A Cougar rests beside her pool
Bald Eagle – our National Bird
The American Bison once roamed the plains of Kansas
A Mute Swan glides across the waterfowl pool
Llama – the South American camel
A Black Bear forages for treats left by keepers
A Peacock spreads its tail
Capuchin Monkeys enjoy the trees on Monkey Island
The Mid-Continent Band performs Tuesday night concerts during summer in the Riverside Bowl
The miniature train has been entertaining park visitors since 1963
The Carousel, a favorite since 1960, costs only 5¢ per ride
Miniature Golf Course – Made possible by donations and hard work of Friends of Riverside Park & Zoo (FORPAZ)
The walkway over the ravine provides a unique vantage point for zoo guests
The American Bison once roamed the plains of Kansas
Kansas Turtles share Monkey Island with monkeys and ducks
A Dama Wallaby, native to Australia, enjoys a romp in the grass
Scarlet Macaws from the forests of South America
Emu – an Australian flightless bird
Beautiful Riverside Park welcomes you
Graphic design by Grass Roots Design Group, Inc.
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Riverside Park & Ralph Mitchell Zoo

Riverside Park & Ralph Mitchell Zoo is nestled in the northeast corner of Independence, Kansas, just 2 blocks east of Highway 75.

Beautiful Riverside Park has been the showcase of Southeast Kansas since it was founded in 1914. Its scenic setting along the Verdigris River includes more than 100 acres of varied terrain. Thousands of visitors each year enjoy the beauty of numerous stately oak trees, a fountain, vast areas of lush grass and rocky hillsides sprinkled with wildflowers.

This picturesque setting is the site of many items of interest for the entire family including: Ralph Mitchell Zoo, home to more than 300 animals; Horner Playground, featuring slides, swings and jungle gyms of all kinds; Lions Club Kiddy Land, filled with storybook characters, tepees, a fort and a castle; Corythosaurus, a large dinosaur; Santa Fe 1050 Locomotive; Tennis Courts; Swimming Pool and Shulthis Stadium, host of the first nighttime baseball game.

Other favorite activities at Riverside Park include riding the Miniature Train, taking a spin on the Carousel and playing a round on the Miniature Golf Course.

In addition to the Park and Zoo, The Train, Carousel and Miniature Golf are open:

Easter to October
Open Sundays From 1 to 5:30 p.m.
Memorial Day to Labor Day
Open Sundays From 1 to 5:30 p.m.
& All Evenings From 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Ralph Mitchell Zoo, named after former mayor and long-time board chairman Ralph Mitchell, has been a favorite attraction at Riverside Park since 1925. Comprising more than half of the park’s 106 acres, Ralph Mitchell Zoo is home to more than 300 animals. Species of animals found in the zoo at any particular time can vary, but generally include monkeys, bears, cougars, turtles, all types of birds and several varieties of reptiles.

Every effort has been made to present the animals in their natural habitat. No where is this more evident than on Monkey Island. Built in 1932, Monkey Island provides a comfortable jungle-like environment for a dozen or so Capuchin monkeys.

Even large mammals like bison, llamas and antelope can be observed at close range with minimal distraction caused by fences and enclosures.

Monkey Island, in Ralph Mitchell Zoo, was the birthplace of Miss Able, the first Monkey NASA sent into space.