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Two Brown Pelicans Join “Wilderness Mississippi” at the Jackson Zoo

Two brown pelicans were introduced to the Wilderness Mississippi Area this week. The pelicans share a waterfowl exhibit with several of the state’s duck species.

The brown pelican is about four feet in length. It has a brown and gray body and a white head with a light brown crown. Its neck is dark brown during breeding season. Young pelicans are all brown. The brown pelican has a very long gray bill with a large pouch of skin. Its pouch holds two or three times more than its stomach can hold – close to three gallons of fish and water! Males and females look the same.

The brown pelican can be found on the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf Coasts. On the Atlantic Coast, it can be found from North Carolina south to Venezuela. On the Pacific Coast, its range stretches from Southern California to Chile. After nesting season, it can be found as far north as British Columbia and Nova Scotia.

The brown pelican can be found in coastal areas like sandy beaches and lagoons. It can also be found around waterfronts and marinas.

The Jackson Zoo was recently named **Travel Attraction of the Year** by the Mississippi Tourism Association and is dedicated to its mission, to provide visitors with a quality recreational and educational environment dedicated to wildlife care and conservation. The new 4-plus acre Wilderness Mississippi was opened in 2006, and last year also marked the unveiling of a new entryway off Capitol Street and renovation of the orangutan exhibit. This year construction of a state-of-the-art Mississippi Discovery Center will begin. The Zoo also plans to make improvements to the elephant, tiger and leopard exhibits.

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.

