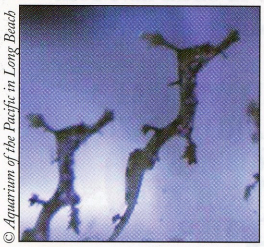
SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS IN CONSERVATION


© Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach

SEA DRAGON MAKES BABIES, HISTORY

The Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach made history in June by becoming the first facility to successfully breed weedy sea dragons. After a gestation period of 6-8 weeks, the male weedy sea dragon *(Phyllopteryx taeniolatus)* gave birth to 29 babies over 12-days of labor. The hatchlings have hearty appetites, and are feeding on enriched baby brine shrimp and mysids. A second male dragon just received over 100 eggs on the underside of its tail, and the leafy sea dragons *(Phycodurus eques)* have been actively courting.


© Milwaukee Zoo

SIGNIFICANT BIRTH AT MILWAUKEE ZOO

A spangled cotinga *(Cotinga cayana)* was born at the Milwaukee County Zoo in April, marking the first of its species to breed in a North American zoo. The chick was approximately three to four weeks old and weighed less than one ounce when it fledged on 16 May. The parents—a wild caught pair from Surinam in South America—have resided at the Zoo since 1997 and 1998.

The chick, whose gender has not been determined, is one of 14 birds currently housed in eight different zoos across North America. Its natural South American forest habitat is under threat due to human expansion.


© San Diego Zoo

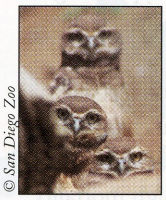
SIGNIFICANT BIRTHS IN SAN DIEGO

On 4 June, a female red-shanked douc langur was born at the World Famous San Diego Zoo. The baby is the 64th douc langur born at the Zoo, and the fourth offspring of 11-year-old Trien. Keepers say both mother and infant are doing well in their exhibit, located at the bottom of *Fern Canyon and Sun Bear Forest.*

The critically endangered red-shanked douc langurs are native to Vietnam. Logging, hunting, farming, and war have all led to the depletion of this species and its natural habitat. Aside from successfully breeding these primates, the Zoological Society of San Diego has helped establish and continues to support the Vietnamese Endangered Primate Conservation Center (EPCC) at the Cuo Phuong National Park. The EPCC has rescued more than 75 animals from hunters and animal smugglers.


© San Diego Zoo

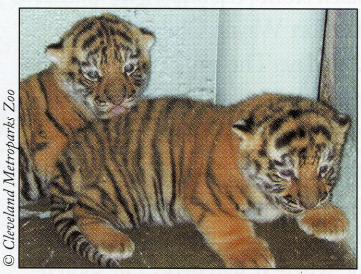
On 6 June an Indian rhino was born at the San Diego Wild Animal Park, following 494-days of gestation. The 158-pound calf and its mother will remain separated from the other rhinoceroses in the Asian Plains enclosure for 30-days, giving them time to bond in the maternity boma. This is the 35th Indian rhino born at the Wild Animal Park. The endangered Indian rhinoceros lives in swampy terrain and in the flood plains of large rivers in India, feeding primarily on grasses and shrubs.


© San Diego Zoo

Two desert bighorn sheep and a Canadian porcupine were born in the Condor Ridge exhibit, as well as a clutch of three Western burrowing owl chicks. A Western greater roadrunner has laid eggs.

The two male bighorn lambs are an important part of the recovery efforts of the desert bighorn sheep. The animal has disappeared from 14 mountain ranges, and only about 300 bighorns live in California today.

The Western burrowing owl population is also threatened, due to development and loss of habit from the poisoning of smaller animals that dig holes where owls live.


© Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

ARRIVALS, DEPARTURES AT CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO

A four-year old female Siberian tiger at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo became a first-time mother to two cubs on 4 April. At the recommendation of the Tiger Species Survival Plan (SSP), the fifteen-year-old sire arrived in March 2000, from Henry Vilas Zoo in Madison, Wisconsin. This is the first pair of tiger cubs born at the Zoo in 16 years.

The arrival of the two cubs came at the tail end of the departure of a baby bald eagle. The eaglet hatched on 2 May, marking the Zoo's first-ever bald eagle birth. The Zoo is working with officials from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to release the bird into the wild. Curator of Birds Stan Searles took the chick to Iowa for eventual release on 14 June, as a wild eagle pair was unavailable to foster-parent the eaglet in Ohio. The eaglet's parents arrived at the Zoo in 1996 from Sutton Avian Center in Oklahoma and are estimated to be 25-years-old.

STUDY SHOWS CORAL BLEACHING MAY BE ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Coral bleaching may actually allow certain corals to adapt to a warming climate and other environmental changes, a study by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) shows. Reef building corals get their nourishment from symbiotic algae, or zooxanthellae, which is housed in their protective skeleton. Eutrophication of the environment stresses corals, which in turn causes them to become completely dependent upon these algal symbionts for nutrients. According to the study, corals lose their colorful algae in order to adapt to warmer sea temperatures by shedding sub-optimal algae. In doing so, corals become hosts to algae types better suited for their environment, thus increasing their survival. Coral bleaching is the result of an increased expulsion rate of zooxanthellae, which is also caused by euthrophication.

Continued on page 40