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Contact: Lucas Meers ▪ 904.757.4463, ext. 211 ▪ cell: 636-328-2036 ▪ meersl@jacksonvillezoo.org
Lyndsay Plemmons ▪ 904.757.4463, ext. 208 ▪ cell: 904-728-0618 ▪ plemmons1@jacksonvillezoo.org

JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS EXCITEDLY ANNOUNCES HATCHING OF THEIR FIRST MAGELLANIC PENGUIN CHICK!

September 5, 2015 - Jacksonville, FL – On August 20, Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) welcomed a chick to the Magellanic penguin colony. This is the first time a penguin hatched at the Zoo since the opening of the Tuxedo Coast exhibit in March of 2010, and its sex is unknown at this time.

The egg was artificially incubated and the chick was clear of its shell at 5:18 a.m. This was the first egg laid by parents Mango (female) and Mr. Big (male). Mango is from the San Francisco Zoo, Mr. Big came from Potter Park Zoo, and they have been a bonded pair for approximately two years.

"We are so excited to have a penguin chick," said Gen Darnell, Bird Supervisor at JZG. "We have been working hard over the last few years to set our penguins up for successful nesting and breeding. Our patience has paid off, and we can't wait to share the chick with our guests!"

The penguin was introduced to the parents shortly after hatching. Due to the newness of the experience, the parents were not responsive to the chick and it was removed to be hand-reared by JZG bird staff.

After the hatching of this chick, the total population of penguins at the Zoo is fourteen. They have come from various Association of Zoos and Aquariums accredited facilities. An additional four penguins came originated at a rehabilitation center in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil when it was determined the rescued penguins could not be released back in to the wild.

Magellanic penguins are native to the southern coasts of South America where they gather in large nesting colonies. They are monogamous, mating with the same partner year after year, and are listed as near threatened by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

According to Dan Maloney, Deputy Director of Animal Care and Conservation, "We see this chick as a great opportunity to highlight the challenges for all species of wild penguins. A portion of each paid admission to JZG supports conservation programs, including a project that helps preserve the African Black-footed penguin."

Currently, the chick is still being cared for by zookeepers and will make its public debut within the next several months.

Photo Credits:

- Penguin 1 – Sarah Schoenberg
- Penguin 2 – DeeAnna Murphy
- Penguin 3 – Gen Darnell
- Penguin 4 – Gen Darnell
- Penguin 5 – JZG

Dropbox Link to video of keepers feeding chick:

Credit: DeeAnna Murphy

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/738nq0lvsqnavni/video%20aug%2031%2C%2012%2029%2035%20pm.mov?dl=0>

About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

For over 100 years, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has aimed to inspire the discovery and appreciation of wildlife through innovative experiences in a caring environment. Starting in 1914 with an animal collection of one red deer fawn, the Zoo now has more than 2,000 rare and exotic animals and 1,000 species of plants, boasting the largest botanical garden in Northeast Florida. The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit organization and an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. For more information, visit jacksonvillezoo.org.