

ZOOGRAM

The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

SPRING 2019

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“We are dedicated to the best possible experience for our guests, from the moment you arrive at the Zoo to the moment you drive away.”

In this issue of *Zoogram*, you will be transported to the Amazon River Basin in South America where, in some parts, annual rainfall exceeds 100 inches. There, the Amazon and its tributaries overflow their banks routinely, flooding surrounding forest for months at a time. Many thousands of miles separate Baltimore from Amazonia, but you might not have thought so in the year 2018. It seemed to be our year of never-ending rain! A record amount fell and certainly put a damper on Zoo visitation. I am forever an optimist, though, and I think it’s time in 2019 for a lovely spring season here at the Zoo.

Meanwhile, through every type of weather, *African Journey* continues to undergo the major changes that you have now heard so much about. Honestly, this is not only the most expansive renovation we have undertaken in the past 11 years but also the most mind-bending. Every time I am at the construction site, I try to remember what the area looked like only a year ago and that is getting more and more difficult. I am amazed by the transformation and cannot wait to welcome you to the new lion, giraffe, and elephant habitats.

As you know, wildlife conservation remains central to our mission, and in this issue of *Zoogram* you will read about the work our own Dr. Ellen Bronson did this past fall, deep in the wilderness of Bolivia. This is an important project that not only benefits the very rare Bolivian river dolphins but also highlights the important contributions of women scientists and wildlife veterinarians to conservation work in Bolivia. We hope you enjoy the story of Dr. Bronson’s ground-breaking work and adventure, as well as the tale of two polar bear half-sisters, Amelia Gray and Neva, now living in *Polar Bear Watch*.

We’ll all hope for a spring full of 75-degree days with soft breezes blowing—perfect weather for a day at the Zoo. Even if it’s not always perfect, though, you can be sure that our staff and volunteers will be here to greet you with a smile, rain or shine, and facilitate a fine day of animal-watching. We are dedicated not only to the animals in our care but also to the best possible experience for our guests, from the moment you arrive at the Zoo to the moment you drive away.

See you soon!

Don Hutchinson
President/CEO



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ADDRA CALVES

Over the winter, two Addra gazelle calves were born at the Zoo. “Wren” gave birth to her first calf, an 11-pound male, in November. About one month later, “Pipit” gave birth to her own offspring, a 9.5-pound female. Mothers and calves have been bonding together behind the scenes and will be outdoors this spring along with the lesser kudu and two other Addra gazelles, including Makuru, who sired both new calves. These births result from recommendations by the Addra Gazelle Species Survival Plan (SSP) coordinated by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). In their native Africa, Addra gazelle are critically endangered.



PENGUIN CHICKS

Between Labor Day and late January, 10 new chicks hatched at *Penguin Coast* and 7 will join the Zoo’s thriving African penguin colony as permanent members. The Zoo continues to have the most successful breeding program and manage the largest colony of African penguins in North America. We are proud to help grow and strengthen the North American population of this critically endangered penguin species.

WILD RAVENS

Every so often, the raven living in *Polar Bear Watch* is visited by one or more wild ravens. These large, jet-black songbirds are not common in the Baltimore area, but Zoo Naturalist Peter Martin has been seeing them more frequently at the Zoo and elsewhere nearby. He shared this observation with Bruce Peterjohn, Chief of the U.S. Bird Banding Lab at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, Maryland, who believes that ravens are moving back into this and other parts of their historical range where they were once eliminated through persecution.



RETURN OF LIONS

Imagine if you went away on an extended vacation and returned several months later, only to discover that someone had done a complete makeover of your home. You might be thrilled with the results but it would still take some getting used to. This may be true for the Zoo’s lions right now as they settle into their newly familiar surroundings in *African Journey*, and their keepers are paying close attention as the big cats settle in. Be sure to stop by and see them next time you visit the Zoo!

HITCHHIKING TOAD

In mid-January, the Zoo’s Animal Hospital received an unlikely guest: a hitchhiking toad that had made its way from South Africa to Baltimore inside a shoe. The owner of the shoe, a Johns Hopkins scholar named Nancy Connell, found the amphibian one morning at the bottom of her gym locker. She quickly pieced the story together and then got the toad help.

