



**For Immediate Release**

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**Rose and Sage Arrive Safely to The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens**

*Rescued and cared for by the Oakland Zoo, the beloved mountain lion pair  
have arrived to their fur-ever home.*

**September 23, 2022 -- (Palm Desert/Indian Wells, CA)** -- The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is thrilled to share that Rose and Sage, the rescued mountain lions from the Oakland Zoo, have arrived safely to The Living Desert. The juvenile mountain lions made the journey from Oakland to Palm Desert on Thursday, September 22, and are now settling into their fur-ever home.

“Rose and Sage’s journey to Southern California went smoothly and they are now acclimating to their new surroundings. Both cats were calm throughout the evening and through our camera monitoring, we observed expected behaviors including drinking, grooming, exploring, playing, and sleeping,” noted Heather Down, Animal Care Curator of The Living Desert. “Rose and Sage will remain behind-the-scenes for about a week as they get accustomed to their new environment and the animal care team builds a relationship with them.”

Both instant media sensations capturing hearts around the nation, Rose was initially spotted by hikers in the Thornewood Open Space Preserve in San Mateo, CA. Orphaned, emaciated, and malnourished, she was brought to the Oakland Zoo in April 2022 where she received critical veterinary care. Today, she is a healthy mountain lion cub estimated to be about nine-to ten-months old. Sage was discovered in a classroom at Pescadero High School in Northern California in June 2022. He was brought to the Oakland Zoo orphaned and malnourished and now is a healthy nine-to eleven-month old mountain lion.

As young, orphaned cubs, Rose and Sage had yet to learn the necessary skills to thrive independently so they could not be released back into the wild. Mountain lion cubs stay with their mothers for up to two years, learning how to hunt and survive.

Today, Rose and Sage are now thriving juvenile mountain lions thanks to the incredible dedication from the Oakland Zoo. To prepare for their California road-trip south, the Oakland Zoo team worked to develop their social skills and build their ability to travel safely and calmly in their transport crates through positive training experiences.

“We are so excited to welcome Rose and Sage to The Living Desert,” said RoxAnna Breitigan, Director of Animal Care at The Living Desert. “These cats have such an amazing story, and we are honored to be part of their next chapter. We are so proud of our colleagues at the Oakland Zoo for the exemplary care and dedication to the well-being of these amazing animals.”

The Living Desert is also home to a mountain lion named Salem. At over 18 years old, Salem is one of the oldest mountain lions in human care with animal care and veterinary teams dedicated to her well-being and health throughout every stage of her life. The current care plan is not to introduce Rose and Sage

with Salem. Rose and Sage are a young, rambunctious pair with different energy levels and care needs than Salem, so they will be managed separately. Once the pair are introduced to the mountain lion habitat, guests will either see Salem or they will see Rose and Sage.

Mountain lions are native to the Americas. Also known as pumas, panthers, or cougars, mountain lions live in a variety of habitats including forests, grasslands, and deserts. Native mountain lion populations are threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation, urban sprawl, and human-wildlife conflict. The Living Desert is committed to sharing the importance of human-wildlife coexistence.

Follow along with Rose and Sage's journey on The Living Desert's [Instagram](#).

[Dropbox Link for Media Images and Video](#)

### **About The Living Desert:**

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit, accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ensuring the highest standards of all aspects of animal care, education, conservation, public service, and operations. The Zoo is active in conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives around the world, as well as in its own community. The Zoo has been a top destination in the Palm Springs area for more than 50 years. The Living Desert is located at 47900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260. For more information: (760) 346-5694 or visit [livingdesert.org](http://livingdesert.org).

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