

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

RESILIENCY





Dear Friends,



For those I haven't had the opportunity to meet, I'm Raymond King, President and CEO of Zoo Atlanta, with a note to share about your Zoo.

When you Google the word "**resilience**," the Oxford Languages result you are served is this dictionary definition: "*Capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness*" and "*The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity.*" The concept of resilience applies not just to individuals, substances, or objects. It can also apply to organizations.

When we think of resilience, we think of adapting to adversity. We think of bouncing back from unexpected or stressful external factors. We think of staying power. And when I look back on 2021, I think of Zoo Atlanta.

Please join me for a look at just a few of the events that made 2021 a truly remarkable year.



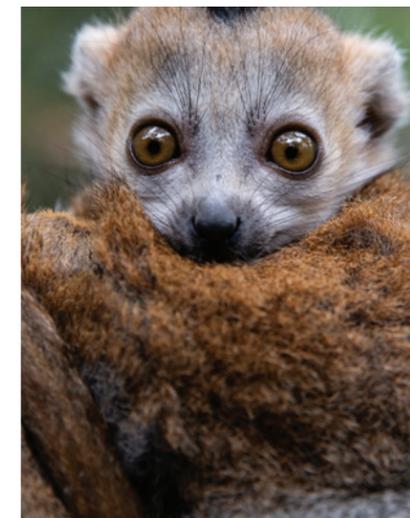
Hatched in June 2021, a **lappet-faced vulture chick** represented a success more than 10 years in the making. Over a period of eight years as a pair recommended to breed by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' (AZA) Species Survival Plan® (SSP), parents Anubis and Amana had many unsuccessful breeding attempts – making this hatching an achievement for both them and our Bird Team.

NEW ARRIVALS

One aspect of resilience is never stopping trying – never seeing failure as a roadblock to future success. Our Animal Care Teams exemplify persistence and determination.

2021 also brought us other important births to celebrate, including but not limited to an **Angolan colobus** infant; a **crowned lemur** infant; **golden lion tamarin** twins; and three **warthog** piglets.

Highly anticipated new arrivals to the Zoo included **Kiazi**, a female southern white rhino recommended to join male Mumbles; female western lowland gorilla **Machi**, who came back to the city of her birth to join our geriatric group; and female white storks **Betty** and **Vanna**, two beautiful complements to our Orkin Children's Zoo.



Emergency conservation support for wildlife

In February 2021, historic winter weather and cold temperatures resulted in crises in Texas and other Gulf Coast states, including an unprecedented sea turtle cold-stunning event. Support from Zoo Atlanta's Emergency Conservation Fund assisted in efforts to admit hundreds of sea turtles into care at Texas State Aquarium's Wildlife Rescue Center.



CONSERVATION

In the U.S. and around the world, the unprecedented circumstances presented by COVID-19 found many accredited zoos struggling to provide the barest necessities, making conservation support a challenge. As we emerged into the second year of the pandemic, I am proud to say that while COVID had interrupted our lives and operations, it has not interrupted our mission.

Seven projects supporting wildlife on four continents

Our Mabel Dorn Reeder Conservation Endowment Fund annually enables a greater total impact in the field than might be achievable by a single organization. On an international scale, 2021 supported projects included programs for red pandas in Nepal; gorillas in Congo; drill monkeys in Cameroon; giant armadillos in Brazil; and clouded leopards in Cambodia. Here at home, the fund benefited projects for loggerhead sea turtles in Georgia's Wassaw National Wildlife Refuge and eastern box turtles in north Georgia.



Partnerships with staying power

2021 saw new successes for two of our longest-standing conservation partnerships for native wildlife. A new group of eastern indigo snakes was introduced to the wild in Alabama's Conecuh National Forest. Zoo Atlanta has reared more than 100 snakes as part of the eastern indigo snake reintroduction program, which has helped to bring a keystone species back to its native range.

In another long-term effort for a treasured Georgia species, 25 diamondback terrapins reared at Zoo Atlanta were returned to Jekyll Island through the Zoo's support of the Georgia Sea Turtle Center's Jekyll Island Causeway Conservation Program. The program works to raise awareness of and mitigate threats facing diamondback terrapins on coastal roadways. In returning the year-old terrapins, our Herpetology Team also received 25 new hatchlings. These will be reared in our Georgia Tidal Creek habitat at Scaly Slimy Spectacular until it is their turn to travel to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center, which will prepare them for release into the wild.

