



city of  
**greenville**

# News Release

## **GREENVILLE ZOO CELEBRATES OCELOT BIRTHS**

**(Greenville SC)** The Greenville Zoo is celebrating the birth of two female ocelot kittens. Born on August 15, the kittens are the first offspring for parents Evita and Oz, who are four years old. This is the first successful birth of this species for the Greenville Zoo, which is one of only two Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) institutions to breed ocelots this year. Zoo staff hopes the kittens will be on exhibit in October, but the timing is up to Evita, who will bring them out on exhibit when she feels they are mature enough.

Evita, who came from Seattle, Washington, and Oz, who came from the North Carolina Zoo, were sent to the Greenville Zoo in 2013 as a breeding pair. They replaced the zoo's non-breeding pair of ocelots, who are now residents of the Mesker Park Zoo in Evansville, Indiana. According to general curator Keith Gilchrist, the kittens' birth is a valuable contribution to the conservation of this endangered species and to the Ocelot Species Survival Plan (SSP), which strives to ensure the sustainability of a healthy, genetically diverse and demographically varied population through breeding programs with AZA-accredited institutions like the Greenville Zoo.

Ocelots, which range in size from 18 to 40 pounds, are found in every country south of the United States, except Chile, and occasionally range as far north as Texas. Their habitats include mangrove forests and coastal marshes, savanna grasslands and pastures and thorn scrub and tropical forests of all types. Ocelots are solitary and territorial nocturnal hunters, with eyesight six times greater than a human's, and while they can climb trees and swim, they spend most of their time hunting on the ground.

###

**Contact:** Beth Rusch  
Zoo Business Administrator  
467-5704  
[barusch@greenville.gov](mailto:barusch@greenville.gov)