

**Celebrate International Red Panda Day
this Weekend at the Assiniboine Park Zoo**

For immediate release: Winnipeg, September 17, 2020 – In honour of International Red Panda Day, Assiniboine Park Zoo is hosting **Red Panda Weekend supported by Red River Co-op** this Saturday and Sunday. With beautiful weather in the forecast, it will be a great weekend to visit the Zoo, and people of all ages are invited to enjoy the fun activities and learn about red pandas and red panda conservation.

Red pandas are found in the mountain forests of Nepal, India, Bhutan, China and Myanmar (Burma). Their natural range is the source of South Asia's three largest rivers and functions as the lungs of the region. According to the Red Panda Network, there may be as few as 2,500 red pandas remaining in the wild.

"The wild population of red pandas is believed to have declined by 50% over the last 20 years, due primarily to habitat loss and other impacts directly linked to human activity," said Grant Furniss, Senior Director, Zoological Operations, Assiniboine Park Zoo. "As the lone member of their taxonomic family, red pandas are truly unique, and losing them to extinction would be devastating. We need to act today to protect red pandas and the many other species that share their habitat."

The following activities will take place under the tent canopy located at the McFeetors Heavy Horse Centre from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 19 and Sunday, September 20:

- **Balancing Challenge:** Red pandas spend most of their time in trees, using their bushy tails for balance and sharp claws for gripping. Can you balance like a red panda?
- **Red Panda Selfie Station:** Take a red panda themed selfie with your friends and family.
- **Adaptation Station:** Visit our "show and tell" bio-fact station and learn how red pandas are physically adapted to arboreal life.
- **Craft Station:** Make your own red panda eye mask.

All activities are designed so that staff, volunteers and visitors can be Covid Careful.

"Red River Co-op is a long-time supporter of the Assiniboine Park Conservancy through our annual sponsorship of the Zoo Tram, presenting sponsorship of Zoo Lights, and \$125,000 donation toward improving the sports field at the Park," said Doug Wiebe, CEO of Red River Co-op. "The great work the Conservancy does allows families and friends to connect with nature and each other, and we are proud to continue our support."

Zoo visitors who enjoy this weekend's activities are invited to leave a donation to support the Red Panda Network and their efforts to conserve wild red pandas and their habitat through the education and empowerment of local communities.

The Zoo is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Regular Zoo admission applies. For more information go to assiniboineparkzoo.ca.

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For interviews and information requests, please contact:

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