

NOAA Awards MRC with Substantial Funding

NOAA-Fisheries and the MRC have combined their efforts to save right whales from their number one killer – ship collisions. NOAA-Fisheries recently recognized the work of MRC's 700 volunteer whale watchers and agreed each one is crucial in preventing ship collisions with right whales. NOAA has taken strides to protect right whales through the years by implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act, and this year they awarded MRC with a generous grant in order to continue to protect the world's most endangered great whale. The funding will be used to continue our toll-free hotline for whale sightings, as well as our training classes on how to identify right whales and report the sightings. However, for the first time, MRC plans to publish a color brochure on right whales and gather photographic data for individual whale identification, monitoring, and tracking.



Disney Keeps Whale Program Alive

from Walt Disney World Co.

In July, the MRC received a generous award from the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund (DWCF). The Fund, established in 1995, promotes the survival of wildlife and wild places. Walt Disney Attractions created the Fund "to promote and enable global wildlife conservation through partnerships with qualified scientists, educators, and organizations committed to preserving the earth's biodiversity. Annual cash awards are distributed to non-profit organizations to protect and study endangered and threatened animals and their habitats."



MRC's whale program greatly needed this award and would like to thank Walt Disney World Co. and the DWCF for considering our conservation efforts worth supporting!

Brevard Zoo Supports Whales & Others

By Beth Armstrong, Brevard Zoo

The Brevard Zoo is a committed conservation organization. Through a small grants program, the Zoo has allocated funding to support MRC's whale program, as well as a variety of conservation and research efforts both locally and internationally.

In Brevard County alone the Zoo has provided funding to the following projects:

- ◆ Marine Resources Council's Right Whale hotline (2002 and 2003 seasons) as well as publication of this newsletter for the 2004 season.
- ◆ UCF's long-term study of loggerhead, green and leatherback sea turtles under Dr. Llew Ehrhart (funding provided in 2001, 2002, 2003).
- ◆ Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program
- ◆ Sea Turtle Preservation Society for the development of two environmental teaching suitcases for use in local schools as well a suitcase for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for use in and around the Carr Refuge.



- ◆ Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for the purchase of a kayak for personnel to use in monitoring injured manatees. Bossart's on-going study of the papilloma virus affecting manatees.
- ◆ Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute for Dr. Greg Bossart's on-going study of the papilloma virus affecting manatees.

The Brevard Zoo is a unique place to bring family and friends with a wide array of animal species, beautiful walkways and natural vegetation, opportunities to kayak in a restored wetlands or around the new Expedition Africa exhibit or even hand-feed a giraffe.

The Zoo would like to thank the people of Brevard County and those that visit us from surrounding counties and states. Your support of the zoo has allowed us to truly make a difference in the protection of wild places and species. If you would like more information about the Brevard Zoo's conservation efforts, please contact Field Conservation Coordinator, Beth Armstrong at (321) 454-6285 or elynn57@aol.com.

Lowdown on the New Logo

Did you notice the new logo on the front page of this newsletter? Dr. Samuel Albert (Julie's father-in-law) donated his time and talent to creating a logo for the whale program. The mother and calf right whales are representative of the calving that occurs off the coasts of

Florida and Georgia. The heart represents the labor of love of each of our volunteers that goes into protecting these animals. Thanks, Dad, for creating such a beautiful logo! But more importantly, thank you to all the volunteers who continue to make this program a success.