



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 23, 2023

## **Birmingham Zoo Announces Addition of Two Eastern Black Rhinos**

### **Opening of the New Eastern Black Rhino Habitat on 3/25!**

**BIRMINGHAM, AL** – The Birmingham Zoo is proud to announce the addition of two new Eastern black rhinoceros to your Zoo family. This announcement also includes the official public opening of your Zoo’s newly renovated Daniel Foundation Alabama Rhino Habitat on March 25, 2023. The Zoo joins fellow Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)-accredited zoos and aquariums around the world in participation with the Black Rhino Species Survival Plan® (SSP) that led them here to Alabama.

5-year-old male Eastern black rhino Moyo was born on May 17, 2017, and joins your Zoo family from the St. Louis Zoo in Missouri. “Moyo means ‘heart’ in Swahili, and he has certainly stolen ours,” explains Annie Kaspar, Zoo Manager of Trails of Africa. “He really enjoys his training sessions and interacting with his keepers. He also loves wallowing in the mud in his habitat and eating all kinds of vegetation, especially browsing on larger branches full of leaves.”

Female Kesi, 6 years old, was born on March 15, 2017, and joins us from the Pittsburgh Zoo. Kaspar says that “Kesi loves splashing in the water, eating willow branches, and spending time being brushed by her keepers.”

The Black Rhino SSP manages the captive black rhino population in AZA Zoos and related facilities, and matches animals based on their genetic lineage. The SSP matched Moyo and Kesi based on their genetics and recommended that they move to Birmingham to breed and contribute to the population with their offspring. With only about 5,500 individuals left in the wild, black rhinos are considered critically endangered.

“We have been working with the Black Rhino SSP to bring Moyo and Kesi here to your Zoo and hope for eventual breeding success,” says Birmingham Zoo Deputy Director Hollie Colahan. “We are excited for everyone to visit both Moyo and Kesi here in their new Zoo home.”

Your AZA-accredited Birmingham Zoo joins other zoos around the world in participating in AZA SSP programs and conservation initiatives.

We invite everyone to come and meet your new Eastern black rhino neighbors in their new home. Our guests will probably see Kesi and Moyo living separately most of the time, but we hope to introduce them for breeding in the future. Right now, our main focus is to get Moyo and Kesi comfortable in their new space and get them acclimated to their new routine.

## **ZOO LOGO**



## **PHOTO OF EASTERN BLACK RHINO – Moyo**



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

Jennifer Ogilvie

Marketing & Public Relations Manager

[jogilvie@birminghamzoo.com](mailto:jogilvie@birminghamzoo.com) | 205.397.3874

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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 500 animals of 172 species call the Birmingham Zoo home, including sea lions, zebras, elephants, bongos, and endangered species from six continents. The Birmingham Zoo is the only AZA-accredited zoo in the state of Alabama.

[www.birminghamzoo.com](http://www.birminghamzoo.com) | 2630 Cahaba Road | Birmingham, AL 35223

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