

**Date:** February 28, 2007  
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## **Jackson Zoo Named “Travel Attraction of the Year” At the Governor’s Conference on Tourism**

The Jackson Zoo was named “Travel Attraction of the Year” this past weekend at the Governor’s Conference on Tourism presented by the Mississippi Tourism Association. The awards program recognized outstanding contributions to the advancement of Mississippi tourism.

“It is such an honor to be recognized by our tourism peers,” said Director Beth Poff. “I am especially proud of all the staff at the Zoo who works so hard to make our facility such a wonderful place for families to visit.”

The association noted the Zoo’s new 4-plus acre Wilderness Mississippi area, as well as being the only zoo in the state that is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

“The Jackson Zoo is going through a significant rebirth with recent and upcoming improvements,” said Christopher Mims, director of marketing and public relations. “Last year’s 30 percent increase in visitation tells us that visitors appreciate the wonderful progress that we are making.”

The Jackson Zoo was also named a “Southern Travel Treasure” this past year by *AAA Magazine*.

The Jackson Zoo is dedicated to its mission, to provide visitors with a quality recreational and educational environment dedicated to wildlife care and conservation. The new 4-plus acre Wilderness Mississippi opened in 2006, and last year also marked the unveiling of a new entryway off Capitol Street and renovation of the orangutan exhibit. This year construction of a state-of-the-art Mississippi Discovery Center will begin. The Zoo also plans to make improvements to the elephant, tiger and leopard exhibits.

The Jackson Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The AZA is America’s leading accrediting organization that sets rigorous, professional standards for zoos and aquariums. The AZA is building North America’s largest wildlife conservation movement by engaging and inspiring the 143 million annual visitors to its member institutions and their communities to care about and take action to help protect wildlife.

The Jackson Zoo is located at 2918 West Capitol Street and is open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. For more information about the Jackson Zoo, call (601) 352-2581 or visit [www.jacksonzoo.org](http://www.jacksonzoo.org).