Connell had visited a friend’s farm in South Africa over the winter holidays. While there, she saw many toads similar to the stowaway and learned that they liked to jump inside boots. She became accustomed to checking her boots before putting them on. It never occurred to her that she should also check her sneakers, and when it was time to leave, she threw them in her suitcase along with everything else. Soon after her return, even before unpacking her suitcase, she put her sneakers in a bag and went to the gym. Her little friend must have jumped out of the shoe, into the bag, and then out of the bag, into the locker.

And so there he was, staring up at her. Connell understood that the long journey must have taken a toll on the toad, so she sought help. After a flurry of phone calls, she delivered the toad to Baltimore County’s Division of Animal Services in Jackson. Animal Services phoned the Zoo, and that is how a toad commonly found in South African gardens and farms ended up in Druid Hill Park.

Now identified as a Ranger’s toad, the hitchhiking toad is being cared for by Zoo staff and may join the Animal Embassy collection as an Animal Ambassador. Ranger’s toads, also known as raucous toads, are considered a species of least concern by the IUCN, the world’s leading conservation organization. They are common throughout most of their native South Africa.



PLAN

YOUR NEXT VISIT

This spring you can enjoy the Zoo many different ways and from many different perspectives: as a citizen scientist, photographer, Brew celebrant, Breakfast diner, overnight camper, yoga practitioner, artist, and always—best of all—animal enthusiast. This is your zoo, so we invite you to make the most of it!

Stay tuned for the return of lions, giraffes, and elephants in African Journey!

While planning your next visit, please check the Zoo’s website—www.MarylandZoo.org—for timely updates on events, programs, exhibits, and improvements.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Goat Corral: Brush, pet, or just visit the goats.

Creature Encounters: Start your visit—and meet Animal Ambassadors—at the Zoo’s outdoor education center.

Education Stations: Stop by for some hands-on learning and fun at stations throughout the Zoo.

Keeper Chats: Keepers share stories and answer questions about Zoo animals and animal care.

Penguin Feedings: Twice a day, a Zoo educator narrates while keepers feed the penguins.

Jones Falls Zephyr: All aboard the Zoo train. Open daily, weather permitting. \$

Carousel: Take a spin on our vintage carousel. \$

Giraffe Feeding Station: CLOSED DURING CONSTRUCTION

\$: fee to participate

MARCH

Stroller Safari

First a story, then a stroll.

March 2 & 12

11 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

Zoo Snooze SCOUT Overnight

A scouts-only campout

March 9-10

6 p.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

Where the Wild Things Art

Craft animal-inspired art.

March 13

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

\$ R

Breakfast with Chimps

Start your day in a wild way.

March 16

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Zoo Bloom & Farm Day

Goodbye winter, hello spring!

March 16

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Breakfast with Penguins

Fish is on their menu, not yours.

March 23

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Citizen Science: Frog Watch

Learn how to listen for frogs.

March 23

10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

R

Yoga at the Zoo

Strike a pose near penguins.

March 31

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

APRIL

Yoga at the Zoo

Is there a penguin pose?

April 6

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

CrossFit

Warm up near flamingos.

April 7

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Stroller Safaris

Tour the Zoo with your toddler.

April 7 & 18

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

\$ R

Breakfast with Penguins

No tux required.

April 13

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Zoo Snooze SCOUT Overnight

An overnight for zoo-loving scouts

April 13-14

6 p.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

Where the Wild Things Art

Bring out your inner artist.

April 17

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

Mary Sue Candies Bunny Bonanzoo

Colored eggs galore and more

April 19-21

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

\$ R

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

Hop on over to the Mansion House.

April 20

8:30a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Citizen Science: Budburst & iNaturalist

Photograph plants and animals for science.

April 21

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

R

Party for the Planet

Celebrate Earth Day with us.

April 21

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Breakfast with Bears

Did you ever imagine such a morning?

April 28

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

MAY

Breakfast with Penguins

Sip your juice, sight a penguin.

May 4

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Stroller Safari

Perfect for very young Zoogoers

May 4 & 14

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

\$ R

Yoga at the Zoo

Vinyasa, then visit.

May 11

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Junior Photo Safari

For aspiring wildlife photographers aged 8-14

May 11

10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

\$ R

Breakfast with the Giraffes

A breakfast you won't forget.

May 12

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

\$ R

Where the Wild Things Art

Craft an evening at the Zoo.

