



MEDIA ADVISORY

- For Immediate Release -

June 2, 2009

ZOO SENIORS – CARING FOR OUR ELDERLY

Calgary, AB – Senior citizens are an integral part of our Calgary community and so too our “zoo seniors” are a much-loved and important part of the Calgary Zoo’s animal population. With the launch of Alberta Seniors’ Week, it is a great time to introduce Calgarians to many of our special zoo seniors and talk about how we care for our elderly citizens.

Normal life expectancy in animals can range from less than a year for some small mammals to several decades for others. The Calgary Zoo’s list of senior citizens covers many species: our oldest zoo resident, Foggy the hippo, who at 43 is also one of the 10 oldest hippos in North America; our lovely and gracefully aging giraffe, Mardi, now 19; wonderful 14 year old red panda, Kachin; 10 year old river otter, Callebaut; Fluffy the emu at approximately 32 years of age; grizzly bears Skoki and Khutzymateen at 20 and 18; Przewalski horses, Zina and Nikita, 24 and 21; and our entire lion pride who are all 13 years old – and there are more.

“Getting older presents challenges not only for people, but also for animals,” explains Dr. Sandie Black, Head of Veterinary Services. “Each animal has its own special needs. Along with the keepers, we do everything we can to ensure our animals maintain a good quality of life well into their golden years.”

Animal care in zoos is a lifelong commitment and at the Calgary Zoo our expert veterinary staff and zookeepers provide individual care for each of the more than 1,000 animals for whom the zoo is home – from birth to old age. They might have a few special needs, but we think our senior citizens at the zoo still have a lot to offer.

Media Information:

WHAT: A behind-the-scenes opportunity to see Foggy the hippo get his daily gingivitis treatment and health check.

WHEN: Wednesday, June 3 at 8:00 a.m.

WHERE: African Savannah Building

**WHO: Dr. Sandie Black, Head of Veterinary Services
Mona Keith, Zookeeper**

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The Calgary Zoo is part of a professional, accredited association and member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) comprised of caring, trusted experts committed to ensuring that many endangered and threatened species are part of the world's future. AZA and CAZA advocate on behalf of animals with a unified and consistent voice, and collaborate with others committed to their long-term survival. The Calgary Zoo participates in many Species Survival Plans (SSP), a network among accredited institutions designed to breed endangered species in captivity to ensure the best possible genetic diversity and maintain healthy populations in human care. Through our conservation, education and research programs, many animals in our care play an essential role in the survival of their species in the wild.

The Calgary Zoological Society is a charitable organization. Charitable Registration #118824192 RR0001

