

CKC Przewalski's Horse (P. Horse) Profile

A Perfect Pair

National Zoo Names: Rose Marie and Rolles

Species: Przewalski's Horse

Location: Smithsonian National Park

Their Story

Rose Marie the Przewalski Horse (P. horse) was born on August 25, 1986. She came to the National Zoo in 2006 directly from the Conservation Research Center (CRC) in Front Royal, Virginia. She was originally brought in as a companion for Minnesota another P. Horse who was living at the Zoo, but recently Minnesota was sent back to the CRC to breed. This left Rose Marie all alone, so in February 2008



Rolles was brought to the Zoo from the CRC. P. horses are very social animals so it was important for Rose Marie to have a companion.

Przewalski's horses are incredibly important to zoos all over the world for one major reason. Ever since the 1970s these animals have been classified as extinct in the wild. This means that you can only see them if you visit a zoo. The National Zoo has P. horses in two locations, both at the CRC in Virginia and here in Rock Creek Park. Rose Marie and Rolles' job here at the Zoo is to act as ambassadors for their species and to help educate the public about their story. Scientists all over the world are working hard to re-grow P. horse populations with the hopes that one day they will be able to run free in the wild once again.

Spirit Horse

P. horses are originally from Mongolia and while they cannot be found in the wild today, they are still considered to be a symbol of Mongolian national heritage. In Mongolia, people call these horses *takhi* which means "spirit." Throughout history these horses have been featured in many Mongolian books, songs and rock engravings.

Horse Sense

P. horses are typically around 13 hands high. What does that mean? Well, a long time ago it wasn't easy to find measuring tools like rulers, so people had to measure objects by using their body parts. A person's hand is typically 4 inches in width, so the measurement of a "hand" represents 4 inches. Therefore, if a horse is 13 hands that means that they are about 52 inches high or a little over four feet tall. Horses are measured from the ground to their withers, the highest part of the back at the base of the neck. However, unlike most horses that you would see in the United States, P. horses are not meant to be ridden, so you can't ride Rose Marie and Rolles because they wouldn't like it.

Horsing Around

Both Rose Marie and Rolles have light blond coats, but Rose Marie is a little bit bigger than Rolles and much hairier. In fact, she has a beard, but don't tell her that you noticed! Both animals are very laid back but Rose Marie LOVES to eat and if given the chance will eat both her and Rolles' food. Here at the Zoo they are fed a diet of hay and pellets.

One of the most important things about taking care of animals at the Zoo is to keep them healthy, happy, and occupied so they don't get bored. Rose Marie and Rolles are often given rubber balls to grab and push around. Sometimes they are fed from a feeder called an "Amazing Graze" which is a tube with a hole in the bottom. The horses can play with them and reach their food as a reward.



Where You Can Find Them

Rose Marie and Rolles are great animals to visit in the winter as it is their favorite season, but they can be seen year round off of Olmstead walk near the Small Mammal House. Come to the Zoo and visit them today!