



## Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens Fact Sheet

LOCATION	370 Zoo Parkway Jacksonville, Florida 32218																
ESTABLISHED	1914 in Springfield Park 1924 Acquired Current Property																
OWNERSHIP	City of Jacksonville owns land, animal collection and equipment																
NATIONWIDE STATUS	Named Parents Magazine as the 14 <sup>th</sup> Best Zoo in America for Kids. Also named by Intrepid Traveler Publishing Company as one of 60 (out of over 2,000) of the best zoos in America. One of 20 of the largest zoos in the nation, Jacksonville Zoo's member base includes people from 35 states across the nation.																
REGIONAL STATUS	53.6% of Zoo visitors are from Duval County 46.4% of Zoo visitors are from outside of Duval County Members from 87 cities in Georgia Visitors from over 60 counties in Georgia																
LOCAL RECOGNITION	Voted by various local publications as best attraction for families.																
ADMISSION FEES	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Adults</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$13.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children (3-12)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$8.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Citizens</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$11.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children 2 and under</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Free</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Military &amp; AAA</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10% Discount</td> </tr> </table> <p>All Duval County school groups from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade are admitted free during school term.</p> <p>For fiscal year 2008/09, 5,000 guest passes were given to the Mayor's Office of the City of Jacksonville for distribution to socio-economically challenged individuals.</p>	Adults	\$13.00	Children (3-12)	\$8.00	Senior Citizens	\$11.00	Children 2 and under	Free	Military & AAA	10% Discount						
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EDUCATION PROGRAMS	More than 25 different programs serving all age groups																
VOLUNTEERS	About 1,150 volunteered in all areas of zoo operations for the 2007/08 fiscal year.																
LAND AREA	92 developed acres; 28 acres to be developed as funds become available																



## **VISION**

*Inspiring discovery, appreciation and conservation of wildlife, plants and natural resources through innovative experiences in a caring environment.*

## **MISSION**

The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens fosters understanding that empowers people to respect and conserve their natural environment by:

- Creating innovative educational and recreational experiences that engage our guests
- Funding operations, expansion and programs through an entrepreneurial spirit with public and private partnerships
- Instilling passion to actively participate as responsible stewards of our planet Earth



## **The History of Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens**

The Zoo opened in the Springfield section of Jacksonville on May 12, 1914, with the donation of one red deer fawn. Several domestic animals were added later and a “monkey island” was established. On July 19, 1925, the Municipal Zoo, as it was then known, relocated to its present site bordering on the Trout River. Starting with 37.5 acres, the Zoo continued to grow, reaching about 89 acres when an 11-acre tract of land adjoining the Zoo to the east was acquired in January 1992. On October 20, 1993, the Zoo name was officially changed from the Jacksonville Zoological Park to the Jacksonville Zoological Gardens.

The first major animal purchase of the Zoo was a female Asian Elephant bought in 1926 with money raised by local school children. By the end of the 1960s, the Zoo is reputed to have had the largest collection of exotic animals in the Southeast, but it had fallen on hard times and a great deal of money was needed to save the Zoo. Community leaders, under the direction of Mayor Hans Tanzler, appointed a seven-member committee to search for an alternative to closing the Zoo.

The Jacksonville Zoological Society subsequently came into being in April 1971, having grown from the seven-member committee to 85 of the city’s most influential leaders. The Society began managing the Zoo on June 21, 1971.

The city of Jacksonville contracts with the Society to manage all phases of the operation of the Zoo. All property, including animals and equipment, and all improvements, belong to the city, which in turn contributes an annual subsidy to offset some of the Zoo’s operating expenses. All other Zoo expenses are paid through revenues earned from admission and concession sales, membership and adoption, and group sales. The Jacksonville Zoo serves a two-state area within a 100-mile radius of the facility.

A major redevelopment of the Jacksonville Zoo began in 1992. Through a combination of River City Renaissance funds and donations from the private sector, \$22.5 million was raised to complete Phase One of the Master Plan. Projects completed include a new front entry gate and parking lot, the Main Camp Safari Lodge, Birds of the Rift Valley Aviary, Great Apes of the World, an expanded train ride, an elephant and breeding complex, RiverBranch Foundation Animal Medical Center, the PepsiCo Foundation Education Campus and redevelopment of the 11-acre Plains of East Africa.

