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Zoo's Conservation Efforts Honored

The International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE) presented Nashville Zoo with the 2009 Conservation Award as well as a \$500 donation. The award recognizes IAATE members' avian conservation efforts in the field as well as in zoos and other avian facilities.

The Zoo's Friends of Animals at Nashville Zoo (FANZ) Club received the award for their support of the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation in 2008. The Zoo founded the FANZ club last year as a conservation initiative tied to its educational animal shows. Guests purchase collectible cards and pins featuring animals in the shows, like Jane the hornbill or Isabella the Burmese python. All proceeds benefit conservation efforts.

This year, the FANZ Club is sponsoring the Nashville Crayfish Project. The Nashville crayfish is federally endangered, and its habitat has diminished to a small range in the heavily industrialized Mill Creek watershed. The project focuses on protecting the crayfish's natural habitat as well as developing a conservation and breeding program. Nashville Zoo spearheaded the project in collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

IAATE fosters communication, professionalism and cooperation among individuals promoting avian science through training, public display, research, husbandry, conservation and education. Conservation Award applicants are evaluated on the: project's impact on avian conservation, extent of IAATE involvement, use of creative or innovative methods, and sustainability of the conservation effort.

Nashville Zoo is accredited by the prestigious Association of Zoos and Aquariums, assuring the highest standards of animal care and husbandry. The Zoo is a non-profit organization located at 3777 Nolensville Road and is open every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The mission of Nashville Zoo is to inspire a culture of understanding and discovery of our natural world through conservation, innovation and leadership. For more information about Nashville Zoo, call 615-833-1534 or visit www.nashvillezoo.org.

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