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Komodo dragon Joins “Lizards on the Loose” Exhibit

Dubuque, Iowa – Oct. 13, 2009—Dragons do exist! A Komodo dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) has joined the cast of “Lizards on the Loose!” at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium. The Dragon arrived Saturday, Oct.10, and is with the lizard exhibit located in the Norman Changing Exhibits Gallery on the second floor.

The Komodo dragon, a monitor lizard, is the largest lizard still living in the world today. It can weigh as much as 500 pounds and grow to be 10 feet long. The dragon at the Museum & Aquarium is a five ft. long, 2-year-old female named Jude, after the Beatles song.

Komodo dragons are one of the world’s most endangered lizards, living only in the driest, most remote parts of Indonesia. In the 1970s their population was 6000; today their total population in the wild is less than 3000. There are fewer than 100 Komodo dragons in captivity. The dragon at the Museum & Aquarium is the only one in Iowa.

The animal is on short-term loan from the San Antonio Zoo. The Museum & Aquarium’s recent accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums has made such loans possible.

“Lizards on the Loose!” is sponsored by the Dubuque Telegraph Herald and the Iowa Math & Science Education Partnership.

For more information please call 563-557-9545 or visit www.rivermuseum.com.

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