

Press Release
For Immediate Release
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Nikita

THE BEARS ARE BACK

TUNDRA TREK OPENS TO PUBLIC SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2009

Thursday, July 30, 2009, Toronto, Ontario: Last night the Toronto Zoo hosted a VIP and Media Preview Event for the new Tundra Trek. On hand for the opening were the Honourable Donna Cansfield, Minister of Natural Resources, Councillor Raymond Cho, Chair, Toronto Zoo Board of Management, and acclaimed Canadian Singer, Song Writer and Conservationist, Chantal Kreviazuk. Chantal's performance was made possible and supported by Polar Bears International (www.polarbearsinternational.org).

The eagerly-awaited 10-acre Tundra Trek, the Zoo's awesome Arctic adventure, featuring Polar bears, Arctic wolves and foxes, reindeer, snowy owls and lesser snow geese will open to the public on Saturday, August 1, 2009. Inukshuk, Nikita, and Aurora, the returning Polar bears, are the charismatic, but laid-back "stars" of the new exhibit. All three bears were orphaned in the wild and spent some time at the Toronto Zoo before moving on to other locations such as Quebec's St. Félicien Zoo and Cochrane's Polar Bear Habitat and Heritage Village. Now they've returned home to the kind of exhibit polar bears dream about with five times more space, an ice cave for underwater viewing, a bear den to go close and personal with Zoo visitors, and last but not least, a green roof. Polar bears have been off exhibit at the Zoo since October of 2007, so their return is eagerly anticipated by Zoo staff and visitors.

"The new Tundra Trek exhibit at the Toronto Zoo will provide a spectacular interactive public connection to the magnificent northern species and indigenous peoples that are found in this circumpolar habitat." noted Dr. William Rapley, Toronto Zoo's Executive Director of Conservation, Education and Research.

The Great White North comes into its' own with Tundra Trek, a total immersion experience of the Canadian Arctic with interpretation to help our visitors understand the impacts of climate change and global warming. Exciting elements to watch for are the Caribou Café, which overlooks the Arctic Wolf Exhibit, the Wolf Bridge, providing a close up experience of the wolves, a Goose Camp depicting Aboriginal life in northern Ontario, plexiglas Arctic fox burrows which kids can clamber through for close up and personal encounters, a whale skeleton, a bush plane, and a weather station. All this is complemented by state-of-the-art audio components that deliver realistic animals sounds.

During the two year construction process, which included challenges such as working through two winters, Zoo staff logged extra miles travelling to Hudson's Bay in order to ensure the authenticity of the intricate rock work and landscaping of the exhibit.

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Toronto Zoo: Current Zoo hours - 9:00 am -7:30 pm. Last admissions one hour before closing.

General Admission 13-64 incl. is \$21, Children 3 and under are free, Children 4-12 are \$13 and Seniors 65+ are \$15. Parking is \$8. Events and admission prices subject to change without notice. For general information call (416) 392-5929 or visit torontozoo.com