

The stately, long-legged flamingo is among the most popular animals exhibited in zoos and aviaries around the world. The birds' magnificent size, graceful movements and startling salmon coloring become a breathtaking sight when hundreds of these birds flock together.

The National Aviary is home to five of these beautiful birds. This March the Aviary is pleased to host noted flamingo researchers Dr. Felicity Arengo, Associate Director of the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American

## Flamingo Conservation in South America and the Caribbean

Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York, and Dr. Nancy Clum, Assistant Curator of Ornithology for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) at the Bronx Zoo. Felicity and Nancy will present a talk on international efforts to study and protect flamingo populations in the Caribbean and South America.

Dr. Felicity Arengo coordinates WCS and AMNH research efforts in South America with those of the Grupo de Conservación de Flamencos Altoandinos (or High Andes Flamingo Conservation Group), a multinational initiative by scientists and conservationists from the four countries where Andean, James' and Chilean Flamingos are found. Recently the group put together a monumental effort to take a comprehensive census of populations of Andean and James' Flamingos. This project involved nearly 100 volunteers who, in one week, visited 220 mountain and lowland lakes, counting flamingos at each. The efforts of these field crews were rewarded when they produced the first-ever comprehensive and reliable estimates of the size of Andean and James' Flamingo populations.

Now that there is a good knowledge of the size of these populations, Felicity and her colleagues are going high-tech, outfitting Andean Flamingos with satellite transmitters in order to study their movements and habitat use. To insure that the transmitter "backpack" would not adversely affect the birds'



behavior, the attachment techniques were perfected through work with the Bronx Zoo's captive flamingos.

In the Caribbean, WCS also works with the Bahamas National Trust and The Nature Conservancy to survey and study flamingo populations. The work in the Bahamas, which is home to the second-largest concentration of Caribbean Flamingos, is coordinated by Dr. Nancy Clum. Last year, Nancy led the first-ever archipelago-wide survey for the species and also initiated fieldwork to examine flamingo habitat requirements and responses to disturbance.

South America and the Caribbean are home to some of the world's most impressive and threatened flamingos. Nancy and Felicity work in remote and threatened wetlands and are taking research in new directions to better understand and conserve these species. Together with other WCS researchers, they are currently evaluating the feasibility of using remote sensing to examine the annual redistribution of flamingos among breeding sites throughout the world. They hope to use the same satellite telemetry technology that Felicity uses in South America to study Caribbean flamingos.

**Dr. Felicity Arengo and Dr. Nancy Clum will present their talk on Flamingo research on Thursday, March 16, at 6:00 p.m. at the National Aviary. To register, contact Aimee Plotz at 412-323-7235, ext. 249.**

### *Host Your Event at the National Aviary*

With over 600 exotic and endangered birds, the Aviary makes a unique and exciting venue to host your event. Enjoy a casual and relaxed or elegant and intimate evening gathering in our Atrium or Rose Garden Tent.

Wedding receptions • Cocktail parties • Corporate engagements • Fundraisers • Reunions • and more...

Visit our website at [www.aviary.org](http://www.aviary.org) for new improved pricing.

For details, contact Aimee J. Plotz, Facility Rental Associate, at 412-323-7235 ext. 249 or [aimee.plotz@aviary.org](mailto:aimee.plotz@aviary.org)