Raising awareness of changing trends

While we always celebrate leaps forward, we must also be prepared to respond when conservation trends shift in distressing directions. Rather than viewing these as reasons for faltering hope, we recognize and want our guests to know that our work is more urgent than ever.

In 2021, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced that African savanna elephants, the species housed here at Zoo Atlanta, are now classified as Endangered. At Zoo Atlanta, we have a responsibility to aggressively raise awareness of the threats facing elephants and to ensure that our Members, guests, and ambassadors are familiar with the work being done with our support.

Zoo Atlanta has a significant partnership with Conservation South Luangwa, a Zambia-based organization working to mitigate illegal wildlife trafficking and human-wildlife conflict. Their efforts include a team of specialized detection dogs; aerial patrols; de-snaring of injured animals; and community initiatives dedicated to helping local people improve their livelihoods while living in close proximity to elephants and other wildlife.



RESEARCH

When I consider resilience, I also think of never being satisfied with the status quo – of always seeking, continually questing forward, and perpetually working to build upon knowledge that can help us better understand the species in our care.

Zoo Atlanta team members published 11 peer-reviewed articles in 2021, including an article published in the journal *Animal Cognition and Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, which is widely recognized as one of the scientific community's most prestigious periodicals.

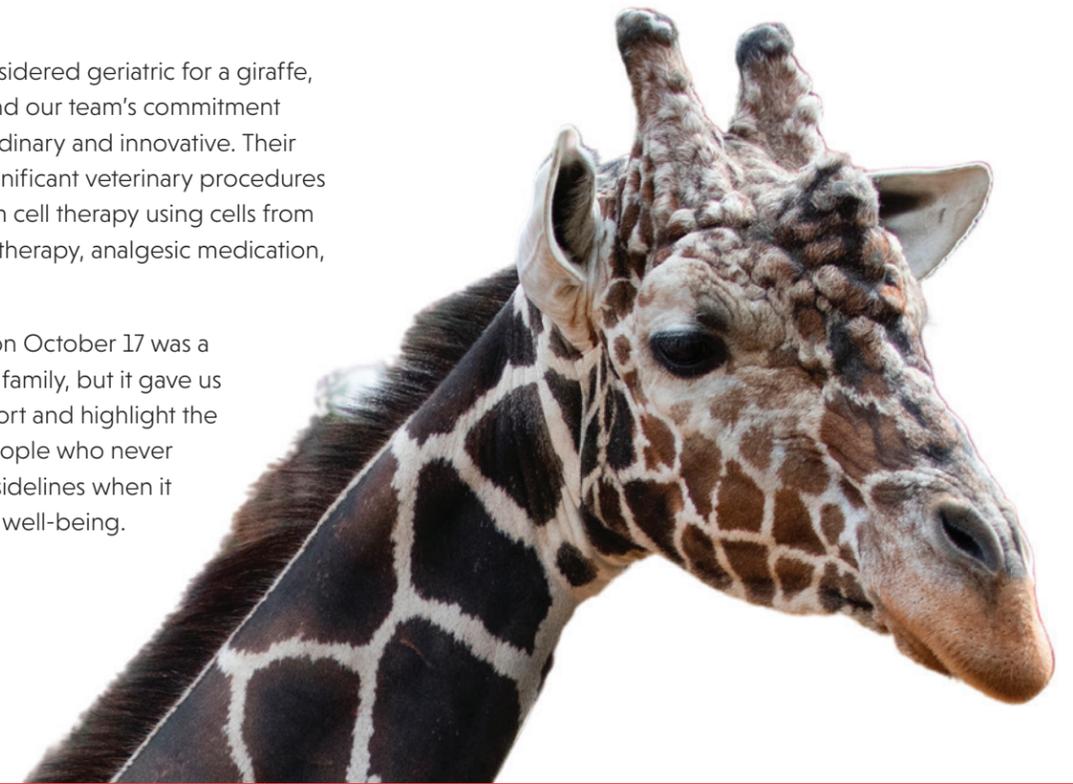
Topics examined in 2021 publications included snake locomotion; frog biology; amphibian conservation; turtle behavior; gorilla behavior; fennec fox biology and behavior; orangutan behavior; and meerkat behavior.

The year's research productivity brought Zoo Atlanta's total number of scientific publications to nearly 400 since 1978.



Abu, who at 16 was considered geriatric for a giraffe, experienced arthritis, and our team's commitment to him was both extraordinary and innovative. Their efforts included two significant veterinary procedures in May and August, stem cell therapy using cells from Abu's own blood, laser therapy, analgesic medication, and hoof trimming.

