



For Immediate Release

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Keisha Hines-Davis – Director of Public Relations and Communications
404.624.5980 – office
404.309.2238 – cell
khines-davis@zooatlanta.org

Simone Griffin – Public Relations Coordinator
404.624.2809
sgriffin@zooatlanta.org

RENOWNED BIOLOGIST TO HEADLINE ZOO ATLANTA'S EVENING ADVENTURE

Dr. Willie Smits joins popular Discovery Talk Series

ATLANTA – August 31, 2009 – The city's best-kept secret in evening adventures take guests on an exploration in the world of orangutans on September 3, 2009, with a presentation by one of the world's most prominent champions for orangutan conservation. Zoo Atlanta is privileged to welcome Dr. Willie Smits to the compelling fourth installment of the all-new 2009 Discovery Talk Series. A respected biologist and conservationist based in Indonesia, Smits is Chairman of the Masarang Foundation and founder of Borneo Orangutan Survival, an international organization operating the world's largest rehabilitation centers for the critically endangered Asian apes.

Complete with exclusive after-hours exhibit visits and complimentary drinks preceding discussions tackling some of the 21st century's most pressing conservation and wildlife topics, the Discovery Talk Series is rapidly gaining popularity as one of Atlanta's best and most affordable cultural activities. On September 3, guests begin with an up close introduction to the evening's foremost primates with a visit to the Zoo's own orangutan habitat.

Zoo Atlanta is home to the nation's largest collection of orangutans, with 10 individuals living in separate family groups. The outlook is grim for their wild counterparts, which scientists predict could go extinct within a decade without focused conservation efforts. Smits will provide fascinating insights into field initiatives devoted to reversing a tragic outcome, with dramatic food for thought for individuals and consumers making daily decisions affecting the future of orangutans. For more information on the work of Dr. Smits and his colleagues in Borneo, visit Orangutan Outreach at www.redapes.org.

Orangutan habitat visits begin at 6 p.m.; Discovery Talk begins promptly at 7 p.m. in the Zoo's Action Resource Center (ARC). The Discovery Talk Series is free for Adventure Pack Members and up; \$5 for Family and Companion Members; \$7 for non-Members. Advance reservations are strongly encouraged. Visit www.zooatlanta.org for registration and event details.

About Zoo Atlanta

An accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Zoo Atlanta inspires value and preservation of wildlife through a unique mix of education and outdoor family fun. From well-known native wildlife to critically endangered species on the brink of extinction, the Zoo offers memorable close encounters with more than 1,000 animals from around the world. The Zoo's newest attraction, Boundless Budgies: A Parakeet Adventure, opened in April 2009. The interactive new experience is the largest of its kind in the Southeast. Zoo Atlanta is also the proud home of Xi Lan, the only giant panda cub born in the U.S. in 2008. Other highlights include the nation's largest collection of great apes and a global center of excellence for the care and reproduction of vanishing amphibians and reptiles. Zoo Atlanta is open daily with the exceptions of Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Keeper talks, interactive wildlife shows, education programs and special events run year-round. For more information, call 404.624.WILD or go to zooatlanta.org.

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