



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Birmingham Zoo Welcomes New Red Panda

BIRMINGHAM, AL – The Birmingham Zoo is thrilled to welcome two-year-old, female, Himalayan red panda named Kodo to our Zoo family! Kodo arrived at the Birmingham Zoo last month from the Buttonwood Park Zoo in New Bedford, Massachusetts, also accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

After a few short weeks behind-the-scenes, she has completed her health exam and routine quarantine at the Zoo's Animal Health Center and is now getting acclimated to her new home in the Predator building. Zoo Animal Care Professionals (ACPs) have been taking great care of Kodo and allowing her all the time she needs to become comfortable with her new habitat before introducing her to current resident male red panda, Gizmo.

According to Scott Kayser, Zoological Manager of Predators, "We are excited to welcome Kodo to the Birmingham Zoo as a part of our ongoing collaboration with the Red Panda Species Survival Plan (SSP)." The program is in place to ensure that there is a genetically diverse population of species in AZA accredited zoos and aquariums in North America. "Through the Red Panda SSP, Kodo has been recommended to breed with Gizmo. We are hopeful they will hit it off and will be crossing our fingers for red panda cubs next year." In 2013, previous Zoo red pandas, Sorrel and Shifu, gave birth to two cubs, Fred and George, who now live at the Roosevelt Park Zoo in Minot, North Dakota.

"Kodo has been with us for a short time but has already stolen our hearts," says Victoria Kaml, ACP, Predators. "She is very friendly and loves her fruit!"

The endangered Himalayan red pandas are an arboreal species and found in high elevation forests in Nepal, central China and northern Myanmar. Kodo and Gizmo have several unique adaptations such as their red coat, which is the exact color as the moss found on the trees where they live. While they have no paw pads, the soles of their feet are covered with fur to help them grip onto trees and their long, sharp claws help them climb. They are one of the few animals that can climb down a tree head-first! Their long tail helps them maintain their balance and is used as a blanket in cold temperatures.

"Birmingham Zoo is passionate about educating our guests on the importance of red pandas and other endangered species found around the world and right here in Alabama," explains Chris Pfefferkorn, Birmingham Zoo President and CEO. "We are proud to continue our strong commitment to the AZA SSP, for the sustainability red pandas. We are also proud of the work we do

for red panda conservation, including our partnership with the Red Panda Network, which works to protect the remaining 2,500 red pandas currently in the wild.”

Visitors are invited to see Kodo now on habitat in the Predator Building. Kodo and Gizmo will be together as soon as they are introduced and comfortable with one another.

Zoo Logo,



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ABOUT THE BIRMINGHAM ZOO

The Birmingham Zoo is an independent, not for profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

Our mission: *Inspiring Passion to Conserve the Natural World.*

Approximately 650 animals of 230 species call the Birmingham Zoo home, including sea lions, zebras, elephants, bongos and endangered species from six continents. The Birmingham Zoo is a non-profit and is open Wednesday-Sunday from 9am to 5pm. All Birmingham Zoo Members and children under two-years-old receive free admission. The Birmingham Zoo is the only AZA accredited Zoo in the state of Alabama.

www.birminghamzoo.com | 2630 Cahaba Road | Birmingham, AL 35223