



Media Release

1 September 2015

## International Primate Day – a day of recognition for our closest relatives

**Today, September 1st, is International Primate Day - a day to highlight the threats and abuses that apes and monkeys face around the world, and also to celebrate those who have been given a second chance of life.**

(Non-human) Primates are genetically the closest living creatures to humans. Their sentient ability is thought to be very similar to ours as primates have complex social interactions. They have the ability to form and remember relationships, remember behaviours, mirror tasks, and even make predictions about future interactions. Like humans, primates have a communicative language, they use gestures, facial expressions and body language to interact with one another.

Despite this however, Australia uses hundreds of primates in highly invasive experiments every year.

**Helen Marston, CEO of Humane Research Australia:** *“Hundreds of primates are being used in Australia every year in biomedical experiments and many more are housed in breeding facilities awaiting a similar fate. These primates – macaques, marmosets and baboons – are sourced from three government-funded, research-specific breeding colonies located within Australia. Few Australians are even aware that their tax dollars are supporting this and HRA believes they should know.”*

*“As well as the unethical nature of using sentient and highly cognitive animals as research tools, reliance on data from animal experiments is dubious as they are insufficiently predictive of human outcomes. This in turn causes major concern for Australian health when we rely on these out-dated models for human ills”. I hope that International Primate Day will help raise awareness of this important, yet often hidden issue.”* **Helen Marston concluded.**

Humane Research Australia is specifically calling for:

- The replacement of primate experiments with more humane and scientifically-valid (non-animal) methods of research
- A ban on the importation of primates for research
- Establishment of a primate sanctuary for ex-laboratory animals.

For more information, please visit [BanPrimateExperiments.org](http://BanPrimateExperiments.org)