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Press Release

JURONG BIRDPARK EXPERIENCES BUMPER BIRTHS IN THE YEAR OF THE DOG

Singapore, February, 2006

Singapore, February 27, 2005 – 2006 may be the Year of the Dog, but at Jurong BirdPark, the birds are enjoying a baby boom.

Since the start of 2006, less than two months into the year, the birds at Jurong BirdPark have hatched 15 chicks from six different bird species. In particular, the King Penguins have laid six eggs, a

significant number as King Penguins do not breed easily in captivity. In the past, the King Penguins colony has laid on average one to three eggs a year. Another bird which has been very prolific is the Barn Owls in the World of Darkness exhibit, which had laid a clutch of 12 eggs. In the past, the Barn Owl laid on average three eggs to six eggs a year.

This year, the Park also bred a rare East African Crowned Crane, an endangered species listed as Appendix II by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which protects the bird's population in the wild by restricting trade in this species. In late January 2006, a hatchling was born to the park's pair of East African Crowned Cranes that have decided to make their home in the Flamingo Lake with 1001 flamingos. Covered in brown down, the chick can be seen with its parents at the park's Flamingo Lake.

Dr Wong Hon Mun, Jurong BirdPark's Executive Director, said: "This is great news for us as this attests to the success of our captive breeding programmes and husbandry practices. Our staff have closely monitored the birds' behaviour and adjusted their living environment to create ideal conditions for them to breed. The fish used to feed the King Penguins are specially imported from the USA. And to encourage the Barn Owls to breed, the keepers decreased the lighting, increased the food supply and minimise disturbance in the exhibit."

Barn Owls are found in many parts of the world. They usually breed one or twice a year, laying three to seven eggs per clutch. Primarily white with yellow and brown shadings, the barn owl has a white heart-shaped face with large dark eyes. It has long, feathered legs and makes a loud, rasping hiss, rather than the hoot associated with other owls.

Jurong BirdPark has bred a total of 100 penguins including 18 King Penguins, since the Penguin Parade opened in 1990. On average, the park usually breeds one to three baby penguins each year. This year, the King Penguins, the second largest penguin in the world, have led the pack. Six King Penguin eggs were laid, of which three are from breeding pairs which have bred before and three are from new breeding pairs. This is significant as the new pairs are likely to breed again. The first King Penguin baby hatched on February 16 and the last hatchling will most likely be born by next month.

Other birds which bred this year include the Sun Conure, Red-sided Eclectus Parrot, Jenday Conure, and the Green-naped Pheasant Pigeon.



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