



Press Release  
For Immediate Release  
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For More Information  
Contact: Katie Gray  
Supervisor, Public Relations  
(416) 392-5941

**UNITED NATIONS  
2010 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY  
Corporate Supporters of Toronto Zoo Celebrate Year of Biodiversity**

**Friday, May 21, 2010. Toronto, Ontario.** Toronto Zoo today announced the United Nations 2010 International Year of Biodiversity with May 22 designated as the International Day of Biodiversity. Over 200 employees and volunteers from several environmentally-focused companies are on-site for the day supporting biodiversity and the planet's health by planting trees, weeding green spaces of invasive plant species and the assembly of 12 metre high tepees – the original building structure that works with nature. Employee volunteers are from Symcor, TELUS, Xerox, Leaf (Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests), Seaton House, University of Toronto and Anishinaabe First Nation Elders.

Tree planting in support of the Association of Zoo Keepers (AZK) conservation program "Acres for Atmosphere" was made possible by a generous financial and employee volunteer donation from Symcor. This program is a global initiative led by the AZK and Polar Bears International to help combat global warming and protect polar bears and their habitat. "Symcor is proud to partner with such leadership organizations to reforest and preserve our planet and its more vulnerable inhabitants" stated Meegan Hinds, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Symcor Integrated Statement Services division.

"It is essential that we do all that we can to protect biodiversity" commented Zoo CEO John Tracogna. "Habitat destruction, climate change and the proliferation of 'alien plant and animal species' are major factors in the decline of biodiversity. The Toronto Zoo plays a leadership role in protecting biodiversity and educating others to do the same."

The Zoo has hosted events focused around International Biodiversity Day (May 22) for the past four years. Activities this year include:

**Garlic Mustard Pull and restoring the Zoo Core Woods** – The UN has proclaimed invasive alien species as the second leading threat to biodiversity globally. Found locally in Ontario, this plant displaces and strangles native vegetation and tree saplings. Over 4 tonnes was pulled this year and replaced with over 750 native shrubs and forest plants.

**Acres for Atmosphere tree planting** – The AZK in 14 zoos around the world have spearheaded this program with Polar Bears International (PBI) to plant an acre of trees each year at their respective organizations.

**Sustainable building design with First Nation Tepee building** – First Nations people have for centuries been living in balance with nature and the tepee is an excellent example of a building that works with nature, not against it. Community partners from Telus and Anishinaabe First Nation Elders to assemble two 12 metre high tepees.

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Current Zoo Hours to Sept. 6: 9:00am to 7:30pm. Last admission one hour before closing. General Admission 13-64 incl. is \$21.00 (\$23 as of July 1), Children 3 and under are free, Children 4-12 are \$13.00 and Seniors 65+ are \$15.00. Parking is \$10. Prices include applicable taxes and are subject to change without notice. Events are subject to change without notice. The Zoo is located at Meadowvale Road and Hwy. 401, Exit 389 east and west bound. For general information, call (416) 392-5929. The Toronto Zoo is open year round (except December 25<sup>th</sup>).

**[torontozoo.com](http://torontozoo.com)**