

Black Pine Animal Sanctuary

Animal Facts

Breed: RHEA

Names / Sex / Age:

Boomer	M	At least 10-12 years
Lucy	F	At least 10-12 years

Previous Home: Born and raised at Black Pine prior to a no-breeding policy.

Native to: South America

Diet: Vegetation

Facts:

- In general appearance, rheas resemble the much larger African ostrich
- Rheas can occur in gray or white. White is the result of a recessive gene.
- Rheas have larger wings than ostriches, and are flightless birds
- Rheas have three toes; ostriches have two
- Heads and necks are completely feathered
- Tails are under-developed, but long feathers droop over and cover their posteriors. These feathers are used to make dusters
- Several females use the same nest, and a single male may hatch fifty eggs
- Rheas roam in flocks of about six birds, except in mating season, when about 25 flock together
- In the rhea family, the male makes a nest. The female then lays her eggs, which the male turns and situates in the nest. He then sits on the eggs and tends to them, and once hatched, raises the young
- Rheas enjoy swimming

Personal History:

Boomer and Lucy were among rheas originally purchased by the founders of Black Pine before the park opened to the public. The pair successfully nested and hatched 8 chicks in 2003, and more chicks again in 2005, before the park adopted a no-breeding policy.

Today any eggs laid are gathered and disposed of.