The last project of the 1992 Master Plan, a Florida wetlands attraction, “Wild Florida,” opened in March 2001. Redevelopment is ongoing, and future emphasis will be placed on fundraising for and completion of major exhibits. In March 2002, the Zoo opened the Outback Steakhouse Australian Adventure. Range of the Jaguar, the Zoo’s national award winning premier attraction, opened March 5, 2004. In March of 2005, the Wildlife Carousel opened to the public for the first time, with its 34 hand-painted animals. In April of 2005 the redesigned viewing area for the Giraffes called Giraffe Overlook and the first botanical gardens, Savanna Blooms, opened. As part of this development the main path was redesigned and widened for guest comfort. Play Park, an exciting environment providing children learning opportunities, opened in the late spring of 2006. In September, 2007, the latest addition to the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, the Gardens at Trout River Plaza opened. The plaza serves as the gateway to the Asian Bamboo Gardens that opened in the spring of 2009 with the new komodo dragon exhibit.

The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is an accredited institution of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association.



## Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens Education Department Facts

- Over 90,000 school children visit the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens each year either on teacher-led field trips or to participate in formal education programs at the PepsiCo Education Campus.
- Teacher packets complement school programs and give teachers vocabulary lists, suggested non-fiction science reading lists, pre- and post-visit activities that support life science curriculum objectives.
- Initiated during the 2005-2006 school year, the Education Department partners with the Science Team of the Duval County Public School District (serving over 125,000 students annually) to develop and implement science programs integrated with Sunshine State Standards. Kindergarten, First and Second Grade classrooms scheduling a field trip at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens participate in the on-site classroom programs where their students meet animals up-close and hands-on while learning life science.
- Educational Programs at the Zoo:

On-Site School Programs	Home School Programs
Teacher Workshops	Safari Sleepovers
Family Workshops	Pack Prowls
Holiday Camp	Moonlight Strollers
Spring Break Camp	Mother and Child Sleepover
Summer Camp	Father and Child Sleepover
Critter Close-Up	Zoofari Outreach
Pre-school Programs (9 months – 4 years)	
ZooTREK (Teaching, Reading, Exploring with Kids) – Library After School Program	
ZooBRIDGE – 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade after school enrichment program with The Bridge of NE Florida	
Andrew Jackson High School Health Science Academy Zoology Program (11 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup> Graders)	

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Camp



High School Zoology Class



ZooTREK



Home School



## **Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens Major Exhibits**

As the Zoo's Master Plan is implemented over the next several years, the number of major exhibits will increase. The major exhibits that are currently open are:

### **Main Camp Safari Lodge**

The Zoo's admission facility is 26,000 square feet, has a replicated African thatched roof and houses the ticket gates, Guest Relations and Membership Offices, the Mombasa Import/Export Shop, a 2,500 square foot store that sells animal-themed gifts. The Main Camp Café, a food kiosk that offers a variety of fast foods is also located here. The Main Camp Safari Lodge includes spaces that can be rented for private or business events. The Samburu Room, a 1,900 square foot indoor facility, Shaba Terrace, a 69,000 square foot space that is located upstairs and is a covered, open air venue used for larger, private or business-related events; and Mt. Kenya Boardroom, used for the Zoo's Board meetings are all spaces available for rental.

### **River Valley Aviary**

Home to exotic birds representing many different species, the River Valley Aviary is a two-story enclosure covering 9,000 square feet. It allows birds such as the yellow-billed stork, white-bellied bustard, lesser flamingos and turacos to fly about freely.

### **African Loop**

Guests can walk along the 1,400-foot long boardwalk and see the animals in their large, open environment called the Plains of East Africa.

The Nile crocodile exhibit is the first exhibit you'll see. The crocodile is the largest of African reptiles and can grow 14-16 feet long. Mainly found in sub-Saharan Africa, these crocodiles are notorious for preying on large mammals.

The Wart Hog exhibit is across from the Nile crocodiles.

The Antelope exhibit is in the center of the loop around the Plains. Home to eastern bongo, impala and African ground hornbills, the exhibit is spacious and tree-shaded. It is also home to a wild breeding colony of the endangered wood storks.

A pair of our Saddle-billed Storks is in the area across from the antelope exhibit. This rare stork species is the tallest of the African storks. Wattled cranes, the rarest of the African cranes, also occupy this area.

The Cheetah exhibit is a 300-foot long, 50-foot wide area. Cheetahs are capable of running 70 miles per hour, the fastest four-legged animal in the world.

