



ELEPHANT AID INTERNATIONAL
One World...One Elephant at a Time

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mundi Proves Elephants Can Fly

On May 12, Mundi, a 41-year-old African elephant from the zoo in Puerto Rico, will fly to Elephant Refuge North America (ERNA). The refuge, located in Attapulgus, Georgia, is currently home to two other elephants—Bo and Tarra.

The custom-built transport crate was delivered last month and set up at Mundi's barn so she could become accustomed to it. Carol Buckley, Elephant Aid International founder and CEO, with nearly 50 years of caring for captive-held elephants, arrived at the zoo two weeks ago to help Mundi become comfortable going in and out of the crate at her own pace. Mundi already voluntarily enters the crate, spending time inside with the door open. This process will help her feel comfortable as she travels via a dedicated 747 airplane from Puerto Rico to Florida, along with veterinarians and caregivers.

The flight is expected to take 3 hours. Mundi will travel with three other animals from the zoo—a rhino and two hippos—each in their own custom transport crate, with their own forever home waiting for them in the United States. The move, coordinated by Pat Craig of The Wild Animal Sanctuary (TWAS), who also funded the flight, has assembled an expert team experienced with animal transports, including elephants.

Mundi's move to South Georgia and preparations at the refuge have been an impressive collaborative effort of organizations dedicated to animal welfare. The Kennedy Foundation funded additional infrastructure at the refuge, including a giant mud wallow, which Mundi is sure to love. World Animal Protection International has provided fundraising for Mundi's move and care.

Mundi is 8' tall, weighs 8,000 pounds, and has a calm and curious personality. As a result of an altercation with another elephant before coming to the zoo, she is blind in one eye and has a missing tusk.

Mundi was born in 1982 in Zimbabwe and was left orphaned by a government-organized mass culling. She was one of 63 young African elephants brought to the United States in 1984 in a rescue mission orchestrated by eccentric millionaire Arthur Jones, the inventor of Nautilus exercise equipment. Jones brought them to his Jumbo Lair estate in Ocala, Florida, where they lived for two years.

In 1986, Jones broke up the young herd and sold them to zoos, circuses, and private individuals.

Mundi has lived alone at the zoo for 35 years, in an area of about 15,000 square feet, slightly more than 1/4 acre, with access to an enclosed shelter.

The zoo has struggled financially and been closed to the public for years after losing its USDA license for failing to employ a veterinarian and providing substandard care for its animals, many of whom have died.

In February 2023, the US Department of Justice ordered the zoo to close and relocate all the remaining animals to reputable sanctuaries.

As with all emergency rescues, EAI must quickly raise the funds necessary to provide for Mundi in her forever home. The cost of Mundi's care for a year is \$145,000, which covers food, supplements, veterinary services, caregivers, and fuel for the 4-wheeler that makes multiple daily trips into the habitat to deliver food and care. Thanks to supporters, EAI has raised \$40,147.00 which is 28% of the funds needed.

To learn more, or if you would like to contribute toward Mundi's care in her new forever home at the refuge, visit: <https://elephantaidthelp.org/mundi-campaign/>

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About Elephant Aid International (EAI): Carol Buckley founded EAI, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, in 2010 to improve the lives of captive elephants worldwide. EAI enlists scientists, veterinarians, mahouts (elephant handlers), and owners in improving elephant welfare. EAI also provides education and hands-on assistance to improve elephants' care, training, and handling. To learn more about Elephant Refuge North America, visit ElephantAidInternational.org.

About Elephant Refuge North America (ERNA): The Refuge is a project of Elephant Aid International. Its 850 acres of lush pastures, forests, creeks, and spring-fed lakes provide a natural environment where captive-held elephants can retire and thrive.

About World Animal Protection

World Animal Protection is a global organization working to end factory farming and wildlife exploitation. They expose cruel systems, promote animal-friendly alternatives, and influence policy change. For over 70 years, World Animal Protection has been rewriting the story for animals.

Working across almost 50 countries with offices in 12, World Animal Protection is the only animal welfare organization with UN Consultative Status, enabling the organization to engage with and influence global decision-makers. World Animal Protection prioritizes animals in farming and wild animals exploited for use in entertainment, as pets, and in fashion.