



African Penguin

Spheniscus demersus



Male Penguins

Linus, Eon, Bob, Stevie, Kobe Dragon, Stanley, D2, Nelson, Oswald,

You can tell us apart by the color and name of bands around our flippers. Linus has a **red** band (born Jan 28, 2013), Eon has **no band** (born May 14, 2007), Bob has a band with **BOB** (born Jan 4, 2006), Stevie has a band with **STEVIE** (born June 25, 2009), Kobe has a **blue** band (born Jan 17, 2016), Stanley has a **red** band (born Oct 11, 2009), D2 has **white** band (born Jan 29, 2004), Nelson has a **orange** band (born Mar 6, 2021), and Oswald has a **black** band (born Mar 8, 2021).

Nelson has a **hunched back** because when he was a chick, he had a spinal infection that led to mobility issues. Due to continued medical interventions like acupuncture treatments, he is living healthy and comfortable life.

Female Penguins

Yellow, Robben, and Harper

We live together with the males in the penguin exhibit next to Meerkat Manor. You can view us outside with our pool or if its cold, we can be seen through our indoor window.

Yellow has a **yellow** band (born Feb 17, 1991), Robben has a **purple** band (born Mar 27, 2006), and Harper has a **green** band (born Jan 1, 2019).

We all have **quirky** personalities ranging from **bossy** to **social**. We like to swim in our pool or huddle together.



AFRICAN PENGUINS AT A GLANCE



- We are covered in **black** and **white** feathers that keep them warm by providing a **waterproof insulating layer**.

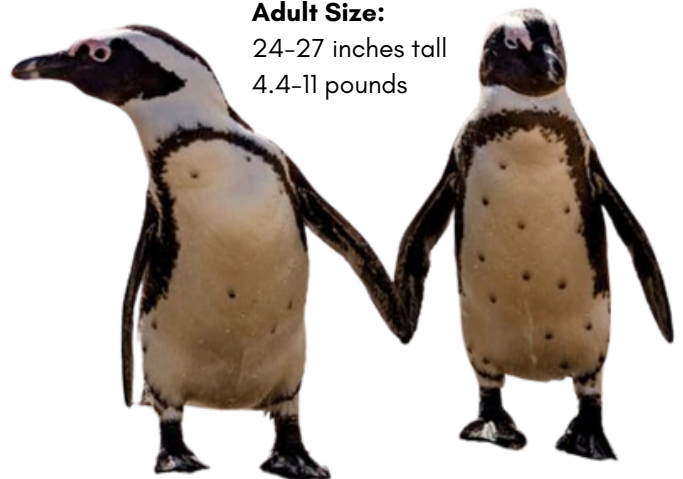
- You can tell African penguins apart from other penguins from their black facial mask and a white chest with one black line and spots.

- We have two wings called **flippers**; We are flightless, but can swim really fast in the water.

- We can hold our breath for **2 minutes**, and swim **15 mph** and dive **400 m deep**.

- We have **small pink gland** above each eye that helps deal with hot temperatures.

- Blood will go to the gland where it will cool against the surrounding air, cooling the penguin.



Adult Size:

24-27 inches tall
4.4-11 pounds

Avg. life expectancy in native habitats:
10-15+ years

Avg. life expectancy in human care:
up to 25 years

WHERE ARE NATIVE AFRICAN PENGUIN HABITATS LOCATED?



African Penguins are the only penguins found on the continent of Africa. They live in large colonies along the southwestern coast of Africa from Namibia to Port Elizabeth, South Africa, and many of the surrounding islands. They prefer rocky, temperate, coastal beaches.

African Penguins Behaviors

BRAYING

We like to perform ecstatic displays of braying, where we will make a honking sound when we lift our beaks upwards and lift our wings.

We are letting you know that you are in our territory and identify who we are.



EATING

We don't have teeth so we use our beaks to swallow food whole. In the wild, we like to eat a variety of fish, squids, and crustaceans. We also absorb a lot of the water we need from our prey.

Our favorite foods at the zoo are capelin and herring.



PREENING

In order to stay warm, we constantly transfer oil from a gland on our tail to our feathers to keep them clean, well-oiled, and waterproof.

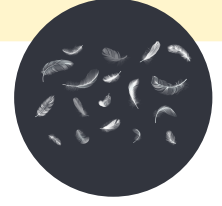
We are making sure that our feathers are nice and healthy.



MOLTING

Every year, we go through a process where we grow new feathers to replace old, worn down feathers. Leading up to the process, we will eat more to bulk up when we stay out of water for an extended period of time.

We might look disheveled, but trust the process.



- African penguins are very social animals and can be found in large colonies that can reach up to 50-100 individuals; they frequently vocalize to establish pair bonds, defend nesting sites and communicate between mates in the ocean and on land.
- They are monogamous, and they will bond with one individual for many years.
- When building a nest, they will burrow into deep layer guano where it will protect the egg and provide cool shelter for the penguin.
- Both parents take responsibility raising the hatched chick for the first 30 days.

African Penguins Conservation

Human disturbances have negatively affected colonies of African Penguin. The collection of guano has deprived penguins to nest-burrowing sites, causing birds to nest in open grounds making them vulnerable to heat stress.

African Penguins are currently of **Endangered** due to the pressures of commercial fishing depleting healthy stocks of fish and other food sources. They have to travel further away from the shore increasing chances of predation, abandonment of nests, and starvation.

How can we help?

We can use programs like Seafood Watch to find and purchase types of fish that are sustainably caught or farmed to protect populations that other animals depend on.

Visiting Racine zoo directly supports Penguins such as the SAFE (Saving Animals From Extinction) program where the zoo participated in studies for nesting box shapes that would be successful for the bird.

