

AZA Grants Accreditation To The Jackson Zoo

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (September 18, 2007) – The Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) today announced that the

Jackson Zoo was granted accreditation by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) last month.

“Only the very best zoos and aquariums can meet tough Association of Zoos and Aquariums accreditation standards,” said AZA President and CEO Jim Maddy. “The leadership and staff of the Jackson Zoo are to be congratulated for the hard work and commitment that they put into the accreditation process.”

To be accredited, the Jackson Zoo underwent a thorough investigation to insure it has and will continue to meet ever-rising standards, which include animal care, veterinary programs, conservation, education, and safety. AZA requires zoos and aquariums to successfully complete this rigorous accreditation process in order to be members of the association, and are required to resubmit to this process every five years.

“Not only does Jackson Zoo meet or exceed AZA’s high standards, but it provides every visitor with a chance to connect to global wildlife conservation,” Maddy added. “Every member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums shares a strong commitment to animal care, professionalism, ethics, conservation, and education. In turn, they enrich the lives of their communities by developing significant wildlife education and conservation programs.”

The mission of the AZA Accreditation Commission is to establish, uphold, and raise the highest zoological and aquarium industry standards through self-evaluation, on-site inspection, and peer review. The accreditation process includes a detailed application and a meticulous on-site inspection by a team of trained zoo and aquarium professionals. The inspecting team observes all aspects of the institution’s operation in areas such as animal care (including living environment and daily enrichment), keeper training, safety for animals, staff, and visitors, educational programs, conservation efforts, veterinary programs, financial stability, risk management, visitor services, and other areas. The inspection team prepares an extensive written report for the Accreditation Commission. Finally, top officials are interviewed at a formal Commission hearing, after which accreditation is either granted, tabled, or denied. Any institution that is denied may reapply one year after the Commission’s decision is made.

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, education, science, and recreation. Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting an institution dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, the AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats. For more information, please visit www.aza.org.

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Please contact Christopher Mims at Jackson Zoo at 601-352-2599 for additional information about the institution, including special events and activities for visitors and its ongoing commitment to wildlife conservation and science.