



## 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;">\$14.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children (3-12)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$9.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Citizens</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$12.95</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 2010/2011, 4,000 guest passes were distributed to socio-economically challenged individuals.</p>	Adults	\$14.95	Children (3-12)	\$9.95	Senior Citizens	\$12.95	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	Approximately 2,200 volunteered in all areas of zoo operations for the 2010/11 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, River Branch 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.

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. In spring 2010, Tuxedo Coast, a new penguin exhibit displaying Magellanic penguins, opened in the Play Park area.

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



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

### **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, Membership Offices, and 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 offers several spaces available for rent, including 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 and is also available for small private or business meetings.

### **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.

### **Stingray Bay**

Guests can feed and touch over 20 stingrays in our 17,000 gallon exhibit. There are four different types of stingrays including atlantic, blunt-nosed, southern and cownosed. This exhibit is a fun, interactive exhibit for guests of all ages.

### **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 will see. The crocodile is the largest African reptile 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, making them the fastest four-legged animals 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, one of the most dangerous animals in Africa, and Grevy's zebras exhibits are further along the boardwalk.

Elephant Plaza offers an intimate view of the elephants and their 275,000-gallon pool. Included in the same area is the African 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. These lions can be viewed from the overlook on the boardwalk or in a viewing area along the main path.

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.

Two highly endangered 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 alligators, black bears, red wolves, whooping cranes, bald eagles, bobcats, Florida panthers, white-tailed deer and an owl species.

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 located just north of the reptile house and are fed every Saturday at 2:15 p.m. from mid-March 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 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 next to the animal exhibits is a village area where you'll find the Palm Plaza restaurant, a 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, a replica of an abandoned Mayan 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, a sunbittern sunning itself on a low branch or a macaw that's close enough to

touch. In the back of the aviary you will also see rare Giant Otters that will entertain you with their playful antics.

### **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, groom and pet the pygmy goats in the Animal Care area and enjoy kid-friendly food from the Play Park Café.

Opened in the spring of 2010 is Tuxedo Coast, the Zoo's popular penguin exhibit in Play Park. Located near the Animal Care area, Tuxedo Coast displays the Magellanic penguins in an exhibit where children can watch penguins through a tunnel window as they swim overhead.

### **The Gardens at Trout River Plaza**

This garden space, which officially opened in September 2007, features a partially-walled botanical garden plaza that serves as a gathering and event space and offers a beautiful view of the Trout River. Central to the plaza is a celebratory fountain, where kids love to play in the water falling from a giant spill bowl. The fountain is topped by a basking anhinga bird sculpture and is surrounded by pebble mosaic paving that features a menagerie of animals of the Trout River. Springing from lush garden beds, 13 Grecian-style "living" columns topped with overflowing flowering urns give the Gardens a classical look. A planted trellis, lush and cool with colorful and fragrant vines, along with a number of large shade trees and themed lights all create a special area that can be enjoyed for private parties after hours.

### **Save the Frogs! Amphibian Conservation Center**

The greatest mass extinction since the dinosaurs is happening in our time. Faced with a shrinking habitat and the threat of a deadly fungus, frogs and other amphibian species from all over the world – even here in our own backyard – need our help to survive. On February 15, 2007, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens opened Save the Frogs! Amphibian Conservation Center, a sanctuary for amphibians in danger of contracting the deadly fungus. The Center allows visitors to see some of the threatened amphibians, hear the sounds of those that are already extinct, and learn what they can do to help.

### **Australian Adventure**

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

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

Tranquility abounds in this beautiful garden created in the hopes that it will resonate with people experienced in Asian cultures. A traditional Moon Gate welcomes visitors to the exotic garden that features a Lotus Pool, Moon Bridge, Koi Pond, Orchid Pavilion, and water falls all surrounded by bamboo and other Asian plants. Kids and adults love the Bamboo Mist Forest, home to our bronze Panda sculptures.

The Komodo Dragon exhibit is set in an Indonesian fishing village on the Island of Komodo. There, it appears that the two Komodo dragon residents are wandering the backyards of the village or basking in the sun. Visitors will periodically get an opportunity to see zookeepers train the animals through an interactive panel in public view.



## 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:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-Site School Programs</li> <li>Teacher Workshops</li> <li>Pack Prowls</li> <li>Moonlight Strollers</li> <li>Spring Zoo Camp</li> <li>Summer Zoo Camp</li> <li>Pre-school Programs (0 – 5 years old)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Home School Programs</li> <li>Safari Sleepovers</li> <li>Winter Camp</li> <li>Mother and Child Sleepover</li> <li>Father and Child Sleepover</li> <li>Zoofari Outreach</li> </ul>
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Camp



High School Zoology Class



Home School