

MARYLAND ZOO

NEWS

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CHANGES COMING TO CHEETAH HABITAT AT THE MARYLAND ZOO

-- Refu and Wgasa to move out, cheetahs from Omaha to move in --

BALTIMORE, MD – Today, The Maryland Zoo’s cheetah brother pair, four-year-olds Refu and Wgasa, will be moving from Baltimore to the Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park and Wildlife Safari in Ashland, Nebraska. The Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park, which is run by Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, have in turn brought four-year-old cheetah brothers Bud and Davis to The Maryland Zoo.

“As an active participant in the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) Cheetah Species Survival Program (SSP) we were asked to move Refu and Wgasa to Omaha so they could become part of their cheetah breeding program,” stated Erin Cantwell, mammal collection and conservation manager at The Maryland Zoo. “While we are sad to see them leave, we are glad that they will have a chance to be paired up with other genetically valuable cheetah to further strengthen the world’s population of these rare animals.”

Bud and Davis were born on October 1, 2014 at Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Glen Rose, Texas. They moved to the African Grasslands habitat at Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium in 2016 and subsequently moved to Omaha Zoo’s Wildlife Safari Park in 2018.

Cheetah, the world’s fastest land mammal, are also the most endangered cat in Africa. Historically native to Africa and Asia from South Africa to India, cheetah can now only be found in parts of eastern, central and southwestern Africa, as well as a small portion of Iran. Cheetah are facing extinction due to habitat loss, the illegal wildlife trade and human-wildlife conflict. “North American zoos that have cheetah work cooperatively on research and conservation on behalf of these cats,” said Cantwell. “Educating people is critical, not only here but also in Africa. If local people in Africa come to see the cheetah as an asset in terms of promoting ecotourism, they will move forward into the next generation eager to save this magnificent cat and safeguard its future.”

“At the moment, we do not know when Bud and Davis will make their first public appearance,” said Cantwell. “They are currently in mandatory quarantine while they are introduced to their new home and new animal care team, so the habitat will be empty for a few weeks while we prepare for their debut. We look forward to seeing them along the African Journey boardwalk soon.”

For updates regarding the debut of Bud and Davis, follow The Maryland Zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) and our website 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.

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