



Contact:

Ciara Castellanoz
Marketing Manager
559-498-5936 (office)
559-303-9286 (cell)
CCastellanoz@fresnochaffeezoo.org

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**FRESNO CHAFFEE ZOO WELCOMES FIRST FEMALE KOMODO DRAGON IN
ZOOS HISTORY**

Fresno, CA – Fresno Chaffee Zoo officials are excited to announce the arrival of female Komodo dragon, Saphira!

Saphira arrived in Fresno on May 17 from the Jacksonville Zoo. She is the first female Komodo dragon to ever reside in Fresno. She was hatched at the Memphis Zoo on January 10, 2013.

“After a 30-day quarantine period, Saphira will reside in the current Komodo dragon exhibit in the Zoo’s reptile building,” said Mark Halvorsen, curator at Fresno Chaffee Zoo. “We are currently renovating our old coati exhibit, which is near Safari Café. We expect to be finished with these renovations sometime this summer, at which point, our male Komodo dragon will move there. Komodo dragons have solitary tendencies so these two won’t be together at all times.”

The Zoo’s male Komodo dragon is 7-year-old, Budak, who was hatched at the Los Angeles Zoo on August 18, 2010. He came to Fresno from the Oglebay Good Zoo in West Virginia on July 15, 2013 and is the first male Komodo dragon to ever reside in Fresno.

“We are starting to prepare for the construction of our Asian exhibit,” Halvorsen said. “So, once that exhibit is finished in approximately 2020, we hope that Budak and Saphira will breed and that, for the first time in the Zoo’s history, we will have Komodo dragon offspring.”

"Fresno Chaffee Zoo inspires wonder of our natural world, provides an engaging learning environment, and creates a passion for conservation."

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