

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action

Minister for Solar Homes



Saturday, 17 September 2022

ZOOS VICTORIA CELEBRATES 160 YEARS

Victoria's Zoos are celebrating 160 years of wildlife conservation with school holiday activities free for kids, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for the Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio today launched the exhibition at Melbourne Zoo, which depicts Zoos Victoria's history and its transformation into a world-leading conservation organisation.

All children under 16 can join in the 160th celebrations at Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo and Healesville Sanctuary for free this Victorian school holidays, as well as weekends and public holidays, thanks to the Labor Government's \$20 million Kids Go Free initiative.

Melbourne Zoo has erected a pop-up maze and 160th anniversary themed photo opportunity for visitors to record special memories, while Werribee Open Range Zoo and Healesville Sanctuary have exciting opportunities for children to join in nature play and art-inspired activities.

Melbourne Zoo is Australia's oldest, still retaining the same 55-hectare footprint as when it opened its gates on 6 October 1862. It originally housed mostly domestic and wild animals, such as deer, boar and birds that had been imported to Australia from overseas.

From its origins, Zoos Victoria has grown to include Werribee Open Range Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary and, later this year, Kyabram Fauna Park in northern Victoria. All engage the wider community in wildlife conservation, educating and empowering visitors to take positive action for wildlife.

Together, Victoria's Zoos currently care for more than 4,500 animals across 350 species, with a focus on fighting wildlife extinction here in Victoria and across Australia with a focus on 27 local threatened species, as well as internationally.

The Labor Government has invested more than \$305 million in Zoos Victoria since 2014. Over the same period, the Government has invested more than \$560 million in protecting biodiversity – more than any other in Victorian history.

Quotes attributable to Minister for the Environment and Climate Action Lily D'Ambrosio

"We're proud to celebrate 160 years of Zoos Victoria – our world-class zoos play an integral role in the conservation of threatened species across Victoria, Australia and internationally."

"Thanks to our 'Kids Go Free' initiative, all children under 16 can enjoy the 160th anniversary activities at Zoos Victoria this school holidays and fall in love with wildlife."

Quotes attributable to Dr Jenny Gray CEO Zoos Victoria

"Over the past 160 years, Zoos Victoria has grown into a world-leading zoo-based conservation organisation, working with the community to fight wildlife extinction."

"The science of animal welfare drives Zoos Victoria's ongoing research into how we provide the best opportunities for the animals in our care and the wildlife beyond the zoo walls."

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