Abu's ultimate passing on October 17 was a difficult loss for the Zoo family, but it gave us an opportunity to support and highlight the tireless efforts of the people who never gave up nor sat on the sidelines when it came to working for his well-being.



COMPASSION

The determination and compassion of our Animal Care and Veterinary Teams are constant sources of inspiration. These qualities are evident every day, everywhere at Zoo Atlanta, but perhaps no 2021 story is more symbolic of these than that of Abu the giraffe.



COMMUNITY

Zoo Atlanta experiences and programs are rich resources that can benefit every individual who walks through our gates, but what value lies in these if the Zoo is not accessible to everyone? Community accessibility and a focus on diversity and inclusion are aspects of our mission where continuous improvements are evident every year.



Zoo Atlanta partnered with the Georgia Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to host our first **ASL Family Day at the Zoo** on October 2.



Other community partners present to support the event were Georgia Hands and Voices; GA PINES; Atlanta Area School for the Deaf; and Georgia School for the Deaf.

Zoo Atlanta heightened our existing diversity efforts in 2019 with the establishment of a new Diversity and Inclusion Committee of our Board of Directors. As part of the creation of a new Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan, a Community Access Standard exists to ensure that Zoo policies, practices, and outreach efforts promote partnership with social service agencies, school systems, and nonprofits throughout the community to broaden Zoo access to groups and individuals who may not otherwise be able to visit.

2021 saw the first full year of work by the Board committee's internal counterpart, a **Diversity and Inclusion Committee** comprised of Zoo team members. The committee focuses on accessibility and inclusion within our workforce and human resources policies; community engagement and outreach efforts; and supplier and partner diversity efforts.



We broadened community access to our signature summer camp experience with the return of the **Safari Camp Scholarship Program**. Sponsored by The UPS Foundation, the program provided a week of Safari Camp for 86 children ages 5 to 11 from Title I Schools in the City of Atlanta and Fulton County. The Safari Camp Scholarship Program first launched in 2016 and has been offered in every consecutive year with the exception of 2020.



Remaining nimble on our feet

Although we were certainly in a different position from where we had been in 2020 – the year that saw a two-month closure and posed a clear and present threat to the Zoo's very survival – COVID was still a major factor in our operations in 2021. As we had done throughout the pandemic, our teams showed amazing dexterity and proactivity as we worked to ensure that we remained ever aligned with frequently changing public guidelines, both on grounds and within our internal culture.



DEXTERITY

In 2020, no one would have anticipated that we would be entering a second year of the pandemic. COVID's continued presence in our lives asked incredible resilience and agility from everyone on the Zoo Atlanta team – and I am very proud to say that everyone delivered.

COVID hits home

The pandemic reached our animal population in September, when 18 of the 20 western lowland gorillas here at the Zoo contracted SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The weeks that followed required strength of mind and character for the members of our Gorilla and Veterinary Teams, who were unflagging in their efforts to monitor and provide proactive and supportive care for the gorillas, all of whom ultimately cleared the infection.



SUCCESS

By year's end, a series of tremendously strong finishes intertwined to suggest that 2021 would be a year for our history books.

Our guests returned with enthusiasm.

