

Brought to you by the **ASPCA**[Nose for News](#)[Pet Care](#)[Ask Azula](#)[Animal Careers](#)[Animal ABCs](#)[Real Issues](#)[Cartoons](#)[Activities](#)[Pet of the Week](#)[Home](#)

ANIMAL CAREERS



Bill Shesko

Zookeeper, Central Park Zoo

What he does:

Makes sure that all the birds, mammals and reptiles in the zoo's Tropic Zone habitat are happy, healthy and well-fed. That's a tall order, since there are more than 100 birds alone, plus lots of other diverse species including caimans, fruit bats and green tree

pythons.

Why does this man wear a mask?:

Whenever Shesko enters the area where the tamarins (South American primates) live, he covers his face and wears gloves. "We have to be careful not to transmit any germs to them," he explains.

Favorite time of year:

Halloween—when he puts a jack-o'-lantern on display in the zoo's colony of 100,000-plus leaf cutter ants. "It's cool to watch the ants crawl out of the pumpkin's eyes and mouth!" he laughs.

Most fun part of job:

Shesko whistles while he works, and the parrots who naturally mimic others birds' calls have started to copy him. That's how he accidentally taught some of them the theme song to "The Munsters"!

Advice to future zookeepers:

"It takes lots of hard work and a background in biology or zoology" to be a real pro.

[Veterinarian](#)[Lawyer/Lobbyist](#)[Pet Therapy Handler](#)[Photographer](#)[HLE Officer](#)[Arachnologist](#)[Biology Major](#)[Zookeeper](#)[Director of Public Information](#)[Feline Behavior Counselor](#)