



MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 20, 2009

ZOO ATLANTA CELEBRATES NATIONAL ZOOKEEPERS WEEK

WHAT: Zoo Atlanta joins the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) in observing National Zookeepers Week from July 20 to July 24. Annually during the third week of July, AAZK, a nonprofit organization with chapters throughout the U.S., honors and promotes the efforts, talents and achievements of the professionals dedicated to the care and training of hundreds of animal species living in zoo and aquarium settings nationwide.

Roughly one third of Zoo Atlanta's full-time staff are animal care professionals – an occupation that has diversified dramatically in recent decades. Once considered a trade that rarely exceeded basic duties such as feeding and cleaning, zoological animal care is now a highly competitive profession demanding education, experience and specialized training. During National Zookeepers Week in 2007, the Atlanta City Council recognized the contributions of the Zoo's keepers with a special proclamation, and since that time, the organization has continued to build a national reputation as a source of talent and expertise for the zoological industry.

WHEN: July 20-24, 2009

WHERE: Zoo Atlanta
800 Cherokee Avenue, S.E.
Atlanta, GA 30315

CONTACT: Keisha N. Hines Davis, Director of Public Relations and Communications
404.624.5980 – office
404.309.2238 – cell
khines-davis@zooatlanta.org

Simone Griffin
Public Relations Coordinator
404.624.2809
sgriffin@zooatlanta.org

ABOUT: **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.

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