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Contact: Christopher Mims, Director of Marketing and Public Relations 601-352-2599

What Small Antelopes Can Leap Boulders and Steep Outcrops in a Single Bound? A Klipspringer Born at the Jackson Zoo Can!

The Jackson Zoo, only one of 13 Zoos in North America to exhibit Klipspringers, was overjoyed last week when Klipspringer parents Bo and Lilly gave birth to their first daughter Amelia, the first Klipspringer birth at the Jackson Zoo too!

Klipspringers live up to their name, which means "rock jumper" in the Afrikaans language. These nearly two-foot-tall antelope have tiny hooves that are blunt and rubbery, like skid-proof shoes that allow them to leap up and down nearly vertical rock walls. Each foot has two parts to the hoof and between the two is a tough piece of tissue that keeps the hooves from splaying, which is important since they stand, walk, leap, and land on their tiny hoof tips. Their short and stout muscular bodies help them to power up sheer slopes and leap crevasses. Because of the slight upward arch in their back, klipspringers can easily bend and balance with all four feet together on the smallest patches of level rock.

In the wild, klipspringers are found from the Cape of Angola and up the eastern half of Africa to Ethiopia and east Sudan near well-drained rocky outcroppings, called kopje (pronounced KAH-pee). Their fur, a yellow-olive and speckled with grey color, is thick and dense with hollow hairs, similar to coats of the American pronghorn and white-tailed deer. This thick coat protects them from injury on rocks, acting as a cushion against bruising and insulation against heat loss.

Klipspringers are strictly monogamous, and are usually seen within a few feet of their mate. Amelia and her parents will be off exhibit for a few more days while she adjusts to her new surroundings.



The Jackson Zoo was recently named **Travel Attraction of the Year** by the Mississippi Tourism Association and is dedicated to its mission, to provide visitors with a quality recreational and educational environment dedicated to wildlife care and conservation. The new 4-plus acre Wilderness Mississippi was opened in 2006, and last year also marked the unveiling of a new entryway off Capitol Street and renovation of the orangutan exhibit. This year construction of a state-of-the-art Mississippi Discovery Center will begin. The Zoo also plans to make improvements to the elephant, tiger and leopard exhibits.

The Jackson Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The AZA is America's leading accrediting organization that sets rigorous, professional standards for zoos and aquariums. The AZA is building North America's largest wildlife conservation movement by engaging and inspiring the 143 million annual visitors to its member institutions and their communities to care about and take action to help protect wildlife.

The Jackson Zoo is located at 2918 West Capitol Street and is open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. For more information about the Jackson Zoo, call (601) 352-2581 or visit www.jacksonzoo.org.