

## Lake sturgeon are alive and well in the Genesee

### Sturgeon release kicks off Zoo's Genesee Trail weekend events

Rochester, N.Y. – October 3, 2014 — The Seneca Park Zoo will be joining the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC) and United States Geological Survey's (USGS) release of 1,000 hatchery-reared baby sturgeon into the Genesee at noon today, October 3, at the Port of Rochester. The release of these lake sturgeon, which were raised at the NYSDEC's Oneida Fish Hatchery, brings the total number of sturgeon reintroduced to the Genesee to 4,000 since 2003.

“With the release of these lake sturgeon into the Genesee River, Monroe County is doing its part in the effort to reintroduce the species into our waterways,” said County Executive Maggie Brooks. “There was a time when the sturgeon was virtually extinct, but initiatives like this are helping to ensure a brighter future for this species.”

Lake sturgeon are the oldest and largest species of fish native to the Great Lakes, growing to seven feet in length and living up to 150 years.

“The repatriated sturgeon, growing in the Genesee at rates similar to healthy populations in Wisconsin have proven to be excellent bioindicators of improved environmental health,” says Dr. Jeff Wyatt, the Zoo's Director of Animal Health & Conservation.

Following the release, three of the 4-inch fingerling sturgeon will be exhibited at the Zoo, helping us tell our visitors the important story of their successful return to the Genesee River and Lake Ontario.

Today's release is just the beginning of the Zoo's planned events taking place this weekend related to sturgeon and improved habitat for native wildlife. On Saturday, October 4, the Zoo is hosting its popular Genesee Trail Day.

“One of the important messages we want to convey to Zoo visitors is that their individual actions affect our environment,” said Pamela Reed Sanchez, Executive Director of the Seneca Park Zoo Society. “That the Genesee River is once again healthy enough to be home to otters and sturgeon is a true success story and a result of the concerted efforts of many. We hope visitors will come to the Zoo on Saturday for Genesee Trail Day to learn more.”

Visitors to this event will have the opportunity to learn how conservation efforts and restored habitat have positively affected the lives of native animals. Additionally, representatives from Ganondagan will be on grounds displaying Seneca Nation artifacts. The event is free with paid Zoo admission.

Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a large role in species survival. This project is just one example of the work we are doing regionally to assist in bringing animals back from the brink of extinction.

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The Seneca Park Zoo Society is a not-for-profit organization which has, since 1957, provided education, fundraising, special events and public relations support to Monroe County, who owns and operates the Seneca Park Zoo. For additional information, visit [www.senecaparkzoo.org](http://www.senecaparkzoo.org).