

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Toronto Zoo Recognized for Excellence in Marketing

**Silver Spring, Maryland (October 3, 2008)** – The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) announced that Toronto Zoo's Bugzibitz II campaign received its 2008 Top Honors Award for Excellence in Marketing for campaigns under \$175,000. The award was presented at the 84th Annual AZA Conference held recently in Milwaukee.

"AZA congratulates the Toronto Zoo for this significant achievement," said Senior Vice President of Marketing and Corporate Strategies Jill Nicoll. "Toronto Zoo has set a great example for how to encourage the public to come to accredited zoos and aquariums to truly connect with wildlife."

AZA recognizes the valuable role that marketing plays in building and sustaining business and creating platforms to interact with our various audiences. The Marketing Award recognizes excellence in marketing campaigns developed and executed by AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums. The campaign must utilize a marketing mix with a minimum of three communication channels, such as television, radio, print advertising, outdoor, internet, direct mail, etc. Two awards are presented, one for a campaign with a budget under \$175,000 and one for a campaign with a budget of \$175,000 or higher.

The Toronto Zoo's 2007 Bugzibitz II event campaign was developed to generate awareness of the Zoo's special exhibit and was targeted to young families with children under the age of 12. Campaign elements included an interactive micro-site [bugsrock.ca](http://bugsrock.ca), a viral site featuring "Jeb's Trip" and "Bugs Rock" Music Video, on-line banners, and print ads. The campaign helped garner awareness of this ten-day event; attendance increased by 6.7% and paid revenues by \$14.8 thousand (5.6%). Visitors were invited to take part in all the "buggy" activities at Bugzibitz II, including how bugs play a part in our daily diets, the discovery of which bugs make the Wetland their home, and the BEE Creative station within our Bugatorium, home to over 100 bugs!

"The Toronto Zoo continually strives to communicate the message that life is more fun with real animals" says Shanna Young, Executive Director of Marketing and Communications. "The Bugzibitz II March Break event attendance and creative advertising campaign results prove that, once again, the live and interactive connection with animals is key to engaging visitors of all ages."

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, education, science, and recreation. Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting an institution dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, the AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats. For more information, please visit [www.aza.org](http://www.aza.org).