May 15

5:30pm-8pm

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

CrossFit

Do lunges near the leopard.

May 18

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Sip & Stroll

Sip, stroll, and learn about zoo evolution.

May 18

5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

\$ R

Brew at the Zoo

Raise a glass and dance the afternoon away at this good-time fundraiser for the Zoo. Bring a date or bring your kids—it's a party for all ages!

Advance tickets can be purchased online and include unlimited beer samplings, a complimentary tasting glass, and admission to the Zoo. VIP packages are also available. Purchase your tickets soon—this event will sell out!

Dates: May 25 & 26

Hours: 1 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Prices: \$15-\$100



JUNE

Stroller Safari

Fun for parents & toddlers

June 2

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

\$ R

Breakfast with the Chimps

Don't share.

June 9

8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

\$ R

Yoga at the Zoo

Outdoors at Penguin Coast

June 9 & 29

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Where the Wild Things Art

Let's make some art.

June 12

5:30 p.m.- 8 p.m.

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

Breakfast with Celebrity Birds

A bucket-list item for bird lovers

June 15

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Where the Wild Things Art for KIDS

Craft night for kids only!

June 19

5:30 p.m.- 8 p.m.

Penguin Education Center
\$ R

CrossFit

Do pushups by the porcupines.

June 22

8 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Wild About Giraffes Day

Look way, way up and admire.

June 22

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Breakfast with the Penguins

Say good morning to the colony.

June 28

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

\$ R

Wild About Enrichment Day

What is it and why does it matter?

June 29

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Breakfast with Giraffes

Pancakes for you, browse for them.

June 30

8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

\$ R

Amelia Gray exploring her new habitat with Neva (not pictured).

Sister BEARS

By Sarah Evans, Zoogram Editor

Polar bears are frequently described as solitary animals. Wild ones do spend much of their time alone, wandering the frozen ice pack at the top of the world. However, the adventures of the acclaimed Russian biologist and animal behaviorist Nikita Ovsyanikov belie the polar bear's solitary reputation.

Beginning in 1990, Ovsyanikov spent eight seasons living in the middle of the Chukchi Sea, on Wrangel and Herald Islands, surrounded by polar bears. The Chukchi Sea lies northeast of Siberia and northwest of Alaska and spills into the Arctic Ocean. Polar bears gather on the remote neighboring islands to breed and to wait for sea ice to form each year. During the course of Ovsyanikov's observations and interactions with dozens of polar bears, he came to appreciate that, in fact, they are very social. When living in close quarters, they are intensely aware of and interested in each other. They follow distinct rules of social engagement which, in order to survive, Ovsyanikov had to learn. "Each interaction forced me to play a kind of game in which I had to adjust myself to the bears' social etiquette," he recalls. "In other words, I had to play at being a polar bear."

From the moment a polar bear is born, it starts to learn proper behavior from its mother. This means not only how to swim and how to hunt but how to behave around other bears. "Polar bears are intelligent animals," says Ovsyanikov. "They realize that they can hurt one another, and they avoid situations in which their power might be put to the test. They err on the side of caution."

Manners Matter

Neva and Amelia Gray, the Zoo's two new polar bears, were born one week apart in November 2016 at the Columbus Zoo. They are half sisters who share the same father, but their early upbringings were quite different. Each was born a twin but only Neva's twin survived. Neva was raised by her mother alongside her brother, Nuniq, who grew to a massive 600 pounds in less than two years. Amelia Gray, on the other hand, was raised by her mother as a singleton or "only child." Because polar bear mothers typically raise their cubs independently and are fiercely protective, Neva and Amelia Gray knew of each other at the Columbus Zoo but never shared space.

When the two sisters moved to The Maryland Zoo shortly before their second birthdays in October 2018, they met nose to nose for the very first time. "It was really interesting, when we first put them together, to see how the circumstances of how they were raised affected how they behaved," recalls Erin Cantwell, Mammal Collection and Conservation Manager. "Neva had better bear skills because growing up, she had to figure out how to get around her huge brother and manage him."

