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Seneca Park Zoo announces death of spider monkey

Spiderman, age 43, among the oldest spider monkeys in conservation care

September 1, 2017 —Seneca Park Zoo announces the death of Spiderman, the Zoo's 43-year-old male black-handed spider monkey. Spiderman was born in 1974, and came to Seneca Park Zoo from Fort Rickey Game Farm in Rome, NY in 1977. The Zoo is also home to a female spider monkey, Lucy, who was born in 1975.

"For forty years, Spiderman has been an integral part of the Zoo's conservation mission and guest experience," said **Larry Sorel**, County Zoo Director. "He will certainly be missed and remembered by staff and guests alike."

Spider monkeys have a life expectancy of about 25 years. Spiderman, at 43, was known to be among the oldest black-handed spider monkey in conservation care.

In his long life, Spiderman left quite a legacy. He was the father of 9 offspring, who eventually went to other zoos to start their own families, collectively resulting in 8 second-generation offspring.

Dr. Jeffrey Wyatt D.V.M., the Zoo's Director of Animal Health and Conservation, performed a necropsy which confirmed that Spiderman had terminal cancer.

Native to Central and South America, spider monkeys face many threats including illegal hunting and habitat loss due to logging and deforestation. IUCN rates them as critically endangered.

"Spiderman and his many offspring have inspired generations of Zoo guests to care about and conserve wildlife," said **Pamela Reed Sanchez**, Executive Director of Seneca Park Zoo Society. "We are dedicated to honoring his memory through educational programs, research, and fundraising that help protect endangered animals."

***Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.