

Detroit Zoo Cares for Smuggled Lizards

Eight spiny-tailed lizards are acclimating to their new home at the Detroit Zoo after the US Fish and Wildlife Service confiscated 343 of the wild-caught reptiles that were being smuggled from Mali. Officials believe these animals were poached as a part of the pet trade.

"These eight lizards represent a global crisis in wildlife trafficking. Many individual animals die in situations like this, and the impacts on wild populations can be catastrophic," said Scott Carter, the zoo's chief life sciences officer. "We

are happy to be able to provide great care and permanent sanctuary for these lizards, and to help bring attention to this important wildlife issue."

Two species of spiny-tailed lizard were among the confiscation and the Detroit Zoo opted to house four individuals of each species; the animals are currently in quarantine and will eventually be placed on public display in the Zoo's Holden Reptile Conservation Center. The remaining lizards were sent to other zoological institutions.

Texas State Aquarium Begins Caribbean Journey

In December, officials at the Texas State Aquarium broke ground on Caribbean Journey, a \$50 million project that is slated to be the largest expansion in the aquarium's history. When the exhibit opens in 2017, it will mark the completion of a master plan drafted more than twenty-five years ago.

Caribbean Journey will occupy a brand-new, 65,000-square-foot building that features a free-flight aviary, a 400,000-gallon shark habitat and smaller tanks. These enclosures will collectively house thousands of colorful fish, birds, amphibians and insects native to the Caribbean. Along with these stunning additions come enhancements to behind-the-scenes operations such as education and wildlife rehabilitation.

Once this project is completed, the aquarium estimates that it will increase its overall annual economic impact to \$69 million, support 887 area jobs, generate \$10 million in hotel room sales and provide local districts with \$5 million in taxes.



Save Vanishing Species Stamp

The Save Vanishing Species semipostal stamp benefits the Multinational Species Conservation Funds (MSCF), which support private-public partnerships to protect African and Asian elephants, great apes, marine turtles, rhinos, and tigers. The difference between the cost of the semipostal rate and the first class rate is transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the MSCF. The stamp has generated \$2,637,000 since September 2011, and is available for purchase at www.usps.com.

Leatherback Sea Turtle Rehabs at South Carolina Aquarium

On March 7th a live leatherback sea turtle washed ashore on Yawkey South Island Reserve in South Carolina. This stranding was only the fifth reported for a live leatherback in the United States. The juvenile sea turtle, estimated to weigh 500 pounds, was transported to the South Carolina Aquarium to receive treatment. The aquarium released the turtle back to the wild on March 12th.



Institutions Collaborate to Rescue and Release Manatees

In January, wildlife rehabilitators at SeaWorld Orlando and Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo returned two rescued manatees to the wilds of Florida following months of intensive treatment. Sarge, a male manatee, was rescued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission in November 2013 after showing signs of cold stress, and was soon transported to SeaWorld Orlando.

Pixie, a female, had been rescued as an orphaned calf in 2010, receiving care at SeaWorld Orlando, Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo, and the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. She was finally released in 2014 but had to be rescued again a short time later.

Because of their fragile nature, manatees are threatened by cold stress, algal blooms, boat strikes and the ingestion of fishing gear. Rescued manatees are frequently rehabilitated by AZA-accredited institutions and released whenever possible.

Please visit the [AZA website](#) to learn more about marine mammal conservation.



Storks at the Toledo Zoo



January marked a bit of a baby boom at the Toledo Zoo as avian care staff welcomed four saddle-billed stork chicks, each weighing just under four ounces. The hatchings were spread out over a three-and-a-half-week period.

The chicks are being reared off exhibit under the watchful eyes of their keepers. To encourage bonding with members of the same species, the young birds are fed by a hand puppet painted to resemble an adult saddle-billed stork.

In 2000, the Toledo Zoo became the second zoo in the world to raise chicks of this species. Since that time, an additional 13 saddle-billed storks have hatched at the facility. The species is native to Sub-Saharan Africa and is named for the yellow "saddle" that rests at the base of its beak.

Palm Beach Zoo Supports Local Agriculture

To encourage sustainable eating practices, the Palm Beach Zoo has become a pickup site for locally grown fruits and vegetables. By supporting these types of activities, the Zoo has become part of the "locavore" movement.

Kai Kai Farm, located in adjacent Martin County, allows community members to pick up pre-ordered boxes of produce at the Zoo every Saturday. The contents of these boxes vary seasonally and may include items such as watermelon, Swiss chard, cabbage and squash.

"We like to promote local food businesses that source their offerings within 100 miles. These conservation actions inspire us, and we want to join in," said Andrew Aiken, the Zoo's president and CEO. "The reduction of carbon emissions from saved trucking miles is always a good thing for our climate and for wildlife."



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