According to Ovsyanikov, any polar bear that approaches another bear too quickly and confidently will be assessed as a threat, so it is better to move slowly and give space. When saying hello, two polar bears approach cautiously, stretch out their necks so that their muzzles nearly touch, and then open their mouths wide in what looks like a silent roar. Neva knew all this but Amelia Gray apparently did not. She got too close too quickly and, as Cantwell describes it, "Neva had to make it clear that she had personal boundaries that Amelia needed to respect." She did so without physical aggression (other than maybe a quick paw swipe) but with deep, throaty vocalizations that sent a strong message.

Months later, Amelia Gray has learned her sister's social cues. If they were wild polar bears trying to survive on the sea ice, they might not be hanging out together, but here at the Zoo circumstances are different. The two get along just fine, despite occasional grumbling. "They like to vocalize at each other," says Cantwell. "It sounds so aggressive when you hear it, but they literally just stand next to each other with their heads down and roar, then go about their business."

You Need to Ask!

As you might expect, the complaints sometimes concern one sister taking the other's food. Apparently this is typical. "When several bears feed simultaneously from the same carcass, there can be a lot of growling and short open-mouthed lunges," notes Ovsyanikov. However, if asked politely and appropriately, a polar bear will share. There is a right way and a wrong way to ask. The right way involves a slow gentle approach, a circle around the "carcass," and a nose-to-nose greeting.

Maybe this is something that Neva and Amelia Gray still need to work on. One day not long ago, their keepers put two oxtails in the yard for them. They found the same one, overlooked the other, and proceeded to engage in a loud and dramatic slow-motion game of tug-of-war. "One would be eating the oxtail and the other would sneak in and then they're roaring," recalls Cantwell. "Someone would slide it slowly one way and the other would come back, grab the other end, and inch it back the other way." This might have gone on forever, if not for the keepers making the second oxtail more obvious, at which point both bears settled down to their own snacks.

Beware the Company You Keep

Interestingly, the very fact that polar bears are socially inclined contributes to the survival of bears such as Neva and Amelia Gray. It has everything to do with sharing food. In the wild, Neva and Amelia Gray would be entering the most difficult and challenging phase of their lives, known as sub-adulthood. During this phase, which lasts from about the age of two to five, a young polar bear has separated from its mother (and siblings) but is not yet an experienced hunter. Sub-adults have a more difficult time feeding themselves through the winter and are lowest-ranked within a polar bear community. In order to eat, they must beg properly.

“The lone sub-adults were always the hangers-on in the community,” writes Ovsyanikov, “yet they were tolerated by the adults and allowed access to the kills. I realized then that the high level of social tolerance among bears plays an important role in the survival of the entire population. For one thing, it helps such lone sub-adults survive until they are able to hunt and make their own contributions to the community.”

At the Zoo and in the wild, it is clear that manners matter to polar bears. Neva and Amelia Gray have learned how to get along and would be forced to do the same in a community of wild polar bears. As sub-adults, they would keep their distance, not attract unnecessary attention, and ask before trying to share food. They would steer clear of mature males and even mothers with cubs but might seek out bears their own age. “The company of other young bears is so attractive,” observed Ovsyanikov, “that cubs still under their mothers’ care often leave the family for several hours to enjoy some freedom with friends.”

Sisterhood of Two

Neva and Amelia Gray don’t have to go far to find companionship. They are now a sisterhood of two, which has helped them transition to their new circumstances at the Zoo. “They have been an excellent resource for each other while going through this change together,” says Cantwell, adding that “every night, they sleep in one big pile.” If their napping habits are any indication, then sisterhood suits them.

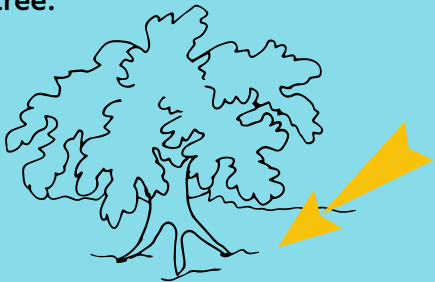
Amelia Gray and Neva napping on a sunny winter day.



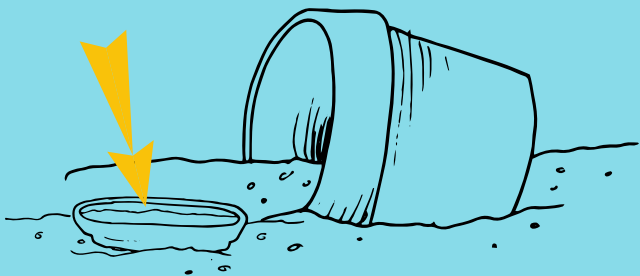
Maybe you don’t want a toad living in your shoe (see p. 4), but adding a toad house to your garden is a nice touch and attracting toads to your garden is a good idea. One toad can eat up to 100 insects per day, and some of those insects might be eating your plants, so that’s great natural pest control!

