



Contact Information

Jared Schaller

Office: 409-683-4209

Cell: 409-771-3891

news@moodygardens.org

Jerri Hamachek

Office: 409-683-4249

Cell: 409-789-2607

jhamachek@moodygardens.org

Photos & Videos: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/jTtMbsrc9K>

MOODY GARDENS WELCOMES ENDANGERED KOMODO DRAGON TO RAINFOREST PYRAMID

GALVESTON, Texas (June 22, 2026) - Moody Gardens is excited to welcome Diah, an 8-year-old female Komodo dragon, to the Rainforest Pyramid. Hatched at the Fort Worth Zoo in 2017, Diah arrived at Moody Gardens through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP), a collaborative program that helps ensure healthy and genetically diverse populations of animals in accredited zoos and aquariums.

As Diah settles into her new habitat, animal care specialists are carefully monitoring her behavior and allowing her to adjust at her own pace. Guests may catch a glimpse of her in the coming days, although she will have the choice to remain behind the scenes as she becomes comfortable in her new surroundings.

Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*) are the largest living lizards on Earth, capable of reaching lengths of up to 10 feet. Native to a handful of Indonesian islands, they are apex predators known for their keen senses, powerful bodies and forked tongues that help them detect chemical cues in their environment.

"Komodo Dragons are one of the most impressive and well recognized reptiles in the world. We are excited to have Diah as an ambassador for her species and allow guests to make a connection with this special animal," said Marci Kurtz Hoffman, assistant curator of the Rainforest Pyramid and animal wellbeing manager at Moody Gardens.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies Komodo dragons as Endangered due to threats including habitat loss, climate change and rising sea levels that impact their limited island habitat. Through participation in AZA-accredited conservation and breeding programs, institutions such as Moody Gardens help support the long-term future of species while inspiring guests to become environmental stewards.

The Rainforest Pyramid at Moody Gardens is home to a diverse collection of tropical plants and animals from Asia, Africa and the Americas. Through immersive exhibits, education programs and conservation initiatives, Moody Gardens works to connect guests with wildlife and encourage the protection of ecosystems around the globe.

For more information about Moody Gardens, visit moodygardens.org.

Moody Gardens® is a public, non-profit, educational destination utilizing nature in the of rehabilitation, conservation, recreation, and research.