Biology Primary Research Notes:

Note: The pictures that were taken at the zoo have been included on the website created by me and can be found at this link TheAfricanRainforest.weebly.com

**Red River Hogs**: Class - Mammailia Order - Artiodactyla Family - Suidae Genus - Potamochoerus

Scientific name: Potamochoerus porcus

Location: Africa and Asia

Animal Description on sign: Red river hogs have a great sense of smell. Their snouts are firm and are used like shovels to root around in the moist soft ground and dig up roots or bulbs. They also use their razor sharp tusks for cutting through tough woody plants and tubers.

Red river hogs also have excellent hearing and can even detect the underground movement of an earthworm!

**Meller's Chamelon**: Scientific name: Chamaelo melleri

Description on sign: Meller's Chamelon is the largest of the chameleons from the African mainland easily recognized by the single small horn protruding front he front of their snouts. They are usually green with white or yellow stripes and communicate mood, stress or agression by changing colour to brown, dark green, yellow, grey or even black when females are carrying up to 80 eggs.

**Slender- tailed Meerkat**: Scientific name: Suricata Suricatta

Description on sign: What are they? Meerkats also called suricats, are a type of mongoose that live in groups of 10 to 15 individuals called "mobs" or "gangs", They are not cats!

What do they eat: Worms, crickets, grasshoppers, locuts, small snakes, birds, fruit, roots and ant larvae (a favorite) make up their diet, In Africa, meerkats are sometimes kept as pets to control rats and mice. Groups hunt during the day, with one meerkat watching for danger. An alarm is called if trouble arises and the gang bands together to fight the predator.

Who's the "boss"? A female is usually the leader of the group. She is the only one to breed and produces a litter of 2 to 5 young each year.

Where do they live? The dry Kalahari Desert in Africa.

**Pygmy Hippopotamus**: Scientific name: Choeropsis liberiensis

Description from the sign: The pygmy hippo may resemble a miniature river hippopotamus, but there are structural differences. It is considerably smaller; the head is rounder, proportionately smaller and not so broad and flat. The nostrils are large and almost circular, the eyes are set on the side of the head and do not protrude, the legs are proportionately longer and only the front toes are webbed.

Habitat : Rainforests, swamps, and thickets that are near water and streams.

Threats to Survival : Excessive logging operations combined with the destruction of large areas of its forest habitat, and hunting has made the pygmy Hippopotamus an endangered species.

**The Gaboon Viper**: Scientific Name: Bitis Gabonica

Description on Sign: The Gaboon Viper is a docile, ground dwelling snake found in tropical forest and thickets of central and western Africa.

Description: This is a magnificent African venomous snake. Colours and patterns are truly stunning; they form symmetrical designs which create various unique patterns on the scales. The body is beautifully coloured in various shades of dark and light brown, buff, purple, and pink. Combinations of these colours form geometric patterns along the length of the snakeâ€™s back. A broad buff vertebral stripe is broken into quadrangular shapes neatly aligned over the center of the back.

**Spotted Neck Otter:** Scientific Name: LaLoture a coutachete or Lutra maculicollis

BORN TO SWIM:

Description on the sign: There are 13 species of otters world wide

Spotted-necked otters live in family or bachelor groups of six to ten animals. They range throughout Central Africa. Their habitats include swamps, lakes, and rivers, and they are perfectly adapted for life in the water. A long tapered tails is flat underneath and serves as a paddle. Otter paws have webbing between the toes, mimicking a couple of pairs of flippers, In fact these expert swimmers are so in tune with water, they keep their dry land excursions to a minimum.

Spotted-necked otters eat mainly fish and in turn are occasionally eaten by crocodiles.

**Flat Tailed Tortise:** Scientific Name: Plyxis Planicauda

Description on sign: Map Both tortoise and species are only found along a narrow coastal stip on Madagascar and nowhere else in the world. The burrow in sandy soils and forest leaves during the dry season. When it rains, they are very active and eat fallen fruit and flowers, succulent plants and mushrooms!

Tiny Totoises: Two of the world's smallest tortoises! Look caredully to see which one of our beautiful tortoise species you will meet today, the Spider or the flat-tailed tortoise. These rare tortoises are an important part of the Toronto Zoo's conservation breeding programme. Each year we move one species to our special breeding room and celebrate when a single egg is laid.

Umbrella Species: Protect the rare tortoise and its special forest habitat and under this "Umbrella" all other species will share the same protection.