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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HOLIDAY JOY: TWO BABY PENGUIN CHICKS HATCH IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS AT MOODY GARDENS, GALVESTON ISLAND**

GALVESTON, Texas (Dec. 24, 2024) – Santa arrived early with a precious delivery to the Moody Gardens Aquarium Pyramid, as two new Chinstrap penguin chicks hatched at the exhibit just in time for Christmas. The first fuzzy chick hatched on Dec. 17 and the second baby penguin arrived Dec. 22 as staff biologists have watched closely to monitor to their progress.

The first chick registered at 182 grams at the Christmas Eve weigh-in as biologists track its daily progress and report the tiny new addition to the South Atlantic Exhibit is doing very well with its parents Blue and Blanche. The younger penguin currently weighs 114 grams and is also settling in nicely with parents Squawk and Dorothy. Both chicks hatched in their nests and are being raised by their parents on exhibit.

“These chicks will remain with their parents on exhibit for about a month,” said staff Biologist Brooke Loewenthal, who works with the penguins daily and added they will be moved to the back of the exhibit as they become more active. Because they have down feathers that are not waterproof, it is important to keep the chicks away from the deep, cold water of the exhibit. While away from public view, they will be weaned from their parents, taught to swim and then reintroduced to their tuxedo-clad peers.

Guests can watch closely for a glimpse of the chicks from the front of the exhibit as they emerge periodically from beneath the bellies of their protective parents during shifts and feeding. They can also be viewed on the live penguin webcam at <https://www.moodygardens.com/media-center/penguinwebcam>.

These Chinstraps join a collection of 93 other penguins of the King, Macaroni, Gentoo and Rockhopper species that reside in the exhibit. They represent another successful breeding season at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums accredited facility with anticipation of other possible chicks as additional King penguin eggs may produce more baby birds in early 2025.

It has been a busy month for the Moody Gardens birds as a Penguin Painting video featuring Marley the Rockhopper penguin went viral in mid-December. The video captured over 100 million views on TikTok, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram and introduced an option to help with animal conservation projects in the wild. For more information, call 1-800-582-4673 or visit [www.moodygardens.org](http://www.moodygardens.org)

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