

Conservation Matters

Saving wildlife through education, awareness, and action



Introduction



Not all penguins live where it's cold—African penguins live at the southern tip of Africa. Like other penguins, African penguins spend most of the day feeding in the ocean, and that helps keep them cool. Their land habitat can get quite warm, but bare skin on their legs and around their eyes help them stay cool. They also stay in the shade when they can.

Most other penguins lay their eggs out in the open, but African penguins have a different approach. They dig burrows to lay their eggs so they are protected from the sun's heat.

The young chicks stay in the burrows for about three weeks. After that, they go out to explore but return to the burrow to stay cool and avoid predators. On land, leopards, mongeese, and domestic dogs and cats hunt penguins. In the water, penguins must avoid sharks, fur seals, and orcas.

The African penguin is an endangered species—there are only about 52,000 birds left in the wild.

If we don't work together to care for our planet by reducing pollution and respecting wildlife habitats, these wonderful creatures will disappear from the world in our lifetime.

Please help us support African penguins in the wild and right here at the Racine Zoo.

African Penguin 101

Height (avg. adult)	23-24 in
Weight (avg. adult)	5-9 lbs
Defense	Swim at fast speeds to avoid predators such as sharks, killer whales, and fur seals; Coloring serves as camouflage when fishing.
Color	White with black markings
Diet	Small fish, shellfish, squid, anchovies
Range/Habitat	Southern tip of Africa and surrounding islands, Rocky coastlines
Longevity	20 years in the wild; 30-40 years under human care
Social Behavior	Social birds, live in colonies and use loud vocalizations to communicate with other members of their colony.
Gestation	Eggs are incubated by both parents for about five weeks.
Clutch Size	One to two eggs



Did You Know?



Penguins have small muscles at the base of each feather that enable the feathers to be held tightly against the body while in water, forming a waterproof layer.



African penguins can remain under water for about 2.5 minutes and dive more than 100 ft. below the surface.



Wild penguins eat up to 14 percent of their body weight every day.



To keep their cool, they pant and pump blood to parts of their bodies with less insulation—their wings, faces and feet—where excess heat can escape.

Penguin Species

There are 17 subspecies of penguin living in the world today. All subspecies are protected from hunting and egg collection however, many of them are near threatened, endangered, or critically endangered as populations continue to decline.

Class: Aves **Order:** Sphenisciform **Family:** Spheniscidae **Genus:** Spheniscus



Adelie

Near
Threatened



African

Endangered



Chinstrap

Least
Concern



Emperor

Near
Threatened



Erect-crested

Endangered



Fiordland

Vulnerable



Galapagos

Endangered



Gentoo

Near
Threatened



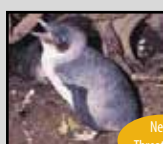
Humbolt

Vulnerable



King

Least
Concern



Little

Near
Threatened



Macaroni

Vulnerable



Magellanic

Near
Threatened



Rockhopper

Endangered



Royal

Vulnerable



Snares

Vulnerable



Yellow-eyed

Endangered

Threats

The main threats to the survival of the African penguin include environmental issues such as habitat loss, oil spills and water pollution and commercial overfishing.

Habitat Loss

The greatest threats affecting the African penguin population are human-related. Commercial removal of their feces for fertilizer disrupts the African penguin habitat, and the collection of their eggs for food dramatically reduces population numbers.

Water Pollution

Water pollution, such as that caused by South Africa's June, 2000 oil spill, has impacted 40 percent of the population. Spilled oil coats the penguin's feathers, which can lead to hypothermia (cold stress) and even death.

Commercial Overfishing

Commercial overfishing also causes a reduction in the penguin's prey species. Conservationists are discovering that closing marine protected areas to fisheries can have immediate benefits to African penguin populations.



Meet Our African Penguins



Name: Blue/Yellow
Age: 30
Stats: Oldest bird of the group



Name: Robben
Age: 9
Stats: Arrived from Denver in 2012



Name: Blue/Green
Age: 14 (hatched at Racine Zoo)
Stats: Naughtiest bird of the group



Name: Yellow "Alake"
Age: 24
Stats: Most social bird of our group



Name: White "Mr. Bill"
Age: 12 (hatched at Racine Zoo)
Stats: Only eats his fish tossed to him



Name: Linus
Age: 2
Stats: Most adventurous bird of the group



Ways You Can Help

Donate to African Penguin Conservation Projects

SANCCOB is a leading marine non-profit organization with a vision to conserve seabirds and other sea-life, especially threatened species such as the African penguin. As the mandated government rehabilitation authority in South Africa, SANCCOB protects and treats seabirds affected by major and chronic oil pollution, and shares its specialist skills with the international community.

Through its partnership in the Chick Bolstering Project chicks hand-reared at SANCCOB contribute towards research and expertise to hand-rear chicks from eggs is being developed in the Chick Rearing Unit.

SANCCOB's research focuses on improving knowledge that will improve the conservation of seabirds in the wild, and improve our ability to care for seabirds during their rehabilitation process.



SANCCOB:
sanccob.co.za

Support Sustainable Seafood

You can also choose to support sustainable seafood companies and restaurants as part of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program. The program help sustain wild, diverse and healthy ocean ecosystems that will exist long into the future. As a conservation outreach partner, we are working to educate area businesses and organizations on serving only environmentally responsible seafood and promoting sustainable seafood within our community.



Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program
seafoodwatch.org

Adopt a Penguin

You can become a Zoo parent to an animal at the Racine Zoo for an entire year. By adopting an animal you are directly contributing to its daily care and well being. Adoption packages range from \$25 to \$500. Visit racinezoo.org, the Zootique or call 262.636.9189 for more information.



Monetary Donations

General donations can also be made and designated to our penguin colony. Money collected can be used to purchase food and produce, enrichment items, or other items penguins need on a daily basis. Donations can be made online or at the Zoo.



Racine Zoological Society, 2131 Main Street, Racine, WI 53402
racinezoo.org • 262.636.9189 • info@racinezoo.org