

BRANDYWINE

NEWS



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The Zoo News is a publication of the
 Delaware Zoological Society.

On the Cover:

Please welcome female Andean condor Jennifer and male Andean condor Luca. More about Jennifer and Luca on page 4.

As part of The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)-led Species Survival Plan® (SSP), longtime and beloved Brandywine Zoo residents, Andean condor Chavín (male), moved to the National Aviary in Pittsburgh, and Andean condor Gryphus (female), moved to ABQ BioPark in Albuquerque. They will be missed by staff and guests, but we wish them the best in their new homes!



Cover photo by Keeper Linnea

Check out our new water refill station! It's wheelchair accessible and located by the family restrooms next to the Wildlife Amphitheater. Stop over to fill your reusable water bottle, which is welcome at the zoo. The benefits of refill stations are many! They promote hydration, reduce waste, provide convenient access to clean drinking water, and decrease the carbon footprint of bottled water production and transportation. Now that's refreshing!



Delaware Zoological Society Executive Director Message

There is a great deal of excitement on the horizon at the Brandywine Zoo following a remarkably successful 2025.

In 2025, the Brandywine Zoo celebrated our 120th year in operation, making us one of the oldest zoos in America. More than 61,000 guests helped us mark that milestone anniversary. That's the highest number of visitors we've had in the past 10 years! We saw increases in our major events (Brew at the Zoo, Sip & Strolls, Boo at the Zoo and Spirits at the Zoo). Our inaugural capital campaign gala, Zoobilee, was held in March and was sold out two months in advance. More importantly, the gala raised over \$110,000 towards our Zoo Re-imagined capital campaign.

But perhaps the most gratifying moment of the year came in early fall, when we secured the final funds necessary to begin construction on the next critical step in improving our facilities- building our new multi-species habitat. The habitat will hold up to three different species (we won't have a final determination on which species until the spring) and will feature a 325-square foot off-exhibit holding. That building will include a large window to allow year-round viewing of our wildlife



Mark Shafer

providing an improved visitor experience as currently, when the animals are "off-exhibit" in cold weather months, visitors are unable to see the wildlife.

Demolition has begun and the new habitat should be open by the first of June. While construction is happening, you will still be able to visit your favorite animals. The barn yard, South

American habitat where our giant anteater resides, and flight exhibit with our eagle, ravens and sandhill crane, will all be open. And our lemurs will be keeping a watchful eye on the construction project for their new neighbors.

We have had to make a few programming adjustments while we complete this project. One of significant note is that we've moved our very popular, and always sold-out, Brew at the Zoo back to September for 2026.

We'll monitor the construction progress as it develops and promise to keep you apprised. But we are very excited about this new zoo addition and hope to see you all out during the year and at this year's Members Only Event on June 11th.

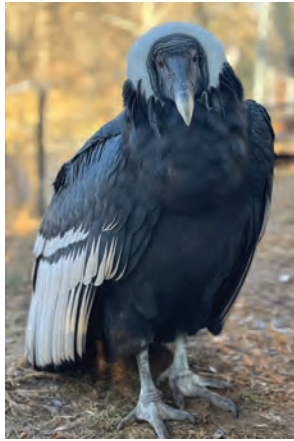
As always, thank you for your support.



New at the Zoo! Andean condors Jennifer & Luca

Jennifer

Meet our newest female Andean condor, Jennifer! Jennifer is just over 43 and a half years young. In their natural habitat Andean condors live about 50 years on average, but in human care they can live up to 70+! Jennifer has a fairly calm personality and appreciates a good nap (I mean, who doesn't?). She also enjoys interacting with her keepers; gently tapping on the window to get their attention or watching them through the exhibit mesh as they clean up her holding space. It can take her some time to become comfortable with new large enrichment, but she likes to push around metal canisters and loves to target train. Jennifer can often be seen at the top of her exhibit perched on the rocks. She is housed at the front of the zoo in our condor exhibit with our 4-year-old male, Luca. Jennifer has let Luca know that she is the boss in their relationship and makes it clear when she wants to have some alone time, but she is getting more comfortable with him every day and has started showing signs of interest in getting to know him better.



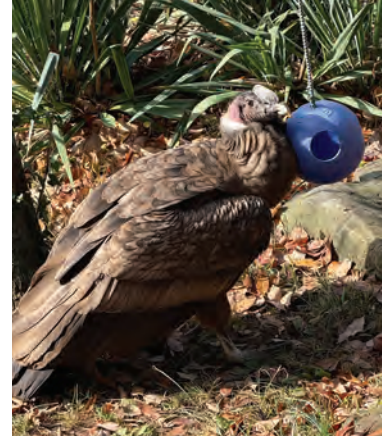
Andean condor Jennifer
by Keeper Linnea



Andean condor Jennifer by Keeper Doug

Luca

Meet our newest male Andean condor, Luca! Luca is a 4-year-old male and still has his juvenile plumage. Luca is extremely inquisitive and will often investigate new things and explore. He can be wary of new enrichment or spaces and can take time to warm up but will utilize them fully once comfortable. He really likes interacting with his keepers. Luca has already become very popular amongst zoo staff and guests. He likes to sit at the front of his habitat where people are. He's a people watcher!



