

MARYLAND ZOO

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1 August 2017

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MARYLAND ZOO WELCOMES NEW SANDHILL CRANE

BALTIMORE, MD – The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is happy to announce the addition of a seven-year-old sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*) to the flock. Allegany or “Allie,” is joining male sandhill crane Garrett in the Marsh Aviary section of the Maryland Wilderness at the Zoo.

Allie came to the Zoo from SeaWorld Orlando. “She was found in the wild with an injury to her left wing, and was subsequently deemed non-releasable due to the extent of the injury,” said Jen Kottyan, avian collection and conservation manager at the Zoo. “Our colleagues at SeaWorld Orlando took her in for rehabilitation and to locate a permanent home for her. We were seeking a companion for Garrett, so we were happy to bring her here.” Allie was transferred to The Maryland Zoo in mid-June and recently completed her mandatory 30-day quarantine stay at the Zoo hospital.

Sandhill cranes are relatively tall slate grey birds with a long neck, long legs, and bare crimson skin on the front of their head. They are usually found in huge flocks numbering the thousands in central and western North America. They breed and forage in open fields and wetlands, migrating in the early fall to the southern US and northern Mexico. They are not endangered and populations thrive in their natural range, but they are infrequently seen this far east in the US. According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources however, their range is gradually spreading east and at least one pair has been seen nesting in Garrett County.

“Zoos and aquariums frequently partner with other wildlife experts in their states when it comes to providing medical attention or rehabilitation to native species,” continued Kottyan. “Garrett was placed at the Zoo by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources after he was found wandering alone in Western Maryland and deemed non-releasable. In this case we were happy to partner with SeaWorld Orlando to offer Allie a permanent home in the Marsh Aviary. She seems to be settling in nicely.”

Initial introductions between Garrett and Allie went very well. “They are interested in one another, which is a very encouraging as Garrett has not had any socialization with another of his species since he was found alone two years ago,” continued Kottyan. “It’s great to listen to them vocalize with one another and should be very interesting to observe in the Aviary.”

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 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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