



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

EXPERTISE WITH IMPACT



Dear Wildlife Ally,

What a transformative year it has been. In our 107th year, we built on our century of expertise, standing tall on a global stage, taking collaborative conservation to new heights, and reaching more wildlife allies than ever before.

Our conservation work begins with our two front doors, the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park, and spans the globe across our eight Conservation Hubs. To save, protect, and care for wildlife, our dedicated teams put our four core pillars into action: Collaborate, Innovate, Inspire, Thrive.

The results of these comprehensive, inclusive, science-based efforts are groundbreaking conservation achievements and everyday moments that create allies. Together we’re securing the future for wildlife and the planet we all share.

This year, that commitment has led to countless incredible accomplishments and milestones. We rescued and cared for orphaned and trafficked wildlife. We celebrated the births of critically endangered species, increasing global populations and bringing attention to the crises they face in native habitats. We deepened and expanded our collaborations, embarking on a first-of-its-kind partnership with the world’s largest conservation organization. And we made history, marking the first time cloning successfully produced more than one individual of any endangered species.

At the heart of it all are allies like you. You are there with us every step of the way, propelling our mission forward and moving the needle on what the future of conservation can look like. We hope you enjoy this look at 2023 and all you make possible.

Together for wildlife,

Paul A. Baribault
President and Chief Executive Officer

Steven S. Simpson
Chair, Board of Trustees



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Who We Are

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance is an international, nonprofit conservation organization committed to inspiring a passion for nature and envisioning a world where all life thrives. It all begins with our two front doors, the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park, where millions of guests from around the world join us to connect with wildlife and conservation every year.

Our two wildlife parks make our mission, conservation work, and partnerships possible. Conservation is at the heart of everything we do, and it all begins with those connections we make between people and nature every day.

With more than 100 years of expertise, we integrate wildlife health and care, science, and education to develop sustainable conservation solutions across the globe. As an Alliance, we partner with allies in eight strategic regions worldwide, known as our Conservation Hubs.

By uniting our strengths, knowledge, and resources, we have a greater impact as we work together to safeguard the future of the planet, its wildlife, and the spaces we all share. Because when wildlife thrives, all life thrives.

OUR VISION

A World Where **All Life Thrives**

OUR MISSION

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance is committed to saving species worldwide by uniting our expertise in wildlife care and conservation science with our dedication to inspiring passion for nature.

OUR VALUES

Collaborate
We nurture alliances with diverse teams, peers, partners, and communities to expand and deepen our impact.

Innovate
Together we pioneer new ideas and approaches to ensure the long-term health and survival of wildlife.

Inspire
We share our passion for nature to increase understanding, empathy, advocacy, and action for wildlife.

Thrive
When we collaborate, innovate, and inspire, we help people and wildlife thrive together for a healthy planet.



Our Logo

Our logo represents over a century of achievement and San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance’s future as a force for conservation.

The Lion
Represents the founding of our World-Famous Zoo more than a century ago.

The Rhino
Represents the icon of our No Place Like It on Earth Safari Park.

The Bird
Represents our groundbreaking historical and ongoing conservation efforts.





Our Two Wildlife Conservation Parks

As our two front doors, the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park fuel our mission, fostering connections with wildlife and allowing us to invest alongside our allies and partners in our vision of **a world where all life thrives**.

We care for
nearly **16,000**
animals and more
than **2 million**
plants at the Zoo
and Safari Park.

Our Responsibility

With over a century of experience, we've conceptualized, developed, and honed a unique set of skills and strengths that has become a significant contributor to greater global conservation efforts. The privilege of working with wildlife at each stage in life, with intimate access to each plant or animal's biology, comes with the responsibility of using that insight to secure the future for wildlife—and to inspire others to join us in doing so.

Whether our teams are closing vital gaps in knowledge about species, conducting disease surveillance to safeguard wildlife, pioneering technology, connecting with the next generations, or boosting vulnerable populations and reintroducing endangered plants and animals, **all our conservation efforts around the world are made possible by the work we do each and every day at the Zoo and Safari Park.**

A smile and a wave of hello are a universal way to create memories. I've had many great guests return over the years. **It's a pleasure to watch them relive a moment from their childhood.**

— Terra M.,
Skyfari Aerial Tram

I always loved the Safari Park, so it's like a dream come true to work here. **I love all the work we do for both people and animals.** It makes me happy I can help with that.

— Alicia S., Retail





San Diego Zoo

It all began with a roar in 1916,

when the world-famous San Diego Zoo was founded to create connections between people and wildlife. Today, our commitment to that mission is stronger than ever.

Each year, 4 million guests join us to make lasting memories and connect with wildlife. Across 100 acres in the heart of Balboa Park in downtown San Diego, allies of all ages learn about animals, plants, conservation, and the ecosystems we share through inspiring and educational experiences.



Conservation Starts Here

The Zoo is home to a veterinary hospital and the museum-accredited Pathology Archives. At the Scripps Building, our Disease Investigations team carries out research on wildlife disease and health surveillance, and our Wildlife Nutrition and Curatorial teams collaborate to provide world-class care.

Discovery Awaits

Our engaging experiences bring allies closer to wildlife than ever before.

- Behind-the-scenes tours
- Animals in Action
- Wildlife encounters and experiences
- Early Morning Explorers
- Exclusive VIP Experience
- Plant Days and Orchid Odyssey
- Seasonal events, including HaIGLOWeen and Jungle Bells



Discover Wildlife

The Zoo is home to more than 12,000 unique and endangered animals representing over 680 species. From polar bears swimming in the Northern Frontier to leopards prowling overhead in Asian Passage, discovery waits around every corner.

A Home for Exploration

In Denny Sanford Wildlife Explorers Basecamp, the next generation of conservationists and caretakers of our planet learn about nature and encounter new worlds while they climb, jump, and play alongside wildlife.

New Perspectives

Whether walking through buzzing aviaries and forests with trickling streams or experiencing bird's-eye views from Skyfari, Bashor Bridge, and our signature double-decker buses, there are new ways to connect with nature everywhere you look.

Gardens Galore

The Zoo is an accredited botanical garden, known for its peaceful, lush grounds and naturalistic habitats featuring over 700,000 individual plants of 3,100 species. It also serves as a haven for endangered and illegally trafficked plants, including at our Orchid House.

Next-Level Dining

From quick bites, sips, and treats to a full-service restaurant, the Zoo boasts 30 diverse dining locations with something tasty for all.

Journey to New Worlds

Explore savanna to seashore through Conrad Prebys Africa Rocks and discover the wonders of Down Under at Australian Outback. With each breathtaking moment, guests are immersed in biodiversity and ecosystems from across the globe.



San Diego Zoo Safari Park

There's no place like it on Earth.

Immersive, authentic, adventure-oriented experiences spread across 1,800 acres in Escondido, California, offer guests the opportunity to connect with extraordinary wildlife and ecosystems—from the Australian outback and rainforests of Indonesia to the vast grasslands of Africa. Life-changing moments happen here every single day, **inspiring 1.5 million allies who visit us each year to join our efforts to save, protect, and care for wildlife worldwide.**



Conservation Starts Here

Founded as one of the boldest preservation projects in history, the Safari Park continues to lead the way for conservation. Programs to save and protect the northern white rhino, burrowing owl, California condor, and other endangered species are headquartered here, along with the state-of-the-art Paul Harter Veterinary Medical Center.

Adventure Awaits

Guests enjoy a range of thrilling, educational, and adventure-oriented experiences.

- Wildlife and behind-the-scenes safaris
- Zip lining on Flightline Safari
- Roar & Snore overnight camping
- Sun Up Cheetah Safari
- Wildlife encounters
- Balloon Safari
- Seasonal adventures, including Butterfly Jungle, Autumn Festival, and Wild Holidays

The Wildlife Biodiversity Preserve is a protected area of vital native sage scrub habitat, and makes up 1,000 of the Safari Park's 1,800 acres.



A World of Wildlife

From tigers prowling bamboo forests to platypuses swimming through bubbling streams and troops of gorillas relaxing in the sun, we care for more than 3,000 animals representing over 300 species, offering endless opportunities to connect with the world's wildlife.

All Aboard

Inspired by the legendary safari trains of Africa, the iconic Africa Tram takes guests on a guided 2.5-mile adventure around expansive savanna habitats to see towers of giraffes, crashes of rhinos, flocks of rare birds, and so much more.

Tasty Bites

There's something delicious for everyone at our 17 dining and snacking locations, from bites that fuel you through your next adventure to full-service meals and delectable seasonal offerings.

Places for Play

Play areas engage our youngest allies with wild fun, including Mawazo Woods Discovery Area, Conservation Carousel, and Tiger Trail Play Area.

World Gardens

With **more than 1.3 million plants** of over 3,700 species, our accredited botanical gardens offer a chance to visit habitats from around the globe, including the Baja and Old World Succulent Gardens, Epiphyllum Trail, Bonsai Pavilion, and California Nativescapes Garden.

Elephant Valley

With your support, we're transforming the heart of the Safari Park with the reimagining of Denny Sanford Elephant Valley—a new home for our elephant family and a one-of-a-kind place where you can roam alongside these gentle giants.

Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center for Conservation Research

This revolutionary home base for our conservation science teams also houses our library, laboratories, Wildlife Biodiversity Bank, Conservation Education Lab, and The Eddy Family Outdoor Learning Lab.

Everyday Allies

People Make It All Possible

Behind Our Two Front Doors

Our mission begins at the Zoo and the Safari Park, where over 5.5 million guests a year join us to connect with wildlife. **Every single one of those visits, the lifelong memories they create, and the positive impact they make for wildlife across the globe is only possible because of thousands of team members and volunteers making it happen each and every day.**

3,000+

Team Member Dedication

In 2023, more than 3,000 dedicated team members worked to fulfill San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance's mission in San Diego and across the globe.



“This was my dad’s favorite place. **This place means a lot to me.** It’s way more than just a job.”
— Summer D., Retail



This spring, we came together for “Onward,” our second annual organization-wide meeting, and heard from leadership, conservation partners, and wildlife care teams as they provided insights into our work and a look at what’s on the horizon.



We are truly a global alliance, and **we are so grateful to the people making it possible** each and every day.

Collaborating for Knowledge

In 2023, our Conservation Science Wildlife Health team members authored over 70 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, reports, and news stories. Expanding and disseminating learnings and informing wildlife health, care, and education across the globe, these works include:

- Neotropical freshwater bird biodiversity in the face of human activity
- Wildfire smoke and health effects in the San Diego–Tijuana region
- Factors affecting Caribbean iguana mate selection and reproduction
- Amazonian bird community dynamics in Manú National Park
- West African giraffes and human-wildlife coexistence
- Effects of gold mining and mercury on oxbow lake fish
- Using infrared thermography to noninvasively measure polar bears’ temperature
- Experiences of farming communities living with Asian elephants



“

What makes me most excited **looking ahead** are the **advancements in science and technology** that our organization is directly involved in and pioneering for conservation. I love learning new things, and being a small part of the greater species knowledge is very meaningful.

— Krystal K., Conservation Science Wildlife Health



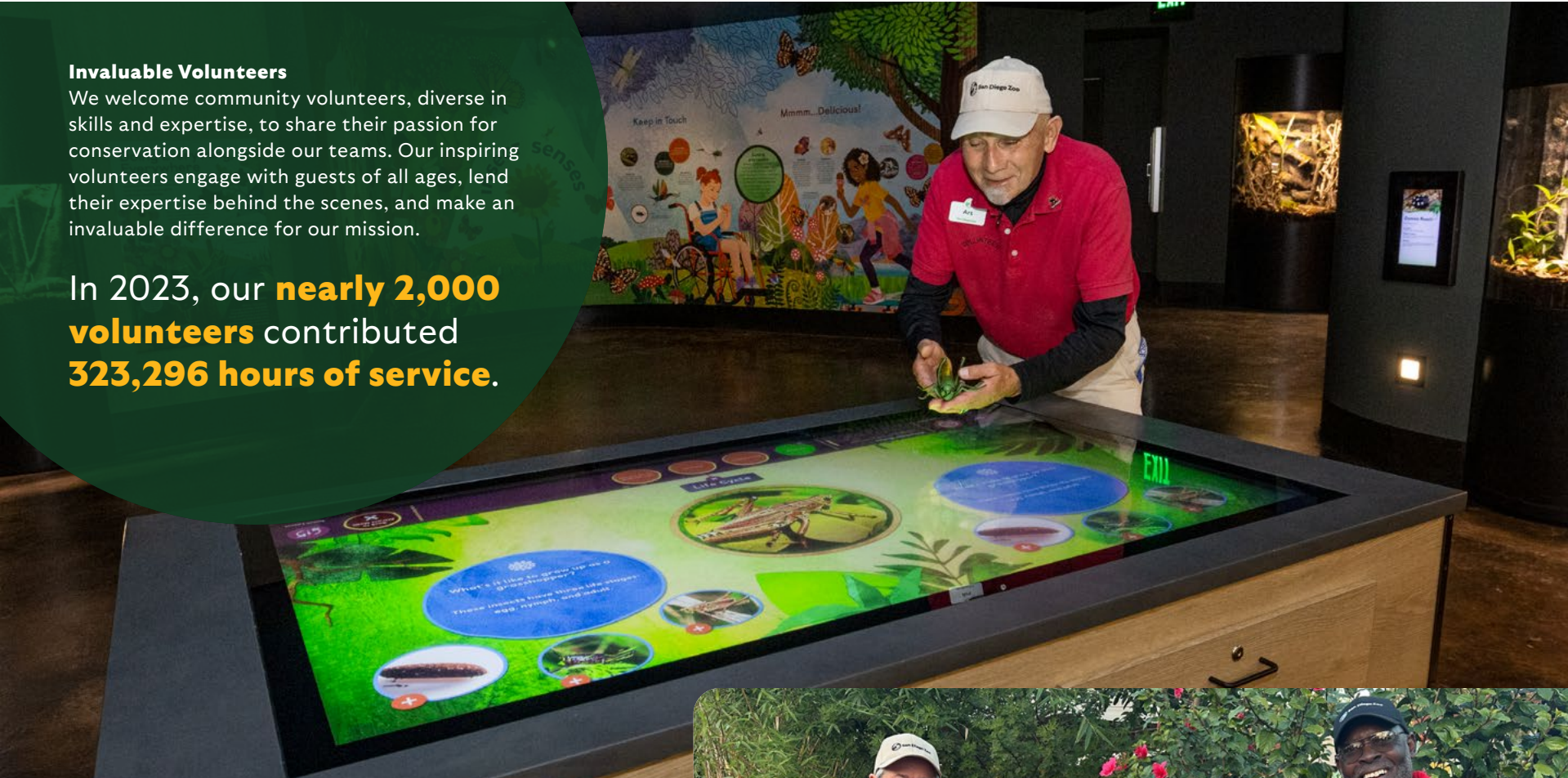
Over 603,000 pieces of browse—shoots, bark, buds, leaves, and other edible plant material—were farmed, serving more than 245 animals, from insects to elephants.



