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## **JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS, NATIONAL EXHIBIT AWARD FOR LAND OF THE TIGER**

September 21, 2015 – *Jacksonville, FL* – On Sunday, September 20, The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) was presented with the Significant Achievement in Exhibitory award by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

“We’re thrilled to be recognized by our peers and the AZA and we’re proud to be a part of the worldwide effort to take the exhibition and care of animals to the next level,” said Dan Maloney, Deputy Director of Animal Care and Conservation at JZG.

To win the award, the exhibit must provide high quality animal care, incorporate strong educational programming, provide state-of-the-art safety for employees and guests, deliver an immersive guest experience and demonstrate a connection to conserving the species in the wild. JZG supports a Wildlife Protection Unit in Sumatra, Indonesia that patrols the forests removing snares and arresting poachers of endangered Sumatran tigers, elephants and rhinos.

“Once again we set the bar and exceeded expectations with Land of the Tiger. It is a spectacular exhibit that is fully immersive for our guests and animals,” said Tony Vecchio, Executive Director at JZG. “The planning and execution of this exhibit could not have been possible without the dedication of our staff and the continued support from our donors and the community.”

The 2.5-acre Land of the Tiger exhibit opened in March of 2014 featuring Sumatran and Malayan tigers, Visayan warty pigs, Babirusa, Asian Small-clawed Otters, and Wreathed and Wrinkled hornbills. The highlight of the exhibit is the 670-foot fortified trail system which provides the animals choice on where to go. The exhibit also boasts an award-winning garden full of plants native to Asia providing guests the opportunity to feel as if they’ve traveled across the globe.

In 2005, the JZG won Top Honors in Exhibitory for Range of the Jaguar, thrusting the zoo into the national spotlight and acting as the catalyst launching the Zoo on its path to enhancing the guest experience and providing top-notch care for animals.

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### **About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG)**

For over 100 years, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has aimed to inspire the discovery and appreciation of wildlife through innovative experiences in a caring environment. Starting in 1914 with an animal collection of one red deer fawn, the Zoo now has more than 2,000 rare and exotic animals and 1,000 species of plants, boasting the largest botanical garden in Northeast Florida. The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit organization and an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. For more information, visit [jacksonvillezoo.org](http://jacksonvillezoo.org).

### **About Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)**

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, animal welfare, education, science, and recreation. AZA is the accrediting body for the top zoos and aquariums in the United States and seven other countries. Look for the AZA accreditation logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. The AZA is a leader in saving species and your link to helping animals all over the world. To learn more, visit [www.aza.org](http://www.aza.org).