



News From

Maggie Brooks

Monroe County Executive

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BROOKS ANNOUNCES GRAND OPENING OF 'YOUR GREEN BACKYARD' EXHIBIT AT ZOO

New Exhibit Highlights Importance of Conservation in Residents' Backyards

County Executive Maggie Brooks today was joined by officials from the Seneca Park Zoo, Waste Management, the Water Education Collaborative and New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I), to announce the opening of the Seneca Park Zoo's 'Your Green Backyard' exhibit.

*"The addition of this unique exhibit serves as a wonderful way to educate children and adults of the importance of preserving and protecting our environment," said **Brooks**. "The Zoo is an important economic driver in our community and new exhibits, such as this, continue to improve our quality of life and make Monroe County a great place to live and visit."*

'Your Green Backyard' educates and demonstrates helpful ways for people to be good stewards of the environment. Visitors are encouraged to identify the small creatures and indigenous species that are beneficial to the environment, all of which can be found right in their own backyards. Some educational topics include the importance of bees, ladybugs and bats, water conservation, organic gardening and composting.

"I am so proud the Zoo continues to be a leader in conservation education," said Rachel Baker August, Executive Director of the Seneca Park Zoo Society. "The funds provided by these generous corporations; Waste Management and Water Education Collaborative, allows us to spread the important message of what families can do to help the environment."

'Your Green Backyard' was made possible through support from Waste Management, the Water Education Collaborative and New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I). The Water Education Collaborative and NYSP2I are responsible for H2O Hero, a popular water quality and conservation project. H2O Hero and his dog, Scoop, are featured in the exhibit to educate visitors on how to protect our local waterways.

"Our Community Grants Program assists local communities looking to directly address pollution and environmental quality in the state of New York and provides the financial and technical assistance necessary to make these goals a reality," said Anahita Williamson, Director of the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute. "NYSP2I is proud to sponsor projects such as the Water Education Collaborative's H2O Water Hero that increase public awareness and improve water quality at the local level."

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New animals native to the local area will also be on display next to 'Your Green Backyard'. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn more about these animals that now have a new place to call home.

"The raccoon, turkey vulture and red tailed hawk are three of the most common animals in our region," said Larry Sorel, County Zoo Director. "Now that we are exhibiting these animals adjacent to 'Your Green Backyard' we are able to remind visitors that while we can safely coexist with them, they should always be thought of as wild animals."

The Seneca Park Zoo recently broke ground on a new lion exhibit and also held a sea lion naming contest at the end of last month for two new sea lions that made their debut at the Zoo in March.

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