Invaluable Volunteers

We welcome community volunteers, diverse in skills and expertise, to share their passion for conservation alongside our teams. Our inspiring volunteers engage with guests of all ages, lend their expertise behind the scenes, and make an invaluable difference for our mission.

In 2023, our **nearly 2,000 volunteers** contributed **323,296 hours of service.**



“

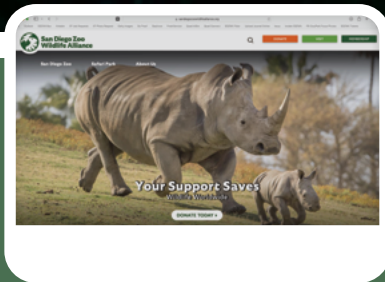
While the overall organization has global influence, I feel good **doing my part to educate guests one-on-one in a personalized way** in the beautiful Zoo setting. It’s like being in a living classroom, with examples of nature and conservation every place we look.

— Kevin D., Volunteer



2023 Milestone Moments

From heartwarming stories at the Zoo and Safari Park to noteworthy conservation achievements and global media reach, here are some of the memorable moments that made our year.



122 million
visits to our website from people across the globe.

Nearly 350,000
students joined us for one-of-a-kind educational programming (page 86).



11,000th

living cell line banked in the Wildlife Biodiversity Bank's Frozen Zoo® (page 34).

1st time in history cloning has successfully produced more than one individual of an endangered species (page 55).



1,796

campers participated in Summer Camp at the Zoo—and collectively immersed themselves in **53,880 hours** of fun and learning.

5.5 million+

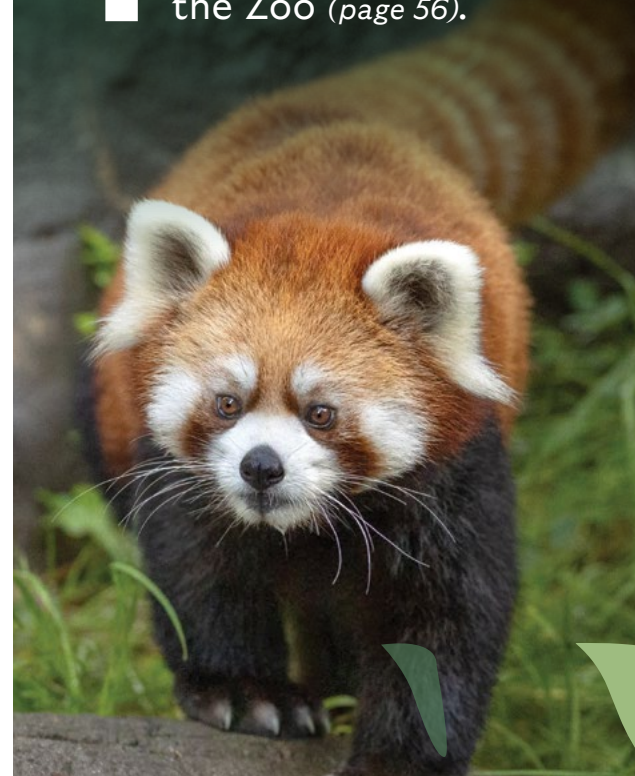
guests came to the Zoo and Safari Park to experience life-changing moments with wildlife.

148 billion

media impressions worldwide—a **32% increase**—reaching more allies than ever before.



1 endangered red panda cub born at the Zoo (page 56).



2 twin births

of critically endangered cubs, securing the future of their species: Sumatran tigers at the Safari Park and Amur leopards at the Zoo (page 56).



Nearly 400,000

members call the Zoo and Safari Park their home away from home—one of the largest membership bases of any zoo in the world (see page 90 for how you can join us).

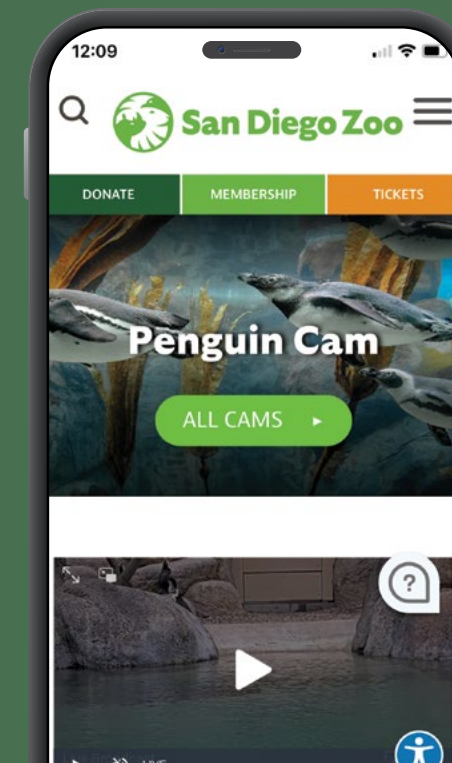


New ways

of propagating endangered plants were pioneered by our teams (page 44).



30 million+
webcam views connected allies across the globe with wildlife.



We launched a **groundbreaking partnership** with one of the world's largest conservation organizations (page 26).

2023 Awards

This was a year for recognition. Standing tall on a global stage, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance received accolades for everything from our conservation work and on-grounds experiences to our podcast and books.

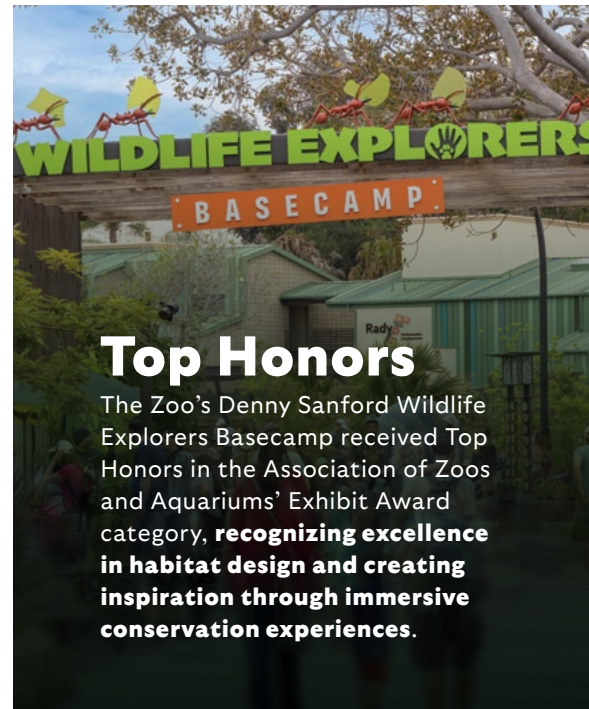


Amazing Wildlife

The second season of our *Amazing Wildlife: A San Diego Zoo Podcast* received two Marcom Awards and two Signal Awards in the categories of science, education, and more (page 102).

More Medallions

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Press received Independent Book Publishers Association's Silver and Gold Ben Franklin Awards for two titles, **a children's book** and **a biography** (page 102).



Top Honors

The Zoo's Denny Sanford Wildlife Explorers Basecamp received Top Honors in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Exhibit Award category, **recognizing excellence in habitat design and creating inspiration through immersive conservation experiences.**

50 million+

allies around the globe viewed our float in the 134th Rose Parade as we celebrated 50 years of conservation at the Safari Park—and **won the event's Animation Award** (page 101).

World Changing Ideas

In our Amazonia Conservation Hub, we've collaborated to **bring low-cost, cutting-edge genomic sequencing technology to the rainforests of Peru**, helping democratize the process of science (page 73). This in situ lab was recognized with honorable mention in *Fast Company's* 2023 World Changing Ideas Awards.

Awarding Leadership

Our leadership team received multiple gold **Globe Awards**:

Paul A. Baribault

Chief Executive Officer of the Year

David Franco

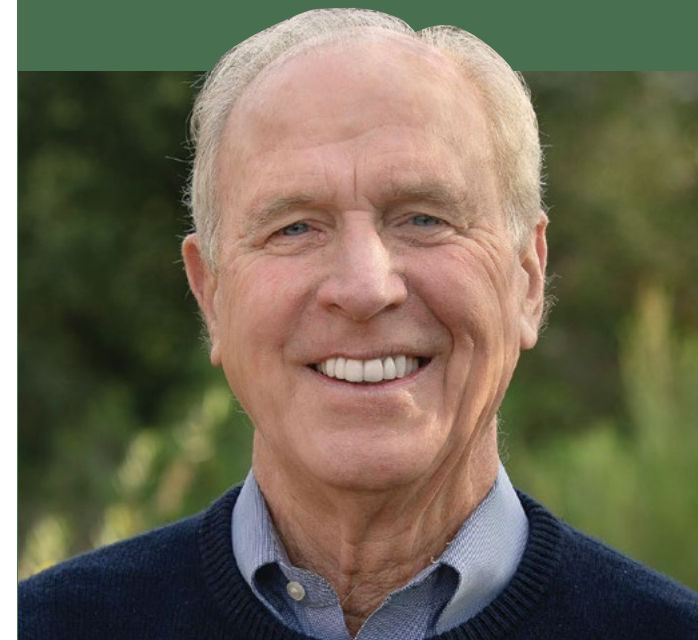
Chief Financial Officer of the Year

David Miller

Chief Marketing Officer of the Year

San Diego Business Journal named Paul A. Baribault CEO of the Year in the Nonprofit category while David Franco was an honoree for CFO of the Year. David Miller was recognized for leadership in marketing, advertising, and public relations.

This year, *San Diego Business Journal* selected Richard B. Gulley as a **Nonprofit Board Leader of Influence.**



Wedding Wins

We won **The Knot's Best of Weddings Award** and the **Couples' Choice Award from WeddingWire.**



Employer of Choice
Forbes named us as one of **America's Best Midsize Employers 2023.**

Nature Venue of the Year

The San Diego Zoo received the KultureCity Human Highlight Award: Nature Venue of the Year for **outstanding work in making the space inclusive for all.** Both the Zoo and Safari Park are certified as sensory inclusive locations (page 111).



FASTCOMPANY

Brands that Matter

Fast Company's Brands That Matter selected San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance as an honoree for **demonstrating purpose, promoting social engagement, and creating cultural impact.**

Excellence in Journalism

Teams won first place in several categories at the San Diego Press Club 2023 Excellence in Journalism Awards, recognizing our **Stories website, conservation newsletters, press releases, and magazine writing and illustration.**



An Alliance for the World

Upholding our values through four core pillars enables us to bring our best forward—our century of expertise, teams, partnerships, and the ability to engage allies worldwide—so we can be the most effective conservation organization for the world.

Here's how we collaborated, innovated, inspired, and thrived in 2023.

300+

women from community conservancies in northern Kenya now have secure work spaces in the Chui Mamas Center.



WAZA
78TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
SAN DIEGO
8-12 OCTOBER 2023

COLLABORATE

Hosting the World

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance proudly hosted the 78th meeting of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) in San Diego. This event brought together **300 zoo and aquarium leaders from 44 international regions across the globe** to discuss wildlife, exchange ideas, and create new partnerships to advance conservation worldwide.

Opened this year with our help, the Center serves as a place to **sell goods, organize community meetings, and host conservation events.** For more about Chui Mamas and their work to protect wildlife, see page 82.



Photo: Ambrose Letolual

We nurture alliances with diverse teams, peers, partners, and communities to amplify our impact.

Milestone moments in 2023 will continue to advance conservation and collaboration for years to come.



Photo: © Rick Stevens

First of Its Kind

We renewed and expanded our collaboration for platypus conservation by partnering with the Taronga Conservation Society Australia to support a **platypus emergency response and resilience initiative.** We'll work together to better understand environmental factors that support successful platypus conservation interventions. For more, see page 78.



