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## **JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS OFFERS \$5 ADMISSION ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 THANKING THE JACKSONVILLE COMMUNITY FOR A RECORD- BREAKING YEAR**

*September 23, 2015 - Jacksonville, FL* – For the fifth year in a row, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) is celebrating the best year in its history with record-breaking attendance of over 900,000 and still growing. The Zoo surpassed 2014's record attendance within the first 10 months of the fiscal year.

The Zoo would like to thank the supportive community by offering \$5 general admission on Saturday, September 26.

“Jacksonville is a wonderful city.” said Tony Vecchio, Executive Director of JZG. “We are so happy and proud that the community sees us as a place to enjoy with their families, and that area visitors see us as a destination. We can't say ‘Thank You’ enough to the community for helping make us one of America's best Zoos.”

Over the past year, the Zoo broke records and celebrated many firsts. Highlights include:

- Being named a '[Top 25 Zoo in the U.S.](#)' by TripAdvisor,
- Receiving the Significant Achievement award in exhibitory by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums,
- The birth of lion cub triplets,
- The birth of 7 primate infants, including the Zoo's first 2 gorilla babies,
- Successful hatching of the Zoo's first-ever Magellanic penguin chick, and two Louisiana pine snakes, one of the rarest snakes in the United States, and the first birth of a Cownose ray pup.
- The launch of the Conservation Speaker Series, a quarterly educational dinner highlighting conservation programs the Zoo supports,
- A record-shattering fundraising event, Bowling for Rhinos (BFR), where our chapter of the American Association of Zoo keepers (AAZK) raised over

\$18,000 for rhino conservation. The event was also named 'BFR Event of the Year' by the national organization.

- The return of Goober, the Zoo's 411-pound Aldabra tortoise,
- The groundbreaking of region's first manatee critical care center set to open in 2016, and
- The inaugural celebration of the North Florida Shark Festival welcoming shark experts from around the country.

The Zoo is thankful for all the generous support the Jacksonville community has provided throughout the 101 years, and is proud to be a part of Jacksonville as the city continues to thrive and prosper.

Join the Zoo this Saturday, September 26 for \$5 general admission for each guest. No coupon required.

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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).