



Exploring his new home — With a piercing gaze, a stately bald eagle scans his environs in the new Eagle Canyon display at Busch Gardens, The Dark Continent, in Tampa, Florida. The display houses two bald eagles, both male, and a mated pair of golden eagles, in a setting constructed of weathered woods, a rippling moat and Southeastern mesa-like rock abutments.

Busch Gardens Introduces Eagle Canyon Display

TAMPA, Fla. — A new natural habitat display housing four injured and flightless American Eagles has been added to the animal collection at Busch Gardens, The Dark Continent, according to Joseph C. Fincher, general manager of the Tampa zoo and African-themed family entertainment park.

"Eagle Canyon" is home to a pair of bald eagles and a pair of golden eagles, Fincher said. Bald eagles are endangered in 44 states and both the bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the Bird of Prey Act of 1973.

The eagles on display were discovered injured in the wild and removed to captivity to allow them to live out their lives in a safe, protected environment. Federal laws mandate that eagles cannot be removed from the wild unless they are considered "non-releasable" or unable to fend for themselves.

"Anheuser-Busch has maintained a commitment to the eagle for many years. These birds, permanently injured as they are, could not survive in the

wild. We are pleased to offer them a new home which can ensure their survival in the coming years," Fincher said.

Both of the bald eagles in the new display were acquired from the Raptor Rehabilitation and Propagation Project, Inc., located in Eureka, Mo. According to Walter C. Crawford, Jr., executive director of the project, the eagles were collected in 1984 in Alaska, with injuries to their wings. One of the birds had also sustained a foot injury.

The circumstances of their injuries and their exact ages are unknown, although Crawford says both birds were mature when captured. Eagles generally live eight to 15 years in the wild, but can double their longevity in captivity.

The female golden eagle on display in Eagle Canyon was acquired from a Wyoming rehabilitation project which found the bird suffering from a broken wing on July 4, 1984, in the Big Horn Mountains of Northern Wyoming.

The male golden eagle came to Busch Gardens from the Denver Zoo, where it has been housed since the Colorado Division of Wildlife discovered it in 1979 with a badly wounded wing,

which was later amputated.

It is not known whether the birds' injuries will preclude any possible breeding.

The Eagle Canyon display features rock abutments which resemble the mesa-like rock constructions of the American Southwest. Designers from New Orleans-based Design Consortium Ltd., architects for the project, made trips to Phoenix and Tucson while formulating the concept for the unusual rock work.

A rough-hewn plank walkway winds through the landscaped Canyon, which contains no bars, wires or fences to impede the view of the eagles. A moat, 10 feet wide at its narrowest point, keeps the birds from wandering away, and the abutments, a minimum of four feet higher than any perching point, discourages the eagles from jumping over the canyon walls.

"We are glad to have this opportunity to reaffirm our concern for the American eagle," said Fincher. "The eagle has long been an integral part of the Anheuser-Busch corporate logo, symbolizing strength and pride," he said. ●

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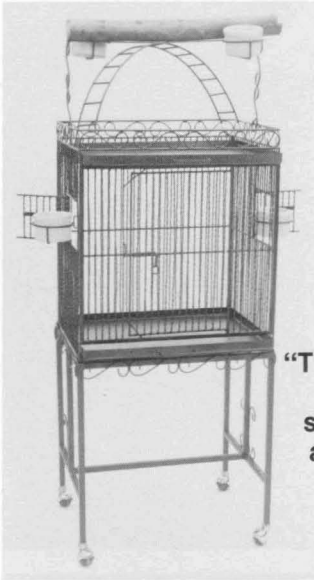
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