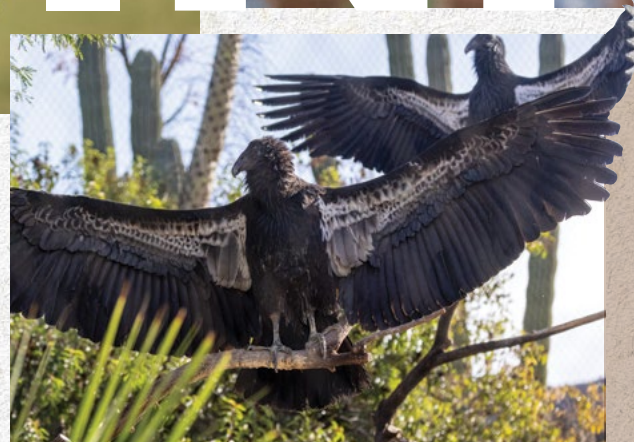
New Partnership with IUCN

Our Wildlife Biodiversity Bank is the oldest and largest repository of its kind in the world (page 34). This year, we were honored to launch a new partnership with the world's leading conservation organization, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). **Together, we formed the first Center for Species Survival: Biodiversity Banking**, collaborating with IUCN Species Survival Commission's global network of partners to develop **best practices guidance in biobanking, maximize genetic diversity preservation, and train and advise partners in the establishment and expansion of biobanks.**



Another History-Making Birth

Ollie is the second-ever endangered Przewalski's horse clone. His birth marks **the first time in history cloning has successfully produced more than one individual of any endangered species**, sparking hope and opening new doors for the future of conservation. For more, see page 55.



Historic Vaccine Trial

For over 40 years, we've worked to save critically endangered California condors. When deadly highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was **detected in condors this spring**, the USDA approved emergency use of a vaccine to be piloted among birds in managed care. **We proudly participated in this historic vaccine trial, developed in conjunction with our longstanding partners.**



Lifetime Achievement

Dr. Ekwoge Abwe began working with our organization 20 years ago. Today he's widely recognized as one of Central Africa's most effective, dynamic, and committed conservationists. This year, as the lead conservation scientist of the African Forest Conservation Hub team, **he received the Prince William Award for Conservation** at the Tusk Conservation Awards.



Ekwoge's research has expanded understanding of Ebo forest wildlife while forging alliances across communities, **using the power of community support to pave the way for groundbreaking conservation efforts to protect wildlife and ecosystems.**



Presented personally by His Royal Highness Prince William, this lifetime achievement award recognizes how Ekwoge's work has created a transformational impact on conservation.

Together we pioneer new ideas and approaches to ensure the long-term health and survival of wildlife.

This year was filled with groundbreaking milestones as we continued to work toward major advances in conservation.



Ekwoge was the **first to witness endangered Ebo chimpanzees using stone and wooden "hammers" to crack open tree nuts** in Cameroon, and he helped pioneer the use of field cameras to gain insights into the conservation needs of African forest elephants.

For Future Generations

The Zoo's Wildlife Explorers Basecamp celebrated a successful first year inspiring the next generation of wildlife allies in a 3.2-acre, multi-ecosystem experience immersing guests in 4 unique habitats: Wild Woods, Desert Dunes, Marsh Meadows, and Rainforest.



Amazing Wildlife

The second season of our podcast, *Amazing Wildlife*, brought wildlife conservation and an inside look at our work to listeners of all ages around the globe. See page 102 for more.



We share our passion for nature to increase understanding, empathy, advocacy, and action for wildlife.

Each and every day, we connect with guests of all ages at the Zoo and Safari Park. And we bring our stories to life for countless allies across the globe, inspiring them to join us in our mission.

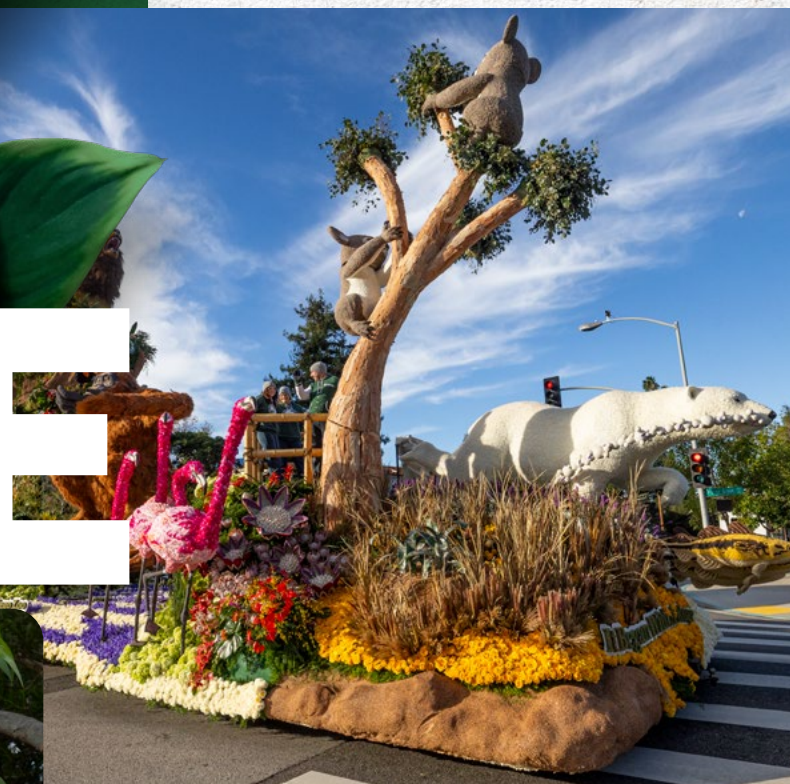


Hope Through Stories

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Press published three new titles this year, sharing incredible true tales of resilient wildlife and special stories that engage our youngest allies.



INSPIRE



A Rosy Finish

We capped off an exceptional 2023 by roaring into the new year with our 2024 Rose Parade float, "It Began With A Roar." It depicted iconic wildlife including Rex the lion, whose mighty roar sparked a dream more than a century ago and inspired our world-renowned Zoo. **The event engaged more than 50 million people in 170 countries**, and our float brought home the top honor of the event, the Sweepstakes Award. For more on our 2023 float celebrating 50 Years of Conservation, see page 101.



In Good Hands
Out of an abundance of caution, we conducted risk assessments, applied biosecurity measures, and moved birds to protected habitats to help **keep them safe from potential seasonal threats** from HPAI.

Every Heartbeat
With the help of the bonobo troop at the Zoo, our Wildlife Care team and registered veterinary technicians were able to contribute hundreds of blood pressure readings to the Great Ape Heart Project, offering **crucial insights into species heart health**.

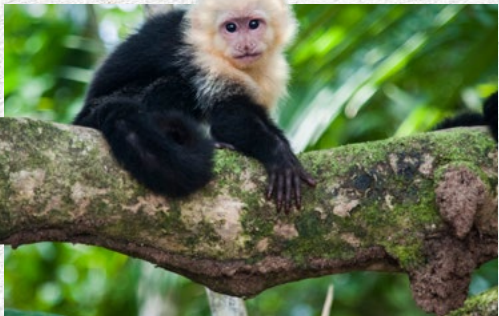
Emergency Surgery Success
To save maned wolf Isadora from a sudden and life-threatening condition, teams **collaborated with a local surgeon on a complicated emergency surgery**. Isadora's made a full recovery.

Let's Get Physical...Therapy
From geriatric giant tortoises to armadillos with arthritis, physical therapy can make all the difference. We're at the forefront of this emerging field in veterinary medicine, **successfully treating a variety of species with therapeutic exercise, massage, and even acupuncture**.



When we collaborate, innovate, and inspire, we help people and wildlife thrive together for a healthy planet.
Everything we do for wildlife begins in San Diego and rests on a solid foundation of wellbeing forged from over a century of expertise.

Photo (right) Romnikah Photos/Stock/Getty Images



Sharing Learnings
By collaborating with doctors of human medicine, we continue to innovate and ensure we provide the world's best healthcare, including treating capuchin monkeys for diabetes.



Training for Life
Our Wildlife Health team traveled to Hawai'i to provide medical care for critically endangered birds at our Maui and Keauhou Bird Conservation Centers and to help train teams in veterinary technical skills—a **vital part of recovering these species found nowhere else on Earth** (page 51).



New and Improved
To continue providing the best care possible, we make ongoing adjustments and improvements to wildlife habitats. In 2023, updates were made to Hippo Trail. Upon reopening in 2024, guests will once again be welcomed into the underwater world of these rotund river dwellers.

Karen Zable Cox and family gave an exceptional gift to Hippo Beach in memory of her mother, Betty Carter Zable.

Together for Wildlife

Our Approach

One Health

We are all interconnected. The health of wildlife, people, and the ecosystems we share are inextricably linked—and this balance determines the health of our planet. Through the One Health approach, we honor, celebrate, and advocate for that connection every day by caring for the diversity of plants and animals at our wildlife parks, working alongside partners and local communities on conservation efforts across the globe, and inspiring allies to join us.



A Vital Balance

Biodiversity loss, climate change, and global pandemics are severe and interconnected crises that cannot be addressed in isolation. Habitat degradation, invasive species, illegal wildlife trade, pollution, and human-wildlife conflict drive these crises. They threaten the healthy ecosystems we all rely on for clean water, food, medicines, and shelter. We work with partner organizations and allies around the world to address these complex issues so all life can thrive.



Photo: (Left) az garret/istock/Getty Images
(Above) Petmal/istock/Getty Images

Sustainable Conservation Solutions

Our approach to protecting and restoring wildlife and habitats is collaborative, innovative, and multidisciplinary. Working alongside local communities and global partners, we apply the following skills and expertise to address pressing threats to conservation. We use inclusive, comprehensive, and evidence-based solutions to address immediate and root causes of the loss of biodiversity, empowering those who live alongside wildlife to be stewards of nature.

Skills & Expertise

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Applied Social Science | Conservation Breeding | Diagnostic Techniques | Plant Conservation |
| Assisted Reproductive Technologies | Conservation Education | Disease Investigation & Response | Wildlife Care |
| Biodiversity Banking | Conservation Technologies | Ecological Applications & Monitoring | Wildlife Nutrition |
| Capacity Enhancement | Conservation Translocation | Genetic Rescue | Veterinary Care |

Wildlife Biodiversity Bank

We're at the forefront of collaborative global biobanking efforts, receiving and sharing samples and data with hundreds of scientists worldwide.

We thank BJ Williams, whose legacy gift has further secured the future for critical biobanking efforts by endowing the vital role of Curator of the Frozen Zoo.



Our Wildlife Biodiversity Bank is the umbrella term for all the biological materials—organized into six subcollections—preserved by our teams. It includes

living and nonliving materials, which together represent an invaluable repository of genetic information that can be applied toward advancing wildlife health, care, education, and conservation. Biobanks like ours have become an essential tool with the potential to save species in the face of increasing biodiversity loss, and they lay the foundation for trailblazing conservation solutions by bridging today's samples and tomorrow's scientific potential.

In 2023:



Seeds from the peak rush-rose marked our **1,000th collection**, bringing us one step closer to our goal of preserving the rich botanical diversity of San Diego County.



We banked the **11,000th individual** in the Frozen Zoo.



210+ species and subspecies were added to the Frozen Zoo, including **36 species new to the collection**.



We **sequenced the genome of the extinct po'ouli** (Hawaiian honeycreeper) using cells banked in 2004.



900+ vials of gametes and reproductive tissue were frozen.

Our subcollections total millions of samples—diverse in both type and taxa—including:

50,000+ samples of genetic materials including blood, tissue, DNA, and cells

Gametes from **2,290+** individuals representing nearly 460+ species

65 million+ seeds representing more than 450 types of plants

Slides of tissue sections from **1,000+** species, dating back to the 1930s

11,000+ individual cell lines representing about 1,298 species and subspecies

This year we partnered with IUCN to form the first Center for Species Survival: Biodiversity Banking, representing our enduring commitment to biobanking. Our efforts began in 1975, and today the Wildlife Biodiversity Bank is the most extensive resource of its kind in the world (see page 26 for more).



FROZEN ZOO

Gametes (sperm and eggs), embryos, and living fibroblast (skin) cell lines



WILDLIFE ARTIFACTS

Skeletal replicas and items naturally shed or lost (for example, feathers and leaves)



CLINICAL REPOSITORY

Bodily fluids and blood components (plasma and serum)



TISSUE AND DNA BANK
Blood, tissues, DNA, and cells



NATIVE PLANT GENE BANK
Seeds, plant cuttings, and herbarium vouchers (pressed and dried specimens)



PATHOLOGY ARCHIVE
Tissues, microbes, DNA, and RNA

Our work begins in San Diego and spans the globe.

Building Alliances to Thrive

Much of our conservation work takes place in biodiversity hotspots, the most biologically rich—and threatened—regions on the planet.

A world where all life thrives is only possible when we work together: local communities, governments, conservation organizations, allies like you, and wildlife explorers of all ages. We are committed not only to wildlife, but also to the people and communities who share their ecosystems. Our eight Conservation Hubs

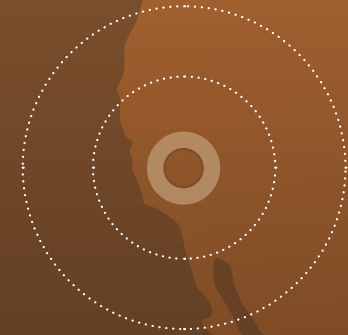
are the places we're currently most invested, and where we can use our century of wildlife expertise to build on existing collaborations with internal and external partners and drive strategic outcomes—**healthy wildlife populations, flourishing communities, and connected and resilient landscapes.**

You are our most important ally. The Zoo and Safari Park allow us to generate revenue, which we invest in conservation right alongside you. Every time you visit, make a donation, purchase an item from us, or share what you know about animals, plants, and conservation, you're playing a role in achieving our mission and securing the future for wildlife.

