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**THE LIVING DESERT ANNOUNCES HISTORIC
ANNUAL ATTENDANCE FOR 2017-2018**

The Zoo Welcomed Over 459,000 Guests

PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELLS -- (July 12, 2018) -- The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is thrilled to announce the fifth straight year of record attendance. The Zoo welcomed 459,784 guests and members as of June 30, making 2017-2018 a milestone and record-breaking year, greatly surpassing last year's attendance record of 420,327.

"This is a historic milestone and we are so grateful for the continued support of our community," said Allen Monroe President/CEO. "We had a terrific year welcoming so many guests through our gates, educating them about desert animals, plants and ecosystems, and inspiring them to care about the world's deserts."

The non-profit organization surpassed last year's attendance by 9.4%. The wildly-popular WildLights and inaugural Safari Nights series contributed to the record attendance, as well as other highlights including Year of the Giraffe, Howl-O-Ween, Brew at the Zoo, and the 25th Annual Zoobilee Gala.

"We thank our many fans for their support and patronage over the last year," said Dawn Petrick, Director of Park Services and Guest Relations. "We are so excited to see what the upcoming year brings and look forward to continuing to welcome guests from around the corner and around the world to experience what makes The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens so special."

The Living Desert is eagerly anticipating the upcoming season to unveil the new Crossroads of Conservation complex, which will serve as the Zoo's new entrance. With self-serve ticketing kiosks, ample guest service windows, a new gift shop and Living Legacy Endowment garden, the new entrance will provide zoo guests with a memorable welcome to The Living Desert.

The Living Desert is open daily during the summer from 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., with last admission at 1 p.m. For more information about summer memberships and The Living Desert visit livingdesert.org or call (760) 346-5694.

About The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens:

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit, accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ensuring the highest standards of all aspects of animal care, education, conservation, public service, and operations. The Zoo is active in conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives around the world, as well as in its own community. The Zoo has been a top attraction in the Palm Springs area for nearly 50 years. The Living Desert is located at 47900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260. For more information: (760) 346-5694 or visit livingdesert.org.

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