

SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS IN CONSERVATION

Significant Arrivals In San Antonio

Two Guam rails (*Rallus owstoni*) hatched at the San Antonio Zoo in June 2000. The 1.1 chicks were parent-reared in the Zoo's off-exhibit Avian Reproduction Center. The parents, a two-year-old male born in Phoenix, and a six-year-old female from Guam, have been together since August 1999.

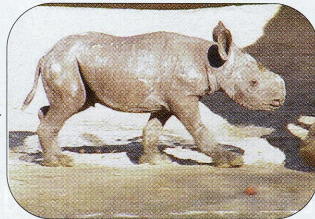


JEFF ROUSE/SAN ANTONIO ZOO

After 30 days in their natal enclosure, the chicks were removed due to overly aggressive behavior from the parents. They are now housed in an adjacent exhibit. Future placement will depend on recommendations from the SSP. The critically endangered chicks mark an important addition to the SSP population, and represent the first hatchings for the San Antonio Zoo.

A 60-pound female black rhino was also born at the Zoo on 26 January. The calf was named Timu Mbanu, which is Swahili for "team effort."

Sabubu and Herbie are first time parents. Herbie came to San Antonio two years ago, on loan from Sedgwick County Zoo in Kansas. Sabubu arrived in 1987, after being transferred from the Cincinnati Zoo.



TERRY L. FISHER/SAN ANTONIO ZOO

Ecological Restoration SAG

The AZA Conservation and Science department is taking steps to establish an Ecological Restoration Scientific Advisory Group in response to a growing demand for *in situ* conservation programs in North America. This activity is an outgrowth of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between AZA and the Society for Ecological Restoration on 15 February 2000.

AZA, in partnership with SER and other ecological restoration organizations, hopes to help organize management activities designed to improve local habitats, thus expanding the number of restoration projects carried out by our members.

An organizational meeting of the Ecological Restoration SAG will be held at the AZA Western Regional Workshop at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs, CO. The date and time for the meeting will be 1600 h on 22 March 2001. Interested parties should contact Peter J. Tolson at The Toledo Zoo, P.O. Box 4010, Toledo, OH, 43609; Phone (419) 385-5721, Email: ptolson@aol.com, or Robin Dalton at Queens Wildlife Center, 53-51 111th St., Flushing, NY, 11368; Phone (718) 271-4441; Email: robindalton@earthlink.net

Conservation Efforts in Oregon

The Oregon Zoo is working with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to save the endangered pygmy

rabbit. With less than 100 pygmy rabbits left in the wild sagebrush habitat in the state of Washington, the Zoo will help the WDFW design a captive breeding facility. The facility, will supply rabbits for reintroduction to two tracts of protected habitat.

The Zoo is home to four pygmy rabbits, collected in Idaho. Through genetic research by the WDFW, studies indicated the Washington and Idaho rabbits have been isolated from each other for at least 7,000 to 10,000 years, making a strong case against simply translocating the animals from Idaho.

The Zoo's pygmy rabbits are under 24-hour monitoring through the use of video recording equipment. Researchers will use the data to catalog mating rituals and reproductive biology. They are a protected "sensitive" species in Oregon, but it is thought their populations continue to decline in other regions, including neighboring states of Washington, southern Idaho, northeastern California and parts of Nevada.

MICHAEL DURHAM/OREGON ZOO

Visitors to the Zoo can now watch a two-month-old Southern sea otter pup through a newly installed video monitor, in the zoo's Steller Cove exhibit. The pup, born 3 January, is gaining strength, showing greater mobility, and nursing regularly. It is also vocalizing with first-time mother Thelma, all of which are good indications of a healthy pup.



The pup, a male, is thriving under its mother's attention. Keepers say Thelma is taking great care of him and he's eating the food she offers. The pup's arrival was a surprise to keepers because the pup's mother is not even three years old and sea otters are not normally sexually mature until they reach at least four years of age.

The pups parents were found stranded when they were infants. Both were brought to the Monterey Bay Aquarium Sea Otter Research and Conservation Program in April 1998 where they were deemed not viable release candidates.

Southern sea otters have a six-month gestation period and it is believed Thelma conceived while she was in quarantine with Eddie, who is also nearly three years old.

The otters are housed in the Zoo's new sea otter pool which holds 10,000 gallons of seawater and is 13 feet deep at its deepest part. Surrounding it are haul-out beaches where the otters can leave the water. Four vantage points offer the public both above-water and below-water views.

Bird Raises Dollars For Conservation

At the Minnesota Zoo, a red-breasted cockatoo named Floyd, helped raise more than \$3,000 for The Nature Conservancy's