CHATTANOOGA ZOO WELCOMES PIED TAMARIN TRIPLETS

*Chattanooga, Tennessee*- The Chattanooga Zoo is delighted to announce the birth of three pied tamarins. The triplets were born at the Chattanooga Zoo in the early morning hours of May 25, 2017 to seasoned mother and first time father, Zafra and Sammy. Parents and infants are all doing great!

Pied Tamarin Primary Keeper, Kate Warner states, “Pied tamarins are an endangered animal but there is still hope for this species, and many of the other animals you will find at our zoo. In a time where more and more species are becoming threatened, it is the plight of these animals which keeps us going. You can be sure that zoos and aquariums are on the front lines in the battle to save wildlife and wild places. This is why I do what I do.”

In efforts to conserve this species in the wild, the Chattanooga Zoo is a proud participant of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums’ (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP) for the pied tamarin program. Zafra came to the Chattanooga Zoo in April 2016 as a breeding recommendation from the SSP for the Zoo’s resident male pied tamarin, Sammy. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, pied tamarins are listed as an endangered species. Their biggest threat to survival is habitat loss and range replacement.

At age 9, Zafra has mothered and raised 3 infants at the Cleveland Zoo before coming to make the Chattanooga Zoo her home; the triplets make her a mother of 6. The experienced mother is doing great and shown to be a very caring mother. First time father, Sammy, also 9 years old, is showing he is a natural and being very helpful in caring for their young. Group care of the young is a very important feature among tamarin social structures. The triplets are already nursing well and will be very dependent on their parents for up to 7 months. They should start showing mobility in 3-5 weeks.

Because the pied tamarin triplets were birthed on exhibit in the Corcovado Jungle exhibit building, they will stay with their parents on exhibit, and we welcome all guests to come visit them. As they are new born infants and our proud parents are experiencing higher stress levels at this time, we do ask that all visitors are respectful of this and refrain from any intentional disturbances.

The Chattanooga Zoo first began housing pied tamarins in 2009. This is the first SSP successful breeding of this species at the Chattanooga Zoo. The Zoo currently houses seven pied tamarins, including the triplet infants.
Chattanooga Zoo President and CEO, Dardenelle Long, says, “It is so exciting to have baby triplets at our zoo and even more special to have a birth of an endangered species. This birth speaks volumes to the special care our staff provides to our animals and the relentless work they put into conserving animals all over the world.”

The Chattanooga Zoo invites the press to come at your leisure to get footage of our pied tamarin triplets. However, we do ask that you contact us to schedule an appointment time. For appointment scheduling, please email Hannah Hammon at hhammon@chattzoo.org.

To learn about our daily activities and monthly events, please follow us on social media and stay up-to-date.

The 14-acre Chattanooga Zoo (historically referred to as the Chattanooga Zoo at Warner Park) is accredited by the national Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), assuring the highest standards of animal care and husbandry. The Zoo is dedicated to its mission of engaging and inspiring all citizens of the community to better understand and preserve wildlife by creating meaningful connections between people and animals. With its intimate, innovative exhibits, wide-ranging education offerings and commitment to conservation, the Chattanooga Zoo fills a unique niche within the community. The Zoo is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. For more information, visit www.chattzoo.org.