

The Tropical Rainforest at Miller Park Zoo

It is possible that the first large aviary dates as far back as the early 1500s. The first one inside a zoological garden was established in 880 at the Rotterdam Zoo. In 1902, an aviary, then called a flying cage, was completed at the National Zoological Park of the Smithsonian Institution. A new great flying cage was built at the National Zoo in 1964.

The Tropical Rainforest, Miller Park Zoo's aviary, was established in 2004 and currently houses thirty-two birds representing sixteen different species. This included twelve birds from five different species that were added in 2021. The newest birds added to the Rainforest include the Bali mynah and the Golden-crested mynah.

Many things are considered when adding new birds including the ratio of males to females, the diets required, and the ability to live peacefully with the other birds.

Some of the species of birds you can find in the Tropical Rainforest at Miller Park Zoo are:

- Bali mynah
- Black-naped fruit dove
- Black-necked stilt
- Blue-grey Tanager
- Golden-crested mynah
- Green-backed trogon
- Nicobar pigeon
- Red-capped cardinals
- Rufous-crowned tanager
- Saffron finch
- Scarlet ibis
- Silver-beaked tanager
- Sunbittern
- Turquoise tanager
- Troupial
- Violaceous euphonnia



Black-necked stilt



Green-backed trogon



Violaceous euphonnia



Silver-beaked tanager



Nicobar pigeon



Scarlet ibis



Sunbittern

Keepers have built nine nests positioned throughout the exhibit. Birds can choose between open or closed nests, or they may build a nest of their own. Each year, numerous eggs are hatched and while some of the fledglings stay at Miller Park others are sent to zoos across the country. The most recent birds to leave our flock for other zoos were Silver-beaked tanagers.



Types of nest boxes found in the Tropical Rainforest

When sending birds to other institutions, they travel by car or plane in specially packed crates with Astroturf on the floor and branches for perching. This ensures the birds are both comfortable and secure during their trip.

This is the time of year when every bird in the Rainforest is captured and examined by veterinarians. To accomplish this, open cages with food and liquids are placed on the ground throughout the exhibit to capture the birds.

In addition to the birds, the Tropical Rainforest at Miller Park Zoo is currently home to White-faced saki monkeys, Red-rumped agoutis, Southern tamandua, and a breeding pair of Cotton-top tamarins.



Cotton-top tamarin

Red-rumped agouti

Southern tamandua

With so many species to find and plans to add even more throughout the year, every trip to the Tropical Rainforest is sure to be unique. Zoo Members can make the most out of their unlimited free admission and check back frequently to discover something new.

How many species can you find in the Tropical Rainforest?

