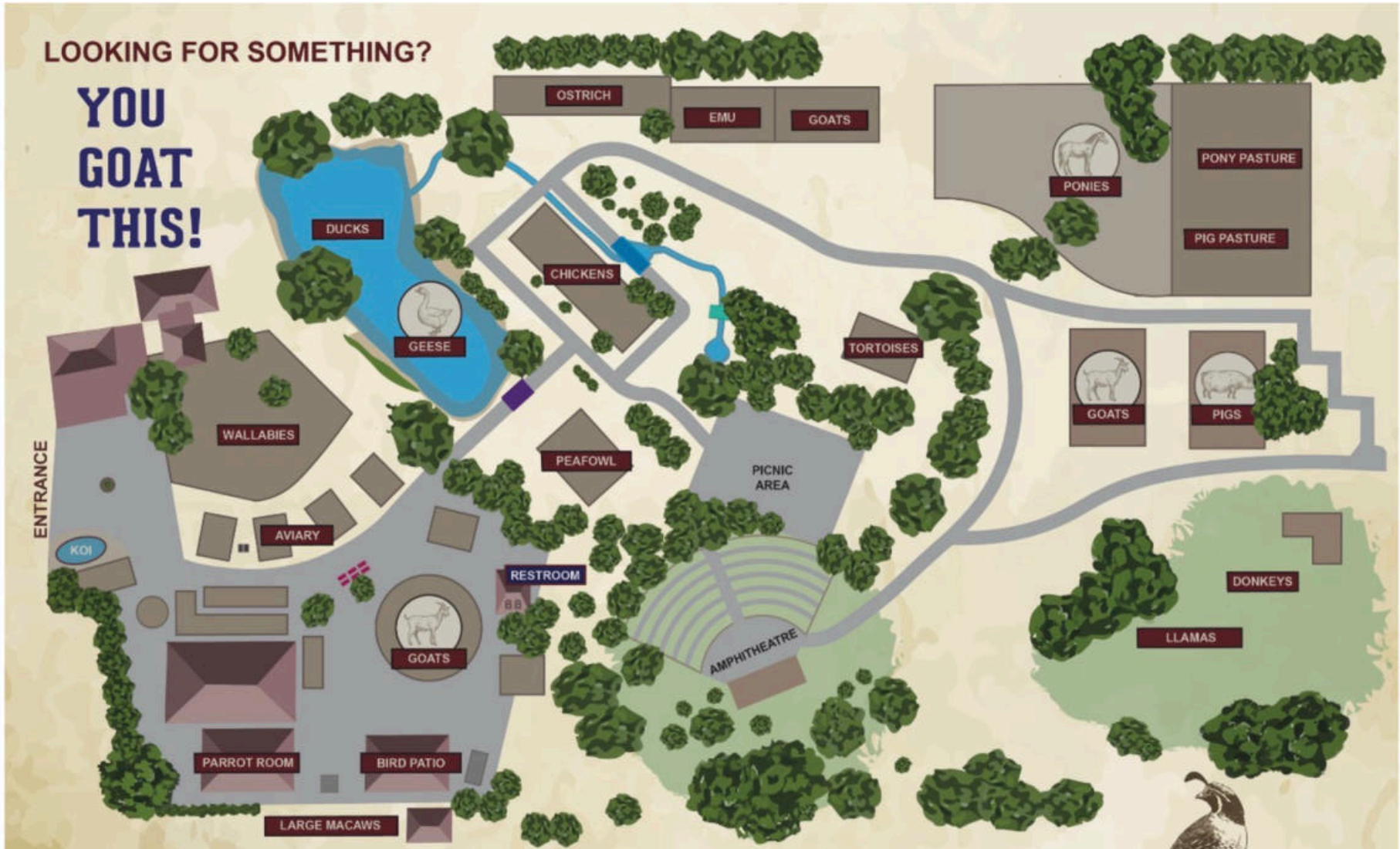
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The historical seven acre property offers a serene home retreat for over 500 exotic birds and domestic animals that have found a refuge when their owners can no longer take care of them.

Sanctuary management and staff are dedicated to the continued awareness of responisble pet adoption. Through onsite classes on animal wellness, presentations, and tours of the facility, citizens are encouraged and taught the serious responsibility of pet ownership.

EST 1979

GILCREASE

Nature Sanctuary

LAS VEGAS, NV