



*For Immediate Release*

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**ZOO ATLANTA ORANGUTAN BECOMES FIRST TO PARTICIPATE IN AWAKE CARDIAC  
ULTRASOUND**

*Satu sets new standards for monitoring cardiac health*

**ATLANTA – February 02, 2012** — Satu, an 8-year-old male Bornean orangutan at Zoo Atlanta, recently became the first member of his species to participate in an awake cardiac ultrasound. The procedure was made possible through partnership with sonographers from Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

The ultrasound is the result of training, hard work and patience on the part of Zoo Atlanta animal care professionals, veterinarians and Satu himself. Primate Keeper Patti Frazier, Satu's primary trainer, built on the youngster's already impressive training repertoire to encourage consistent behaviors that would enable his voluntary participation in the procedure.

"We communicate a great deal to our visitors about the bonds of mutual trust that are formed between our great apes and their caregivers, but this ultrasound is an example of why these training advancements matter," said Hayley Murphy, DVM, Director of Veterinary Services. "This is a very encouraging step forward in our ability to monitor our apes' heart health."

Heart health might not seem to be a concern in an individual as young as Satu, but could prove critical when he reaches adulthood. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a leading cause of mortality among great apes living in zoological settings. The Great Ape Heart Project, headquartered at Zoo Atlanta, seeks to understand, diagnose, and treat cardiac disease across all four non-human great ape taxa (gorillas, orangutans, chimpanzees and bonobos). Murphy serves as the project's Principal Investigator. Organizing partners include the Emerging Diseases Research Group of the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine; the UC Davis College of Veterinary Medicine; and the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

Following closely on the heels of Satu's success, Primate Keeper Lynn Yakubinis has since trained another orangutan, 34-year-old male Chantek, to participate in awake cardiac ultrasounds. Animal care professionals and veterinarians plan to introduce additional orangutans to the procedure in the future.

Zoo Atlanta is home to the nation's largest zoological collection of orangutans, with 13 individuals, in addition to housing the largest collection of western lowland gorillas in North America, with 22.

**About Zoo Atlanta**

An accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Zoo Atlanta inspires value and preservation of wildlife through a unique mix of education and outdoor family fun. From well-known native wildlife to critically endangered species on the brink of extinction, the Zoo offers memorable close encounters with more than 1,000 animals from around the world. Complex Carnivores, a new series of exhibits featuring bush dogs, fossa and binturong, opened in April 2011. Zoo Atlanta is also proud to be one of only four zoos in the U.S. that giant pandas call home: Lun Lun's newest cub, born November 3, 2010, made his public debut in spring 2011. Other highlights include the nation's largest collection of western lowland gorillas, the nation's largest zoological collection of orangutans, and a global center of excellence for the care and study of vanishing reptiles and amphibians. The Zoo is open daily with the exceptions of Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Keeper talks, interactive wildlife shows, education programs and special events run year-round. For more information, call 404.624.WILD or visit [zooatlanta.org](http://zooatlanta.org).

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