NEW SNOW LEOPARD DEBUTS AT THE CHATTANOOGA ZOO

Chattanooga, Tennessee - The Chattanooga Zoo is pleased to announce the arrival of the newest addition to the zoo family, Tashi the snow leopard!

Tashi the male snow leopard is 1 year old. He came to the Chattanooga Zoo as a breeding loan from the Idaho Falls Zoo at Tautphaus Park as part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP). Tashi has been recommended for breeding with the Chattanooga Zoo’s resident female snow leopard, Callie.

The SSP is a population management and conservation program created by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). This program focuses on breeding programs by strictly monitoring the placement and propagation of selected animal species. The Chattanooga Zoo is a proud participant of 39 individual SSP programs including snow leopard, chimpanzee, red panda, and komodo dragons. In addition, the Chattanooga Zoo is also honored to partner with the Snow Leopard Trust to support their in-field conservation efforts better understand the needs of snow leopards in the wild and the communities surrounding their natural habitats in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia.

Male snow leopards do not sexually mature until age four, and the Chattanooga Zoo officials hope to breed Callie and Tashi in the future in hopes of fulfilling the Zoo’s mission to conserve animals and protect endangered species. Efforts at breeding snow leopards in captivity have been marginally successful at best due to their highly solitary lifestyles and low birth survival rate. In years past, the Chattanooga Zoo has had two successful snow leopard births.

“It is so exciting to add to our animal collection and strengthen our conservation efforts through our partnership with the SSP,” says Dardenelle Long, Zoo CEO and President. “We are so thrilled to receive another snow leopard breeding recommendation.”

Tashi is now on exhibit full time with Callie and open to public viewing during normal operating hours (9am-5pm). To differentiate our snow leopards, Callie has a slimmer frame while Tashi has shorter legs, a larger body mass weighing around ten pounds more than Callie, and has a white tipped tail.

The addition of Tashi the snow leopard continues a strong effort by the Chattanooga Zoo to help save these beautiful cats in the wild. Welcome to Chattanooga, Tashi!

The Chattanooga Zoo invites the press to come at your leisure to get footage of Tashi the snow leopard. 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.