

For Immediate Release
Date: 2011-10-22

For more Information:
Katie Gray, PR Supervisor
416-392-5941

PATRIARCH OF ZOO'S AFRICAN LION PRIDE **'ROWDY'** **1991-2011**



'Rowdy' shown in 2000 with his pride, female 'Nokanda' (1995-2011) and two male offspring, 'Jerroh' and 'Lindy' who can still be seen on exhibit.

'Rowdy', the Toronto Zoo's oldest male African lion has passed away at age 20. Rowdy was a majestic leader of the pride of lions at the Zoo and a popular animal with the millions of zoo visitors over these years. In addition to the two male offspring born in 2000 that still reside at the Zoo, another male 'Simba' born in 1999 currently resides at accredited Parc Safari in Quebec. Rowdy's legacy lives on through 'Simba' who has since sired three female and one male to form new lion prides at that facility.

Rowdy's zookeepers remember him as a gentle creature that was affectionate and good to work with. He loved the smell of cinnamon, which could also be used to arouse interest in females.

A vital and active lion for much of his life, only in the past year did Rowdy's health declined due to his advanced age. The Zoo's Wildlife Care staff and Veterinarians managed his decrease in appetite and

ill-health symptoms until they had to make the difficult decision to humanely euthanize the ageing lion.

In the wild, African lion populations are rapidly decreasing. An estimated 30-50% decline has been documented in the last two decades primarily due to habitat loss and lion/human conflict. They are listed as vulnerable with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Behind the scenes, the Zoo's lion pride provides valuable data and learning for the conservation of the species in years to come in both wild and captive environments. Toronto Zoo Reproductive Biologists conduct hormone studies to better understand conditions or changes as animals mature that will help with successful breeding.

The Toronto Zoo is an accredited member of CAZA (Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums) and AZA (Association of Zoos and Aquariums). Current Zoo Hours: 9:30am to 4:30pm. Last admission is one hour before closing. 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 25th).

torontozoo.com