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Extinct Turtle Species Lives on at Kansas Zoo with Help from New, Adorable Arrival

The Sedgwick County Zoo shared that the hatching of the McCord's box turtle is "an important milestone for conservation"

By [Ingrid Vasquez](#) | Updated on October 11, 2023 10:03AM EDT



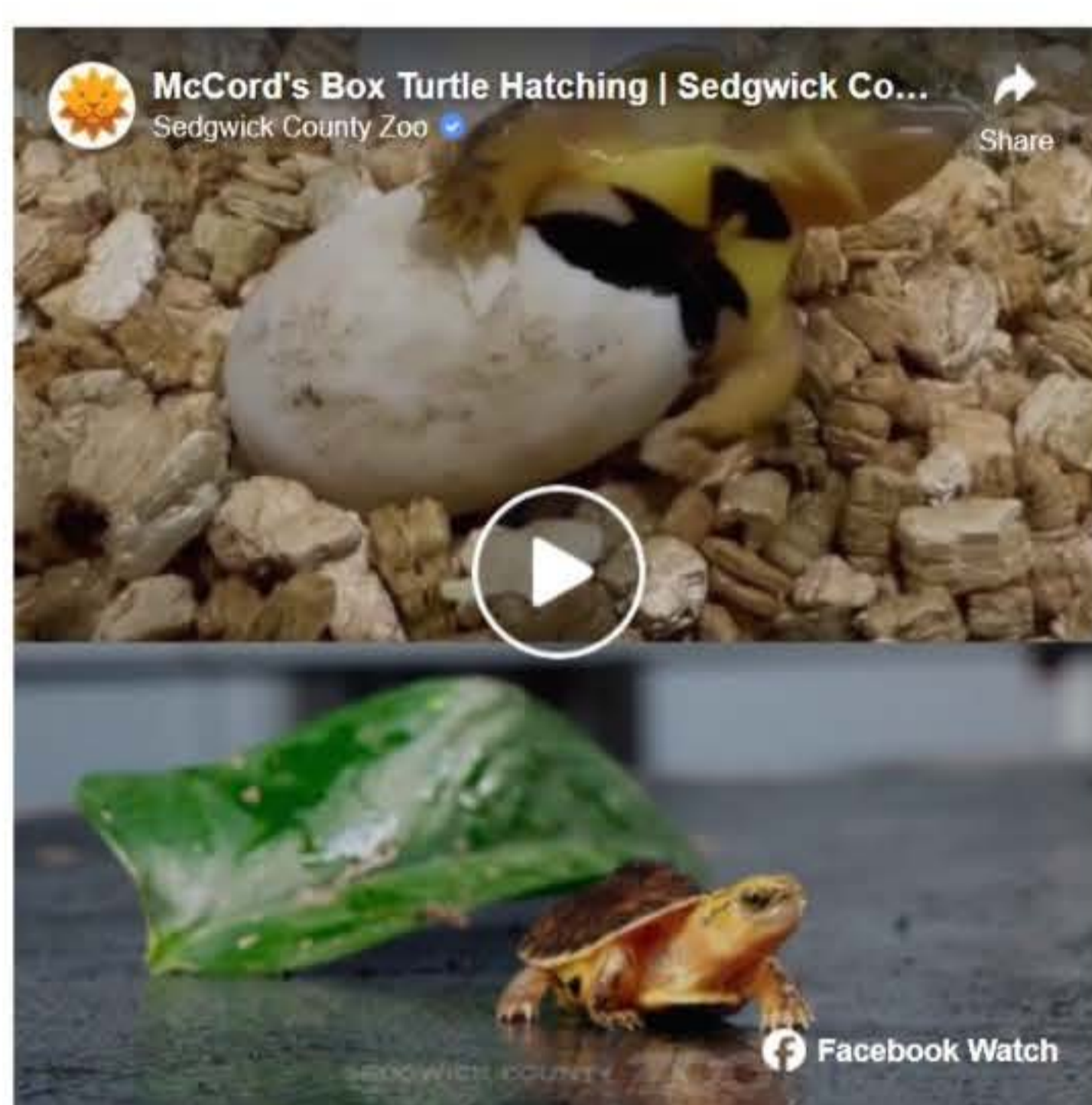
Photo of a turtle hatching via Getty Images. PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/WESTEND61

A zoo in Kansas has welcomed the arrival of a rare species of turtle!

The [Sedgwick County Zoo](#) – a wildlife park that is home to 3,000 individual animals of nearly 400 species — announced the birth of a McCord's box turtle on Friday.

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"This successful hatching is not only a first for our Zoo, but an important milestone for conservation as this species is EXTINCT in the wild," the zoo wrote in a [Facebook post](#) that included a video of the reptile's arrival.



Many social media users thanked the zoo for their conservation efforts in the comment section, including one follower who wrote, "Congratulations and thank the staff for this wonderful achievement." Another added, "So happy. You hardly see any Box turtles anymore."

The zoo spoke further about the adorable arrival on a [mini-episode of its Sedgwick County ZooCast podcast](#), in which they explained that the species of turtle is presumed extinct, being that no McCord's box turtles have been observed in the wild since 2010 and only exist in captive breeding programs.

"McCord's box turtles can lay clutches of one to six eggs," said host Emily Bishop. "Our female laid a single egg, and after 90 days of incubation, it successfully hatched."

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While Bishop explained that animals at the zoo are often rotated on and off exhibits, she shared that the McCord's box turtles are kept in a behind-the-scenes facility to be closely monitored by zookeepers.

"This is the first time Sedgwick County Zoo has bred McCord's box turtles," she continued. "Prior to now, we didn't have a breeding recommendation from the Species Survival Plan. This program manages the population of endangered animals across zoos that are accredited with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums."

Bishop explained that pollution and habitat destruction have contributed to the decrease in the McCord's box turtle population along with its use in "traditional Chinese Medicine, for food, and for sale in pet trade."

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"By successfully breeding McCord's box turtles, SCZ is helping to ensure future generations are able to see and learn about these turtles," Bishop added.