

Love on the rocks: Penguins celebrating Valentine's Day

February 14 2018



A penguin gets a heart-shaped nesting material from biologist Spencer Rennerfeldt at the California Academy of Sciences Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, in San Francisco. Academy staff handed out the hearts to the penguins who naturally use similar material to build nests in the wild. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

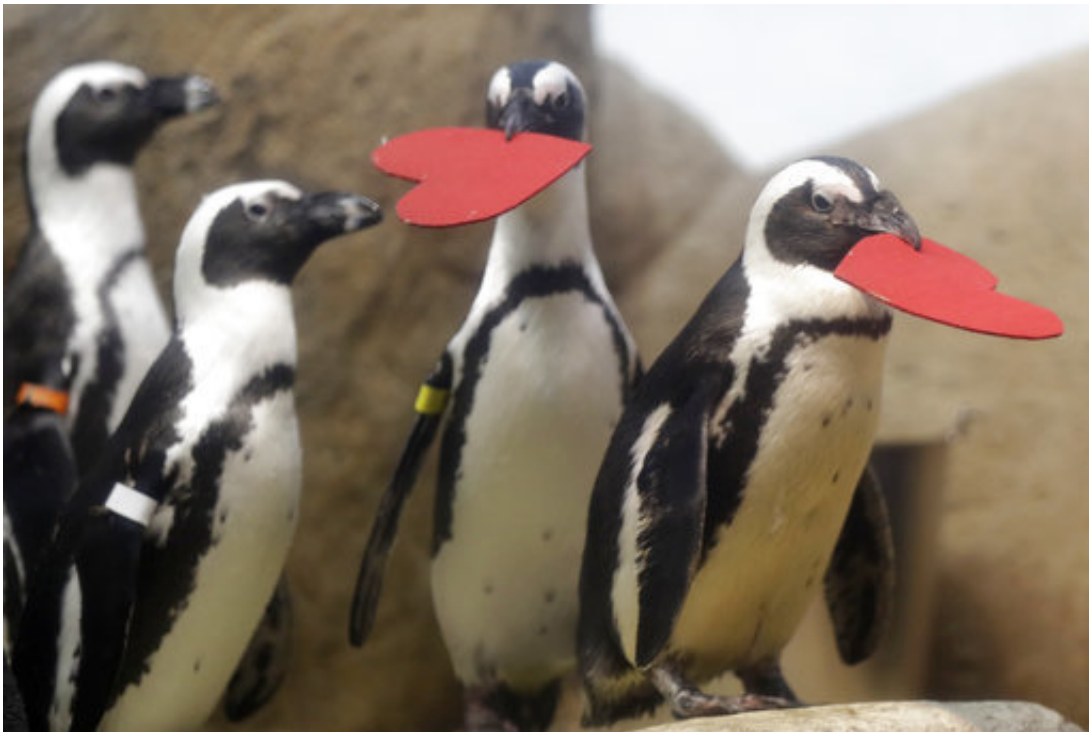
Penguins are looking for love with big red hearts at a San Francisco aquarium.

In what has become an annual Valentine's Day tradition, biologists handed out red felt hearts to the 14 African penguins at the California Academy of Sciences on Tuesday.

The animals grabbed the hearts in their beaks and waddled around their rocky enclosure toward their nests.

Spokeswoman Kelly Mendez said it is often the male penguin who retrieves the [heart](#) and carries it back to his mate. The penguins use the felt for material in their [nests](#), which helps reinforce the couples' bonds.

The activity is part of the academy's captive breeding program to help increase the African penguin population, which is endangered in the wild.



Penguins carry heart-shaped nesting material given to them by biologists as a Valentine's Day promotion at the California Academy of Sciences Tuesday, Feb.

13, 2018, in San Francisco. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)



A penguin carries heart-shaped nesting material which it received from biologists as a Valentine's Day promotion at the California Academy of Sciences Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, in San Francisco. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)



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