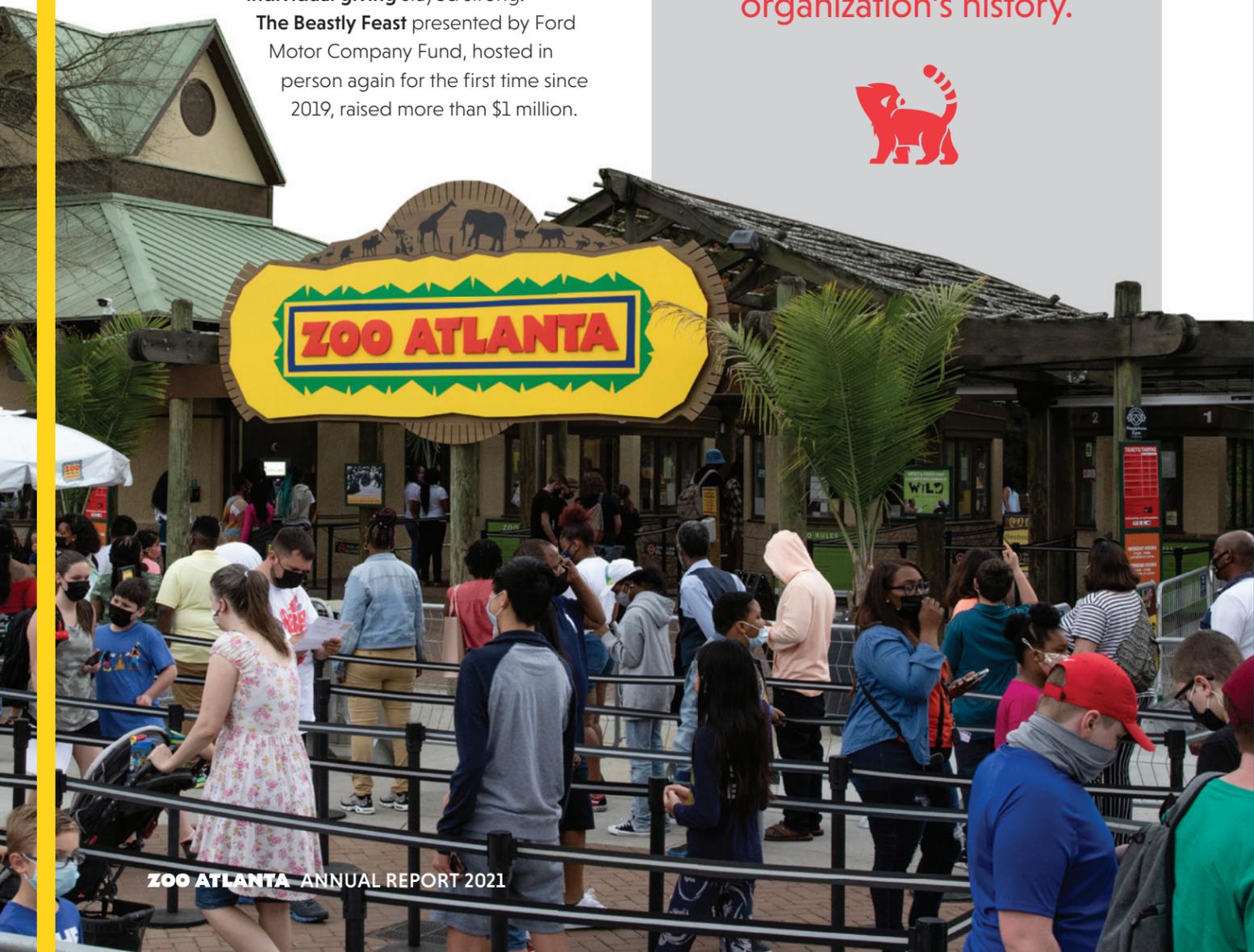
Attendance surpassed budget by more than 10 percent and finished within just one percent of our pre-COVID 2019 attendance volume, excluding the impact of school groups.

Membership sales saw a dramatic success, finishing the year 44% ahead of 2020. **Rides and per capita sales** also finished ahead of budget.

Individual giving stayed strong.

The Beastly Feast presented by Ford Motor Company Fund, hosted in person again for the first time since 2019, raised more than \$1 million.

With these and other factors combined, we ended the year in the strongest position Zoo Atlanta has ever been in at any time in our organization's history.



When we had only so recently seen the worst of times, it seems nearly impossible to believe that in just a matter of months, we would see the best of times. Given the challenges we faced in 2020 – challenges which were still with us in many forms in 2021 – I could not have fathomed that by year's end, I would be in the position of being able to tell our team that Zoo Atlanta stood in a place of historic strength.

Every year in the life of the Zoo has its moments of sadness, setbacks, and surprises. Even considering these moments, it's easy to see the conclusion of 2021 as a fairy tale. But it's no fairy tale. It's a tale of perseverance, creativity, and loyalty. It's a tale of compassion for our fellow team members and for our partners furthering similar missions at other organizations. It's a tale of the place Zoo Atlanta holds in the fabric of our community, and our community's willingness to help us keep that place.

And what a tale it is to tell.

Now is not a time to rest on our successes. This amazing year gave us new worlds of opportunities to be more, do better, and go further as we continuously strive for improvement to the Zoo experience, enhancements to our animal habitats and facilities, development of our talent, and realization of our mission. We are deeply appreciative of each of you for your past, present, and future support as we chart new territories together.