Andean condor Luca
by Keeper Emily

Be sure to stop by and say "hi" to Jennifer and Luca during your next visit!



Andean condor Luca by Keeper Linnea

Meet Assistant Curator Allyson

By Amy Haddock, General Curator/Registrar



We are pleased to announce that Allyson Coleman was promoted to the zoo's Assistant Curator position. Allyson has been a lead keeper at Brandywine Zoo since 2022.

Allyson worked at the Leesburg Animal Park in Virginia as the Animal Curator for 9 years. She brings experience from Staten Island Zoological Society and her first

job in a zoo was as a monkey monitor at the National Zoo in D.C.

In 2007 she volunteered at C.A.R.E Baboon Sanctuary in Northern Cape South Africa. Allyson has attended numerous professional workshops and brings that knowledge to the Brandywine Zoo. She also obtained Karen Pryor Certified Training certificate in 2022.



Allyson lives in Wilmington with her husband and two young sons. Her family still resides in Virginia, where Allyson grew up. Her family recently took a trip to Puerto Rico to visit Allyson's extended family. We are very excited to have Allyson join the management team at the zoo and are looking forward to all that she will bring to her new position.

Save the Date—Online Auction

Get ready to place your bids for a good cause! We're holding our Online Auction to raise money for the Brandywine Zoo starting May 1st at 8am (EDT) and ending May 8th at 9pm (EDT).

If you or someone you know would like to donate an item or service to the auction, visit https://yourcharity-auction.com/item_donation.php?a=4048 or email Kate McMonagle at kmcmonagle@brandywinezoo.org by 4/24/2026.

You can register now at YourCharityAuction.com/BrandywineZoo and bookmark that page to view and bid on items once the auction begins.

Your generosity and assistance are what keeps Brandywine Zoo thriving. We hope that you will participate in the auction! Thank you for your continued support.

Stay tuned and follow us **@brandywinezoo on Facebook and Instagram**



A Look Back at our Fall & Winter Events

Boo at the Zoo



Spirits at the Zoo



Santa at the Zoo



Zoo Years Eve



Scout Night



KID'S CORNER ACTIVITY

By Meghan Hoopes, Programs Coordinator

Animal Groups Crossword

Can you identify the name for a group of these animals?



2



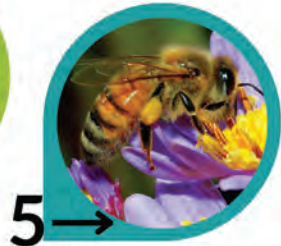
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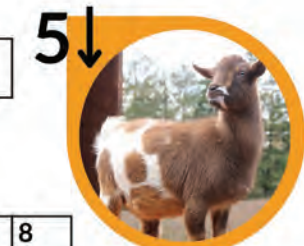
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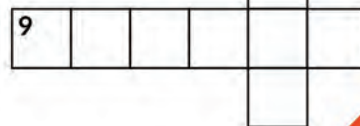
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7



9



8

Word Bank

Flock	Unkindness	Lounge
Herd	Convocation	Sedge
Troop	Prickle	Hive Pack

The Thrill of the Drill!

By Jen Klotz, Community Engagement Specialist

Ready, Set, Go!

What would you do if a fire broke out at home? Or if someone nearby had a heart attack? While scary to think about, it's an important first step at being ready in an emergency. Those scenarios could also happen at the zoo, so staff must be prepared to respond appropriately. One way we achieve that is by conducting safety drills.

As an accredited organization with the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, we are required to perform a primary set of drills each calendar year. They include fire, bad weather, human health, and animal escape. Much like schools, businesses, and other organizations these days, we practice active shooter drills as well. To that list of 5 we add "animal pest" and "lost child" since they can certainly become emergencies to manage onsite. The responsibility for coordination and tracking of annual drills falls on the Safety Team. Any staff member is welcome to join, with the team currently composed of individuals from the Animal Care, Zoological Society, and Conservation Science & Learning departments.

Our safety drills can take place at any time, so if you ever find yourself at the zoo during one, please calmly

follow directions given by staff. Don't worry, it won't be long until you can return to your visit! We are sure to cover material thoroughly but efficiently, usually taking 10 minutes in total. Remember what they say, "practice makes perfect". Maybe running your own drill or simply talking through everyone's roles in an emergency is something you can do this winter while inside together. It surely won't be time wasted!



