**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THE LIVING DESERT ZOO AND GARDENS TO HOST ITS ANNUAL CONSERVATION-FOCUSED SPEAKER SERIES**

***Series is Free and Open to the Public***

**PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELLS, CA – (February 25, 2019) –**The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is hosting an enlightening speaker series focusing on its conservation efforts. The lectures, held in The Living Desert's Chase Administration Building, are free and open to the public. Space is limited to the first 100 people on a first-come, first-served basis.

“We invite the public to join us at these free, informative lectures and learn about some of our many conservation programs we support at The Living Desert,” said Dr. James Danoff-Burg, Director of Conservation at The Living Desert. “We are excited to present these experts who will share their knowledge and experience in a variety of subject matters related to our desert flora and fauna.”

**Following is the schedule of speakers:**

**Monday, March 4, 2019; 12 p.m. – 1p.m.**(at Hoover Auditorium, Education Building)

*Dr. Greg Rasmussen, Founder Executive Director, Painted Dog Trust*

Painted Dog Research in Zimbabwe

**Friday, March 8, 2019; 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.**

*Dr. Chris Tracy, Director Philip L Boyd Deep Canyon Research Center, UC Riverside Palm Desert*

Sand Beneath Their Toes: Similarities and Differences in Ecology of the Coachella Fringe-Toed Lizard and the Desert Plated Lizard of Namibia

**Friday, March 15, 2019; 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.***Dr. James Danoff-Burg, Director of Conservation, The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens*

Forget That, I’m Going In Anyway: Why People Do and Don’t Support Trail Closures

**Wednesday, March 20, 2019*;* 12 p.m. – 1p.m.***Dr. Laurie Marker, Founder and Executive Director, Cheetah Conservation Fund*

Cheetah and Humans Sharing a Landscape

**Wednesday, March 27,2019; 12 p.m. - 1p.m.**

*RoxAnna Breitigan, Director of Animal Care, The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens*

Chad – A Conservation Adventure to Save a Species

**Thursday, April 4, 2019; 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.**

*Felicia Sirchia, Fish & Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

Conserving the Joshua Tree: The USFWS Species Status Assessment Approach

The Living Desert is open daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call (760) 346-5694 or visit [www.LivingDesert.org](http://www.LivingDesert.org).

**About the Living Desert:**

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](http://livingdesert.org/).

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