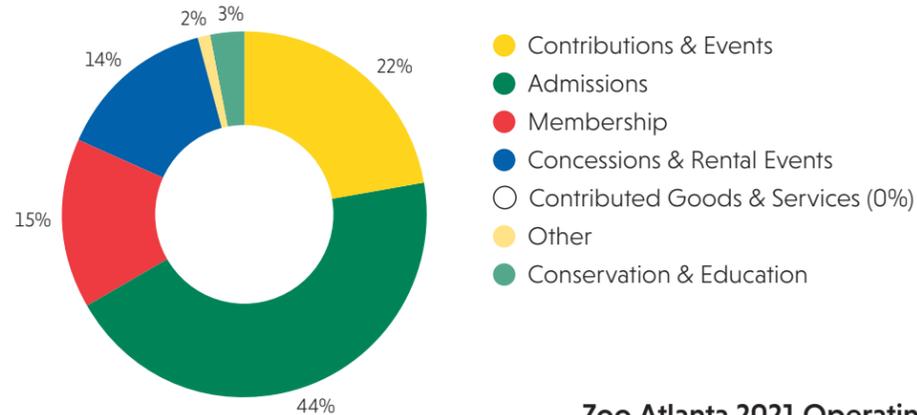
Gratefully,

Raymond B. King
President and CEO

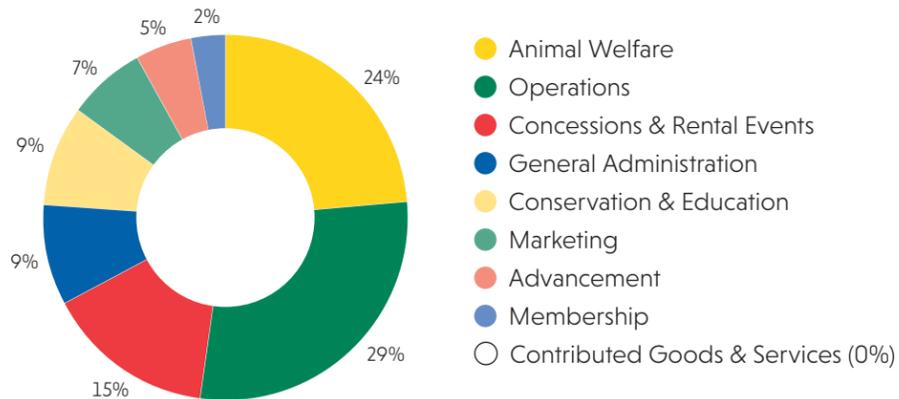


FINANCIALS*

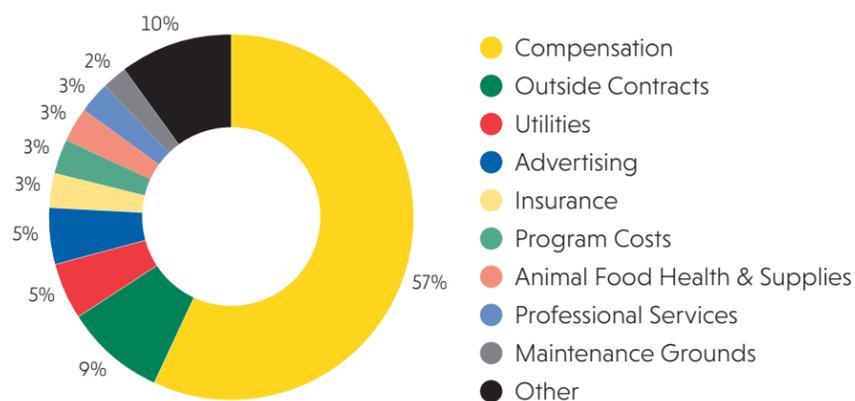
Zoo Atlanta 2021 Operating Revenue \$29.9 million



Zoo Atlanta 2021 Operating Expenses \$23.2 million



Zoo Atlanta 2021 Operating Expenses by Function \$23.2 million



*2021 financial performance was aided by some one-time, non-recurring items, such as PPP loan funds and crisis fundraising, and does not include non-cash depreciation expense.

APPLAUSE

We applaud our donors. Zoo Atlanta would like to express gratitude to the following donors for their generous gifts given between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021 or given for 2021.

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 The Newell Brands Charitable Foundation
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 Saks Fifth Avenue
 Stephanie Saunders and Cece Kimble
 Dr. Mason Savage
 Seale Lindsay Plant Design
 Seared Pink
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 Matthew Simon-Schumann
 Holly Sims
 Sisley Spa
 Skin IQ MedSPA
 Sloan Home and Gallery
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