

**Senior Leadership Opportunity:  
 Director of Animal Health**

This is a unique opportunity to lead innovative veterinary care for a diverse animal collection, while partnering with Florida agencies on manatee protection and rehabilitation in a cutting-edge care center.

**Commitment and Values**

**CULTURE**

We strive to develop a collaborative culture where safety is the foundation driving our actions and interactions to create safe spaces and habitats through the cultivation of equity and well-being for all forms of life

**CONSERVATION**

We commit to being proactive, emphasizing the urgency of environmental and sustainability challenges while fostering empathy, support and compassion towards our planet and its inhabitants

**EDUCATION**

We recognize that every interaction is a learning and teaching opportunity that inspires change, enriches one another and our visitors, promotes accessibility, and connects our communities

**INNOVATION**

We embrace the challenge to continuously grow and develop our organization, valuing creativity and diversity to support one another and remain relevant within our community



**VISION**

A vibrant community energized by a connection to nature that enriches lives and inspires all to preserve and protect our natural world.

**MISSION**

Connecting communities with wild-life and wild places.

**TO APPLY:**

To be considered for this exciting opportunity, please submit a single PDF containing both your detailed resume and cover letter to [search@adisagroup.com](mailto:search@adisagroup.com). For any inquiries, feel free to use the same email address. This search is a partnership between Adisa and Canopy Strategic Partners.



## Director of Animal Health: Key Aspects and Candidate Strengths

The next Director of Animal Health is a **veterinary leader with strong clinical expertise and a commitment to driving innovation, ensuring that Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) remains at the forefront of animal health and care.** They will play a pivotal role in the Critical Manatee Center, which will house up to 18 animals, contributing to local conservation and rehabilitation efforts. This role also offers opportunities to engage in field projects for other species, further expanding the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' conservation impact.

This individual has a **forward-thinking mindset**, focused on staying ahead of industry standards while fostering excellence in animal health. Their **dedication to growth**, including the potential for manatee care certification, reflects a commitment to ongoing development and delivering the best outcomes for animals.

As a **skilled communicator**, the Director of Animal Health engages effectively with a variety of stakeholders. They listen attentively and communicate clearly, offering objective and realistic insights. Their ability to distill complex information into understandable terms ensures alignment across the team and fosters transparency. **Empathy** and **honesty** define their communication style, allowing them to **connect deeply with teams** while addressing challenges and solutions.

**Collaboration** is central to this role. The Director of Animal Health unites teams across departments, fostering strong connections between animal health, life support, well-being, and husbandry. Their focus on capacity-building and teamwork helps break down silos and encourages shared ownership of protocols and procedures. By uniting different perspectives, this leader creates an **inclusive culture that empowers** every team member to contribute meaningfully.



Strong organizational and management skills are essential for overseeing a growing veterinary team. The Director of Animal Health not only excels at administrative duties but also actively **fosters team cohesion and efficiency.** They understand when to work hard and when to **celebrate success**, cultivating a **positive atmosphere** that recognizes both effort and achievement.

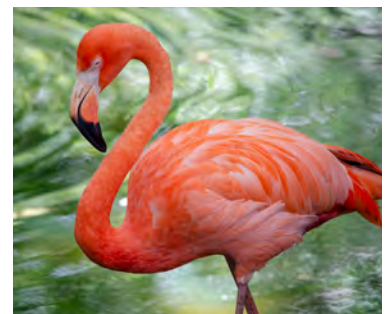
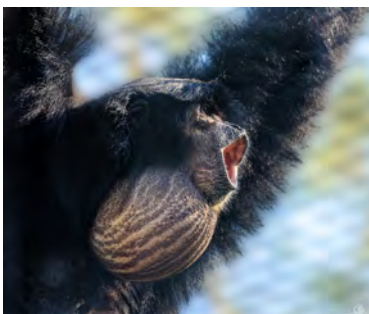
Ultimately, the Director of Animal Health **embodies growth, leadership, and mentorship.** They balance clinical excellence with broader organizational leadership and are committed to developing the next generation of animal health professionals. Their **ability to inspire and connect** with others is vital to the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' success and its continued evolution as a top-tier institution and employer of choice.



## QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

In addition to the above, other essential qualifications for this role include:

- **Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine** from an AVMA-accredited school.
- **Board Certification** in the American College of Zoological Medicine (or in the process) is **strongly desired**.
- **Over 5 years of clinical expertise** in zoological or wildlife medicine, with comprehensive knowledge of animal care, including safety protocols, drug administration, and precise record-keeping.
- Ability to obtain a **USDA Category II Accreditation and Veterinary License** in Florida within six months of hire. A **DEA License (Schedule II-V)** is also required or must be obtained.
- Experience or strong interest in **manatee care is a plus**, with a desire to engage in conservation medicine and peer-reviewed scientific publications.
- Strong **leadership and mentorship skills**, guiding a high-performing veterinary and nutrition team while supporting professional growth.
- Exceptional **organizational abilities**, with a keen sense for prioritizing and delegating tasks effectively in a dynamic environment.
- **Skilled communicator**, able to engage with stakeholders and share JZG's impact through empathetic, clear, and objective communication.
- **Commitment to inclusion**, fostering a collaborative workplace culture.
- Dedication to **continuous learning**, encouraging a culture of continuous improvement within the team.
- Experience in the **care and management of varied species**, including primates, birds, megavertebrates, and reptiles, with a focus on advancing animal welfare and well-being.





## The Vibe

### ***A Welcoming and Inclusive Environment***

Our organization is a welcoming and inclusive space where every voice is valued. Inclusion is fundamental to who we are, and we're committed to fostering collaboration and respect for all perspectives. You'll join a community that thrives on bringing people together.



### ***Collaboration and Innovation at the Core***

At Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, innovation and teamwork drive everything we do. We lead the way in building cutting-edge habitat and providing the highest standards of care. Collaboration across departments helps us set new benchmarks in animal care, guest experiences, and community connections.

### ***Growth, Development, and Leadership***

We are dedicated to fostering the growth and development of every team member. Whether you're working directly with animals or contributing in another role, you'll have access to opportunities for learning and advancement. As we continue to evolve, we strive to create a workplace that offers both professional fulfillment and a deep connection to our mission of excellence in animal care, conservation, and community engagement.



### ***Passion and Purpose***

Passion drives us. From animal care to education, our team is deeply committed to conservation and excellence. Joining us means making a real impact—whether through innovative animal care or educating the next generation.

### ***A Supportive Atmosphere***

In times of challenge, we rally together. Joining us means becoming part of a close-knit team that values hard work, inclusion, innovation, and shared successes.



## About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a world-class, **award-winning institution** accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. With a budget of \$31 million and more than 850,000 visitors annually, JZG has inspired curiosity about

Earth's creatures and ecosystems for over 100 years. Home to over 1500 + rare and exotic animals and 1,000 plant species, it is as much a botanical garden as it is a haven for wildlife.

One of the first institutions in the nation with a dedicated Animal Well-being team, JZG ensures animals thrive through holistic care. Our Manatee Critical Care Center is one of seven facilities in Florida authorized to rescue and rehabilitate manatees. Following a major expansion, the center will soon house up to 18 injured manatees, positioning the program as one of the largest in the state.



## JACKSONVILLE ZOO & GARDENS IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



**No. 1 visited cultural institution** in Northeast Florida.



Successfully rehabilitated and **released over 36 manatees** since its launch in 2017.



Supports **more than 25 conservation programs** worldwide, including an employee volunteer Marine Mammal Response team.



Cares for a diverse collection of **over 1500+ rare and exotic animals** and 1,000 plant species.



Spans **133 acres of wildlife and botanical garden habitats**, 30 which are undeveloped.



Amelia Island

## Life in North Florida: A Blend of Natural Beauty, Cultural Depth, and Convenience

Living in North Florida offers a unique and fulfilling experience, combining the allure of natural landscapes with the convenience of urban amenities. Here's what makes North Florida an exceptional place to call home:

- ☀️ **Ideal Weather:** Jacksonville boasts some of Florida's most pleasant weather, offering a warm, sunny climate that's perfect for outdoor enthusiasts. Unlike other parts of Florida, North Florida experiences a more pronounced change of seasons, adding to the charm and appeal of the region.
- ☀️ **Diverse Environments:** Whether you crave the tranquility of rural life, the excitement of urban living, or the relaxation of beachside living, North Florida has it all within a 30-minute reach.
- ☀️ **Stunning Natural Beauty:** The region's natural beauty is breathtaking, with majestic rivers, public parks, and meandering lush landscapes.
- ☀️ **Practical and Affordable:** Life here is not only practical but also affordable. The cost of living is reasonable, allowing for a comfortable lifestyle without the strain on your wallet.
- ☀️ **Tax Benefits:** Florida's lack of state income tax is a financial boon, giving residents a chance to enjoy more of their hard-earned money.
- ☀️ **Cultural Richness:** The community in North Florida is known for its wide range of cultural backgrounds, offering a rich variety of experiences and perspectives.
- ☀️ **Southern Charm:** True to its roots, North Florida exudes Southern hospitality. Expect warm greetings and friendly faces, making you feel right at home.



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In North Florida, you're not just finding a place to live; you're discovering a lifestyle that's as diverse and dynamic as the landscape itself. Whether you're settling in North Florida or South Georgia, this region offers a quality of life that's hard to match.