



AZA Grants Accreditation to the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

Cincinnati, OH (September 23, 2009) – The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden is proud to announce that accreditation was granted by the American Zoo & Aquarium Association’s (AZA) independent Accreditation Commission during its meeting at the association’s Annual Conference held last week in Portland, Oregon.

“I have visited a wide spectrum of zoos across the country this summer, most of which have far more capital funding than ours (provided by local taxes), but none show as much heart by bringing animals, shows, and keepers right out with our guests,” said Thane Maynard, Director of the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. “So, it is good to be accredited, but it is great to try harder and really deliver on our vision of inspiring every visitor with wildlife every day.”

To be accredited, the Cincinnati 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.

“The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden is one of the best in the world because it has met the highest standards in the world,” said AZA President and CEO Jim Maddy. “It takes hard work and a sustained commitment to excellence to meet the Association of Zoos & Aquariums Accreditation Standards.” 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; keeper training; safety for visitors, staff, and animals; 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 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 [.aza.org](http://aza.org).

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The world famous Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden was rated the #1 attraction locally and one of the top zoos in the nation by Zagat Survey. It was recognized by Parents Magazine as #7 on the “Top 10 Best Zoos for Kids.” It has also been recognized by Child Magazine as one of “The 10 Best Zoos for Kids.” Over one million people visit the Zoo’s award-winning exhibits, and more than 500 animal and 3000 plant species annually. The Zoo is an accredited member of the American Zoo & Aquarium Association (AZA) and the American Public Gardens Association (APGA), is internationally known for its success in the protection and propagation of endangered animals and plants, and engages in research and conservation projects worldwide.