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THE ZOO CELEBRATES THE RETURN OF GOOBER, THE ALDABRA TORTOISE

July 11, 2015 - Jacksonville, FL – He's baaack! Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) is excited to announce the return of Goober, a 411 pound Aldabra tortoise. He was introduced to his new exhibit today at the beginning of the Zoo's Africa boardwalk.

"Since the 1960s, several generations of Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens visitors have grown up with Goober. Given the long lifespan of Aldabra tortoises, it's really exciting to know that Goober will continue to serve as an ambassador of his species and inspire young zoo goers for many generations to come," said Robert Mendyk, Supervisor of Herpetology at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens.

Long-time Zoo guests may remember this giant tortoise from as far back as 1968, when he first arrived at JZG. In 1984, Goober successfully sired the first Aldabra tortoise hatchlings in captivity, in the western hemisphere. Born in the wild, Goober is estimated to be about 62 years old, give or take a decade. Until recently, Goober was visiting our friends at the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens in Sanford, Florida.

Guests can visit Goober in his new exhibit, located at the entrance to JZG's Africa area and in the fall of 2015, he'll be joined by a brand new flock of African Flamingos.

Photo Credit: Sean Wallace

Additional photos and information available by request.

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 2,400 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.