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Lincoln Park
Zoo

Bird Habitat Fact Sheets:

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McCormick Bird House

What: The McCormick Bird House is home to an incredible variety of birds – some so rare they are extinct in the wild – and the zoo is working to save them. The original Bird House opened to the public in 1904, and was designed by the zoo’s first director, Cyrus DeVry. After \$2.8 million in renovations in 1991, it became known as the McCormick Bird House. Ten habitats, featuring more than three dozen species of birds, replicate the dense tropical jungles, sandy sea coasts, running forest streams, grassy wetlands and savanna plains; each depicting the birds’ natural atmosphere. The Bird House contains a tropical free-flight aviary with approximately 20 bird species, including a gregarious flock of Inca terns and the endangered Bali Mynah. Enter this free-flight area to become immersed in a wondrous, winged world.

Size: 18,000 square-foot-facility
Opened: 1991
Cost: \$2.8 million renovation

Featured birds (see list of birds here): <http://www.lpzoo.org/mccormick-bird-house>

Conservation Science efforts underway at the Bird House and abroad:

Guam Rail (*Rallus owstoni*) conservation efforts:

A flightless bird, the Guam rail is extinct in the wild. Once present in the hundreds of thousands, the rail was wiped out on its native island by the unfortunate and unintended introduction of the brown tree snake. Lincoln Park Zoo participates in the Guam Rail Species Survival Plan, a cooperative effort among Association of Zoos and Aquariums institutions to preserve the species.

Zoo scientist Megan Ross, PhD is the coordinator of this committee. She has visited the rail rehabilitation center on the island and oversees the breeding plan for all the rails in North America. Ross also works with wildlife staff from Guam to determine which individuals are suitable for wild reintroductions. A small



number of birds from the breeding program have been introduced to the island of Rota, just south of Guam.

Conservation efforts for Guam Micronesian kingfisher (*Halcyon cinnamomina cinnamomina*):

Guam Micronesian Kingfishers are extinct in the wild, due to the unfortunate and unintended introduction of the invasive brown tree snake several decades ago. Lincoln Park Zoo houses several of the last remaining members of this species, and is working diligently with the Association of Zoos and Aquarium's Species Survival Plan (SSP) to coordinate conservation education and field conservation efforts. Micronesian kingfishers had not been on the island since their disappearance in the mid-1980s. The zoo has been involved with kingfisher recovery projects since the early 1990s. Lincoln Park Zoo Conservation Biologist Joanne Earnhardt, Ph.D., is a member of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Recovery Team. The zoo is also a leader in kingfisher breeding.



Conservation efforts for Bali Mynah (*Leucopsar rothschildi*)

Bali mynahs are one of the world's most critically endangered birds, and nearly extinct in the wild due to poachers collecting them for the illegal pet trade, where they are valued for their striking plumage and beautiful songs. Because of this poaching, Bali mynahs are found almost exclusively in zoos. Scientists at Lincoln Park Zoo help conserve Bali mynahs by keeping the studbook for the species. Studbooks contain the family trees of every individual animal in the zoo population. Zoo scientists carefully study family trees to make the best possible pairing and create equal representation of all possible family lines to ensure a genetically diverse and healthy population.



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The Regenstein Birds of Prey Exhibit



What: Lincoln Park Zoo's Regenstein Birds of Prey Exhibit consists of three large free-flight exhibits; all with heated platforms for the birds to utilize during cooler winter days. The outdoor habitats house some of the zoo's most intriguing animals. Birds of prey are considered nature's clean-up crew. They are predatory and possess sharp-hooked bills and talons which are essential tools used to help the birds capture small animals or feed on carrion. While the exhibit is named for the raptorial species it has traditionally housed, it now features birds of prey and much more. Cinereous vultures share a large section of the habitat with beautiful white storks and Himalayan monals. Other habitats house bald eagles and shy snowy owls.

Opened: 1989

Hope B. McCormick Swan Pond and Waterfowl Lagoon

What: In 1868 Chicago's Lincoln Park Commissioners received a gift, a pair of swans from New York's Central Park Commissioners. The birds became such popular attractions that it marked the beginning of Chicago's free zoo. The swan pond and waterfowl lagoon was refurbished in 1996 through a bequest from the estate of Hope B. McCormick. Today there is still a pair of snow-white trumpeter swans that make their home here and serve as a continual reminder of the zoo's long history of preserving wildlife.



The pond is divided by a bridge into two separate areas; one side is known as the Swan Pond and the other as Waterfowl Lagoon. In 1979 a dome was built to house flamingos during the cold wintry months. Renovated in 2003 the dome was replaced by a scenic overlook and the flamingo facility was relocated below at the same level as their outdoor habitat. This new feature allows the Chilean

flamingos to easily maneuver between the outdoor and indoor areas as they choose. They are a relatively cold-tolerant species and choose to be outdoors in all but the coldest temperatures. Native Illinois wildflowers and grasses make up the landscape surrounding the pond.

Size: Flamingo building – 1,400-square-foot-facility
Opened: 1997 Swan Pond
2003 Flamingo Exhibit
Cost: \$1.05 million Flamingo Exhibit
\$1 million Swan Pond



Featured birds:

Chilean flamingos, trumpeter swans, swan geese, ruddy ducks, hooded mergansers and other native ducks.

Conservation Science Underway at the swan pond and abroad:

- **Trumpeter swan recovery efforts:**
The trumpeter swan nearly became extinct in the early 20th century due to the pressures of overhunting and habitat loss. Today, reintroduction programs are in place to restore the species to much of its former range. Since 2001, Lincoln Park Zoo has contributed more than 38 trumpeter swan cygnets from the breeding pair in the Hope B. McCormick Swan Pond for release in the wild in Illinois and Iowa. In 2006, a trumpeter swan from Lincoln Park Zoo was one of the first to nest in Illinois in more than 100 years. The wild population is nearing the numbers thought to be necessary for species recovery and future reintroductions are currently on hold while the wild population is monitored. Cygnets hatched at Lincoln Park Zoo are now regularly having their own wild chicks, contributing to this recovery.