See page 112 for a list of partners, and page 118 for more about how you can join us.

SOUTHWEST

CONSERVATION HUB



The Southwest—a cross-border area spanning the southwestern United States and northern Mexico—extends from coast to desert and incorporates diverse landscapes, including wetlands, forests, grasslands, and mountains. In the heart of this region, where we are headquartered, San Diego County is home to more imperiled wildlife than anywhere else in the continental United States.

We collaborate to safeguard and celebrate local wildlife and the ecosystems we share. With projects across the Southwest, we make conservation impacts by boosting populations and reintroducing threatened species, identifying and reducing threats to ecosystems, and using cutting-edge science and technology to monitor and protect wildlife and native habitats.

Expertise

Conservation Begins with Our Two Wildlife Parks

All of our conservation work begins with the expertise honed from over a century of wildlife care at the Zoo and Safari Park, which are also the gateway to our Southwest conservation efforts.

1,000 Acres

More than half of the Safari Park's 1,800 acres is set aside as the Biodiversity Reserve—one of the last remaining areas of native coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitat in the region.

70+ More than 70 endangered mountain yellow-legged frogs bred at the Safari Park and reared by partners were introduced into a lake in the San Bernardino Mountains, helping restore sustainable populations.

Staying a Leap Ahead

We successfully piloted antifungal treatment to reduce the impact of deadly chytrid fungus in native habitat, which threatens these endangered frogs. The treatment will help mitigate future outbreaks.



Miniature Mouse Earns Mighty Recognition

We received a Guinness World Records™ title when Pat, a Pacific pocket mouse born at the Safari Park in 2013, was certified as the Oldest Living Mouse in Human Care, making headlines worldwide.

Weighing about the same as three pennies, the tiny species was considered extinct for 20 years until a small population was discovered. This win shone a **spotlight on the role many small but mighty species play in seed dispersal and ecosystem health.**



60 Years

after it first aired, *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom* returned to television, with the debut episode featuring our work to save endangered desert tortoises—the largest terrestrial turtle in the United States.

Audiences tuned in as nearly 70 tortoise hatchlings were reintroduced into their native range.

We are deeply grateful to the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and the National Science Foundation for awarding us a Partnership to Advance Conservation Science and Practice Grant. **This collaborative grant will enable our conservation scientists to generate novel insights into the vulnerability to climate change for the Mojave desert tortoise.**





Condor Care

We're at the forefront of cutting-edge veterinary care for every life stage and have become leaders in the use of regenerative medicine. This year, Tecuya—a California condor hatched at the Safari Park 40 years ago, and only the second hatched in human care—received **innovative stem cell therapy to treat arthritis**.

Avian Flu Vaccine Shows Promise

A vaccine trial we participated in for critically endangered California condors proved effective if the birds are exposed to deadly avian influenza, which has claimed the lives of condors in native habitats. **This vital program underscores the role our century of expertise plays in safeguarding wildlife health on a national and global scale.**



The Zoo is a designated Plant Rescue Center, and the Orchid House is home to 900 taxa of orchids confiscated from the illegal trade.

Expertise to the Rescue

When wildlife is at risk, abandoned, or confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade, we work with local partners and government agencies to provide expert care and, when needed, a new home.



Burrowing Owls

This summer, teams rescued three juvenile burrowing owls when their parents were unable to care for them. After being rehabilitated at the Safari Park, they'll be reintroduced back to their native habitat.

Habitat Restoration

When record rainfall caused the overgrowth of nonnative grasses, we quickly worked with partners to **mow and trim vital habitat and foraging areas**, helping ensure access to burrows and a productive breeding season.



Mexican Spider Monkeys

Teams sprang into action to help some very young spider monkeys confiscated from the illegal trade. Because they were separated from their families at such a young age, they can't be reintroduced into native habitats. **With expert around-the-clock care from teams at the Safari Park, the trio made a full recovery.**

Mountain Lion Cubs

We knew that a mountain lion we tracked for years as part of our conservation program had cubs. When we learned she passed away as a result of human-wildlife conflict, teams leaped into action, using data from her GPS collar to embark on an **epic collaborative effort to track down her 6-week-old cubs, bringing them into our care, rehabilitating them, and offering them a forever home.**



Being part of a team that dropped everything and pulled together to save three orphaned mountain lion cubs was the highlight of my year. **To have a chance at success, we needed quick action and seamless coordination**—and everyone involved brought 100 percent to the table, including hospital staff, wildlife care, our Population Sustainability team, and our partners at University of California, Davis, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. It was awe-inspiring and humbling to be a part of.

— Charlie D., Natural Lands Program



Plant Conservation & Horticulture

Botanical Survey Surprise

During a botanical survey of endangered plants in the Channel Islands, teams successfully located healthy populations of the threatened *Galium buxifolium*, collected seeds of the endemic *Boechera hoffmannii*, and took cuttings of the endangered island oak **for future conservation efforts.**

Big Help for a Tiny Plant

Our Native Plant Gene Bank team and partners were able to **map a new population and collect seeds** from the tiny species *Linanthus maculatus emaculatus* to enable germination, propagation research, and future restoration.

A Milestone Medium for a Keystone Species

The Plant Conservation team developed a universal growth medium to help grow the keystone coastal sage scrub oak and other endangered plant species in managed care—a **vital breakthrough in flora conservation.**

How to Rescue an Acorn

Some insect species lay eggs in acorns, rendering them unable to grow and posing a threat for endangered oaks—so we developed a way to grow acorn tissue in a culture medium so they **can grow and thrive in managed care.**



Community Conservation

Third Annual

As original stewards of the land, the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians hosted the third annual Indigenous Peoples’ Celebration at the Safari Park—a **community event honoring the Kumeyaay people’s community, culture, and commitment to wildlife** through art, storytelling, bird singing, traditional cuisine, and songs.



Local Impact

60 students joined us for the Native Biodiversity Corps, a school-based program turning conservation science into community action and helping plant local wildlife gardens on school campuses.



This program has shown me how much I love biodiversity! **It has inspired me to get a business or biology degree in order to keep helping our environment.**

— Lucas H., high school student

Wild Weekend: Southwest

Kicking off on Earth Day, this event at the Safari Park **celebrated local wildlife and the diverse ecosystems we share**, creating empathy and spurring local action.

Better Together

Community Wildfire Mitigation

With a \$2 million grant and in collaboration with local fire departments and government agencies, an **innovative helicopter water tank** at the Safari Park has bolstered wildfire response capabilities at the Safari Park and in the region.



Local Inspiration

The California Natural Resources Agency provided a grant for **our Biodiversity Hotspot Exploration program**, which shares local wildlife with students and teachers in our community.

PACIFIC ISLANDS

CONSERVATION HUB



The Pacific Islands are home to an abundance of wildlife found nowhere else on Earth. Their incredible biodiversity is found from coastal reefs to mountain ridges, and includes some of the rarest birds and reptiles along with unique habitats. But despite their remote locations, these islands are highly vulnerable to invasive species and diseases, habitat fragmentation, wildfires, and the effects of climate change.

With initiatives in Hawai'i, Fiji, Palau, the Channel Islands, and on the island of Rota, we collaborate with partners and local communities to recover threatened species, safeguard wildlife and ecosystems, and establish sustainable solutions to preserve biodiversity.

Community Conservation

Protecting Fiji's Crested Iguanas

On Fiji's Monuriki Island, we're collaborating to conserve critically endangered crested iguanas through **ranger training programs**, trail cameras monitoring for **illegal wildlife trafficking**, and designated tourist hiking trails to **protect the island's fragile forest ecosystem**.

Sharing Expertise

Care in Remote Locations

Our veterinarians and veterinary technicians traveled to California's San Clemente Island to conduct medical training for teams working in our **conservation breeding program for loggerhead shrikes**, further equipping teams in remote locations with expanded wildlife health and care skills.

Getting Onsite

To build local capacity for conservation and help preserve native orchids, palms, and cycads, the Zoo's horticulture team met with community members in Palau to share propagation and seed collection workshops and irrigation training.



Step by Step

Conservation requires flexibility and adaptation. To improve survival of juvenile shrikes when they're most vulnerable, we implemented new and refined strategies to prepare them for release, including **modifying aviaries to imitate wild foraging and anti-predator training**.



2023 Season Successes

31	128	49
clutches	eggs laid	juvenile releases



Our Commitment

Headstarting for Success

To increase chances for survival, juvenile **critically endangered aga** (Mariana crow) on the island of Rota are brought in to be headstarted for up to two years, protecting them during this vulnerable period.

Science to Save

While we care for them, genetics teams use bloodwork to determine their sex, devise conservation breeding recommendations, and **increase knowledge of the species.**

14

more aga were reintroduced into the forest, bringing the total to date to 62.

Weathering the Storm

When Super Typhoon Mawar moved across Rota, teams quickly secured outdoor aviaries and brought birds into indoor protected areas. **While nature will often surprise, conservation is about adaptability and finding solutions.** The aviaries suffered only minor damage and all birds were safe.

Saving Hawai'i's Unique Birds

Like many islands, Hawai'i is home to countless species found nowhere else. Unfortunately, many of these populations, especially forest songbirds, are now critically endangered.

Wildlife Health Support

Teams traveled to Hawai'i to provide medical care to the birds in our conservation breeding program—including 'alalā (extinct in the wild), 'akikiki, and palila—and **provide staff with further training in veterinary technical skills.**

Heroes Seen Around the World

Our Maui team acted heroically to protect endangered birds from this year's devastating wildfires, which **came within 75 feet of our doors.** Their lifesaving actions protected wildlife, the facility, and our team. **Our hearts remain with our greater Maui community on the long road to recovery.**

Conservation Takes Flight

In response to the imminent extinction of Hawaiian forest birds, **United States Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland visited our conservation centers** to announce a commitment of nearly **\$16 million** as part of the bipartisan Investing in America Agenda.



At our Maui and Keauhou Bird Conservation Centers, teams apply expertise in avian ecology, disease, and behavior to **restore bird populations while engaging local communities in efforts to protect native wildlife.**



ASIA

CONSERVATION HUB



Asia is home to nearly 15 percent of the world's tropical forests, including multiple biodiversity hotspots and an abundance of wildlife found nowhere else on Earth. However, human behaviors like illegal logging and wildlife trafficking are taking a toll on species across Asia.

Together with local communities and partners, we're working to protect the region's unique wildlife. To devise inclusive conservation strategies, we collaborate with our allies to better understand the needs and relationships of local people and wildlife, foster coexistence, reduce the trafficking and use of wildlife products, and preserve species and ecosystems for future generations.

Conservation at Home



33 eggs

laid by critically endangered Roti Island snake-necked turtles at the Zoo hatched. The turtles were raised by our expert veterinary teams and will be reintroduced on the island of Rote, Indonesia.



One by One

The hatching of a critically endangered milky stork chick at the Safari Park expanded the flock to 23. With **fewer than 1,500 estimated to remain on Earth**, each chick is a vital addition to the global population. At the Safari Park, we're honored to care for the only milky storks in North America as part of a collaborative conservation breeding program.



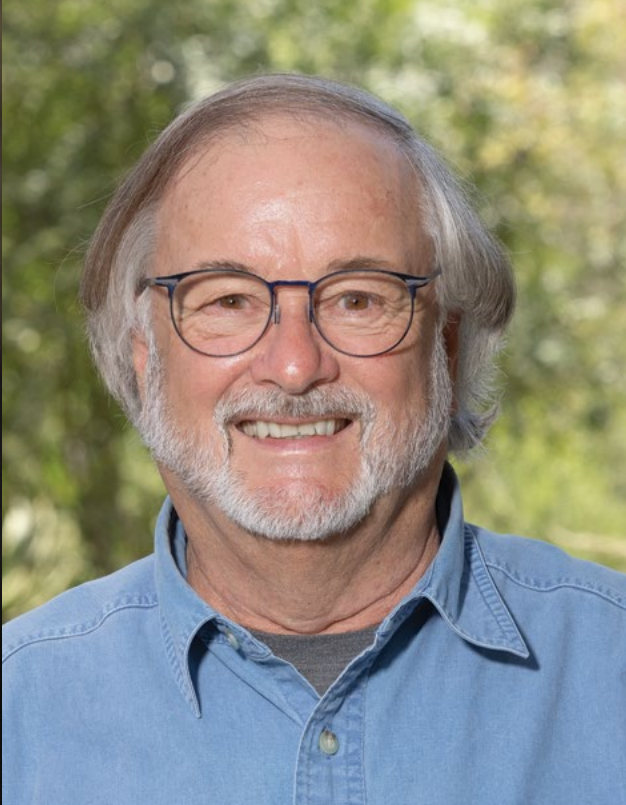
Creating Allies for Wildlife

Through tours, regional cuisine, and interactions with wildlife care specialists, Lunar New Year and Wild Weekend: Asia celebrations at the Zoo and Safari Park **connected guests to the global conservation work they help make possible.**



Making History

Ollie, the world's second successfully cloned Przewalski's horse, arrived at the Safari Park this year. He's genetically a twin to Kurt, the first Przewalski's horse clone, and his birth marks **the first time cloning successfully produced more than one individual of any endangered species**—an unprecedented achievement that proves this technique can be used as a viable conservation tool for genetic rescue. Together, Kurt and Ollie will bring back key genetic diversity to this endangered species.



