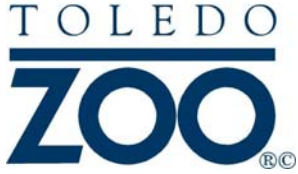




**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** January 19, 2009



## **Toledo Zoo Snow Leopard Dies**

Toledo, Ohio—The Toledo Zoo's female snow leopard died Sunday afternoon following a lengthy illness. The snow leopard, named Tian, was being treated for gastrointestinal issues over the past four months and had been tentatively diagnosed with inflammatory bowel disease. A necropsy performed this afternoon did not reveal an immediate cause of death; histopathology is pending, and the results are expected in the next month.

Tian had presented with a variety of symptoms over the last year, including liver and gastrointestinal issues and blood in her urine. In an effort to identify the cause of her illnesses, she underwent a number of procedures, including exploratory laparoscopic surgery. She was also being treated with steroids and antibiotics at the time of her death. In an effort to determine the best course of treatment, the Zoo had consulted with a number of external professionals, including internal medicine specialists, ultrasound technicians and a general surgeon. While Tian had been responding to treatment in recent weeks, her condition deteriorated rapidly late last week.

According to the Zoo's Associate Veterinarian, Dr. Chris Hanley, "Tian's treatment was a true collaborative effort between veterinary staff, animal care staff and the experts who consulted with us throughout Tian's illness. Although we are saddened by the loss of Tian and frustrated that the outcome was not what we had hoped for, we are heartened by the level of care that she received."

Tian was 10 years old and arrived at the Zoo in April 2006 as part of a Species Survival Plan (SSP) in conjunction with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). She had previously been at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, New York. The Toledo Zoo is still home to a male snow leopard, Nikko.

The snow leopard is a species of feline native to mountain ranges in central Asia. They are known for their long, flexible tails that are covered with thick fur. These tails enable them to keep their balance on rocky terrain and keep them warm in the cold climates of their native region. They have been designated "Endangered" by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN); their wild population is estimated to be fewer than 7,500.

*The Toledo Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is building North America's largest wildlife conservation movement.*

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