



## Zoo Atlanta Press Kit

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## Zoo Atlanta Fact Sheet

- LOCATION:** 800 Cherokee Avenue, S.E., Atlanta, GA 30315  
Zoo Atlanta is located in historic Grant Park, just minutes from Turner Field and downtown Atlanta.
- BASIC FACTS:** Zoo Atlanta maintains a collection of more than 1,000 animals, representing more than 200 species from around the world. A leader in building naturalistic habitats for animals, the Zoo's landscape spans nearly 40 acres of lush greenery and shimmering forests.
- MANAGEMENT:** Zoo Atlanta is a private, nonprofit corporation operated by Atlanta-Fulton County Zoo, Inc., and is managed by a board of directors. Dennis W. Kelly, Zoo Atlanta's and President and CEO since 2003, left Zoo Atlanta in January 2010 to accept a position as Director of Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington, D.C.
- HOURS:** The Zoo is open year round except for Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.  
Daily: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with grounds open until 5:30 p.m.  
Daylight-savings time weekends only: 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with grounds open until 6:30 p.m.
- ADMISSION:** \$19.99 for adults, \$15.99 for seniors 55 and older, \$14.99 for children 3 to 11. Free for Zoo Members and children younger than 3.  
(Admission prices do not include sales tax.)
- Groups of 15 or more may receive discounted group rates by making reservations in advance. All groups should call 404.624.WILD.
- ACCREDITATION:** Zoo Atlanta is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

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## Zoo Atlanta Overview

Located in historic Grant Park, just minutes from downtown Atlanta and Turner Field, Zoo Atlanta is one of Georgia's most loved institutions. Founded in 1889, it is one of the 10 oldest zoos in continuous operation in the U.S. The Zoo's average annual attendance typically exceeds 700,000 and Membership tops 27,000 households.



Zoo Atlanta is best known for its leadership in the movement to provide naturalistic habitats for Zoo animals and began a multi-million dollar redevelopment campaign in 1985. Zoo Atlanta's naturalistic environment is designed to give guests a tour of select destinations around the globe without ever leaving Atlanta. Premier exhibits include The Ford African Rain Forest; African Plains; Asian Forest; Flamingo Plaza; World of Reptiles; Orkin Children's Zoo and Outback Station. A leader in conservation education, Zoo Atlanta serves as one of Georgia's most innovative and broad-reaching educational institutions.

### **The Ford African Rain Forest**

Designed to simulate the gorillas' native homeland, **The Ford African Rain Forest** houses the largest gorilla population in North America, with a total of 22 western lowland gorillas. Four habitats are spread over 1.5 acres, with a lush area of sprawling greenery that allows plenty of room for daily activities. This environment promotes natural gorilla behavior and has contributed to Zoo Atlanta's successful breeding program. The Zoo celebrated the birth of twins, Kali and Kazi, born to Kuchi on October 31, 2005. Macy Baby, born to Kudzoo in December 2005, and Gunther, born to Sukari in July 2006, are the grandchildren of the late Willie B.

**The Living Treehouse** features colorful African bird life in an open-air aviary, as well as guenons, lemurs and drills, the most endangered African primate species. The drill colony at Zoo Atlanta is the only successful breeding group of drills in the nation. The exhibit is a beautifully renovated treetop that brings to life the importance of trees to wildlife survival through hands-on activities and interpretative signage.

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### **African Plains**

The five-acre **African Plains** habitat opened to the public in 1989. Zoo Atlanta's African Plains are home to lions; elephants; giraffe; black rhino; common waterbuck; bongos; yellow-backed duikers; zebras; meerkats and warthogs. The habitat is also home to African grassland birds, including ostrich and crowned cranes. The landscape simulates the terrain of the east African savanna, with locust trees, green leaf barberries, yuccas and other flora. Guests will even see a simulated termite mound, another common sight in east Africa.

**Mzima Springs** houses two African elephants, Tara and Kelly. Included is a large deep pond the elephants use for bathing and a separate yard for daily demonstrations highlighting their unique features and personalities and emphasizing conservation.

