



California's *San Diego Zoo*

How can we not focus on the world famous San Diego Zoo?! Being in Northern California, I've only been there twice, but the visits were certainly memorable...The San Diego Zoo grew out of exotic animal exhibitions abandoned after the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Dr. Harry M. Wegeforth founded the Zoological Society of San Diego in 1916. A permanent tract of land in Balboa Park was set aside in August 1921, and the zoo began to move in the following year. The publication *ZooNooz* commenced in early 1925.

Frank Buck went to work as temporary director for the San Diego Zoo in 1923, but Buck quickly clashed with the strong-willed Wegeforth and left the zoo after three months to return to animal collecting. After several other equally short-lived zoo directors, Dr. Wegeforth appointed the zoo's bookkeeper, Belle Benchley, to the position. She served as zoo director from 1925 until 1953. For most of that time she was the only female zoo director in the world. She was succeeded as director by Dr. Charles Schroeder. The San Diego Zoo has been a pioneer in building "cageless" exhibits. Dr. Wegeforth was determined to create moated exhibits from the start, and the first lion area at the San Diego Zoo without enclosing wires opened in 1922. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Diego_Zoo]

