

Sacramento Zoo Reports the Death of Geriatric Grevy's Zebra

WHAT'S HAPPENING: The Sacramento Zoo is mourning the loss of Akina, a geriatric female Grevy's Zebra.

WHEN: Akina passed away the evening of Thursday, December 29 at the age of 24.



On December 28, Akina was behaving abnormally and was placed under veterinary observation and treatment for suspected colic. Colic is a relatively common, but serious, disorder of the digestive system. The next day, after her condition failed to improve, Akina was brought to the Sacramento Zoo's veterinary clinic where she received a full exam. During the exam, Akina was given fluids, pain medications, antibiotics, intestinal protectants and mineral oil to assist with resolving the colic. Over the course of the afternoon Akina was slow to recover from the exam and unfortunately died at the end of the day. Akina was taken to UC Davis for a full necropsy.

Born in 1992, Akina was the second oldest Zebra at the Sacramento Zoo, and one of the oldest Grevy's Zebras living at an Association of Zoos and Aquariums-accredited institution – the oldest being 27 years-of-age.

"Akina was a Grand Old Equine who was never shy about chatting," said Lindsey Moseanko, Primary Ungulate Keeper at the Sacramento Zoo. "Her vocalizing could be heard throughout

the zoo. She loved coming to her keepers at the fence-line for apple slices and ear scratches," she continued. "Her spunky personality will be missed."

The Sacramento Zoo participates in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Grevy's Zebra Species Survival Plan®. The main focus of this plan is captive breeding and educational awareness to prevent the extinction of this species. From 1978 to 1999 the Zoo had 22 foals born. In 2000 the Sacramento Zoo made the decision to participate in the SSP® in a different way, to give females who are past breeding age or have never conceived with a proven stallion, a home. The non-breeding females that live at the Sacramento Zoo are animal ambassadors for their species and serve an important role in educating the public.

This species of zebra lives in a dry, nutrient-poor habitat in Africa. Their social organization is very different from that of other zebras. Intense competition among females for limited resources prevents long-lasting bonds from being formed. Life on the African plains is also full of danger and predators are a constant threat to the zebras' survival. Because Grevy's Zebras are more solitary, they do not have the safety of a large herd to protect them and instead rely on excellent hearing, with large ears that can rotate in any direction. The wild population of Grevy's Zebras has been drastically reduced in the past few decades. Although protected by law, their beautiful coats demand a good price on the black market. Loss of habitat and competition from cattle are also threats to their survival.

The Sacramento Zoo has been a longtime supporter of the Grevy's Zebra Trust, a program founded to address the urgent need to conserve Grevy's Zebra in the rangelands of Kenya and Ethiopia by incorporating human and wildlife interests into all of their programs.

###

Sacramento Zoo – Wildly Inspiring!

Open since 1927, the Sacramento Zoo is home to more than 500 native, rare and endangered animals and is one of more than 200 accredited institutions of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Located near the corner of Land Park Drive and Sutterville Road in William Land Park, the Zoo is wholly managed by the non-profit Sacramento Zoological Society. This Sacramento treasure inspires conservation awareness through education and recreation. Daily admission is 10 am to 4 pm, Zoo grounds are open until 5 pm. Parking is free throughout the park or ride Regional Transit bus #6. For information, call 916.808.5888 or visit saczoo.org.

###