



MEDIA RELEASE

Zoo Keeper Heads to USA

Territory Wildlife Park zoo keeper Melissa Merry is set to pack her bags full of warm clothes, a new laptop and new video camera during the next few days before flying to the United States next week.

Ms Merry was awarded the prestigious Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship in July last year and is now ready to fulfil her dream of learning more about the conservation of raptors such as eagles, kites and falcons by flying to the US.

"I've been really looking forward to this trip for several months now and despite the long flight, cannot wait until I touch down in Orlando when the adventure gets into full swing," Ms Merry said.

"I will be attending a seven day animal training course in Orlando involving more than 50 different species of birds and mammals.

"This will be a real highlight for me as the course instructor, Steve Martin, has developed shows around the world, including those at Seaworld and Disney's Animal Kingdom in Orlando.

"I have spent the past few days videotaping everything we do at TWP to show the Americans what it is we do here, and the video camera will get a decent workout while I'm in the US to record as much of the trip as possible."

After visiting Orlando, Ms Merry will go to the International Centre for Birds of Prey in South Carolina, the Carolina Raptor Centre in North Carolina, the Baltimore Aquarium, the University of Minnesota and the Alaska Raptor Centre.

Ms Merry said she had been doing further research about the places she will be going to since obtaining the Fellowship, so that she can get the most out of her trip as possible.

"The places I will be visiting cater specifically for raptors and I will study closely what takes place in front of the large audiences as well as what happens behind the scenes, such as the care that goes into looking after these wonderful animals," Ms Merry said.

"I would like to thank the Territory Wildlife Park and the Churchill Fellowship Trust for helping me realise a long-held dream of mine, and I urge everyone to apply for a Churchill Fellowship."

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Media Note – For more information contact Melissa Merry on 8988 7200

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