



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Baby Ghost Bats on Display at TWP Nocturnal House

Three ghost bats recently born into captivity at the Territory Wildlife Park are now on display in the Park's nocturnal house.

Territory Wildlife Park assistant curator Steve Templeton said the first baby bat was born on September 2, the second on September 16 and the third on October 2.

"The sex of the young is unknown because they are still tucked up tightly under the mother's wing where they will remain to feed on milk until they are old enough to eat for themselves," he said.

"People can come and join a spotlight tour through our nocturnal house to see the baby bats and learn about the captive breeding program from one of our guides."

"They are cute and have the face that only a bat mother could love, with large ears, small eyes and has a large nose-leaf.

"A nose-leaf is a distinguishing feature that will help them hunt when they are older.

"Ghost bats are Australia's only carnivorous bats, eating large insects, frogs, birds, lizards and small mammals and get their name from their white appearance when flying over head.

"These bats are classified as "vulnerable" due to loss of feeding habitat caused by clearing and land degradation, and disturbance to cave roosts, and the destruction of caves affects bats.

Mr Templeton said that Ghost bats have been bred at the Territory Wildlife Park for many years and are part of an Australia-wide captive management program in Australian zoos and wildlife parks.

"All ghost bats captive bred in Australia are descendants of original ghost bats collected in the Pine Creek area of the NT at the commencement of the program in 1988," Mr Templeton said.

"The Australia-wide collection of captive bred ghost bats is managed using a computer program designed to assist in the selection of individuals for breeding.

"This program is managed by a studbook keeper at the Territory Wildlife Park who keeps a record of all the animals and determines which animals are sent around Australia to participate in breeding."

Mr Templeton said locals are still able to obtain a Territorian Pass, which gives them up to 12 months access to the Park, all for the price of one admission fee.

The park is open from 8:30am seven days a week and the fully guided nocturnal house spotlight tours are on at 1:30pm daily.

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Steve Templeton on 89887227.

Issued: 9:30am Monday, 9 October 2006