



## **NEWS RELEASE**

- For Immediate Release -

*July 21, 2009*

### ***IT'S MARSUPIAL MANIA AT THE CALGARY ZOO***

Calgary, AB – There are lots of new things hopping in the Australia section of the zoo these days. Visitors to Calgary's "Down Under" will be delighted to see some new additions - all marsupials - and if they're lucky they just might catch a glimpse of a young joey in its mother's pouch.

#### **Red Kangaroos**

New to the Calgary Zoo this year are two adorable female red kangaroos that were introduced to the exhibit over the past two weeks. Willa (meaning woman) and Kiki (meaning watering hole) are just-over and just-under one year old respectively. They arrived in Calgary from the Pueblo Zoo in Colorado on May 27, 2009 and spent their first month at the zoo's Animal Health Centre in required 30-day quarantine. They can now be seen hopping about and munching grass in the outdoor yard weather permitting.

#### **Bennett's Wallabies**

There is another new addition to the zoo family in the Bennett's Wallaby enclosure as a young joey has now begun to regularly venture outside of the safety of its mother's pouch for brief periods of time. Visitors may see a leg dangling or nose peaking outside the pouch as the little joey continues to grow. The joey is now approximately six months old and will continue to grow in the pouch until it reaches about eight months of age when its increasing size will mean it has to nurse from outside the pouch.

"It is really exciting to see the joey, whose gender hasn't yet been determined, getting out of the pouch, bouncing around for a little while and then hopping back in," said Barb Campbell, a zookeeper who works in the Australia section.

### **Matschie's Tree Kangaroos**

Although not a new species for the Calgary Zoo, the zoo has a new female Matschie's tree kangaroo. This endangered species, found only in Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, is part of a Species Survival Plan (SSP) managed by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Koloona, the male, is 11 years old and came to Calgary from the Cleveland Metropark Zoo on November 6, 2000. The new female, Mattie, is two years old and came from the Dallas World Aquarium earlier this spring as a result of an SSP breeding recommendation. Introductions took a little while, but now the pair can be seen regularly in their exhibit in the Australia building.

"It is difficult to estimate the Matschie's tree kangaroo population in the wild because the region where they are found is so remote," explains zookeeper Campbell. "However, current estimates are that there are fewer than 2,500 mature individual tree kangaroos remaining so it is very gratifying to feel we are contributing to their survival."

Tree kangaroos are endangered primarily due to habitat destruction and local hunting. The Calgary Zoo was the first zoo to support the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Project in 1994 and the zoo's Conservation Fund has supported field research and conservation education in New Guinea since 1999.

### **That's not all, folks**

While visiting the zoo's new marsupials, guests can also still see Budaru and Mudoonie, our visiting koalas from the San Diego Zoo. They are here until just after the September long weekend. Visitors can also see other marsupials including feather-tailed gliders, opossums and Parma Wallabies.

### **Media Instructions:**

**What:** Photo opportunity and keeper interview  
**When:** Wednesday, July 22 at 11:00 a.m.  
**Where:** Australia Building  
**Who:** Barb Campbell, zookeeper  
**Note:** Please check in at Zoo Security.

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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*