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CONTACT:

Linda Hardwick

VP of Marketing, Communications & Events

lhawdwick@phoenixzoo.org

602.663.3254

**PHOENIX ZOO-JOINS CONSERVATION PARTNERS IN CELEBRATING
HISTORIC HYACINTH MACAW HATCHINGS IN BOLIVIA**

*First chicks successfully hatched in an artificial nest box mark a major
milestone for conservation efforts in the Bolivian Pantanal*

PHOENIX (October 19, 2026) - The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation/Phoenix Zoo is joining its conservation partners in celebrating a significant milestone with the successful hatching of two hyacinth macaw chicks in an artificial nest box in the San Matías Integrated Management Natural Area (ANMI), located in the Bolivian Pantanal.

The chicks, named Saturnina and Avelino, represent the first documented successful use of an artificial nest box for breeding hyacinth macaws in Bolivia. The first chick hatched August 17, followed by the second on August 19, in the Candelaria area of San Matías. The names of the chicks were chosen by local rangers and honor historic settlers of the land.

The achievement is the result of a collaborative conservation effort involving Fundación Conservación Loros Bolivia (CLB), World Parrot Trust, Bolivia's National Service of Protected Areas (SERNAP), park rangers from ANMI San Matías, and local communities with support from the Phoenix Zoo. "Seeing these chicks hatch is an incredible milestone because it represents years of commitment, collaboration and conservation work coming together," said Rafael Mounzon, Executive Director of Fundación CLB and Bolivia Country Coordinator for [World Parrot Trust](#). "The Phoenix Zoo has been a supporter of this project since 2024, but what makes this success especially meaningful is the partnership behind it. Local communities, park rangers and conservation organizations in Bolivia are doing the work every day to protect these birds and their habitat."

For the Phoenix Zoo, the hatchings are especially meaningful because they build on a strategic conservation partnership. Thanks in part to zoo admission and membership revenue, the Zoo has provided funding for the artificial nest box project for three consecutive years through its Conservation and Science Grant Program, with support directed to World Parrot Trust for conservation work in Bolivia. The Zoo features hyacinth macaws in its live ambassador animal presentations and is pleased to share this exciting conservation story with guests.

Currently found in Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay, hyacinth macaws are the largest parrots in the world and are considered vulnerable to extinction by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. This project addresses one of the most pressing challenges facing hyacinth macaws in the Bolivian Pantanal: the loss of suitable nesting habitat. Recurring fires and habitat degradation have reduced the availability of mature trees with natural cavities large enough for the birds to nest, while increasing competition among wildlife for the remaining cavities. Artificial nest boxes provide an additional breeding option while conservationists continue monitoring the species and its habitat.

The Zoo's support goes beyond providing artificial nesting habitat. This summer, that partnership became even more hands-on when two Phoenix Zoo staff members traveled to Bolivia on a Phoenix Zoo Staff Conservation Grant to work alongside the conservation team in the field.

Joaquin Hidalgo, Marketing & Communications Specialist, and Becky Mansel, Keeper of Animal Ambassador Resources, joined the project team in Bolivia, participating in the field effort alongside local partners. While there, they helped build nest boxes for wild hyacinth macaws and participated in community outreach in San Fernando.

Their visit coincided with an extraordinary moment for the project. While Hidalgo and Mansel were in Bolivia, project partners discovered the first newly hatched chick in one of the artificial nest boxes supported through the conservation program.

"Being in Bolivia and working side by side with the local park rangers, communities and conservation partners gave me an entirely new appreciation for what it takes to protect hyacinth macaws in the wild," said Hidalgo. "To then be there when the first chick hatched in one of these nest boxes was an experience I'll never forget."

"Seeing that tiny chick made the impact of this work incredibly real," said Mansel. "After spending time helping build nest boxes and working alongside the people who are committed to protecting these birds, it was extraordinary to see such a hopeful result firsthand."

The need for artificial nesting opportunities has become increasingly important in San Matías. Recurring fires have destroyed large trees historically used by macaws for nesting and have also affected the food-producing palms the macaws rely upon. According to local park rangers interviewed by Red Ambiental de Información, these environmental pressures have intensified competition for both food and natural nesting cavities.

"We didn't know whether hyacinth macaws would accept the nest boxes," said Tara Harris, Phoenix Zoo Conservation Initiatives Manager. "While similar approaches had succeeded elsewhere, there were no guarantees. But the team stayed committed and adapted the design using local ranger knowledge. Seeing the birds successfully hatch and raise chicks in those boxes is incredibly rewarding and highlights the importance of persistence and collaboration in conservation."

The successful hatchings of Saturnina and Avelino now provide an encouraging indication that artificial nest boxes can offer hyacinth macaws another option for reproduction where suitable natural cavities are increasingly limited.

For the Phoenix Zoo and its conservation partners, the milestone is also a reminder of what long-term conservation investment can make possible: combining financial support, scientific expertise, field participation, community knowledge, engagement and local stewardship to help create a more sustainable future for wildlife.

MEDIA MATERIAL: Photos and video are available via this Dropbox link:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/crltbvem55q834ypiysny/AMUY_kpvG-0UnivnrXWPj9I?rlkey=ew1kdi69v5s8vkeykqcxsa5ib&st=prbzlywa&dl=0

About the Arizona Center for Nature Conservation

The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation operates the Phoenix Zoo. The ACNC advances the stewardship and conservation of animals and their habitats while providing experiences that inspire people and motivate them to care for the natural world.

The Phoenix Zoo is the only zoo in the Valley accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is a non-profit zoological park, serving 1.4 million guests annually. The Zoo is home to more than 3,000 animals, many of which are endangered and threatened species. For information on upcoming events, exhibits and activities at the Phoenix Zoo, visit phoenixzoo.org.

To learn more about hyacinth macaw conservation, visit <https://parrots.org/projects/hyacinth-macaw-conservation/>.