



NEWS RELEASE

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COWNOSE RAY EXHIBIT TO CLOSE

Calgary, AB – Senior management at the zoo have made the decision to close the Cownose ray exhibit in the next few weeks to make way for a new exhibit later this year. Zoo management is considering a number of options to replace the ray exhibit, which opened in February 2008.

“We have made a decision to close the ray exhibit,” said Cathy Gaviller, Director of Conservation, Education and Research. “Although the new equipment we added last year has improved the life support system, to further improve the system to allow us to increase the ray population or to add other aquatic species would represent a significant financial investment.”

“Since the exhibit was always intended to be temporary, we have decided to change to a new exhibit rather than invest more in this one,” Gaviller continued.

The exhibit was not intended to be a permanent feature at the Zoo, but instead was one of a series of temporary attractions planned to highlight and acquaint visitors with species not normally seen at the Calgary Zoo. A number of improvements were made to the exhibit following the death of 41 rays in May 2008 which months of exhaustive testing indicated was likely caused from a lack of dissolved oxygen in the water.

Discussions are underway with other accredited institutions to find homes for the twelve rays currently occupying the exhibit and they are expected to leave the zoo over the next few weeks as permits and transport arrangements are finalized.

Media Information:

Interviews available upon request.

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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