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**FALL IN LOVE WITH PEPÉ AT THE HONOLULU ZOO
Hawaii's ONE and Only Skunk Finds L'amour Solo in Paradise**

WAIKIKI, HI (September 21, 2012) – Oh 'mon cheri'! The Honolulu Zoo will soon be sharing the love when it welcomes Pepé, a male black and white skunk, the only one of its kind in Hawaii. Pepé, named after the Looney Tunes Show character favorite Pepé Le Pew, will be unveiled to the public at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, September 25, 2012, during a special ceremony.

The opening event will feature educational activities, such as the opportunity to smell a vial of skunk scent, see a skunk footprint, and learn about the skunk's anatomy. The first 100 guests will also receive a plush skunk.

"We are excited to have such a unique opportunity to house Hawaii's one and only skunk at the Honolulu Zoo. This addition will prove an invaluable opportunity to educate our youth and general public as they are able to learn more about different animals around the world," says the Honolulu Zoo director, Manuel Mollinedo.

Pepé has been de-scented. He was born on May 8, 2012, in Ohio, and arrived in Honolulu in July. Until he completes his quarantine, Pepé will be viewable behind glass in the Keiki Zoo. Once quarantine is complete he will be moved to a larger naturalistic outdoor enclosure at the Keiki Zoo.

Since arriving at the Zoo, Pepé has worked with Zoo trainer Nancy Leong three times a day for up to 60 minutes at a time. Leong is working with the young skunk to teach him new behaviors like coming when called, getting him comfortable to being handled, and desensitizing him to slipping on a harness so he can eventually walk on lead with an escort to get exercise. The Zoo uses operant conditioning, positive reinforcement as its primary training method. Pepe's reward-based training system features softened vegetables and a natural dog food mixture that simulates his diet in the wild. When Pepé isn't training, he expresses his curiosity by sniffing his surroundings and looking for something new to uncover, and takes naps often through out the day.

The Honolulu Zoo Society

The Honolulu Zoo Society's mission is to foster an appreciation of our living world by supporting and advocating environmental education, recreation, biological study and conservation activities at the Honolulu Zoo. General admission \$14 with children ages 3-12 years \$6. All children under 2 are free.

For more information, call (808) 971-7171 or visit www.honolulu zoo.org.