Safety Team (Left to Right): Janey, Kate, Amy, and Jen

Ambassador Highlight—Greek Tortoise

By Alex Carper, Conservation Science and Learning Intern

Rocky is the zoo's Greek tortoise ambassador. He's a staff favorite for many reasons, but the obstacles he's faced make him an especially strong advocate for his species. At only seventeen years old, he's considered young for a tortoise. This species typically lives into their fifties, with some making it well past one hundred! Rocky is a relinquished pet, so the details of his past are uncertain, but there is evidence of malnutrition that likely took place during his early years.

Rocky has some misshapen scutes (the colorful plates on the outside of the shell) and a loss of mobility in his back legs. Throughout his recovery journey, keepers have given Rocky laser treatments and have adhered a number of objects to the bottom of his shell to aid him in moving around his enclosure. Thanks to proper nutrition and a team of caring and hardworking keepers, Rocky is comfortable and living a happy and fulfilled life.

Despite his mobility differences, Rocky spends his leisure time exploring his enclosure, relaxing in his water dish, and snacking on his specialized reptile salad. He is a very messy eater, and his favorite food is sweet potato.

Rocky makes a great animal ambassador because of his easygoing temperament and his charismatic personality. Rocky is a joy to work with, especially when he "dances" when his shell is scratched.

We can help turtles and tortoises like Rocky by shopping for pets responsibly and knowing how to properly care for an animal for the entire length of its remaining lifespan before we commit to caring for them. Unwanted pets should never be released into the wild, nor should wild animals be ever taken in as pets; injured wildlife should be turned over to the proper authorities as soon as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about Rocky, and we hope to see you soon at the Brandywine Zoo!



THANK YOU!

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the generous DZS Annual Fund contributions in 2025. We truly appreciate every penny, as your support plays a crucial role in enhancing the zoo's conservation and education initiatives, and helps foster a deeper love for wildlife within our community. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!

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John & Nancy Wolak
Marusya Yeghinyan
Nicole & Peter Young
Dolores Zukowski



Red panda, Scarlet,
by Keeper Emily



Black-and-white
ruffed lemur,
Beans, by Keeper
Emily



To donate, scan this QR code or visit brandywinezoo.org/fund

Meet General Curator/Registrar Amy

By Brint Spencer, Zoo Director

Amy started at Brandywine Zoo in 2019 as a lead keeper. Not long after starting, she took on the role as registrar, overseeing the animal management records database, permitting and acquisitions/dispositions. She became Assistant Curator in 2022.

Prior to coming to Brandywine Zoo, Amy was a primate keeper at the Nashville Zoo for 5 years. She also worked at Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ and the Minnesota Zoo.

Amy has attended and presented at several professional conferences including Animal Behavioral Management and AZA. She went to Stockton College in NJ, where she majored in Marine Biology. Amy is currently in Parks Leadership School where she is learning



valuable information about other state parks and parks as a whole. She has also very much enjoyed making friends from other parks that will last long after school.

Amy came to Brandywine Zoo wanting to relocate back to the Northeast. She likes the pace of the northeast, her family is here, and she can catch a lot of concerts in a small area. She most enjoys traveling to see her favorite band Phish!



Save the Date—Guest Bartending

Join us for a fun night out and support a good cause at the same time! The Delaware Zoological Society is hosting its annual Guest Bartending event Thursday, May 7th at BBC Tavern in Greenville, DE. Each year we look forward to good food, drinks and getting to see so many zoo supporters! The Delaware Zoological Society receives 20% of all the food bills, ALL cash tips and online donations. Last year we raised over \$8,500 and we appreciate everyone who came out, bartended or donated online.



If you can't make it to the event, you can still donate using the link below or scanning the QR code: <https://guestbartender.org/events/zj5cqc>

If you are interested in being a guest bartender, email Melanie Flynn at mflynn@brandywinezoo.org by April 1st. Participation is limited, and all bartenders must be age 21+, must be available on Thursday, May 7th from 6:00-9:00pm and should be able to

assist the fundraising effort. No bartending experience is necessary.



Kids Corner Answers:

1-Convocation: 2-Flocks:: 3-Troop: 4-Pack: 5across-Hive: 5down-Herd: 6-Prickle: 7-Unkindness:8-Sledge: 9-Lounge

Delaware Zoological Society

1001 North Park Drive, Wilmington, DE 19802



Delaware Zoological Society
supporting the BRANDYWINE ZOO



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Upcoming Events & Programs

Keeper Talks	Weekends, March – May
Creature Features	Weekends, April – October
Saturday Discoveries	January 31 – March 28
Bird ID Walk: Great Backyard Birdcount....	February 14
Birds & Bees Trivia Night	February 20 & 21
Scout Night	April 4
Online Auction	May 1 – May 8
BBC Guest Bartending	May 7
Members Only Event	June 11
Little Nature Explorers	Ongoing



For More Information, visit www.brandywinezoo.org
and follow us on social media for updates @brandywinezoo

