



# NEWS FROM...

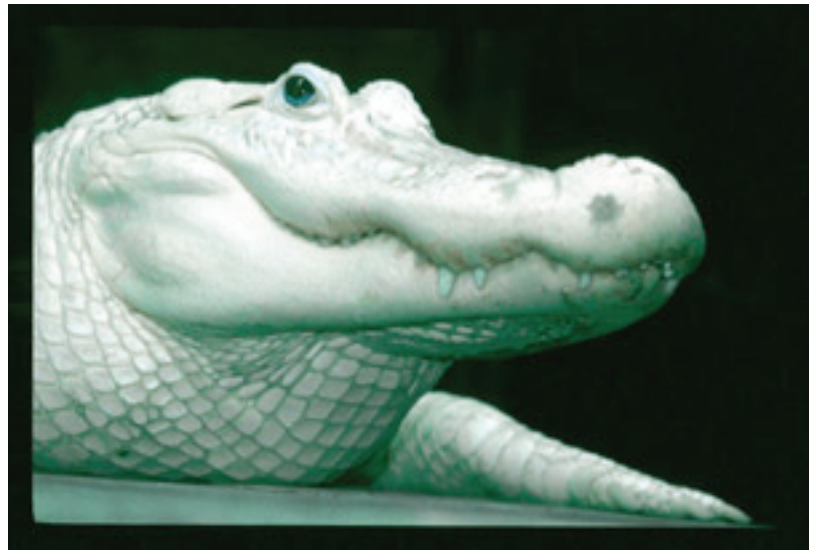
**FOR: IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RE: PARTY WITH “MARDI THE WHITE ALLIGATOR” ALL SUMMER AT THE PALM BEACH ZOO**

**DATE: MAY 30, 2007**

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May 30, 2007, West Palm Beach – The Palm Beach Zoo will be exhibiting a rare white alligator through the end of September. The snow white blue-eyed alligator, named Mardi, is nine feet long and weighs an impressive 250 pounds. Mardi gets his name from “Mardi Gras”, the party that New Orleans is known for. He, like all white alligators, is from Louisiana. He will be on display starting June 15 and he’ll stay until the end of September, all courtesy of FPL Sunshine Energy® Program.



All known white alligators are male. Eastern mythology holds the white beasts to be symbols of extraordinary good luck. No one knows for certain why these alligators were born white. In fact they are not, as most people assume, albinos. Their eyes are brilliantly blue rather than the characteristic red of albino animals. Since their lack of skin pigmentation deprives them of natural camouflage, their ability to survive in the wild is severely limited. One theory is that many white alligators may have been born throughout the centuries but were too vulnerable to enemies within their environment, and to the sun. Only the alligators with protective coloration survive in the wild.

The white alligators that are now exhibited in zoos and aquariums throughout the country were rescued by workers from The Louisiana Land and Exploration Company who spotted the unusual babies minutes after they hatched and brought them to be raised at the Aquarium of the Americas and the Audubon Zoo in New Orleans.

Mardi will be on exhibit through the end of September. His stay in South Florida has been made possible through the generous support of Florida Power and Light Company’s Sunshine Energy® Program.

“We are extremely pleased to help the Palm Beach Zoo foster awareness, appreciation and respect for the natural world,” said David Bates, program manager for FPL’s Sunshine Energy Program. “This is an excellent opportunity for us to help zoo visitors learn more about this unique animal, as well as renewable energy, such as FPL’s Sunshine Energy Program.” To learn more about Sunshine Energy, visit [www.FPL.com/sunshine](http://www.FPL.com/sunshine).

The Palm Beach Zoo is a non profit zoological organization located at Dreher Park in West Palm Beach, housing over 1,500 animals within 23 acres of lush tropical habitat. Its mission is to provide an open-air classroom of living creatures to foster awareness, appreciation and respect for the natural world.

Palm Beach Zoo is located at 1301 Summit Boulevard, just east of I-95 between Southern and Forest Hill Boulevard. Admission: Regular \$12.95, Seniors 60+ \$9.95, Children 3-12 \$8.95, under 3 years and Zoo Members are free. The zoo is open every day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.) For more information visit [www.palmbeachzoo.org](http://www.palmbeachzoo.org).

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**Palm Beach Zoo • 1301 Summit Boulevard, West Palm Beach FL, 33405-3098  
(561) 547-WILD • [www.palmbeachzoo.org](http://www.palmbeachzoo.org)**