

MARYLAND ZOO

NEWS

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MARYLAND ZOO BIDS GOODBYE TO BELLA, FARMYARD FAVORITE

BALTIMORE -- The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is saddened to announce the death of Bella, the Ossabaw Island hog. Bella, age 17, was humanely euthanized at the Zoo yesterday after her health declined over the past few weeks.

“Bella took up residence in the Farmyard as a piglet, and touched many people, staff and visitors alike, with her engaging personality over the years,” said Erin Cantwell, mammal collection and conservation manager. “Bella was an exceptional ambassador for her species and will be greatly missed.”

Ossabaw Island hogs are a uniquely American feral breed of pig native to Ossabaw Island, off the coast of Georgia, near Savannah. They are descended from domestic pigs brought over by explorers that either escaped or were set free intentionally on the island and are especially tolerant of heat, humidity, and seasonal scarcity of food.

“The average life span for the breed is 10-15 years, and certainly the individual care Bella received over the years contributed to her long life with us,” stated Dr. Ellen Bronson, director of animal health, conservation, and research at the Zoo. “Ultimately, age-related ailments were catching up with her, and her quality of life began to decrease,” continued Bronson. “As she declined over the past few weeks, we knew the time had come to humanely euthanize her.”

At this time there is no plan to replace Bella with another Ossabaw Island hog in the Farmyard.

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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