



## Media Alert

For Immediate Release

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## LEMURS SWING IN TO AMARILLO ZOO

The Amarillo Zoo is pleased to introduce visitors to three Ring-tailed Lemurs, a new species to make their home at the Zoo. The lemurs, which are part of the primate family, have just been introduced to their new exhibit this week.

The new lemur family includes an adult male and two females (all 2 years old). The lemurs came to the Amarillo Zoo from the Hillside Zoo in Clovis.

The Ring-tailed Lemurs are found only on the island of Madagascar and are not a true primate species, such as an orangutan or chimpanzee. The word 'lemur' comes from, old Latin and means 'night wandering ghost' and refers to their nocturnal habits, staring eyes, and haunting sounds.

Lemurs weigh 7-10 pounds and measure between 1 ½ to 2 feet in length. They have an attractive soft, thick, black and white coat. The lemur is a forest dweller and their diet consists primarily of fruit as well as leaves, flowers, and seeds.

These creatures are losing their prime habitat in Madagascar to human encroachment for agriculture, cattle grazing and human settlements. The future of the Ring-tail in the wild is uncertain.

Conservation efforts have been making a positive impact on local populations of Ring-tails, particularly where the efforts coincide with eco-tourism. Some locals on the island of Madagascar have discovered the economic benefits of preserving these animals.

Lemurs are warm loving animals so on cool wintry days they may be inside their night time holding area and not available to be seen.

The Amarillo Zoo is located in Thomson Park (NE 24<sup>th</sup> Ave and Dumas Highway) and is open 7 days a week from 9:30am – 5:00pm. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 seniors and \$1 children. For more information visit the zoo's website at [www.amarillozoo.org](http://www.amarillozoo.org) or call 806-381-7911