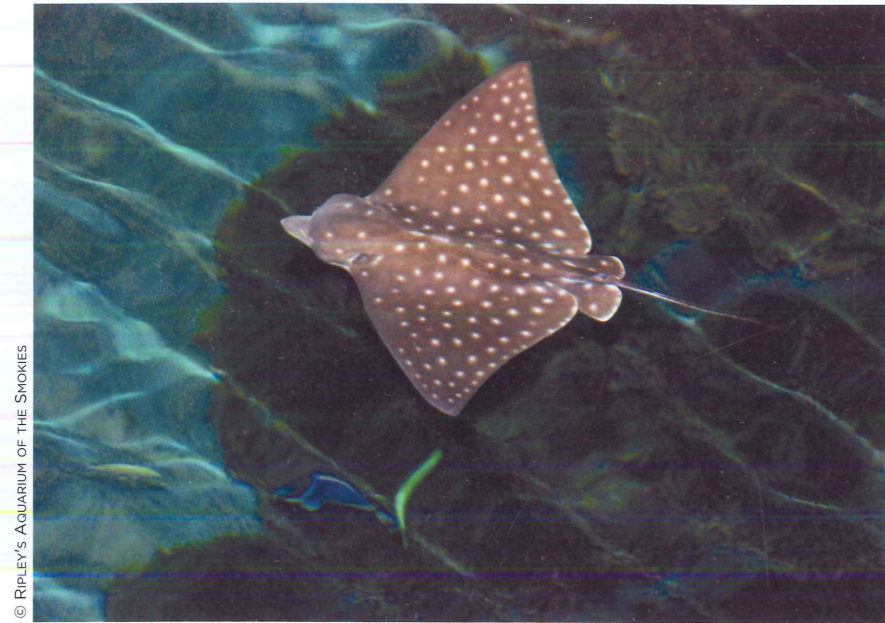


SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS IN CONSERVATION



© RIPLEY'S AQUARIUM OF THE SMOKIES

The seven AZA accredited zoos include the David Traylor Zoo, the Hutchinson Zoo, the Lee Richardson Zoo, Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure, the Sedgwick County Zoo, the Sunset Zoo, and the Topeka Zoo.

Black-footed ferrets have been extirpated from Kansas for fifty years, and were reintroduced into shortgrass prairies habitats located on three private ranches beginning in December of 2007. The Kansas site is held in high regard by the National Black-Footed Ferret Recovery Team because it is free of sylvatic plague, a disease that has hindered the success of some reintroduction sites.

SPOTTED EAGLE RAYS BORN AT RIPLEY'S AQUARIUM OF THE SMOKIES

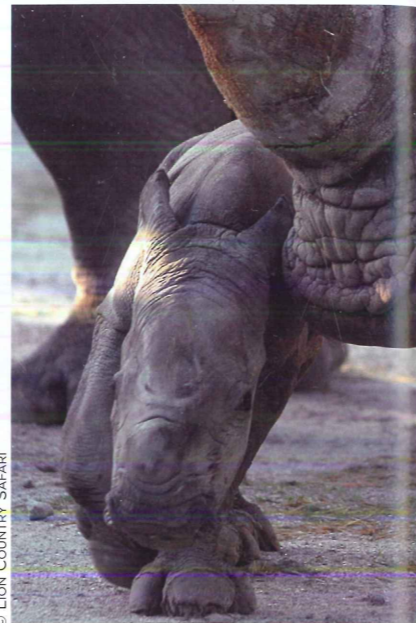
Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies celebrated its first captive birth from captive propagation of two spotted eagle rays on 27 September 2008. The two male pups were the first litter born from one of two females in the *Ray Bay* exhibit at the aquarium. Spotted eagle rays (*Aetobatis narinari*) can grow to a size of ten feet disc width, a weight of 500 pounds and have a litter size of two-to-four pups. The parental eagle

rays were collected in Florida under the auspices of a special state permit that allows for the limited collection of prohibited protected species for educational display and conservation purposes.

