

Black Pine Animal Park

Animal Facts

Breed: AFRICAN OSTRICH

Names / Sex / Age:

Ginger Female At least 9-10 years

Previous Home:

Former breeder on farm. "Retired" with mate, Fred, who passed away in 2003.

Native to: Eastern Africa

Size: 9' tall, up to 300 pounds.

Life Expectancy: 40 to 60 yrs. in captivity

Diet: Grasses, greens, fruits, seeds, some insects, and oyster shells. At Black Pine grass hay, horse feed, and flaxseed.

Facts:

- Ostriches are the largest birds
- Ostriches can run approximately 40 mph, faster than leopards, lions and hyenas
- They belong to the ratite family, which are flightless birds
- The ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain (their brain is the size of walnut)
- Males make nests, while both males and females sit on the nest
- Ostriches are the only bird with 2 toes
- Ostriches can only kick forward
- An ostrich egg is equal to 24 chicken eggs and takes two hours to boil
- Ostriches don't actually stick their heads in the sand, they lay them down on the ground to hide
- Many gladiators lost their lives to the kicks from ostrich, which can stop the heart; they can also gut a man with a toenail
- They can kick through $\frac{3}{4}$ inch plywood
- The cornea of their eye is being tested for use in human transplants.

Personal History:

Fred (since deceased) and Ginger were retired rather than being slaughtered or sold when an ostrich farm went out of business. The prized breeding pair relocated to Black Pine, and in 2003 Fred was severely injured in fight with a Rhea and had to be put down. Ginger loves to be sprayed with water and to eat grass out of your hand. She will try to peck at anything that is bright or shiny!