White rhinoceros, greater kudu, sitatunga and ostrich inhabit three exhibit areas that encompass a 2.5-acre area, allowing plenty of room for the animals to roam.

Rare Cape Buffalo are further along the boardwalk and are one of the most dangerous animals in Africa.

Elephant Plaza offers an intimate view of the elephants and their 275,000-gallon pool. Included in the same area is the Seronera Reptile Building, home of some of the world's deadliest snakes, such as vipers, cobras and mambas. In the Plaza, there are vultures, bats, klipspringers and other animals.

Mahali Pa Simiba ("Place of the Lion" in Swahili) is the one-acre home to our lions.

Angola colobus monkeys live in the area in front of the lions' area. These monkeys move by leaping from tree to tree which makes for a very lively exhibit.

Leopards are at the end of the African Loop and can be viewed from the gazebo or along the main path.

### **Giraffe Overlook**

Take a stroll across the elevated viewing platform and get eye-to-eye with a giraffe. The covered boardwalk gives guests a breathtaking view across a replica of the African Savanna. Giraffe and greater kudu walk and graze freely in this 2.5 acre exhibit adjacent to the Savanna Blooms botanical gardens.

### **Wild Florida**

Wild Florida is 2.5 acres of natural wetlands consisting of native animals and plants and is home to black bears, otters, red wolves, whooping cranes, bald eagles, bobcats, alligators, Florida panthers, white-tail deer, an owl species and various reptiles and amphibians.

The Reptile House at Wild Florida is home to more than 25 different species of reptiles and amphibians including the eastern indigo snake, one of several threatened species protected by the State of Florida. The alligators are presently located just north of the reptile house, and are fed every Saturday at 2:15 p.m. from mid-April through November.

### **Great Apes**

Visitors can get an up-close look at all three kinds of primates in the Great Apes exhibit. The three primate groups are the apes, monkeys and prosimians. The ape primate group consists of the western lowland gorilla, bonobo, siamangs and colobus monkeys. The mandrills represent the monkey primate group and the prosimians include the ring-tailed and black and white-ruffed lemurs.

### **Range of the Jaguar**

The Range of the Jaguar is a two time national award-winning South American exhibit. At the edge of the rainforest, which holds the animal exhibits, is a village area including the Palm Plaza restaurant, gift shop and restrooms. In addition to enjoying the breathtaking jaguar exhibits, take the time to walk the winding halls of the captivating Lost Temple to see bushmaster snakes, poison dart frogs, vampire bats, Amazon tree boa constrictors, anaconda, cotton-topped tamarins, pygmy marmosets and more.

Catch sight of howler monkeys, giant anteaters, capybaras and tapirs coexisting in the River's Edge exhibit.

As an Inca tern flies overhead in the Emerald Forest Aviary, a pudu, the smallest deer species, might dart across your path. Look for a red-capped cardinal perched above you or a sunbittern sunning itself on a low branch. While in the aviary, you'll have an opportunity to see the largest freshwater fish, the arapaima, which can grow up to 15 feet in length and can weigh up to 400 pounds.

Rare Giant Otters will entertain you with their playful antics at the back of the Aviary.

### **Play Park**

Play Park is a place where children learn about and re-connect with nature while having fun. It occupies 2.5 acres located just past the Range of the Jaguar and the Wildlife Carousel in the center of the ZooLoop path.

Climb, jump and get wet in the 4,000 square-foot Splash Ground (Open spring through early fall annually). Find your way through two mazes and discover and create in the Discovery Center. Climb into a tree house or climb on the rock wall in the Forest Play area, watch the river otters through a tunnel window as they swim overhead, groom and pet the pygmy goats in the Animal Care area and enjoy kid-friendly food from the Play Park Café.

### **Australian Adventure**

Take a walkabout through the Australian Adventure exhibit. Animals in this South Pacific attraction include the wallabies, the cassowary, and lorikeets that you can feed in a free-flight aviary.

### **Asian Bamboo Garden & Komodo Dragon Exhibit**

The Asian Bamboo garden serves as an introduction to our Asian animals. Rather than create an authentic garden specific to any one country or culture, we created a garden that we hope will resonate with people who have experienced Asian cultures. Significant features include the Moon Gate, a traditional Asian gate with a circular entry that symbolizes perfection and the Lotus Pool, featuring rock and water expressing the yin and yang principles of Chinese garden design. The Orchid Pavilion, surrounded by bamboo, overlooks the Koi Ponds, and there is also a Bamboo Mist Forest, home to our new bronze Panda sculptures. The garden has 111 plant species/varieties (this number will change as new species are added).