The easiest and best way to make a toad abode is to use a clay flower pot. Clay pots stay cooler than plastic containers in the summer and hold moisture, which makes them an excellent choice.

Choose a shady location, beneath a bush or under a tree.



If there is no natural water source nearby, then sink a small dish in the soil near the toad abode and be sure to fill it regularly.



Turn your pot on its side and bury it halfway in soil until you’ve created a tiny cave just right for a toad.



To decorate your toad abode, you can use washable, non-toxic paint or, better yet, you can cover it with pebbles, moss, and other natural items.





RIVER DOLPHIN RESCUE

By Sarah Evans

The Madeira River originates in the snow-capped mountains of western Bolivia and descends precipitously into lowland forests to the east. As it tumbles out of the mountains, the river carries tons of suspended sediment, turning clear water milky brown. Fed by tributaries across the Bolivian lowlands, the Madeira eventually spills into the mighty Amazon in neighboring Brazil, but only after passing over 250 miles of powerful rapids and waterfalls near the border that separate the upper Madeira from the lower Madeira.

In the murky waters of the upper Madeira and its tributaries lives one of the most mysterious mammals on Earth, the Bolivian river dolphin. Known locally as buefo, it is odd in the extreme—definitely dolphin-like, but pinkish in color, with tiny eyes, whiskers on its long beak, and sometimes black teeth. Bufeos belong to a small and exclusive river dolphin family that includes less than a handful of species split between South America and Asia. Bufeos are native only to Bolivia because, however many there are (and nobody really knows), they cannot pass over those rapids and waterfalls into Brazil. They remain an aquatic wonder in a land-locked country.

For thousands of years, the river dolphins of South America have been the stuff of legend, imbued by locals with supernatural powers both good and bad. They

embody the spirits of those who have drowned. They transform into handsome men who come ashore at sunset to seduce unsuspecting women. They whisk swimmers away to an underwater city from which they will never return. They protect other aquatic creatures such as the Amazon manatee.

The legends underscore the mystery surrounding these secretive river dwellers and, in some parts of their range, have generally protected them from hunting and persecution. However, legend cannot protect river dolphins from changes to their freshwater environments. The reality of such environmental changes is what led Dr. Ellen Bronson, Senior Director of Animal Health, Conservation & Research at the Zoo, to the shore of a remote Bolivian lake last October to scan the silty surface for pink snouts.

THE DILEMMA

In this shallow lake, several Bolivian river dolphins were trapped, and had been for years. They once swam in a tributary of the Madeira River that ran through the lake, but over time as sediment from nearby soybean fields ran into the river and lake, both began to silt in. By 2012, the river had changed course considerably and was no longer connected to the lake. This left the dolphins stuck. The lake continues to shrink and soon will be too small to support the existing population of dolphins.

A local villager was the first to notice the aquatic mammals. He quietly watched them for years and finally concluded that they were trapped. He lives in a remote area about 150 miles from the city of Santa Cruz. He made contact with Claudia Venegas, a biologist affiliated with the Noel Kempff Mercado Natural History Museum in Santa Cruz. In 2017, Venegas began organizing a rescue operation and, in the process, contacted Dr. Bronson and Dr. Sharon Deem, a colleague at the St. Louis Zoo, to ask for veterinary support. The request came from out of the blue but made some sense, as Bronson and Deem have participated in wildlife conservation work in Bolivia for many years. They have focused on maned wolves and other carnivores, though, not river dolphins.

“Dolphins were not previously an area of expertise for me,” admits Bronson. “But the further we got into the planning, it became evident that there is very little known about this species, especially regarding their health.” For the next several months, she worked closely with marine mammal experts and other interested colleagues to devise a plan for the safe transport and medical examinations of the trapped dolphins. They secured grant funding for this first-of-its-kind wildlife health project, and on October 21, 2018, Bronson flew to Santa Cruz to join the three-week rescue operation.

