



For Immediate Release

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ZOO ATLANTA WELCOMES NEW FEMALE SUMATRAN ORANGUTAN
Hopes are a-Blaze for a match with longtime bachelor

ATLANTA – March 30, 2010 – The populace had better prepare for the second burning of Atlanta. Blaze, a 14-year-old Sumatran orangutan from the Audubon Nature Institute in New Orleans, La., arrived at Zoo Atlanta on March 29, 2010. Described by her former care staff as a strong-willed female and a quick learner who enjoys training, Blaze will complete a routine quarantine period before making her official debut later this spring.

Members and guests aren't the only introductions in the young female's future, and it's hoped that her fiery name foreshadows a spark in the Zoo's most eligible orangutan bachelor. Blaze has also been recommended by the Orangutan Species Survival Plan (SSP) as a potential mate for longtime Zoo resident Alan, who is currently ranked as North America's most genetically valuable male. Chaired by Zoo Atlanta's Director of Animal Programs Lori Perkins, the Orangutan SSP places highest breeding priority on individuals whose genes are not well-represented in the zoo population. Alan, 38, is the program's top prospect.

A success for Blaze and Alan would also be a triumph for a critically endangered species. Native to the island of Sumatra in Indonesia, Sumatran orangutans are vanishing in the wild as a result of habitat conversion to palm oil plantations, over-harvesting of timber and human encroachment. Experts predict that the species could be extinct in 10 years without targeted conservation efforts. Zoo Atlanta houses the nation's largest zoological collection of orangutans, now with 10 individuals living in separate family groups.

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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