### **The Asian Forest**

**The Asian Forest** is home to numerous Asian species, including giant pandas; Bornean and Sumatran orangutans; red panda; Komodo dragon; Asian small-clawed otters; clouded leopard and Sumatran tigers. A particular highlight of the Asian Forest is The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation Giant Panda Conservation Center, home to Xi Lan, Lun Lun and Yang Yang. Zoo Atlanta is one of only four zoos in the U.S. housing giant pandas, and Xi Lan was the only giant panda cub born in the U.S. in 2008. Born on August 30, 2008, Xi Lan made his public debut with his mother Lun Lun in early 2009. Xi Lan's older sister, Mei Lan, born on September 6, 2006, was the only giant panda cub born in the U.S. that year. In February 2010, Mei Lan departed Atlanta for China, where she will be a new and valuable contributor to the world's population of giant pandas.

Lun Lun and Yang Yang have participated in studies conducted by research partners from Zoo Atlanta, the Chengdu Zoo and the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. The pandas are at Zoo Atlanta on loan from China. As part of the research agreement on Lun Lun's and Yang Yang's original 10-year loan, Zoo Atlanta committed a total of more than \$10 million to fund international conservation projects in China. With only an estimated 1,600 pandas left in the wild, Zoo Atlanta is committed to performing reproductive and maternal care research that contributes to a self-sustaining, genetically diverse captive population.

The **Orangutans of Ketambe** consists of three outdoor habitats, with a total living space of about a half-acre. Although orangutans are solitary in the wild, the Zoo's collection lives in small groups. Zoo Atlanta houses the largest orangutan collection in North America, with individuals ranging in age from 2 to 39. One

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of the Zoo's male Sumatran orangutans, Allen, has been designated by the Orangutan Species Survival Plan as the nation's most genetically valuable male. Fourteen Sumatran orangutans and one Bornean orangutan have been born at Zoo Atlanta over the past 30 years.

**Tiger Forest** is home to endangered Sumatran tigers Jalal (male), Chelsea (female), Kavi (male) and Moby, a clouded leopard. Sumatrans are the world's most endangered tigers, with fewer than 400 believed to remain in the wild. Clouded leopards, named for the cloud-like spots of their coats, are a medium-sized wild cat species. Native to the lowland tropical forests of southeast Asia, these animals are among the best climbers in the feline family. Two separate habitats simulate Indonesian forest glades, with waterfalls, rivers and rocky crevices for exploration.

### **Flamingo Plaza**

Flamingo Plaza, the first project completed under the Zoo's extensive redevelopment plan, houses Chilean flamingos. This species hails from the mountainous regions of Chile and Peru. Their pink color comes from carotene, the natural substance found in their diet. This same substance gives color to shrimp, marigolds and carrots. Flamingos are white when they hatch, grey as juveniles and pink as adults. The habitat, which adjoins the Zoo's plaza entrance, often serves as a meeting place for visitors as they begin their day at the Zoo.

### **World of Reptiles**

Zoo Atlanta is home to one of the nation's most renowned collections of reptiles and amphibians, including more than 400 individuals representing more than 100 species, many of them critically endangered. The Zoo's herpetology staff is involved in a number of research and conservation projects. Research by Dr. Joe Mendelson, Curator of Herpetology, has led to the discovery, official description and naming of more than 40 species of reptiles and amphibians in Central and South America. The World of Reptiles is also home to the world's rarest lizard species, the Guatemalan beaded lizard. Fewer than 100 of these animals are believed to remain in the wild.

### **Orkin Children's Zoo and Outback Station**

The Orkin Children's Zoo was made possible by a \$1.3 million gift from The Gary W. & Ruth M. Rollins Foundation. Phase One of the Orkin Children's Zoo, which opened in September 2002, carries a South American theme and features a free-ranging exhibit and holding building for golden lion tamarins. Other features include Base Camp Discovery, a group of three climate-controlled cabins that allow Zoo guests to enjoy an educational overnight experience among animals from around the world.

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Outback Station, Phase Two of the Orkin Children's Zoo that opened in May 2004, is Australian-themed and introduced a new species to Zoo Atlanta, red kangaroos. Other examples of Australian wildlife include kookaburras and a double-wattled cassowary. One of the world's largest bird species, the cassowary is roughly the size of an emu.

The Orkin Children's Zoo also contains a spacious renovated petting zoo, where young guests can interact with sheep, goats and Kunekune pigs. The exhibit, built specifically for children, teaches urban visitors about creatures they may not otherwise encounter.

### **Wild Like Me**

Sponsored by Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., and with the help of beloved animated stars from Cartoon Network's Boomerang, **Wild Like Me** is an interactive indoor play space that broadens children's concepts of their relationships to animals by placing them directly in the stimulating hands-on world of a mock film production.