THE JOURNEY

Bolivia is stunning in its natural beauty and diversity, but it is a rugged country that is difficult to traverse. Bronson and other members of the rescue team were stuck in Santa Cruz for days, waiting for roads to open that would lead to the dolphins. The journey was expected to take a few hours; instead, it took twelve. “It was kind of like being in the car on vacation with your dad,” Bronson joked. “After five hours in the cab of the truck, I said ‘Are we there yet?’ and they’d say ‘Just a little further! Almost there!’” On the final leg of the trip, the team had to use machetes to clear-cut passages through the forest because the road ended before reaching the lake.

The extra time in Santa Cruz actually helped the team fine-tune their rescue plan. The group consisted of two female biologists, two female veterinarians, and about 20 state government employees, all male, who were trained as either aquatic rescuers or forest fire fighters. Most had not worked with animals before but all were highly skilled first responders who knew how to dig in and problem solve under challenging conditions in remote locations. “They figured it out, along with the biologists,” recalls Bronson, “and they were great—very safety-minded, very adaptable, and extremely hard-working.”

Once the team arrived at the lake and set up camp, they had to figure out the best route to the river where the dolphins would be translocated. “The plan was to get the dolphins to the river on a road about four miles away,” says Bronson, “but when we got there, the road had been washed out by a rainstorm and was impassable.” Distance mattered because timing mattered—you can only have a wild dolphin in a makeshift pool in the back of a truck for so long.

They spent the next several days trying to find another route. They drove from village to village, asking anyone and

everyone how to reach the river. “The people we met were so willing to help,” remarks Bronson. “Many left everything they were doing and jumped in the truck with us!” Finally, they found a path to the river – about 20 miles away, which meant a two-hour drive each direction. The team would be able to rescue and translocate no more than two dolphins per day; if they were to move as many dolphins as possible, time was of the essence.

THE RESCUE

Capturing the dolphins went smoothly in part because they were amazingly cooperative. The dolphins were curious about the boat and followed it willingly. “It was like we were the Pied Piper,” recalls Bronson. “They came from everywhere, literally, and they stayed with us the whole time, up and down, up and down, all around the boat.” This allowed the rescue team to circle the dolphins with nets, trap two at a time, and bring them to shore individually for examination by Bronson and her medical colleague, Dr. Julie Sheldon, a veterinary resident from the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago who was there representing the St. Louis Zoo’s Institute for Conservation Medicine.

The dolphins remained mostly calm during the examinations, but make no mistake, this was a momentous occasion. On the shore of that lake, as far as she is aware, Bronson performed the first comprehensive health assessment ever on this species. Every night, she and Sheldon stayed up late analyzing the samples in their pop-up field laboratory. They had prepared as best they could for the examinations that they would perform, but to some extent they had to figure it out as they went because there was little prior experience with this species upon which to draw.

The same could be said for the translocations. Other river dolphins have been rescued and moved before, but not under these precise circumstances. After planning for every possible



Clockwise from top left: River dolphin rescue team; Dr. Sheldon, rescue team leader Claudia Venegas, and Dr. Bronson; gently restraining dolphin during medical examination; Dr. Bronson examining a dolphin prior to translocation.

Next page, clockwise from top left: Dr. Bronson and Dr. Sheldon analyzing biological samples in field laboratory at campsite; translocating dolphin by truck; rescue team in lake setting nets to capture dolphins.



contingency, the team simply had to forge ahead into the unknown. Over several exhausting and endless days, they were able to translocate six dolphins—one or two at a time—from the lake where they were trapped to the river where they would swim free. To do so, the team built a small pool in the back of a pickup truck and placed each dolphin in the pool, on a water-saturated foam mattress. During the hours-long trip to the river, they poured water over the dolphins constantly. Each release was as quick as possible, and off each dolphin went, showing no sign of weakness or fatigue.

THE RETURN TRIP

Meanwhile, back at the camp site,

hundreds of little crabs were scuttling around: a sign that the rainy season was coming. And sure enough, it did! During the last two days of the trip, the dolphin rescues were cut short by the sudden onset of torrential rain. The ground turned to mud, the roads washed out, and the team had no choice but to pack up and leave at the first opportunity.

