



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **ASDP Bird of Prey Trainer Returns from USA**

Alice Springs Desert Park (ASDP) specialist keeper/animal trainer Anthony Molyneux has returned to Alice Springs after attending an International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE) Conference in Tacoma, Washington.

Mr Molyneux said the five weeks he spent in the US visiting other zoological institutions and attending the week-long IAATE annual conference has been invaluable.

"The opportunity to visit the US and attend the IAATE conference was an amazing experience and the information and techniques gained through the conference can be incorporated into both the ASDP and Territory Wildlife Park," Mr Molyneux said.

"It was a great opportunity to speak with so many like-minded people who actively participate in animal training and discuss issues that arise in everyone's day to day work as well as new and novel ways to approach such issues.

"All the trainers were very keen to talk about the style of show we do at ASDP because they had heard about it through the IAATE online forum that I have been on over the past few years.

"I could also put names to faces of trainers I had been conversing with over the years and further strengthen the animal training network available to ASDP."

Mr Molyneux said networking and exposure to current developments in training techniques staff at the ASDP and TWP can ensure that birds of prey displays are as advanced as possible.

"The interaction with so many international trainers allowed me to gauge where ASDP sits internationally with regard to the type of display we do and the training techniques used," Mr Molyneux said.

"I can honestly say that the Nature Theatre display at ASDP is a leader in the way we present our animals to our visitors.

"Our style of display is unique in the way animals are presented to visitors and it was rewarding to see the other conference delegates were very impressed with our show at ASDP."

Mr Molyneux said it was also a great opportunity to see and compare a very diverse array of shows from other zoos.

"While watching DVDs of other shows we could all look for new ideas and think about how to modify them so our teams back home could incorporate new ideas into our show," Mr Molyneux said.

"These may include a different style of narration, different interpretation techniques and/or different animal display techniques.

"I have already begun to implement some training and communication strategies into our workplace and so far these have been readily received by the trainers at the Nature Theatre.

"I am confident that these new strategies will not only strengthen our display at ASDP, but also allow all the Nature Theatre staff to become better animal trainers.

"Once I have had more time to assess the effectiveness of what I have learnt and implemented at ASDP as a direct result of attending the IAATE Conference, I would like to share this knowledge with the trainers at Territory Wildlife Park.

"The conference feedback as well as regular daily comments we received from the visitors to ASDP, both local and international is what drives us to ensure our display remains at the forefront of animal displays."

Ends

**Media Note \_ For more information contact Anthony Molyneux on 8951 8747. The attached image is of Anthony Molyneux with an Australian Hobby, a type of Falcon.**

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