### **Conservation Action Resource Center (ARC)**

Zoo Atlanta's **Conservation Action Resource Center**, commonly referred to as the ARC, is an extraordinary facility designed to house Zoo Atlanta's education, conservation and science programs under one ecologically appropriate "living roof" of grasses and plants. The ARC's state-of-the-art facilities, including the Coca-Cola World Studio, helped establish Zoo Atlanta as a leader in innovative education.

### **Boundless Budgies: A Parakeet Adventure**

**Boundless Budgies: A Parakeet Adventure**, opened in April 2009, invites guests to feed hundreds of birds in a dynamic world of wings. Native to Australia and often seen in flocks of thousands, parakeets are highly social, curious and colorful. The largest of its kind in the Southeast, this interactive experience is unlike any other ever offered at Zoo Atlanta.

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## Zoo Atlanta's SSP Participation

Because of the endangered status of animals such as the African elephant, western lowland gorilla, black

rhino and Sumatran orangutan, these animals are part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Species Survival Plan (SSP). SSPs are collective management programs for breeding captive populations of endangered animals. Each SSP manages the breeding of a species in order to maintain a healthy and self-sustaining captive population that is both genetically diverse and demographically stable. Beyond this, SSPs involve a variety of other cooperative conservation activities, such as research, public education and reintroduction and field projects. Currently, more than 100 SSPs are administered by AZA, whose members include accredited zoos and aquariums throughout North America.



Zoo Atlanta currently participates in 23 SSP programs:

- |                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| African lion             | Golden lion tamarin |
| Aruba Island rattlesnake | Gorilla             |
| Asian small-clawed otter | Guenon              |
| Baboon                   | Komodo dragon       |
| Bali mynah               | Kori bustard        |
| Black-and-white colobus  | Orangutan           |
| Black rhino              | Radiated tortoise   |
| Burmese star tortoise    | Red panda           |
| Clouded leopard          | Ringtailed lemur    |
| Eastern bongo            | Ruffed lemur        |
| Elephant                 | Tiger               |
| Giant Panda              |                     |

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## Zoo Atlanta's Points of Pride

- Zoo Atlanta is one of only four zoos in the U.S. housing giant pandas. Mei Lan, born September 6, 2006, was the only giant panda born in the U.S. in 2006. Xi Lan, born August 30, 2008, was the only cub born in the U.S. in 2008.
- Zoo Atlanta is widely respected for the study and care of great apes. The Zoo is home to the nation's largest collection of gorillas, as well as North America's largest collection of orangutans.
- Zoo Atlanta is home to the nation's only successful captive breeding group of one of Africa's most endangered primates, the drill monkey, with nine mother-reared offspring.
- Zoo Atlanta's herpetology collection is one of the foremost in the U.S. The Zoo is the only zoological organization ever to breed the critically endangered Arakan forest turtle. Zoo Atlanta also houses the world's rarest lizard species, the Guatemalan beaded lizard. Fewer than 100 of these animals are believed to remain in the wild.
- Zoo Atlanta's conservation projects affect the preservation of endangered species all over the world, including giant pandas and turtles in Asia; gorillas in Africa; and frogs in Central America. Zoo staff continues to be instrumental in global efforts such as amphibian decline and the Asian Turtle Crisis.
- *Atlanta* Magazine named Zoo Atlanta one of the city's Top 30 Places to Work in 2008.
- Zoo Atlanta received a Keep Georgia Beautiful Award for waste reduction in 2008.
- Zoo Atlanta's Safari Day Camp received the 2008 Nickelodeon Parents' Picks Award for Best Atlanta Day Camp for Little Kids.
- Zoo Atlanta was one of only nine zoos in the world included in *Frommer's* "500 Places to Take Your Kids Before They Grow Up."
- The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) honored Zoo Atlanta with the International Conservation Award *and* the AZA Education Award in 2007.
- *Atlanta* Magazine named Zoo Atlanta one of the "Best Top Ten Places to Visit Animals" in 2007.
- *Air Tran's In Flight* Magazine named Zoo Atlanta one of the top 10 zoos in the U.S. in 2007.
- For the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, Zoo Atlanta met its goal of raising \$1 million in a single evening during the 2009 Beastly Feast. The Beastly Feast is Zoo Atlanta's annual fundraising gala and has been sponsored by Ford Motor Company since 1985.

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