The Komodo Dragon exhibit is set in an Indonesian fishing village on the Island of Komodo. It appears that the Komodo Dragons are wandering the backyards of the village or basking in the sun. The exhibit features opportunities for zookeepers to train the dragons through an interactive panel in public view.

The opening of these areas foreshadows the next phases of our development, which include many new Asian animal exhibits, expanding gardens along our riverfront and a plaza.

### **Botanical Garden Concept Plan: Setting a New Standard**

For decades, Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has given Jacksonville and the Northeast Florida/Southeast Georgia region a place to love animals. Now we also offer these communities a place to love plants and are setting a new standard for zoos in the process.

Unlike most other growing and culturally-rich cities, Jacksonville has not been able to list a botanical garden as one of its cultural treasures. Beyond filling an educational need, botanical gardens benefit communities in many ways. They become tourist attractions, benefit the green industry, serve as an employer and pump millions of construction dollars and salaries into the regional economy.

Over the past 400 years, botanical gardens evolved from a menagerie of medicinal plants to entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a strong focus on the concept of environmental sustainability. While some zoos have enhanced the natural habitat of their animal collections, none to our knowledge have committed to the idea of combining a zoo and botanical garden. This combination will only serve to strengthen each institution's ability to foster a clear vision of sustainable conservation of our natural resources.

With the help of a nationally-renowned botanical garden design firm, the Zoo developed three major garden zones in its award-winning Botanical Garden Concept Plan:

**The Garden Path:** Visitors will begin their garden journey at the Main Camp and will be greeted with a celebratory display of striking foliage and flowering plants. They will be drawn toward the Garden Path by drifts of colorful blooms swirling through ribbons of contrasting foliage and textures in the distance. Throughout the Zoo, the Garden Path will be a linear garden that links garden destinations.

**Themed Pocket Gardens:** These gardens are distinct and unique jewels of horticultural display that immerse the visitor into strongly themed forecourts to the animal exhibits that follow. Each garden is about one half acre in size. The Savanna Blooms garden is the first pocket garden at the Zoo and is the forecourt for the Giraffe Overlook area.

**The Primary Gardens:** In Jacksonville, visitors to the Zoo have, over the years, recognized the unique relationship the Zoo shares with the Trout River. The beautiful native water-edge plants and spectacular panoramic views over the River set this area aside as something quite special. Recognizing this potential, we selected this area as the home for the Primary Gardens which will cover approximately twelve acres.



## Asian Bamboo Garden and Komodo Dragon Exhibit Fact Sheet

- **There are 111 plant species/varieties in the Asian Bamboo Garden and Komodo Dragon Exhibit (this number will change as we add species)**

Of the 111 species and varieties:

- 104 are of Asian origin
  - 7 are of non-Asian origin
  - 29 are bamboo
  - 21 are conifers
  - 17 are trees (7 are flowering trees)
  - 25 are shrubs (16 are flowering shrubs)
  - 5 are flowering perennials
  - 5 varieties of lotus (*Nelumbo*)
  - 78 are new to the JZG gardens
  - a total of over 5800 individual plants installed
- **About the bamboo in the Asian Bamboo Garden and Komodo Dragon Exhibit:**
    - 29 species and varieties in this garden/exhibit area
    - 360 individual bamboo plants planted (pot size range 7-300 gallon)
    - there is great diversity in color, overall height, culm (cane) diameter, and overall form
    - **colors** include several shades of solid green, yellow with green stripes, green with yellow stripes, green with silver stripes, shades of solid blue/grey, and solid black
    - the potentially **tallest** bamboos include Parker's Hawaiian Giant at 70+ feet, Japanese Timber Bamboo at 70 feet, and Punting Pole Bamboo at 60 feet
    - the potentially **largest culm (cane) diameter** include Parker Hawaiian Giant at 10 inches, Japanese Timber Bamboo at 6 inches, and Beechey Bamboo at 5 inches
- **Komodo Dragons:**
    - are the largest lizard in the world measuring up to 10 feet long and weighing up to 310 pounds
    - they are found only on a few remote islands in Indonesia
    - they are excellent swimmers, and have been spotted swimming from island to island
    - they are famous for the deadly bacteria found in their saliva, which causes their bite victims to suffer slow and painful deaths
    - adults are known to prey on juveniles, so young dragons live in trees until they are big enough to defend themselves