The cloning was made possible with living cell lines from a horse that lived more than 40 years ago, which were preserved in the Frozen Zoo.

The foal was named "Ollie" in honor of Dr. Oliver Ryder, our Kleberg Endowed Director of Conservation Genetics, for groundbreaking contributions over his 45-year career.

Increasing Endangered Populations

We were delighted to expand our family this year, welcoming cubs of several endangered species. Each one is a critical addition to global populations—and they all happen to be adorable.

A Big Welcome

We welcomed the **first endangered red panda cub born at the Zoo since 2006!** Pavitra, whose name means “sacred” in Nepali, was born to first-time mom Adira, and the two quickly stole hearts across social media.

Red Panda Habitat Restoration

We’re collaborating to restore degraded red panda habitats in Nepal by replanting trees, which are maintained by local communities and provide sustainable income and opportunities for ecotourism.

Celebrating Stripes

Two Sumatran tiger cubs—a male named Hutan and a female named Puteri—were born at the Safari Park to much excitement. **With only 400 to 600 of these critically endangered big cats remaining, every new arrival is a cause for celebration.**

Two More

Fewer than 100 Amur leopards remain in native habitats, so we were overjoyed to welcome Ulybka and Zorinka at the Zoo this spring—the third litter we’ve had the honor of welcoming.



Tech to Protect



Paws for Science

Teams refined noninvasive ways to track populations of endangered wildlife in native habitats with some help from Rakan, a Sumatran tiger we care for at the Safari Park. Using cutting-edge genome-sequencing technology, we’re **able to detect DNA left behind in paw prints.**



Knowledge Is Power

Our team and partners in Indonesia recently completed the first-ever systematic trail camera survey studying leopards on Java—the world’s most populated island—to **estimate the density of these big cats and guide protections for wildlife and the key landscapes they inhabit.**

Community Conservation & Social Science



Breaking the Wildlife Trade Chain

We held focus groups with communities in and around Pu Mat National Park in Vietnam centered on **curbing wildlife trafficking in this biodiversity hotspot.** Sustainable solutions include finding livelihood alternatives and curbing demand so all life here can thrive.



Bear Bile Reduction

In Southeast Asia, we’re leading a grassroots campaign to help save sun bears, whose bile is still used in some local traditions. The campaign aims to shift perceptions toward science-based medicine in order to **reduce and eventually eliminate demand.**

AFRICAN FOREST

CONSERVATION HUB



Central African forests are rich in wildlife and a site of critical importance to the health of our planet. Containing the world's second-largest tropical rainforest, an abundance of rare plants, and some of the most endangered primates on Earth, this region is a globally significant carbon sink, helping mitigate climate change.

In Cameroon's Ebo forest, we work hand-in-hand with local communities to protect wildlife and promote coexistence. Together, our teams and local partners protect vulnerable species and habitats, documenting animals and plants previously unknown to science and celebrating the cultural and ecological heritage of one of Africa's most intact and important rainforests. Local communities are at the center of conservation in the Ebo forest. Acting as stewards of their shared ecosystem, they work closely with our teams to make inclusive decisions about future land management, ensuring their needs are met, their heritage is respected, and wildlife is protected in the process.





Program Bears Fruit
With our support, members of the Clubs des Amis des Gorilles—community-run “Gorilla Guardian Clubs”—constructed a small-scale mill and began selling sustainably produced native palm oil. **Providing alternative livelihoods helps reduce hunting for bushmeat** and protect forests for all that depend on them.

Farmers’ Cooperative Takes Root
Our teams supported the creation of a farmers’ cooperative involving more than 100 farmers from villages surrounding the Ebo forest, **improving income, reducing reliance on forest resources, and sustainably increasing the quality and volume of cocoa production.**



Awarding Excellence
Dr. Ekwoge Abwe, lead conservation scientist of the African Forest Conservation Hub team, **received the Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa** in recognition of outstanding dedication and exceptional continued contributions to conservation in Africa, including his engagement across local communities. For more, see page 27.



I have always believed that we humans have a duty to ensure that those less fortunate than ourselves, as well as our children and future generations, **live in harmony in a diverse and thriving world for the benefit of all.**

— Dr. Ekwoge Abwe

Science Surprises

Tech to the Rescue

Motion-activated trail cameras have been a game changer for conservation science, offering new insights into the behaviors of elusive species and wildlife in remote areas—and helping devise plans to protect them. This year, teams had some exciting moments via donor-funded cameras in the Ebo forest.

Meet the World’s Smallest Crocodile

Our best photo yet of the nocturnal dwarf crocodile was a surprise discovery on a trail camera. This elusive species is vulnerable to extinction.



Goliath Moment

Weighing up to seven pounds and found only in the coastal rainforests of southwestern Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, the endangered goliath frog is the world’s largest. In a historic first, teams were able to record **never-before-seen mating and nesting behaviors, increasing scientific knowledge of this endangered species.**



Illustration: (Left) SergeyMikhaylov/Stock/Getty Images



Comprehensive Conservation



New Discoveries

A study of grey-necked rockfowl, a threatened bird found only in central African forests, revealed that only about 14 percent of their suitable habitat is within protected areas. This is less than previously thought and will help inform conservation decisions.



A Budding Partnership

To support forest biodiversity, the Cameroon National Herbarium (CNH) is training our team in the collection and handling of local botanical specimens and creating a database to record them while we provide support and training for specimen identification and field research.

We’re collaborating on the first-ever extensive botanical survey and sampling of Ebo forest habitats, which will lead to critical understanding for the future of the forest. **Over 1,000 specimens were collected on the first trip alone.**



In the Nest

A five-year study completed with our partners shows critically endangered Ebo gorillas use more than **281 plant species for nesting materials**—and they rarely use the same nest twice. This remarkable finding underscores the importance of protecting the entire ecosystem.

OCEANS

CONSERVATION HUB



Oceans cover more than 70 percent of Earth's surface. They're critically important to the health of our planet and are closely interconnected with, and support, life across the globe. Oceans pull in over two billion tons of carbon from the atmosphere each year, and billions of people depend on them for food and livelihood.

With the health of our oceans threatened by human activities resulting in climate change and pollution, the need for protection and greater understanding of these immense ecosystems is urgent. With the support of our allies, we're protecting oceans and marine life. Through innovative technologies and collaborative partnerships, we apply our expertise, skills, and experience working with wildlife in San Diego, the Pacific Northwest, across the Arctic, and in southern Africa.

Technology & Collaboration

Ice for All

Polar bears are marine mammals—their scientific name *Ursus maritimus* even means “sea bear.” They rely on sea ice to hunt, mate, and care for their young, and, unfortunately, their habitat is literally melting underfoot.

Without adequate ice, polar bears increasingly come onto land, forcing people and bears to share space in new ways. They may also have to swim up to 100 miles in search of food, a distance that can be insurmountable for cubs—underscoring the urgency of climate action and habitat protection.



Annual Record

This year, teams monitoring den sites in Svalbard, Norway, noted the **sixth lowest sea ice level on record**.

Tracking Migrations

Together with our partners, including University of Alberta, we deployed **20 new GPS transmitter ear tags** to study the impact of sea ice changes and monitor migration routes to land. This data will help protect key Arctic habitats and keep coastal communities and wildlife safe by informing strategies for coexistence.



New Reach

Our seventh year of collaborative den monitoring in partnership with Polar Bears International marked a turning point with new Mini DenCam cameras and a specialized drone to help pinpoint the location of dens under the snow—providing **new insights into hard-to-reach areas in some of the most challenging terrain on the planet**.



From a Distance

Polar bears at the San Diego Zoo contributed to the development of a new laser technology which helps **noninvasively evaluate polar bear body condition in native habitats**, revolutionizing our ability to collect data across a wider polar bear population and advancing conservation strategies.



“

I get excited for the opportunity to learn and innovate with new **technologies that allow researchers to protect wildlife** more efficiently and on a grander scale.

— Katie G., Conservation Technology Lab

Our Conservation Technology Lab helps create new devices that overcome challenges of temperature, wind, and wildlife to gather data, increasing understanding of species in remote locations.

Photo: (Opposite page) Justinreznick/E+/Getty Images, (This page, bottom) Alexey_Seafarer/iStock/Getty Images

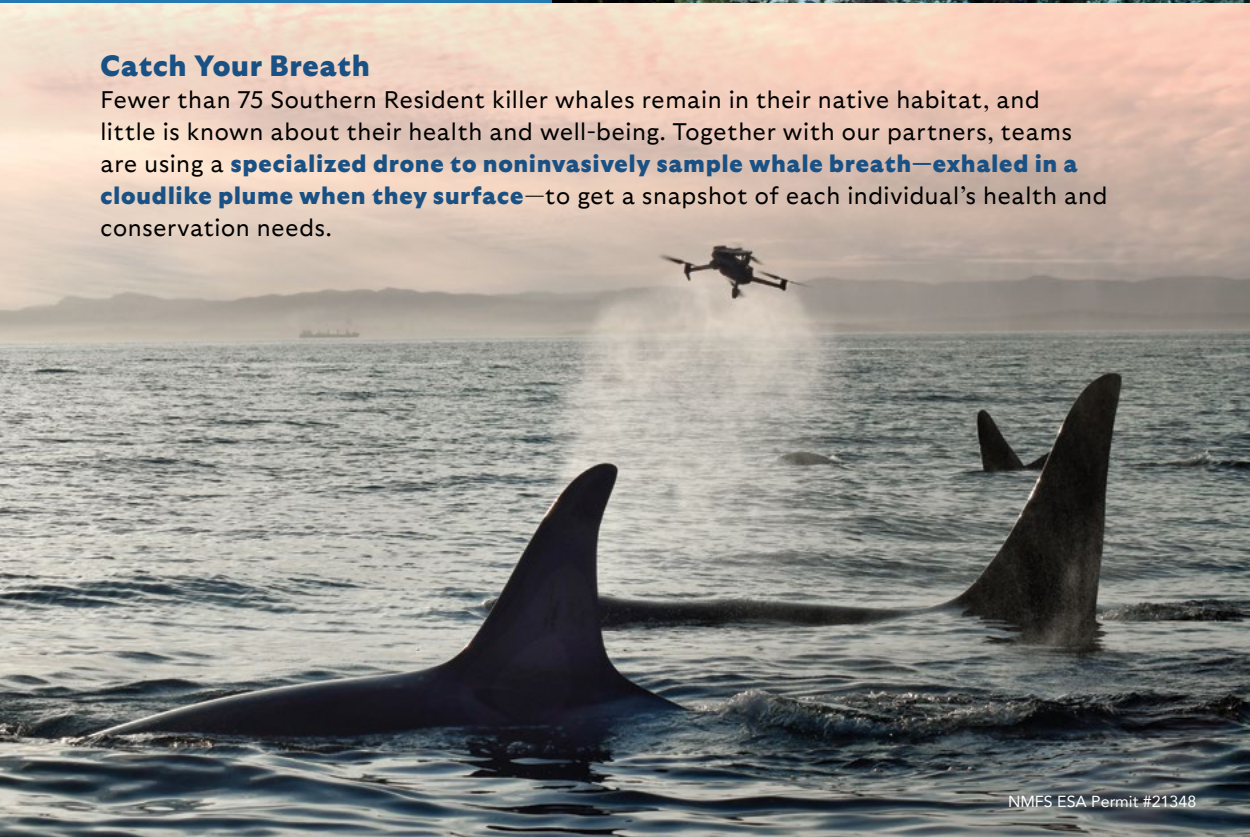
Sunny News

Critically endangered sunflower sea stars can grow to be over a meter wide and are a keystone species in kelp forests. This year, we collaborated to **successfully breed dozens of sunflower sea stars** using sperm from our Frozen Zoo—a first for the species, highlighting the vital role of conservation genetics.



Catch Your Breath

Fewer than 75 Southern Resident killer whales remain in their native habitat, and little is known about their health and well-being. Together with our partners, teams are using a **specialized drone to noninvasively sample whale breath—exhaled in a cloudlike plume when they surface**—to get a snapshot of each individual’s health and conservation needs.



NMFS ESA Permit #21348

“

This year we made some key advances monitoring health and diagnosing disease in endangered killer whales. Understanding and improving their health is a huge responsibility, but **partnering with the professionals at San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance reminds me that we have the best team possible** and are poised for success.