Luckily, the on-site health assessments had brought good news. The animals seemed to be in better shape than anyone expected, which suggests that those still in the lake will be fine for a while longer, until another rescue can be attempted. Ultimately, though, they must be moved in order to survive because the lake will continue to shrink.

Before release, three of the dolphins were fitted with GPS satellite transmitters so that their movements could be tracked. From her office in Baltimore, Bronson can follow their progress up and down the river. She remains in close touch with Venegas, the lead Bolivian biologist, and expects that the Zoo will stay involved in this important and ground-breaking project. You will never see river dolphins at the Zoo, but our mission includes advancing wildlife conservation around the world, and this project presents a compelling opportunity to do just that.



SUPPORT ZOO MORE WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Everyone has their own reasons for joining the Zoo, and every reason is a good one! Here are a few that you probably know well already:

- It's good for your budget.
- It's a great way to channel your passion for animals.
- It's a tangible way to support wildlife conservation.

We thank you for your membership and want to be sure that you are getting the most out of it. Let us tell you about a few perks you don't want to miss!

Members-Only Openings and Offers

Very soon, the Zoo will celebrate the re-opening of its lion, giraffe, and elephant habitats, and as members you can take advantage of exclusive viewings of the newly renovated exhibits. Also new this year, Zoo members can add a year's worth of unlimited train and carousel rides for only \$19 per person. Keep your eyes out for this new benefit and come along for the ride!

Extra Special Family Activities

As a member, you get great deals on Zoo events and activities. Sign the kids up for Summer Camp, go on a Stroller Safari with your toddler, or enjoy a memorable Constellation Presents Breakfast with the Animals. Enjoy daily Keeper Chats and narrated penguin feedings, and don't forget to check out the Penguin Cam on our website when you get home.

Grown-Up Fun

We offer exclusive member savings on Yoga at The Zoo, Adults-only Zoo Snoozes, Sip-n-Stroll tours and even Adult Summer Camp. Members also save on Brew at the Zoo, a fun annual fundraiser that transforms the Zoo into the most exciting watering hole this side of the Atlantic!

Benefits Beyond the Zoo

Your member perks don't end when you leave the Zoo! Visit our website for a full list of Zoo Perks, which includes discounts at local shops and restaurants, Orioles games, Baltimore Brigade games, Hippodrome performances, as well as reciprocal privileges at more than 150 other zoos and aquariums around the country!



For pre-teens and teens interested in a Zoo experience this summer, try our **Keeper-in-Training Program**. Participants learn firsthand what it takes to care for the Zoo's animals. Sessions are open to students entering grades 7-9 and grades 10-12 in fall 2019.

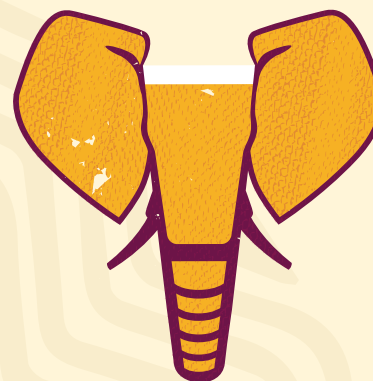
Cost: \$275 for Zoo members;
\$300 for non-members



www.marylandzoo.org/summerprograms

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**MEMORIAL DAY
MAY 25 & 26
WEEKEND**



BREW AT THE ZOO

Brew at the Zoo is not just a rollicking good time—it's also the Zoo's biggest fundraiser of the year! We thank the thousands of festival-goers who turn out each year, as your ticket purchases directly benefit the Zoo's animal, education, and conservation programs. We are also grateful to Brew's new lead sponsor, M&T Bank, and to all other Brew sponsors whose support is so important, including World of Beer-Baltimore & Towson, The Maryland Lottery, MissionTix, Bond Distributing Company, and Transdev.

GET TICKETS: WWW.MARYLANDZOO.ORG/BREW



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FIELD TALKS

"Field Talks" is a new evening lecture series at the Zoo that spotlights life on the front lines of wildlife conservation. Featured biologists, animal experts, and wildlife advocates talk about the work that they are doing, either in the field or elsewhere, to make a difference for threatened and endangered species around the globe. Audience members are free to ask questions. Check the Zoo's website for upcoming Field Talk dates and please join us on the Mansion House Porch.

For tickets visit WWW.MARYLANDZOO.ORG/FIELDTALKS