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Detroit Zoo  
8450 West 10 Mile Road  
Royal Oak, Michigan 48067

I want to buy my wife an aardvark. She adores aardvarks and every time we come to your zoo, we spend almost all of our time at the aardvark exhibit. To be quite honest, I find it a bit disturbing because we never get to see my two favorite animals – the flamingo and the earthworm – due to the amount of time we spend gawking at aardvarks.

To be fair, my wife's attraction to aardvarks borders upon obsession, where my fondness for flamingos and earthworms is only that – fondness. I am not obsessed with either species, I simply have a higher interest in those two than any of the other animals you typically find at the zoo.

But my thinking goes like this. If my wife had her very own aardvark to take care of and talk to every day, she might be willing to spend less time at the aardvark cages when we go to the zoo. As a result, I would then maybe get to see your flamingos and your earthworms.

Please don't get me wrong (and please don't tell my wife), my motivation is not completely selfish. I REALLY want to see my wife's expression when we bring home a baby aardvark because I love to see her expressions of joy regardless of the circumstances. The flamingo and earthworm angle is just icing on the cake.

So I was wondering if you had any baby aardvarks for sale, or even better if you have any pregnant aardvarks? I obviously do not want to take a baby aardvark before it is completely ready to leave its mommy, but I would also like to help my wife develop an emotional bond with an aardvark as a newborn. If I could convince her to give a 'pet name' to a newborn aardvark and check back periodically to see how it was doing, she would then be all that much more surprised when we came to the zoo on that special day to bring the little one home.

Please let me know what this would cost and send me a pamphlet on aardvark care. Is it possible to house train an aardvark? If so, would it use a litter box or just go on old newspapers? Either option is doable. We have a basement that would be perfect for either potty option.

Does an aardvark eat pet food or would I have to buy some special feed for him? I wouldn't want to feed him table scraps (unless that is what he would normally eat) because we always save those for the dog next door to keep her from getting into our

garbage. If I stopped feeding her table scraps, we would end up with garbage strewn all over once again.

While I am talking about the dog next door, let me ask you another question. Please do not judge me since you have never walked a mile in my shoes. When our neighbors first moved in next to us, we did not get to know them and they were very loud and unfriendly. They got a beagle puppy who did nothing but bark all day and night long. We have a chain link fence separating our properties, but the lots are extremely small. (Do aardvarks need a lot of outside room to roam around?)

The puppy was very playful, but I knew she would grow up like all beagles do and become quite adept at only three things. All any full grown beagle is good for is barking at all hours of the night, digging holes all over the yard (or under the fence in our case) and pooping like a super duper pooper machine. I know this because I had a beagle when I was growing up. That was all Harvey knew how to do and I shudder to this day to think what the neighbors must have thought of us.

So anyway, one day I found a dead bird in my back yard and I saw the beagle puppy running laps inside the fence perimeter next door. I figured she would like a toy to play with, so I picked up the dead bird with a stick and lopped it over the fence.

From the puppy's perspective, you would have thought I gave her a new Nintendo Wii game system she was so happy. She played with that dead bird for hours until I think she finally ate him. But then I imagine she went in the house and gave kisses to all of her family. Yuck.

I am getting off topic and am running out of time to write. Please be so kind and answer my aardvark questions above at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rusty Lucas".

Rusty Lucas

p.s. Does the Detroit Zoo have any baseball caps for sale and how much do they cost? I would like to purchase one on my next trip there. That is, unless of course, you happen to have any available for free. Please send me a free Detroit Zoo baseball cap and I will wear it whenever I visit any other zoos around the country as a practical joke! The Detroit Zoo will remain our favorite zoo as it will always be where our baby aardvark was born.