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Contact: JJ Vitale ▪ 904.757.4463, ext. 145 ▪ cell: 904-635-5035 ▪ [vitalej@jacksonvillezoo.org](mailto:vitalej@jacksonvillezoo.org)  
Janet Wesley ▪ 904.757.4463, ext. 210 ▪ cell: 904-472-3699 ▪ [wesleyj@jacksonvillezoo.org](mailto:wesleyj@jacksonvillezoo.org)

## **Six More Weeks of Winter? Spike the Prognosticating Porcupine Will Take a Stab at Predicting Spring's Arrival**

January 31, 2018-- *Jacksonville, FL* – Forget Punxsutawney Phil, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has Spike the Prognosticating Porcupine- bigger, smarter and certainly more handsome than any groundhog could ever be!

African crested porcupines are the world's third largest rodents behind the capybara and beaver, and according to Dan Maloney, the Zoo's Deputy Director for Animal Care and Conservation, Crested porcupines get right to the *point* when it comes to their awareness of the weather and their surroundings.

"African crested porcupines share the savannas with lots of big predators, like lions, leopards and hyenas. They also live with extreme weather swings like drought, monsoons and dust storms. If they don't pay attention, they don't survive."

Guests can watch the amazing animal act of forecasting at the first Campground Critters show of the day- 11 a.m. Friday, February 2. Spike and his furry and feathered friends delight crowds regularly with their acrobatic antics. This show promises to be especially fun as many in northeast Florida are eagerly anticipating the arrival of spring.

Campground Critters is located in the Australia loop of the Zoo near the lorikeet aviary. The show is \$3 for members and \$4 for non-members and included in Zoo value bands. At the end of the 15-minute show, guests have an opportunity to get close to the stars of the show in a meet-and-greet.

Can we trust a porcupine to predict the return of flip-flop weather? The Zoo says yes!

### **MEDIA INVITE**

Media interested in attending the show, contact JJ Vitale at [vitalej@jacksonvillezoo.org](mailto:vitalej@jacksonvillezoo.org) to be added to the Media List.

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**About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens**

For over 100 years, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has aimed to inspire the discovery and appreciation of wildlife through innovative experiences in a caring environment. Starting in 1914 with an animal collection of one red deer fawn, the Zoo now has more than 2,000 rare and exotic animals and 1,000 species of plants, boasting the largest botanical garden in Northeast Florida. **The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit organization and a portion of every ticket sold goes to the over 45 conservation initiatives Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens supports around the world, and here in NE Florida.** JZG is proud to be an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. For more information, visit [jacksonvillezoo.org](http://jacksonvillezoo.org).