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Zoo participates in national launch of SAFE: Saving Animals From Extinction

SAFE focuses efforts on 10 species, including African penguin

Rochester, N.Y. – May 15, 2015 — Today marks the 10th anniversary of Endangered Species Day. To highlight the growing importance of saving endangered species from extinction, Seneca Park Zoo, along with other accredited members of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), today celebrates the launch of SAFE: Saving Animals From Extinction. SAFE combines the power of zoo and aquarium visitors with the resources and collective expertise of AZA institutions, partnering them to save animals from extinction.

“AZA aquarium and zoo conservationists have identified more than 100 species facing the greatest threats and where accredited zoos and aquariums have unique conservation and science knowledge to contribute,” said Jim Maddy, AZA President and CEO. “Today, we are explaining to the public just what AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums are doing to save animals from extinction.”

In 2015, SAFE will focus its efforts on 10 species: African penguins, Asian elephants, black rhinoceros, cheetahs, gorillas, sea turtles, vaquitas, sharks and rays, Western pond turtles and whooping cranes.

Seneca Park Zoo continues its role as a national leader in building the population of African penguins in conservation care. African penguin chicks hatched at Seneca Park Zoo have been sent to 25 accredited zoos and aquariums across North America. Since 1999, the Zoo has had 93 successful hatchlings.

“Penguins from our facility have helped to shape the population in conservation care,” said Larry Sorel, Zoo Director. “Today we celebrate those efforts.”

Visitors to Seneca Park Zoo **today, Friday, May 15**, will learn from volunteer educators, enjoy keeper talks and penguin feedings, and be encouraged to finish the sentence: “Saving animals from extinction is important to me because” All activities take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Penguin Exhibit.

“To want to save an animal from extinction, you have to first ‘meet’ that animal, and be moved enough by your encounter to want to take action,” said Pamela Reed Sanchez, Executive Director of the Seneca Park Zoo Society. “We hope something our guests learn today will move them to take action to save penguins.”

Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.