



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Erin Scott
Sr. Marketing & Public Relations Manager
760-346-5694 x. 2610
escott@livingdesert.org

**THE LIVING DESERT RETURNS TO REGULAR PARK HOURS
AND REOPENS HIKING TRAILS**
The Zoo To Open Daily 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Starting October 1

PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELLS, CA – (September 25, 2020) – Beginning Thursday, October 1, the grounds and gardens of The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens will open at 8 a.m. for both members and non-members with full zoo amenities opening at 9 a.m. The Zoo will remain open until 5 p.m. with the last admission at 4 p.m.

The Living Desert's three nature preserve hiking trails also will reopen at 8 a.m. on October 1. Hikers can select trails of varying degrees of difficulty to enjoy nature and the beauty of the outdoors. The Discovery Loop is a brief, quarter-mile interlude, while the Adventure Loop rambles for a mile through desert wash habitat and across a rocky bajada. The Wilderness Loop offers an adventurous five mile hike up or down a boulder-strewn canyon and along a rocky ridgeline with stunning and far-reaching vistas.

Hikers must observe all posted signage and stay on the designated trails, as they are a nature preserve. The trails, accessible with paid admission or with an annual membership, are open every day, except Christmas Day, through May 31, 2021.

The Living Desert is also pleased to announce it will reopen its Appel Gift Shop in accordance with State and local public health guidelines. The Gift Shop gives guests the opportunity to browse the full collection of souvenirs, collectables, and apparel. The outdoor by-pass exit will also remain open.

"Now that we have some cooler weather ahead, we are looking forward to returning to our regular, seasonal hours," said Allen Monroe, President/CEO of The Living Desert. "As an outdoor facility, our visitors can enjoy time with their families and see some amazing desert animals. We continue to follow the latest guidelines from the State and County health departments to keep our guests, staff, and animals safe."

New this year, guests can experience the world down under at the immersive Australian Adventures. In this habitat, wallabies roam freely, budgies fly above, and guests can watch the playful emu, hear kookaburras sing, and discover other native Australian species such as tawny frog mouth, bettong, echidna, and blue-tongued skink.

The always-popular giraffe feedings are available daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for an additional fee. Private safari tours, with two to six guests, are also available for advanced purchase only. The two-hour tour includes admission to the park, giraffe feeding, a personal guide, and private shuttle. Tours stop at every major habitat as the tour guide provides details of the park history, interesting animal facts and a memorable, engaging experience. For details and to schedule a safari tour visit online at livingdesert.org.

Reserved advanced timed entry ticketing and facial coverings are required. Guests are encouraged to remain diligent with frequent hand washing and use of hand-sanitizing stations available throughout the park. With more than 80 acres of outdoor space, and limiting the number of guests with advanced ticketing, there is plenty of space to socially distance, noted Monroe. Select high-contact and enclosed spaces of the Zoo remain closed. Visit LivingDesert.org/Health for the most up to date information.

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 destination in the Palm Springs area for 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.

###