



## Inspection Report

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John Ball Zoo  
1300 West Fulton  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Customer ID: **331056**  
Certificate: **34-C-0373**  
Site: 001  
JOHN BALL ZOO

Type: FOCUSED INSPECTION  
Date: 15-JUN-2023

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### 2.131(b)(1) Critical

#### Handling of animals.

An adult male sitatunga was killed by an 8-year-old adult male pygmy hippopotamus after an unsuccessful introduction during which the sitatunga was trapped in a tunnel. The hippopotamus had never been housed with any other species.

The hippopotamus consistently exhibited behaviors noted as aggression by the keepers during at least eight introduction preparation events. Such behaviors included, but were not limited to, marking of the exhibit, territorial aggression, charging at the door where the sitatunga was housed, grumbling noises with opening its mouth. Keeper notes included details related to the stress noted in both animals, such as running by the sitatunga and constant motion of the hippopotamus.

Besides the potential area of entrapment of the tunnel, the only visual barrier in the exhibit was a single tree. There was no individual on hand with direct knowledge and experience in the introduction of a pygmy hippopotamus with other species.

Introduction of dangerous species of animals in the presence of behaviors consistent with incompatibility can lead to injury or death of animals involved.

The facility must handle all animals as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that does not cause trauma, overheating, excessive cooling, behavioral stress, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort. Such handling includes the introduction of animals.

To be corrected from this day June 20, 2023, forward.

This inspection and exit interview were conducted with the chief operating officer, and the general curator. .

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Prepared By: CARRIE BONGARD  
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care  
Title: ANIMAL CARE INSPECTOR

Date:  
03-AUG-2023

Received by Title: Facility Representative

Date:  
03-AUG-2023



### Species Inspected

| Cust No | Cert No   | Site | Site Name     | Inspection  |
|---------|-----------|------|---------------|-------------|
| 331056  | 34-C-0373 | 001  | JOHN BALL ZOO | 15-JUN-2023 |

| Count  | Scientific Name                 | Common Name        |
|--------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| 000001 | <i>Hexaprotodon liberiensis</i> | PYGMY HIPPOPOTAMUS |
| 000000 | <i>Tragelaphus spekii</i>       | SITATUNGA          |
| 000001 | <b>Total</b>                    |                    |