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Contacts: Christopher Mims, Director of Marketing and Public Relations 601-352-2599

Jackson Zoo Continues to Build Reputation of Caring for Orphaned and Injured Birds of Prey

Since the late 1970's the Jackson Zoo has committed itself to helping rescue and care for injured and orphaned birds of prey in Mississippi. Birds of prey, which include hawks, owls and vultures are federally protected and some are critically endangered.

"It's important for people to know they should contact someone immediately when they discover a bird of prey that needs help," said Zoo Vet. Tech. Donna Todd. "Many of the birds have very special diets and needs and can be potentially dangerous to people, so it is very important for trained professionals be notified."

The Zoo works with other organizations to rehabilitate the birds with the ultimate goal of releasing them back into the wild. Generally injured birds have a 40% survival rate.

Currently the Zoo is caring for two orphaned black vulture chicks.

"They're so adorable," says Todd. "They have faces that truly only a mother could love."

The Zoo will display the chicks in the Animal Hospital observation window Saturday, May 10, 2008 from 9 a.m. until noon during International Migratory Bird Day activities.

Bird injuries are caused by a number of circumstances such as the bird being hit by cars, injured during home renovations or development of bird habitat and even strong storms.



Black Vulture Chicks

The Zoo also plans to release several great horned owls this weekend that it has been helping care for.

Several other birds that sustained injuries that would not allow them to survive in the wild remain at the Zoo on display, including a great horned owl, a red-tailed hawk and a screech owl.

If you find an injured bird of prey, call:
The Jackson Zoo Animal Hospital – 601-352-2591
North State Animal Hospital – 601-982-8261
Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, Inc. – 601-366-8949

The Jackson Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The AZA is America's leading accrediting organization that sets rigorous, professional standards for zoos and aquariums. The AZA is building North America's largest wildlife conservation movement by engaging and inspiring the 143 million annual visitors to its member institutions and their communities to care about and take action to help protect wildlife.

The Jackson Zoo is located at 2918 West Capitol Street and is open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. For more information about the Jackson Zoo, call (601) 352-2581 or visit www.jacksonzoo.org.