



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
17 July 2014

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**PENGUIN COAST SET TO OPEN SEPTEMBER 27  
AT THE MARYLAND ZOO IN BALTIMORE**

*-- Also opening is the Marsh Aviary in the Maryland Wilderness and flamingos are back! --*

**BALTIMORE, MD** – The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is pleased to announce that *Penguin Coast*, the Zoo's new state-of-the-art African penguin exhibit, will open to guests on Saturday, September 27, 2014 at 10:00 am. *Penguin Coast* will bring guests up-close to penguins and white-breasted cormorants in a vivid re-creation of their natural habitat along the coasts and islands of South Africa.

*Penguin Coast* will provide a richer and more diverse living environment for the Zoo's current colony of African black-footed penguins, including a 185,000 gallon pool surrounding the indoor Conservation Center which will house the birds' nest boxes, a hospital room, kitchen and keeper work space. This space, at more than 1,920 square feet, will allow the Zoo to eventually grow the African penguin colony up to 100 birds.

"One of the most thrilling experiences at *Penguin Coast* will be the opportunity to see the penguins swimming from an underwater viewing area. For as ungainly as they seem on land, they are amazingly graceful swimmers," commented Don Hutchinson, president/CEO of The Maryland Zoo. "The overall design will allow visitors to see the penguins closer than ever from many distinct vantage points around the exhibit. We couldn't be more excited for the exhibit to open."

*Penguin Coast* will include an interpretive building which includes a multi-purpose room for education programs and animal demonstrations, restrooms, indoor space for special events, the underwater viewing window and view to a tidal pool where a dump tank will periodically unload gallons of water creating a wave-like effect for the birds.

There will also be a smaller building for the Zoo's traveling outreach penguins, which are currently housed in another area of the Zoo. This new building will be specifically for the housing and care of these "Animal Ambassadors" and will include a separate yard and pool for up to eight birds.

Also opening on September 27 is the Zoo's Marsh Aviary in the Maryland Wilderness, which has been undergoing major renovations since late winter. The aviary will house many native bird species including turkey vulture, black vulture, wood duck, black-crowned night heron, little blue heron and cattle egret. These renovations were made necessary by the destruction of the old aviary during the twin blizzards of 2010.

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“But maybe the biggest surprise of all on September 27 will be the re-emergence of our flock of flamingos,” continued Hutchinson. “We have wanted to move these gorgeous birds out of the Main Valley for a long time now, and I can’t tell you how many guests have asked us when they would see them again. We are absolutely thrilled to announce that as part of the *Penguin Coast* construction project, we have designed a space for our flock and the thirteen flamingos will be moving to the African Boardwalk area adjacent to *Penguin Coast* in late September.”

The Zoo will close for the four days (September 23-26) leading up to the *Penguin Coast* debut to allow last minute exhibit clean-up to take place, reopening at 10:00 am on September 27 for the Grand Opening of *Penguin Coast*.

“African penguins have been calling Rock Island home for 45 years, so this marks quite a departure for us,” said Hutchinson. “The Maryland Zoo maintains one of the largest colonies and has the most successful breeding program of African penguins in North America and we hope the new environment will enable us to continue with our efforts on behalf of these birds.”

To learn more about *Penguin Coast*, please visit [www.marylandzoo.org](http://www.marylandzoo.org).

#### **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 near downtown Baltimore, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit [www.marylandzoo.org](http://www.marylandzoo.org).

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