

Species Requiem Day

September 1, 2011 marked the first commemoration of Species Requiem Day at Embassy Freetown. It was a day to remember all of the animal species that have gone extinct due to human activity. It is observed on September 1 because that is the day in 1914 that the last Passenger Pigeon died in a Cincinnati Zoo. The Passenger Pigeon was once the most numerous bird in North America but was driven to extinction by over hunting. Symbolic tomb stones were erected in memory of the lost animals with pictures of each on display.

A second portion to the display showed 6 animals native to Sierra Leone that are also at risk for extinction. For some like the Forest Elephant, the population decline is well documented and many are aware of the need to protect them. Others like the Olive Colobus Monkey are prone to the same fate as the Passenger Pigeon. All of the species featured in the display went extinct because of overhunting and/or habitat loss and more are feared to become extinct soon. The aim of the program was to create greater awareness about the adverse effects of human activities on wildlife

