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## **JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS WINS LANDSCAPE AWARDS FOR LAND OF THE TIGER EXHIBIT**

October 6, 2015 - Jacksonville, FL – The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) walked home with two accolades for *Land of the Tiger* at the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) awards ceremony held in Orlando on September 25. The recognitions included Landscape Award of Excellence for a New Public/Institutional Installation and the FNGLA Floriculture Award which is given to the entry that showcases the most effective use of plant material creating color and texture. The landscape was designed and planted solely by the Zoo's Horticulture Department.

"The landscape at the Land of the Tiger is designed to immerse our guests in a lush tropical forest, which gradually opens up to an Asian savanna surrounded by towering cliffs" said Bob Chabot, Director of Facilities, Horticulture and Exhibits. "This gave us an opportunity to introduce several new plant species to our collection. We are honored that FNGLA has voted to recognize us once again with these prestigious awards."

JZG also received honors in 2010 and 2012 for the Gardens at Trout River Plaza and Asian Bamboo Gardens, respectively. Both gardens won Best New Public/Institutional Installation during those years, and are popular venues among the 30 weddings the zoo hosts annually.

In 2004, the Jacksonville Zoo recognized the importance of having a botanical garden in the area and created a Botanical Garden Master plan, and changed its name to the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens as it's known today. The first garden, Savanna Blooms, was planted in April of 2005 and serves as the forecourt to the popular Giraffe Overlook.

While it's not unique to include a gardens with a zoo, it is innovative to incorporate them throughout the animal exhibits so a cohesive plant/animal story is created.

“We create an atmosphere. An experience. And I think people are appreciating that plants are as important as any single exhibit, any animal” said Tony Vecchio, Executive Director of JZG.

**High Resolution Photos can be provided upon request.**

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### **About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens**

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).