In a recent worldwide survey of aquariums conducted by Disney's Epcot Center Living Seas, 16 aquariums reported displaying spotted eagle rays. Only four of these aquariums reported reproduction with three reporting survival of the pups. The spotted eagle ray is found worldwide in tropical seas. The IUCN has listed the spotted eagle ray as near threatened.

In an effort to encourage the spotted eagle rays to begin breeding, the rays were target fed extra food rations during demonstration diver interactions, in addition to the daily broadcast feeding. The female spotted eagle rays were given a sonogram in the beginning of September and the pregnancy was detected. Regular monthly sonograms are now being taken to monitor pregnancies and determine gestation time and reproductive cycles for this species.

Upon birth, the two pups were immediately moved from the *Ray Bay* exhibit to an adjacent holding facility.



© LION COUNTRY SAFARI

The pups began feeding after seven days and were housed with juvenile bullnose rays (*Myliobatis freminvillei*). The pups were trained to hand feed in preparation for being moved into their new home, the *Coral Reef* exhibit, where they need to compete for food with hundreds of Indo-Pacific coral reef fishes. The pups were introduced into the *Coral Reef* exhibit on 9 December and are feeding well.

WHITE RHINO BORN AT LION COUNTRY SAFARI

Lion Country Safari's newest addition, a ninety-five pound female southern white rhinoceros calf is now on display in the rhino maternity area of the drive-through safari.

The baby, named Jazi (meaning gift in Swahili), was born on the evening of 9 December to mom Taraja after 16 months of gestation. Mom and baby remained in the rhino calving pen for approximately three months, to give them plenty of bonding time and to protect them from other animals. They now roam freely in Lion Country Safari's *Hwange National Park* with the other white rhinos, including dad Ronnie.

The endangered southern white

rhinoceros is the third largest land animal after the African and Asian elephants. Lion Country Safari is home to 11 White Rhinos - two males and nine females. Since 1979, Lion Country Safari has had 31 rhino offspring.

AMANI THE AARDVARK ARRIVES PEACEFULLY AT DETROIT ZOO

The Detroit Zoo's newborn aardvark, Amani (Swahili for peace), was born on 8 December to mother, Rachael, and father, Mchimbaji. The Zoo is awaiting DNA test results to determine the sex.

The 23-inch infant arrived hairless, weighing three pounds, ten ounces, with ears measuring four inches. "This baby can only be described as hideously cute," said Director of Conservation and Animal Welfare Scott Carter. "Rachael is a first-time mother and is showing great maternal instincts."

Due to the aardvark's clumsy nature and poor eyesight, veterinary and zookeeper staff are assisting Rachael with raising the fragile baby to prevent the possibility of it being injured. Since the birth, Amani has more than doubled in size. Adult aardvarks can weigh from 90-to-145 pounds and grow five-to-six feet in length.

The aardvark (*Orycteropus afer*) is an African mammal whose name derives from the Afrikaans word "earth pig." The animal's unusual appearance plays a part in its success as a forager. The ears point forward to enable it to listen for the sound of insects. The snout is long and filled with hair that acts as a filter, letting scents in and keeping dirt out. Strong limbs and spoon-shaped claws can tear through the sturdiest of termite mounds, allowing the aardvark to catch insects with its long, sticky tongue which can be up to 12 inches long.

Amani can be seen with Rachael and Mchimbaji across from the giraffe habitat in the spring of 2009 with the Zoo's other aardvarks, Amy Bob and Lily.



© DETROIT ZOO



© CALDWELL ZOO

GIANT ANTEATER BORN AT THE CALDWELL ZOO

Caldwell Zoo is proud to announce the birth of a female giant anteater. The youngster was born 19 November 2008. This is the twelfth baby for the Zoo's adult female (Ellie Mae). The

baby weighed in at 3.9 pounds shortly after birth. The father (Frankie) is on loan to Caldwell Zoo from the Detroit Zoological Park.

CONTINUED, PAGE 40