



*For Immediate Release*

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**ZOO ATLANTA MOURNS PASSING OF SUMATRAN TIGER**  
*Geriatric cat was oldest known member of species in North America*

**ATLANTA – April 23, 2009** – Zoo Atlanta President and CEO Dennis Kelly announced today that Sekayu, a female Sumatran tiger, was euthanized. The decision was made to euthanize Sekayu because of her deteriorating physical condition. At age 21, Sekayu was the oldest known Sumatran tiger in North America. Zoo Atlanta's Animal Management and Veterinary Teams had been treating the tigress for age-related health concerns.

Sekayu's passing is a bittersweet reminder of the natural cycle defining the lives of all animals. "We are saddened by the passing of Sekayu, who was a special part of our family for 16 years. Our Veterinary and Animal Management Teams worked diligently to ensure that Sekayu received the best treatment and care possible," said Dennis Kelly, Zoo Atlanta President and CEO. "The fact that she was the oldest of her species currently on record is a testament to the excellent care she received throughout her life."

Born October 23, 1987, at San Diego Zoo, Sekayu resided at the Phoenix Zoo before becoming a beloved member of the Zoo Atlanta family since 1993. Sekayu was an excellent mother to several cubs while at the Phoenix Zoo. She and her longtime mate in Atlanta, 18-year-old Jalal, have one offspring, Bahagia, born in November 2000. Bahagia now resides at the Sacramento Zoo. Zoo Atlanta also houses a younger pair of Sumatran tigers, female Chelsea, 5, and male Kavi, 8. Sumatrans are one of the world's most critically endangered tigers, with fewer than 400 believed to remain in the wild.

As with all animal deaths regardless of age, a necropsy will be performed through Zoo Atlanta's partnership with the Department of Pathology in the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Georgia.

**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. The Zoo's newest attraction, Boundless Budgies: A Parakeet Adventure, opened in April 2009. The interactive new experience is the largest of its kind in the Southeast. Zoo Atlanta is also the proud home of Xi Lan, the only giant panda cub born in the U.S. in 2008.

Other highlights include one of the nation's most recognized collections 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 go to [zooatlanta.org](http://zooatlanta.org).

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