

MARYLAND ZOO

NEWS

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CHANGES AHEAD FOR MARYLAND ZOO CHIMPANZEE TROOP

-- Farewell to Jambo, Hello to Abby --

BALTIMORE, MD – Later this month, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore will bid farewell to 12-year-old chimpanzee Jambo, and will welcome 35-year-old chimpanzee, Abby.

“Jambo and Abby are joining new troops based on recommendations from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ (AZA) Chimpanzee Species Survival Plan (SSP),” said Erin Cantwell, mammal collection and conservation manager of the Zoo. “Chimpanzees live in complex family groups, and the moves have been carefully planned based on many factors, including the various troop dynamics. We are certain that both Jambo and Abby will adapt well to their new homes.”

Jambo, born to Joice at The Maryland Zoo in 2006, will be joining a troop of seven chimps at Zoo Knoxville in Tennessee. Her move to Zoo Knoxville is based on a breeding recommendation from the SSP, where she will become part of a dynamic troop consisting of four males and three females ranging in age from 10- to 42-years-old.

“While we are sad to see Jambo leave, this is a crucial step for her to be able to become part of a very important breeding program for her species,” continued Cantwell “She will be here with the troop until June 19, when she will be transported by Maryland Zoo staff to her new home.”

Abby arrived in early May from ZooTampa at Lowry Park in Florida. “Abby spent 30 days in quarantine after her arrival, which is standard protocol for all animals moving into the Zoo,” said Cantwell, mammal collections and conservation manager. “She has been able to see and hear the other chimpanzees during this time. She has been doing very well with her new animal care team, and is in excellent health.” Abby is being introduced to the troop in stages. Guests may see two different groups of chimps together in the various Chimpanzee Forest habitats as the introductions continue.

Abby has a long-history as a surrogate mother to various chimp infants in other AZA-accredited zoos. She was born at Zoo Miami, and has been part of chimpanzee troops at the Oklahoma City Zoo and ZooTampa. “She has never had any offspring of her own, but she does really like babies and has been a proven foster mother over the years,” said Cantwell. “If we were to have a chimp born here and the mother was unable to care for her, it would be our plan to have Abby help raise the infant as a surrogate mother.”

Chimpanzees (*P. troglodytes*) are classified as endangered on the International Union for the

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Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List. One of the greatest threats to wild chimpanzees is loss of their African forest habitat due to commercial logging, agriculture and fires. Poaching and disease also put the wild population at risk.

With the addition of Abby, there are currently eleven chimpanzees in The Maryland Zoo's troop. They can be seen daily in the Chimpanzee Forest.

About The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

Founded in 1876, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is the third oldest zoo in the United States and is internationally known for its contributions in conservation and research. More than 1,500 animals are represented in the Zoo's varied natural habitat exhibits in areas such as the award-winning Penguin Coast, Polar Bear Watch, the Maryland Wilderness, African Journey and the Children's Zoo. Situated in Druid Hill Park near downtown Baltimore, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit www.marylandzoo.org.

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