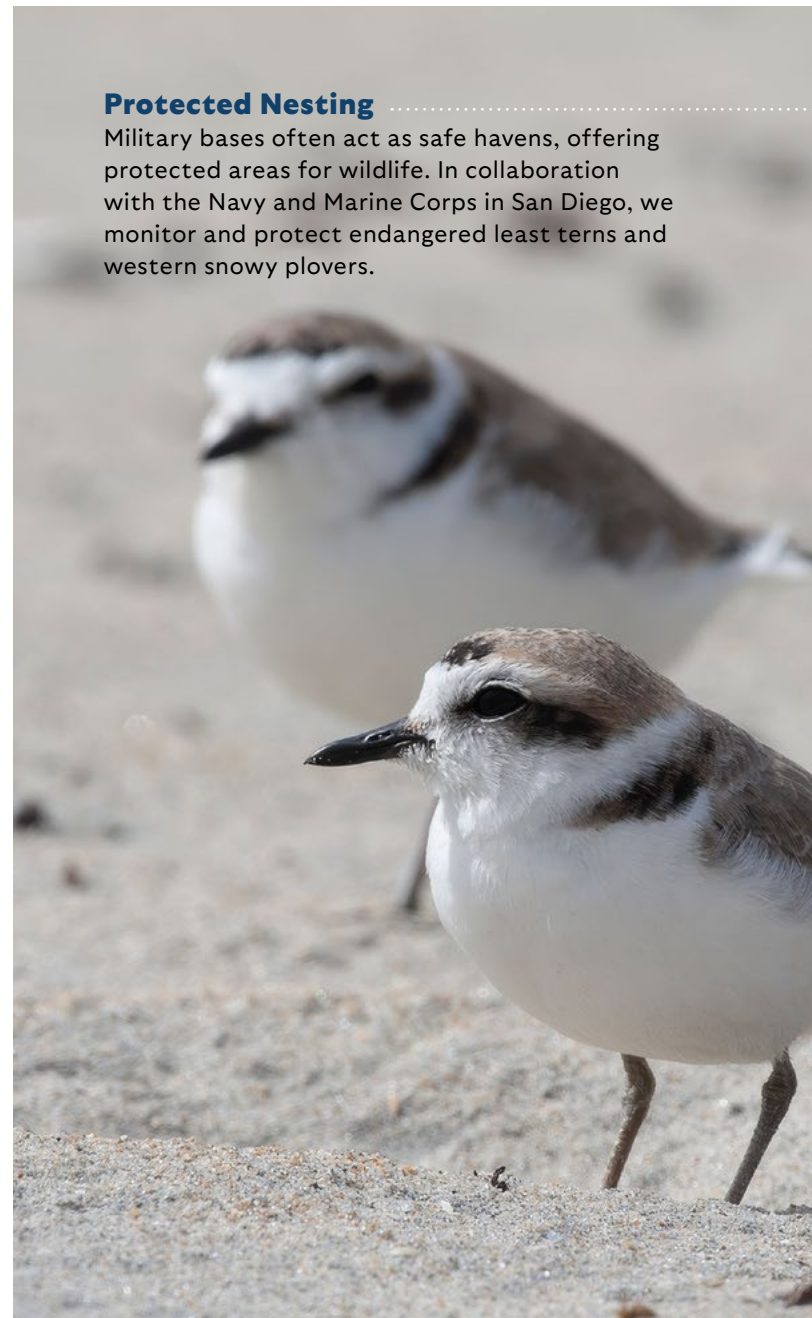
— Joseph G.,
SeaDoc Society and
University of California, Davis,
Karen C. Drayer Wildlife
Health Center

Photos: (Top) © Marco Mazza, (Bottom) Maya Sears, NOAA - NMFS ESA Permit #21348

Close to Home

Protected Nesting

Military bases often act as safe havens, offering protected areas for wildlife. In collaboration with the Navy and Marine Corps in San Diego, we monitor and protect endangered least terns and western snowy plovers.



Documented This Season

244

western snowy plover nests, with 83% of eggs hatching

1,174

least tern nests, with 60% hatching

Wild Weekend: Oceans

Our efforts to turn the tide for at-risk marine life don’t end at sea. **International Polar Bear Day at the Zoo** helped us connect guests to wildlife and our global conservation work in ways that stay with them long after they leave.

Hidden on the Ocean Floor

We were awarded a grant to address **the role of deep ocean dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT)**—a chemical banned after the near extinction of the bald eagle—contamination in Southern California, where hundreds of thousands of barrels were historically dumped. Our research will **help assess which chemicals are present and better understand the biological effects on wildlife and people**.

Making a Splash

At the Zoo, we have the honor of caring for a colony of 25 African penguins—each with distinct personalities and customized care plans. **We support our South African partners in efforts to rehabilitate and reintroduce these endangered birds.**

AMAZONIA

CONSERVATION HUB



As the largest tropical rainforest in the world, the Amazon is often called the “lungs of the planet.” It generates oxygen, impacts weather patterns worldwide, and plays a vital role in mitigating climate change. It’s also one of the most biodiverse places on Earth, with countless species found nowhere else. Nevertheless, many regional and global challenges threaten Amazonia’s wildlife, local people, and habitats.

We deploy cutting-edge technology, apply expertise in genomics and wildlife monitoring, and enhance local efforts as part of our commitment to protecting the biological and cultural richness of the Peruvian Amazon.

Close to Home



Wild Weekend: Amazonia

By connecting with wildlife, including sloths and tapirs, and **celebrating Amazonia's dynamic ecosystems**, this event at the Zoo brought guests closer to the conservation efforts they make possible—inspiring even more allies.



A guest told us they were looking everywhere in the Zoo for a sloth, so a coworker quietly gave a sloth access to nearby vine to climb. As the sloth was climbing toward the guest, there were instant tears of **gratitude and a big “Oh my gosh”!** Inspiring for me!

—Kristi D., Conservation Science
Wildlife Health

Technology & Science

The More You Know

Rapidly evolving technologies help conservationists reach wildlife in remote regions. This year, we installed trail cameras and nearly **100 new sampling locations to noninvasively gather hair and other organic matter wildlife leave behind**. This data will advance scientific understanding of Andean bears and tapirs, including genetic variation within populations.



Groundbreaking Tools

Together with partners, teams completed **whole genome sequencing of two Andean bears**—the first from Peru to be sequenced. This milestone will help develop advanced genotyping tools so researchers can **identify and track bears through noninvasive samples** and help protect this threatened species.



Over the years, Andean bears at the Zoo, including Alba, Turbo, Houdini, and Tommy, have contributed to genetic understanding of the species.

Fieldwork Makes the Dream Work

Fieldwork is crucial, and most scientists working in rugged terrain understandably pause efforts during the most challenging weather months. In Peru, our dedicated teams work year-round to document seasonal changes in Andean bear behavior and ecology—**even trekking across Manú National Park in heavy rains**.

Together for Wildlife

Mercury's Rising

Gold mining around Peru's Manú National Park has resulted in mercury exposure in wildlife. To monitor the impacts and better understand and mitigate these challenges, a state-of-the-art DMA-80 total mercury detector was added to the lab.

2,700+
feather and hair samples
collected so far

6
minutes or
less to analyze
samples

24
new solar panels were
added this year, for a
total of 108



A One-of-a-Kind Laboratory

Deep in the heart of the Amazon rainforest, the solar-powered Wildlife Conservation Laboratory at Los Amigos Biological Station is **making science more accessible and efficient in this area of the Amazon at the foot of Peru's southern Andes mountains**.

Teams completed a program using blood samples from bats and primates to **establish baselines for ecosystem health** in spaces shared by people, livestock, and wildlife.

The lab team used **DNA barcoding to identify 28 rescued primates** and inform appropriate areas for reintroduction.



Sharing Expertise

We partner with Taricaya EcoReserve and Amazon Shelter—**community-led groups that rehabilitate and release wildlife confiscated from illegal trade**—lending our expertise around animal welfare and veterinary medicine.

This year we helped collect samples for genetic and health screenings to prepare **18 rescued red howler monkeys and white capuchins** for reintroduction.

Community Conservation & Education

Collaboration for Jaguars

We held a joint **workshop with the Peruvian government** to discuss conservation challenges for jaguars and track progress toward the plan we helped develop in 2022.

Voices of the Jungle

Creating empathy and understanding through the power of storytelling, our Giant Otter Conservation Program team invited Peruvian students near Cocha Cashu Biological Station to come up with their own stories about charismatic local wildlife.

With help from parents and teachers, *Voces de la Selva* (Voices of the jungle) was made into a book of original stories and drawings for local students.



Known as “river wolves,” endangered giant otters live in family groups and can reach six feet in length. They’re apex predators and a keystone species in their ecosystem.



My favorite part of my job is listening to all sides of a story and finding common spaces to work in. **Working for the well-being of both people and wildlife is a great challenge**, but at the same time, a dream!

— Paloma A., M.V. M.Sc.(c), jaguar program



© San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance-Peru



We thank Cathy Stiefel and Keith Behner for their generous and ongoing commitment to the wildlife and ecosystems of Amazonia, including through their endowment of the Stiefel-Behner Research Scientist role, which is integral to these conservation efforts.

We don’t come in with solutions. **We come in with questions.**

— Ron S., Conservation Science Wildlife Health



AUSTRALIAN FOREST

CONSERVATION HUB

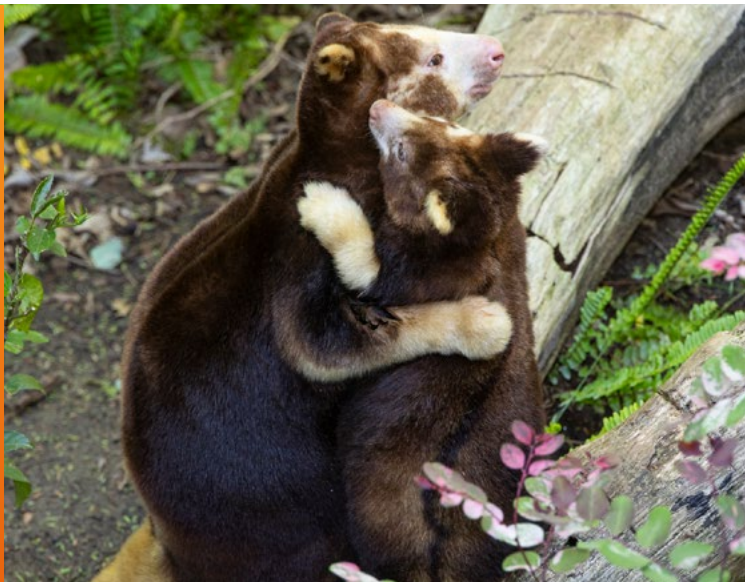


Found primarily along the northern and eastern coasts of the continent, Australian forests are home to some of Earth's most unique and iconic wildlife. Eucalyptus forests account for the majority of these habitats. While they provide food, shelter, and resources for wildlife and local people, they're also highly vulnerable to bushfires and drought—which are growing in frequency and severity due to climate change and habitat fragmentation.

We've been caring for koalas at the Zoo since 1925—nearly 100 years—and the Safari Park is currently home to the only platypuses outside of Australia. We work closely with Australian partners to put our expertise into action, supporting studies on the effects of wildfires on environments and wildlife, caring for displaced wildlife, and developing strategies to increase resilience to fires while maintaining healthy habitats for native species.

Important Additions

A Little at a Time
Kikori, an endangered Matschie's tree kangaroo, was born in late 2022—**only the second of her species to be born at the Safari Park.** Born at about the size of a jellybean, she was finally big enough to make her debut in 2023 and began coming out of her mom's pouch.



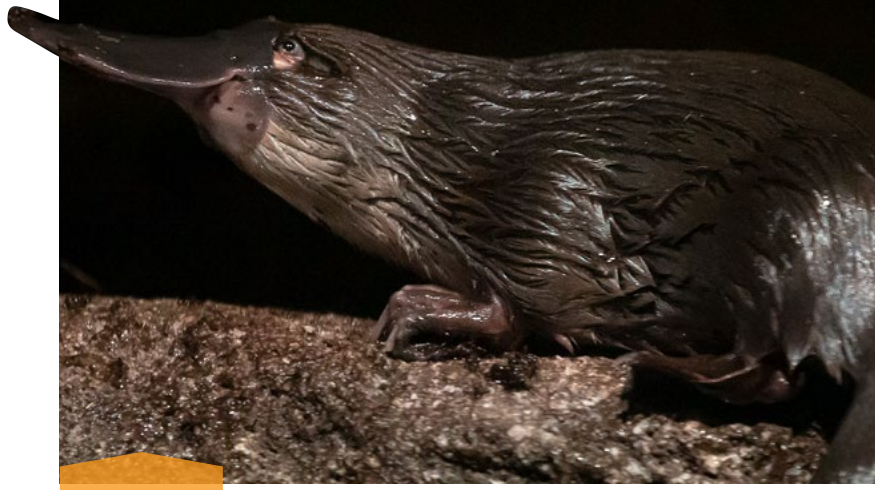
A Second Chance
Critically endangered Lord Howe Island stick insects can now be seen by the public, for **the first time in North America**, at the Zoo's Wildlife Explorers Basecamp. These "tree lobsters" were **once considered extinct**, and we're one of only two places outside Australia to successfully breed the species.



5 Milestones
Two short-beaked echidna puggles hatched at the Safari Park this summer, bringing our total hatchlings to five—more than any other zoo outside of Australia—and **advancing conservation science's knowledge of this unusual egg-laying mammal.**

Collaboration & Care

It is inspiring to work in a team that **brings together different expertise and perspectives** to better understand and successfully protect the platypus.
— Dr. Justine O., Taronga Conservation Society



Australia's First Platypus Center
Threatened by the increased frequency and severity of fires and droughts, a first-of-its-kind rescue and rehabilitation facility for platypuses is being established in Australia by our partners. Our support will help provide emergency response and further research to establish a conservation breeding program.

Over \$1 million generously raised by our donors and guests in response to devastating wildfires helped make this platypus refuge possible.



Koala Genomics Project
A collaborative new project is underway to investigate deadly koala retrovirus (KoRV), which threatens the species' health and sustainability. In collaboration with Illumina and other partners, **our geneticists are providing sequenced genomes of nearly 100 koalas across North America** to explore how the virus attaches to the genome and how this is related to health outcomes—**helping clear a major hurdle in diagnostics and care.**



Leaders in Koala Care
Today, the Zoo is home to 32 koalas—**the largest colony and most successful breeding program outside of Australia.** We collaborate with other zoos and partners to share our nearly 100 years of expertise and protect this species, which is vulnerable to extinction.

