Kangaroos Arrive at the Santa Barbara Zoo & Countdown Begins for the Australian Walkabout Exhibit Opening January 8

Kangaroos join wallabies and emus who are already in the new exhibit acclimating

(December 9, 2021) Santa Barbara, CA - The Santa Barbara Zoo is proud to welcome three male Western grey kangaroos, the last of the species who will call the new Australian Walkabout exhibit home. The kangaroos join four Bennett’s wallabies and two emus who have recently all moved into the exhibit to adjust to their new surroundings, and each other. Construction on the Australian Walkabout is nearly complete and scheduled to officially open on January 8, 2022. The new exhibit is designed to transport guests “Down Under,” where they can walk among the wallabies, kangaroos, emus, and also see native Australian birds and plants.

“We’re happy to share that all the animals are now cohabitating in the exhibit, and getting acclimated with each other and their new surroundings,” said Dr. Julie Barnes, the Zoo’s Vice President of Animal Care & Health. “So far the animals all seem to be adjusting really well, and we’re really looking forward to introducing these unique and iconic animals to our guests very soon!”

Max the kangaroo was born in May 2020, and came to the Santa Barbara Zoo from the San Diego Zoo. Aspen and Coolibah are brothers that arrived together from the LA Zoo. The older brother Aspen was born in August 2019, and the younger brother Coolibah, which is a type of eucalyptus tree, was born in August 2020.

Western grey kangaroos are in the family of marsupials called Macropodidae (“big foot”), a family of 50 species that includes kangaroos and wallabies, among others. As one of the largest macropods, the adult males weigh around 120 pounds, and the females weigh in at around 60 pounds. They are a social species and usually live in groups known as ‘mobs’ of up to 50.

Western grey kangaroos have powerful, large rear legs which support the familiar leaping motion, also aided by their long tail, which acts as a balance. Western grey kangaroos are herbivores and their diet consists mainly of grasses, some herbs, leaves, tree bark and shrubs. They also have a high tolerance to certain plant toxins. Contrary to its common name, they are found throughout southern Australia, from the Indian Ocean in Western Australia to western Victoria, New South Wales and southern Queensland.

Construction is nearly complete on the 15,000 square-foot Australian Walkabout, which will open to the public on January 8, 2022. The new exhibit is specifically designed to put guests right in the middle of the
action, exploring open pathways, beautiful landscapes, and seeing some of the most iconic and unique wildlife representatives from the continent of Australia.

Max is generously sponsored by Jess & Aaron Goldberg, Coolibah is generously sponsored by Charlotte & Ken Richardson and Aspen is generously sponsored by Alaia.

Want to support the kangaroos? Help welcome the newest residents of the Australian Walkabout by becoming a kangaroo Foster Feeder today. Visit https://www.sbzoo.org/support/ to learn more.

About the Santa Barbara Zoo

The Santa Barbara Zoo is open daily from 9 am for members and 9:30 am for general admission until 5 pm; general admission is $19.95 for adults, $14.95 for children 2-12, and free for children under 2. Parking is $11. The Santa Barbara Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). AZA zoos are dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great visitor experience, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation and is the public’s link to helping animals in their native habitats. Visit www.sbzoo.org.

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