



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MARYLAND ZOO IN BALTIMORE WELCOMES NEW ADDITION
-Sitatunga named "Lela" born at Zoo-

BALTIMORE, MD -- The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is welcoming its newest arrival – a female sitatunga born on Sunday, November 1, 2009.

Named "Lela," which means "dark-haired beauty" in Swahili, the calf weighs 11 pounds, and is strong and healthy. Her parents are five-year-old Jahari and ten-year-old Joanie. Joanie is an experienced mother, having given birth to two other calves at the Zoo in the past few years. She is very attentive to the calf's needs and the two are just beginning to explore the exhibit together. Zoo visitors will be able to see Joanie and Lela in the next week or so (weather permitting) along with the rest of the herd.

The sitatunga (*Tragelaphus spekii*) is a species of antelope native to Central Africa. They live in semi-aquatic swamps, marshes and flood plains. The Maryland Zoo's sitatunga herd is made up of five animals, including Lela and can be found along the boardwalk in the Africa section of the Zoo.

Lela's birth is the result of a recommendation from the Sitatunga Population Management Plan (PMP) coordinated by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). PMPs provide breeding recommendations to maximize genetic diversity, with the goal of ensuring the long-term survival of the captive population and the health of individual animals.

The AZA Small Population Management Advisory Group (SPMAG) at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago to helps develop breeding recommendations for the advancement of sitatunga in AZA-accredited zoos.

About The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

Founded in 1876, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is the third oldest zoo in the United States and is internationally known for its contributions in conservation and research. More than 1,500 animals are represented in the Zoo's varied natural habitat exhibits in areas such as Polar Bear Watch, the Maryland Wilderness, African Journey and the award-winning Children's Zoo. Situated in Druid Hill Park near downtown Baltimore, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit www.marylandzoo.org.

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