

# MARYLAND ZOO

## NEWS

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### **MARYLAND ZOO LION PRIDE TO TEMPORARILY MOVE**

*-- Zoo's renovation and expansion continues --*

**BALTIMORE, MD** – As The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore continues with the expansion of the African Journey section, the Zoo's pride of lions, Hassan, Zuri and Luke will temporarily move behind the scenes. During the time while they are behind the scenes, four-year-old Luke will be leaving The Maryland Zoo to make his home as a companion with several female lions at another zoo also accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA).

"We are making major changes to the design of the lion habitat," said Don Hutchinson, president/CEO of the Zoo. "While we know visitors will miss seeing the lions temporarily, the expansion and upgrades will benefit the lions and our visitors in the future. As far as Luke goes, he has been recommended to move by the AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP) and while we are sorry to see him go, we know he will be well cared for into the future."

The new habitat designs will create opportunities for animals to engage naturally and actively with their environment and to make choices about when, where and how to engage. A newly created guest pathway, the African Overlook, will be developed as a cul-de-sac in between the lion and the giraffe habitats, adjacent to the Giraffe Feeding Station. This pathway will have a dramatic impact on the visitor experience by providing guests with an eye-level passage to lions on the left and giraffes on the right. The barrier along the lion side of the African Overlook path will be a combination of stainless steel mesh and glass, giving the lion habitat a more open feel. There will also be a large window with a training demonstration area where visitors will be able to watch keepers interact with the lions during positive reinforcement training sessions, which effectively ask the lions to participate in their own health care.

The Zoo is working once again with CLR Design, the architectural and landscape design firm that created the award-winning *Penguin Coast*. The Gilbane Building Company is the general contractor for the project. Construction began in March and is expected to be completed during the summer of 2019.

"We hope that our members and guests will bear with us while we are working to bring this new vision to light for the benefit of the animals in our care, our staff and our visitors," concluded Hutchinson.

For updates on the renovations during construction, 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 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](http://www.marylandzoo.org).

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