Over 50 tons of eucalyptus were harvested and hand-delivered to koalas in our care this year.

SAVANNA

CONSERVATION HUB



Some of the planet's most iconic—and endangered—wildlife roam Africa's savannas. Covering nearly half the vast continent, these beautiful, carefully balanced grassland ecosystems are the vital foundation for complex food webs and great migrations. They're also integral to the pastoralist livelihoods of local people who share the savanna.

In northern Kenya, we partner with local communities and organizations on innovative, comprehensive conservation strategies. Integrating cutting-edge science with our expertise in wildlife care and health, we collaborate to save wildlife and elevate local voices across the savanna so all who share it can thrive.

Community Conservation and Coexistence

Wild Weekend: Savanna

This action-packed two-day event at the Safari Park **kicked off on World Elephant Day and engaged guests through a variety of interactive and immersive experiences**, inspiring and creating wildlife allies of all ages.

From California to Kenya

While we celebrated **World Giraffe Day at the Zoo, more than 3,600 people from communities across Kenya took part in celebrations** led by the Twiga Walinzi (Giraffe Guards) as part of our shared commitment to protect herds across the savanna and engage wildlife allies.

Next Steps for Giraffes

Working closely with our partners, the Twiga Walinzi helped draft a new version of Kenya’s National Giraffe Recovery and Action Plan, **further unifying efforts to guide and implement conservation activities across giraffe ranges.**



Community Conservation Center Opens

The Chui Mamas headquarters opened this year. Featuring a meeting hall and shop spaces, this home hub will further empower more than 300 women through alternative incomes as they **share resources, learn new skills, and develop life-changing income opportunities while protecting wildlife.**

Chui Mamas, Swahili for “Leopard Mamas,” is a community-based women’s organization that works closely with our leopard conservation team to foster coexistence with these vulnerable predators.



Restoring Healthy Rangelands

For endangered Grevy’s zebras, climate change has led to food and water scarcity, and Chui Mamas is **working to restore critical rangelands.** Leading over **400 volunteers**, they’re removing invasive species, reseeding perennial grasses, and constructing **over 1,000 bunds (earthen walls) for water and soil retention**—benefitting livestock, wildlife, and community well-being in this semiarid region.

Leopards and Livestock

We continue to support a **community-led** study on boma (livestock corral) reinforcements to mitigate livestock predation and keep all who share the savanna safe.

Mapping a Plan for Coexistence

To gain fresh insights for community coexistence strategies, we engaged local community members to help map conflict areas and explore solutions. This enabled the creation of a **shared Human-Elephant Coexistence Toolbox so wildlife and people can both thrive.**

Conservation Begins with People

The Ruko Community Wildlife Coexistence Program, launched in partnership with Ruko Community Conservancy and Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), is an innovative way to offer alternate income opportunities while involving local communities in conservation. **As we support community needs, including school supplies, healthcare services, and livestock veterinary care, the community supports conservation efforts.**

“The partnership between NRT and San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance is founded on a deep mutual **trust with a recognition of how our respective roles and skills complement each other** for the benefit of people and wildlife.

— Ian Craig, Northern Rangelands Trust



Pride of the Park
Lioness sisters Malika, Zuri, and Amira welcomed a new lion to the pride this year with the arrival of beautiful **Bo, a 7-year-old male lion, who joined them at the Safari Park.**




Lion Family Tree
Our team helped track and collect biological samples from lions in the Zambezi Delta to **assess and maintain the genetic diversity essential for long-term survival of these big cats.**

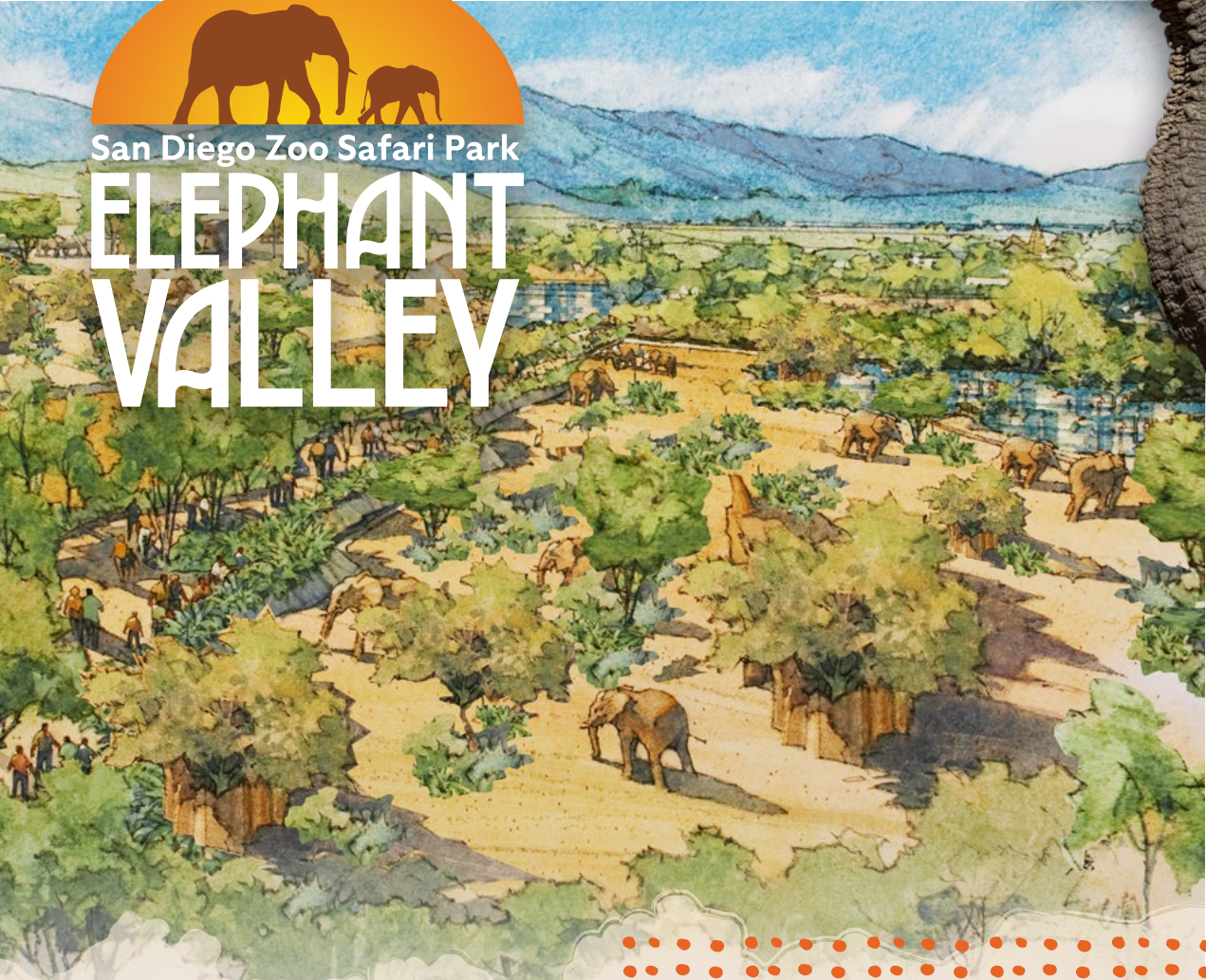


Biobanking for the Future
Northern white rhinos Najin and Fatu are a mother-daughter pair living in a protected area in Kenya—and they are the last of their kind on Earth. Fortunately, **12 genetically diverse living cell lines of northern white rhinos are cryopreserved in our Frozen Zoo, containing worlds of potential for genetic rescue through our Northern White Rhino Initiative.**



African Elephant Genomic Atlas
IUCN estimates African savanna elephant populations declined 60 percent in the past century. This spring, our teams and partners began creating **the first African elephant genomic atlas to guide decisions and help secure a sustainable future**—furthering collaboration for our ongoing elephant conservation efforts.

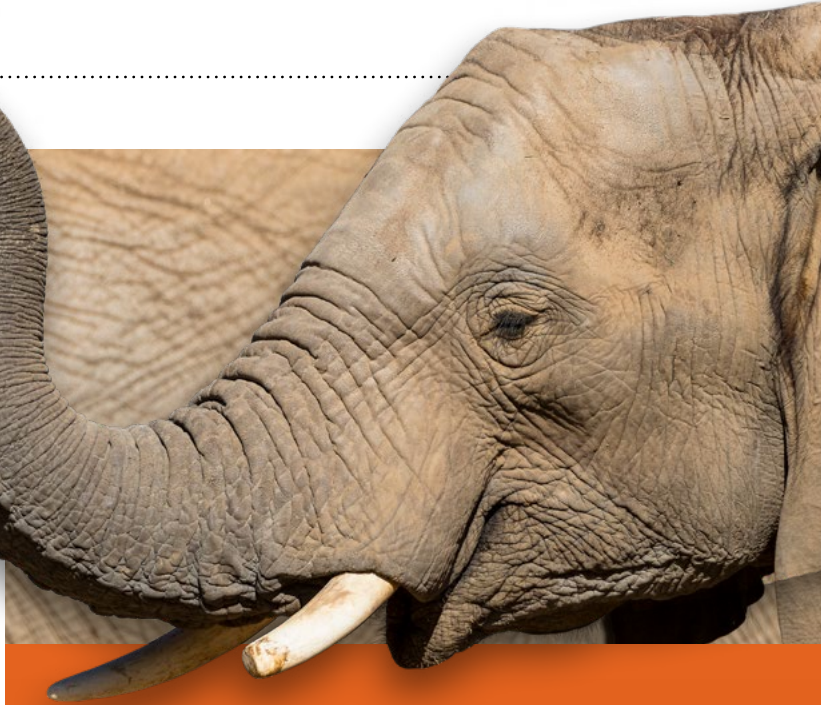


San Diego Zoo Safari Park
ELEPHANT VALLEY



Bringing the Savanna to You
On World Elephant Day, we shared news of Denny Sanford Elephant Valley with the world for the first time. **Construction is well underway on the largest project in the Safari Park's 51-year history, which will transform the heart of the park.** This new home for our elephant family will offer unparalleled opportunities to experience the world of these gentle giants—and will forever change the future of elephant conservation.





An Elephant-Sized Thank You

This project is made possible by the generosity of these leading donors.

- Denny Sanford
- Stephanie Petersen
- Joanne C. Warren and Family
- Marian Frank
- Tisha Hunte Wheat
- Lisa and Wayne Stelmar
- Frank and Linda Riolo



We extend our gratitude to the **more than 3,600 donors** who have contributed **more than \$48 million** toward our \$60 million fundraising goal.



Education Starts Here

Sparking a Curiosity for Wildlife

As we strive toward a world where all life thrives, education is crucial to achieving our vision. Through hands-on learning opportunities for all ages, we're engaging and inspiring wildlife allies to join us in protecting biodiversity and the planet we share.

Our programs begin at the Zoo and Safari Park, including the Conservation Education Lab at the Beckman Center, offering all-grade-level field trips and summer camps, wildlife exploration options for teens, teacher workshops, and more. These education efforts continue across the globe through our Conservation Hubs (turn to the next page for more) and online through extensive resources and web-based training courses.

Transformative Learning Experiences in 2023

Countless lives are touched by our programs, many of which are made possible through the generosity of our donors.

Nearly **350,000 students** visited us.

Over **29,500 students** participated in one of our **40 guided learning programs**.

We were the **largest provider of informal STEM education** in San Diego County.

We served **more than 90 school districts** from 6 counties in Southern California.

Almost **80% of our school groups** came from Title I-eligible schools.

We **provided 543 bus transportation reimbursements**, creating access to our programs for school groups who might not be able to attend otherwise.

Our **3 diverse education teams**, with 90 team members, spent **over 175,000 hours** engaging with students.



Making an Impact

To learn more about our programs and the broad scope of our education efforts, visit sdzwa.org/education.



Resources with Reach

Our **on-site library** served nearly **1,000 visitors** and provided **hundreds of scholarly articles** to team members. Our wildlife fact sheets—which compile rich information on many species—were downloaded **more than 1.1 million times**.



Mentoring Tomorrow's Conservationists

We were thrilled to bring Conservation Corps back in 2023, **giving 39 high school students hands-on opportunities** to learn about environmental issues, develop skills, and participate in conservation projects around San Diego County.



Master's Degrees for Wildlife

Through the Advanced Inquiry Program with Miami University, 107 students affiliated with San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance are pursuing their master's degrees, and **32 students graduated with a master's degree this year**.



Wild Weekends

We hosted **six Wild Weekend** events at the Zoo and Safari Park, spotlighting vulnerable species and ongoing initiatives in our global Conservation Hubs through interactive experiences, engaging talks, and actions allies can take to support wildlife.



Inspiring Students

Coming from all over Southern California, **7,323 students joined our Exploring Conservation Science field trips** to learn about saving species and action steps they can take to make a difference for wildlife.



Building Connections

Once a month, we delivered lessons to every classroom at San Pasqual Union School—connecting **more than 500 students** with science and conservation.



Summer Adventures

At this year's Zoo Summer Camps, **1,796 campers** joined us to connect with wildlife, explore conservation, and have fun. With the generosity of our donors, **over 10 percent of campers** attended at no cost to their families.



