



For Immediate Release
January 24, 2007

Contact: Jill Isaacs
859-815-1432
pr@newportaquarium.com

Newport Aquarium welcomes Blackfooted Penguins

Newport, Ky. -- Not all Penguins like the cold. The three Blackfooted Penguins joining the Newport Aquarium prefer a more temperate environment and that is exactly what they'll receive in their new home in the Newport Aquarium.

On Jan. 24, after a 10-hour truck ride from Camden, NJ, to Newport, Ky., the Penguins will be welcomed to a temporary home at the Newport Aquarium's warehouse, about one mile off site from the Newport Aquarium.

Rainforest Curator Ric Urban, who has 23 years experience in the zoo and aquarium industry, participated in and coordinated the transport. "These penguins will be a great addition to the Aquarium. They have a social and inquisitive personality, they are fun to watch and they can interact with the public more than other species," Urban said.

These animals will be part of the Newport Aquarium's Behind-the-Scenes tours after a 30-day quarantine period. During this time, Urban and his staff will be training the new penguins and developing plans for animal outreach. The Penguins will become animal ambassadors and create another interactive experience for the Newport Aquarium and in the community.

The Blackfooted Penguins will be the third species of Penguins at the Newport Aquarium. Ten King and 15 Gentoo Penguins currently reside in the 34-degree Kingdom of Penguins exhibit, sponsored by Kroger.

Newport Aquarium received the Blackfooted Penguins from its sister aquarium, Adventure Aquarium, in Camden, NJ. Both are owned by Steiner Entertainment.

There are 17 species of Penguins recognized in the world. The Blackfooted Penguins are the only ones found in warm southern and southwestern Africa. Their numbers have suffered serious reduction in the last three decades due to oil spills from tankers. Currently, there are 120,000 individuals left in the wild, which is down 90-percent from 60 years ago.

Newport Aquarium showcases thousands of animals from around the world in a million gallons of water. This state-of-the-art facility was named the No. 1 aquarium in the Midwest in the Zagat Survey's U.S. Family Travel Guide in 2004 and the Best Rainy Day Outing in 2006 in Cincinnati Family Magazine. Like its sister aquarium, Adventure Aquarium, on the Camden Waterfront, Camden, NJ, Newport Aquarium is an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), a leader in global wildlife conservation. The Aquarium is open to the public 365 days a year and is located only two minutes from downtown Cincinnati at Newport on the Levee. For more information, visit newportaquarium.com or call 859-261-7444.

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