



New Orleans, 17 February 2022

Audubon Zoo and Audubon Aquarium of the Americas Collecting Mardi Gras Beads For Recycling

Audubon Zoo and Audubon Aquarium of the Americas are offering parade-goers a way to responsibly recycle their Mardi Gras beads this Carnival season. From Thursday, February 17, through Monday, March 14, 2022, collection boxes will be located at the front gate at the Zoo and the information booth at the Aquarium for the public to drop off beads for recycling by the Arc of Greater New Orleans. Admission to the Zoo or Aquarium is not required in order to drop off beads.

About 25 million pounds of beads are thrown at Mardi Gras each year, but only around 266 thousand pounds of beads were recycled after Mardi Gras in 2019. Audubon attractions are committed to keeping Mardi Gras beads out of landfills and away from nature by making it easier for parade lovers to give their beads a second life.

“Carnival season is a special time in Louisiana,” said Audubon Nature Institute President and CEO Ron Forman. “But, the parades, throws, and costumes create waste that can harm nature and wildlife. Together, we can vow to pick up after ourselves and recycle so that we can all feel good about letting the good times roll.”

Some suggestions for celebrating Mardi Gras sustainably include:

- During parades, reuse throws from prior years or use recycled throws from retailers like Arc of Greater New Orleans.
- Don't toss collected throws after a parade. Save them for next year, bring them to a recycling drop-off point or offer them for free online for crafters or future parade riders.
- Reduce vehicle use by walking, biking or taking public transportation to parades, parties and balls. Parade-goers can also use rideshares or carpools.
- Pack environmentally-friendly parade picnics. Use reusable bottles and storage containers when possible and recyclable materials like aluminum and glass. Glass cannot be put in curbside recycling, but there are multiple glass drop-off locations in the New Orleans area.
- Wear homemade costumes instead of store-bought ones. Use materials from around the house or purchased secondhand at a thrift store. If buying materials, try to avoid plastic and buy things that can be reused.
- Clean up parade spot before leaving. Make sure to take all trash and have a designated bin or bag for recyclables.

Follow this link for more sustainability tips: <https://action.audubonnatureinstitute.org/>

Audubon Nature Institute operates a family of museums, parks and research facilities dedicated to celebrating the wonders of nature. Through innovative live animal exhibits, education programs, and scientific discovery, Audubon makes a meaningful contribution to preserving wildlife for the future. Audubon Nature Institute flagships include Audubon Park, Audubon Zoo, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, Entergy Giant Screen Theater, Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium, Audubon Louisiana Nature Center, Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center, Woldenberg Riverfront Park and Audubon Wilderness Park. Ron Forman is President and CEO of Audubon Nature Institute.

<https://newsroom.audubonnatureinstitute.org/en-us/audubon-zoo-and-audubon-aquarium-of-the-americas-collecting-mardi-gras-beads-for-r>

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