



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MARYLAND ZOO LIONESSE EUTHANIZED

BALTIMORE, MD – The Maryland Zoo is saddened to announce that Cuma (Koo-ma), the Maryland Zoo’s geriatric lioness, was euthanized late yesterday evening. “Cuma’s health had been in gradual decline from several age-related afflictions, but we had been able to keep her quite comfortable with multiple pain medications and joint supplements.” stated Dr. Ellen Bronson, senior veterinarian at the Zoo. “This weekend Cuma suddenly became lethargic, and staff noted an unusual lack of appetite. We spent most of Sunday assessing her health, but she declined rapidly last night, which is when we decided it would be best to humanely euthanize her.”

Cuma was born in February 1996 at the Philadelphia Zoo. She came to the Maryland Zoo in 2007 from the Dallas Zoo, where she had lived for ten years. “Our male lion, Hassan, joined Cuma on exhibit in late 2008,” stated Carey Ricciardone, mammal collection and conservation manager. “They were impressive exhibit animals and became very good companions for each other.”

At almost 19 years old, she lived past the median life expectancy for lions, which is 16.8 years according to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). “Cuma had a calm confidence that made her a great animal to have the pleasure to work with. She was very regal when she sat in the sun on her hot rock in the exhibit,” continued Ricciardone. “She will be missed by all of those who cared for her and who visited her over the years.”

The Zoo currently has four lions – three one-year-old cubs, Luke, Leia and Zuri, as well as Hassan, the seven-year-old male, sire to Luke and Leia.

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 Polar Bear Watch, the Maryland Wilderness, African Journey and the award-winning Children’s Zoo. Situated in Druid Hill Park, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit www.marylandzoo.org.

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