



NEWS RELEASE

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REID PARK ZOO ANNOUNCES ELEPHANT PREGNANCY

Reid Park Zoo is pleased to announce that Litsemba (nickname Semba), a 24 year old African elephant, is pregnant. Breeding behavior was observed between Semba and the Zoo's bull Mabu in October, and the pregnancy was recently confirmed by urinary hormonal analysis. Semba will give birth sometime between late June and August of 2014. Elephants have a 22-23 month gestation period.

Both Semba and Mabu arrived at Reid Park Zoo from the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in 2012 for the opening of Expedition Tanzania. Semba and Mabu were moved as a herd with their offspring Punga and Sundzu, and an unrelated female named Lungile.

This pregnancy represents a significant milestone for Reid Park Zoo and the Tucson community. While any pregnancy has some degree of risk from complication, Reid Park Zoo is taking extensive measures to ensure the safety of both the mother and the unborn calf. Reid Park Zoo is working with fellow experts from the San Diego Zoo Global and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Elephant Taxon Advisory Group to monitor Semba and provide the best pre-natal care possible. Semba, an experienced mother, delivered her first calf, Punga, in March 2007 and her second calf, Sundzu in December 2010. Both calves were born at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park.

Reid Park Zoo is a world class facility that welcomes over 600,000 visitors per year. Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the Zoo provides whole-life care for hundreds of exotic animals, representing a variety of habitats around the world. Reid Park Zoo encourages commitment to the conservation of biological diversity while providing educational and fun experiences for visitors of all ages.

The Zoo is open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily. For directions and visitor information, visit www.reidparkzoo.org.

****MEDIA INVITATION****

Wednesday, September 25, 9 a.m.

RSVP to: 837-8188 or 248-3607

Members of the media are invited to an exclusive opportunity to meet Semba and discuss Semba's pregnancy with Jason Jacobs (Zoo Administrator), Jim Schnormeier (General Curator), and Dr. Sue Tygielski (Supervisor and Elephant Manager). Media will be escorted **into** the elephant habitat for a unique view of one of Semba's training sessions. The training session will start promptly at 9:15 a.m. from the Elephant Care Facility patio.

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