



For Immediate Release

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TWIN GOLDEN LION TAMARINS BORN AT ZOO ATLANTA

It's tiny times two for the Zoo's smallest primate parents

ATLANTA – March 19, 2010 – Robin, a 4-year-old golden lion tamarin at Zoo Atlanta, gave birth to twins on March 18, 2010. The infants, each estimated to weigh about 2 ounces, are the first offspring for Robin and her mate, 4-year-old male Theo. Members and guests can look forward to seeing Robin and her new arrivals early next week.

Named for the vivid orange manes framing their faces, golden lion tamarins are similar in size to squirrels. The primarily arboreal primates live in family groups composed of a breeding pair and their offspring. Theo (pronounced *tay-oh*) is expected to take an active part in caring for the new arrivals, as adult males play key roles in rearing the young.

Robin's delivery is an exciting beginning to Zoo Atlanta's annual golden lion tamarin free-ranging season, which is tentatively scheduled to begin in late April. Zoo Atlanta is one of only two zoos in the U.S. currently offering a free-ranging program, allowing the monkeys to take to the trees outside their indoor habitat. The tamarins wear radio collars to allow trackers to monitor their location.

Now a popular seasonal tradition at the Zoo, the program actually has its origins in an important collaboration that brought a critically endangered species back from the brink of extinction. The Golden Lion Tamarin Conservation Program, actively supported by Zoo Atlanta since 1992, once focused on reintroducing captive-born animals to their native Brazil. "Golden Lion Tamarin Boot Camp" was originally created to allow the monkeys to learn the climbing and foraging skills necessary for survival in the wild and resulted in the successful reintroduction of a number of Zoo Atlanta-born tamarins. The multi-institutional partnership ultimately proved so successful that wild habitats reached carrying capacity, and zoos are no longer reintroducing new individuals.

The wild golden lion tamarin population, which stood at an alarming 250 animals in the early 1980s, now numbers more than 1,600. Zoo Atlanta continues to support efforts to connect fragmented forest territories in Brazil to promote expansion of the species' existing habitat.

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. An all-new carnivore complex, featuring the exciting debut of two new sun bears, is scheduled to open in summer 2010. Zoo Atlanta is also the proud home of Xi Lan, the only giant panda cub born in the U.S. in 2008, and the popular Boundless Budgies: A Parakeet Adventure, the largest interactive experience of its kind in the Southeast. Other highlights include the nation's largest collection of great apes and a global center of excellence for the care and reproduction of vanishing amphibians and reptiles. Zoo Atlanta 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.

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