

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANOTHER “GIANT” BIRTH AT FRESNO CHAFFEE ZOO

FRESNO, Ca. – Another giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*) has been born at Fresno Chaffee Zoo. The infant, whose sex is still unknown, was born on July 24 after a gestation period of about 190 days. This is the third offspring for five-year old “Amber” and 24-year old “Hosenose.”

A newborn anteater climbs onto the mother’s back where it spends much of its time until it is nearly half her size. Born with the same striking markings as the adult, an infant anteater is almost undetectable in this position.

Anteaters are one of only two mammals without any teeth. The mouth is very small, barely big enough to pass a pencil, but the tongue can reach two feet in length. The tongue is covered with sticky saliva, allowing it to trap insects such as ants and termites, and it can be extended and withdrawn up to 150 times per minute. The giant anteater can eat as many as 30,000 insects a day in the wild and is fed a gruel of meat, fruit cocktail, yogurt and crickets at the Zoo.

Giant anteaters can be found in large parts of southern Central America and the northern and central parts of South America. Populations are densest in the tropical forests, grasslands, and highlands where ants are most abundant. Giant anteaters grow to 6 to 8 feet in length and weigh about 70 pounds.

Giant anteaters are listed as Appendix II by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) meaning they are a species not necessarily threatened with extinction but whose populations should be controlled in trade to avoid overuse. Habitat destruction is a major threat to this species.

Fresno Chaffee Zoo is open every day of the year from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. General admission during regular Zoo hours is \$7 for adults, \$3.50 for children 2-11 and seniors 62+, and children under 2 and Fresno Chaffee Zoo members are free. The mission of Fresno Chaffee Zoo is to provide a fun, unique and up-close experience that strengthens the bond between people and wildlife. The Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

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