Classrooms Worldwide

We hosted 131 educators for our Teacher Workshops in Conservation Science. This marked our 18th year for the program, training educators from all 50 states and more than 25 countries—reaching an estimated **2 million students** to date!



Conservation to Go

Teachers brought hands-on conservation programs to their classrooms, **engaging 18,950 students in 30 states** with our complimentary science kits.



Education Spans the Globe

Conservation Begins with People

Those who live among and share spaces with wildlife have the power to make long-term, sustainable changes that benefit all. From here in San Diego to our Conservation Hubs across the globe, we engage allies who will make crucial impacts in their communities as agents of change. We collaborate to foster stewardship, building local capacity and skills for conservation and inspiring students and communities to take action for wildlife. Here are a few highlights.



Outreach and Education

Sharing Skills

In Kenya, 80 students attended trainings in trail camera data collection, while Twiga Walinzi (Giraffe Guards) have **engaged 9,605 students and community members with school lessons, field trips, and more.**



Environmental Education in Cameroon

Outside of Mbam Djerem National Park, **community members, including around 100 students**, have joined our team for conservation education, community meetings, fete days, and more at the Mbakaou Wildlife Education Center.



Planting Seeds at Home

Here in San Diego, **100 Native Biodiversity Corps students** helped design and plant native gardens on their school campuses. In addition to learning about threatened and endangered species, they're creating vital habitat corridors that attract and support local wildlife.



Engaging in the Amazon

At Cocha Cashu Biological Station, we connect with local students of all ages, from elementary and high school students learning about the importance of biodiversity to college students joining us for internships.



Making a Splash

As an Arctic Ambassador Center, we collaborate with our partner Polar Bears International on education, research, and action programs—**engaging our allies to address the challenges polar bears face in a warming climate.**



Building Capacity



Progress in Peru

We held a **training workshop on environmental education for 23 park rangers** of Manú National Park, sharing tools and skills that will serve them when they visit local schools.



Butterfly Network

In partnership with Monarch Joint Venture, we hosted our first North American Monarch Institute, an intensive workshop where **29 teachers from Southern California and Mexico** joined us to study threatened monarch butterflies and **build a lasting network of collaboration across the species' western range.**



Care to Share

With nearly a century of koala care expertise and the largest colony of koalas outside of Australia, we're honored to share our knowledge by providing training and support for zoos preparing to host koalas for the first time, **helping secure the future for this threatened species.**



Empowering Rangers

In Fiji, we support community-based conservation and recovery efforts, including **training for community rangers** who can monitor and protect critically endangered Fiji iguanas.



Support at the Highest Level

In our commitment to building local conservation capacity in Cameroon, we're **supporting over 40% of our local staff** as they pursue advanced degrees in related fields.



Together with Students

We partner with **3 highly skilled graduate students** at Vinh University in Vietnam, working together on conservation strategies among communities.



Our Family

Your Support Makes It All Possible

From the youngest allies visiting us for the first time to those who've been supporters for decades—our members, friends, donors, and allies make everything we do possible. You have a profound impact and are at the heart of our efforts to save, protect, and care for wildlife in San Diego and across the globe. We are equally honored to have a place in your hearts and in your lifelong memories.

Thank you for being part of our family.

Membership Matters

As members, your ongoing support is vital to the Zoo, Safari Park, and conservation efforts worldwide. Visit sdzwa.org/membership to explore membership options, including various prestigious clubs.

Nearly **400,000 members** call the Zoo and Safari Park their home away from home—one of the largest membership bases of any zoo in the world.

President's Clubs

These dedicated friends are committed to our vision of protecting wildlife, joining us throughout the year for exclusive events and connecting more deeply with our conservation work.



PRESIDENT'S VISIONARIES



PRESIDENT'S AMBASSADORS



PRESIDENT'S PATRONS



PRESIDENT'S PARTNERS

This year, President's Club members made additional gifts in support of the Zoo's hippo and polar bear habitats, as well as conservation efforts.

See page 118 for more ways to support.

Other Membership Levels



Wildlife Associate



Wildlife Champion



Wildlife Guardian



Wildlife Protector PREMIUM



San Diego Resident PREMIUM



Wildlife Explorer
YOUTH AGES 3-17

“

One of our lovely members loves our pineapple ice cream. **She comes three times a week just for her ice cream.** We enjoy chatting with her.

— Angie M., Retail



Wildlife Protector



San Diego Resident



Wild PerksSM

In addition to year-round admission to the Zoo and Safari Park, members enjoy a range of benefits, including access to our latest updates, our bimonthly magazine *San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Journal*, discounts, and more. Exclusive member events take place throughout the year, such as member appreciation celebrations, exclusive previews of events like Jungle Bells and Spring Safari, and monthly early morning access to the Zoo and Safari Park.

“

I've been buying annual passes throughout Southern California for the past 30 years and wanted to do one that actually made a difference. This one does! **I am beyond impressed with what the pass not only provides to me as a member with all of its benefits, but what it does for wildlife worldwide.** It's the best membership I've bought to date and the only one I will continue for as long as I am able.

— A member who renewed this year



Thank You...to YOU!

“What inspires me as a donor is the **worldwide view and integration of wildlife conservation for all things**—plants, animals, and human beings. That is the most important philosophy, and I am proud that the Zoo is moving in that direction. I think it is just wonderful to see.

— Ruth Ann and Paul P., Donors



We extend our deepest gratitude to our donors, members, and guests whose continued generosity, commitment to wildlife, and connection to our mission makes all the difference as we work toward a world where all life thrives.



This year, 6,500 monthly donors were committed to saving and protecting endangered species and ecosystems around the world. Through their sustaining monthly gifts, Wildlife Heroes offer hope and a promise for the future to the wildlife relying on us to survive and thrive—each and every day.

A Gala for Good
At the 40th annual Rendezvous In The Zoo (R·I·T·Z) gala, guests journeyed back to the golden age of air travel for an extraordinary evening of fine dining, exciting auctions, and dancing benefiting the new Denny Sanford Elephant Valley and a brighter future for elephants worldwide.

Thank you to our 2023 R·I·T·Z Chairs for leading the way. Pictured from L-R: Dulie and John Ahlring, Cami and Tom Rosso, Susan and Craig McClellan.

2116 Advisors

This group of philanthropists, conservation leaders, and volunteer leaders provides counsel and support toward achieving an even greater wildlife conservation impact here in San Diego and throughout the world. We are honored and grateful for their commitment and leadership.



Conservation Inspiration

Our 2116 Advisors joined us at the Safari Park for Conservation Inspiration—a full-day event where they met with conservation scientists and wildlife care experts, hearing firsthand about their leading work in San Diego and across the globe.



Welcome Reception

In September, 2116 Advisors gathered for the first time, celebrating the launch of the group and recognizing their leadership and vision for the organization's future.



Introducing WILD

A select group of wildlife allies joined us for the inaugural WILD event, kicking off a new era of conservation and stewardship with a night of adventure. Attendees connected with wildlife and our conservation science teams while enjoying entertainment, fine dining, and more.

Stronger Together

As some of our closest allies, our committed donor groups enjoy a range of benefits, including exclusive events, presentations on wildlife and conservation, and updates from the executive team. For information on how to join us, see page 90.

Ocelots

This remarkable group helps our mission through commitment to education and fundraising.



Aardvarks

As an enthusiastic circle of longtime supporters, these donors are committed to our mission and stay connected with us throughout the year at exclusive events.



GAZELS

(Group Association of Zoo Educational Ladies)

Co-chairs Maryanne Pfister and Patsy Marino hosted a GAZELS grand finale celebrating 10 years of connecting to conservation.



Leaving a Legacy for Wildlife

A heartfelt thank you to those who are creating a lasting legacy by including us in their estate plans, helping us meet the conservation challenges of today and tomorrow. Those who have informed us of their planned giving join our honorary Heritage Guild, enjoying access to exclusive benefits such as special events.



Heritage Guild member Tim Sanders

For Generations to Come

ZOO100 is a vital circle of donors helping us care for wildlife, through this century and beyond, with their support of the Wegeforth Fund endowment. We recognized this group with a special morning at the Zoo, in addition to other benefits throughout the year.

We celebrate the memory of **Paul E. and Gloria J. LeBuhn**, whose generous legacy gift is making a difference that will echo for generations to come.





Community Connections

Harnessing the Power of Storytelling

Every connection we make helps create allies for conservation—and the more people we can reach, the more we can accomplish together for wildlife and landscapes across the globe.

By diversifying the ways we connect with our audiences, we bring them into our mission through the power of storytelling, shining a light on the incredible world we all share.

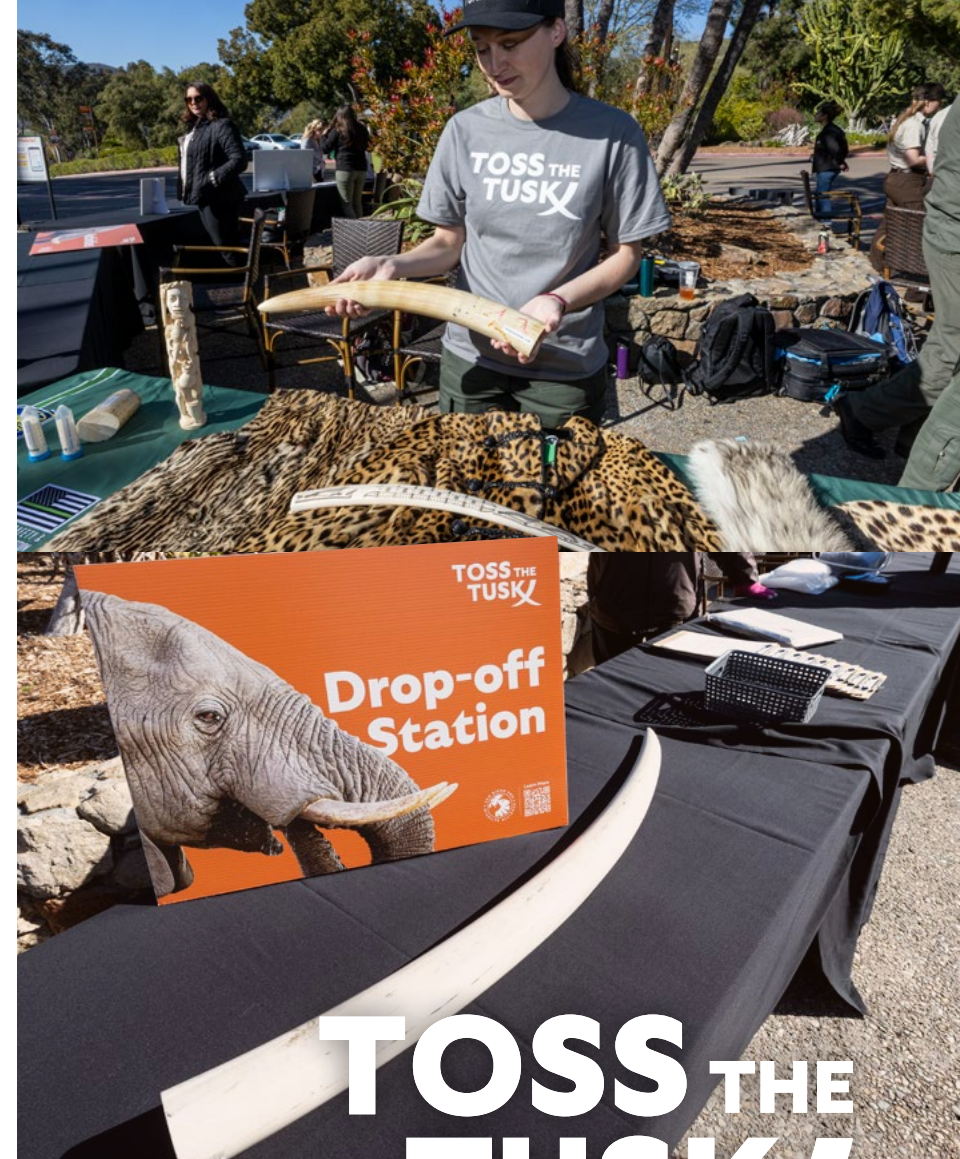
Engaging Allies

Throughout the year, special events and festive seasonal celebrations at the Zoo and Safari Park inspire our guests and connect them to the global conservation efforts they make possible with each visit. At the Safari Park, guests enjoy **Seniors Free February, Spring Safari Featuring Butterfly Jungle, Autumn Festival, Wild Holidays, and Indigenous Peoples' Celebration**, while at the Zoo, major events include **Food, Wine & Brew, HaGLOWeen, and Jungle Bells**. Both parks offer **Kids Free October**, celebrations for **Lunar New Year**, and **Wild Weekend** events spotlighting global work in our Conservation Hubs.

“

I love telling guests they don't need to pay for their little ones when they come up to a booth to purchase tickets in October. **They almost always light up** and are surprised.

— Kevin L., Admissions



TOSS THE TUSK

New This Year

In March, the Safari Park hosted “Toss the Tusk,” the first event of its kind designed to raise awareness about the elephant poaching crisis and illegal ivory trade. Organized by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums Wildlife Trafficking Alliance and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, **Toss the Tusk encouraged the public to surrender unwanted elephant ivory items, helping ensure their availability will not drive demand for the product.**



Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation

We kicked off the year at the **134th Rose Parade**, celebrating the Safari Park’s 50th anniversary and the life-changing moments happening here every day.

Bringing the Safari Park to life, **our float won the 2023 Animation Award!** It featured rhino Neville and his mom Livia, Msituni the giraffe and her parents, and African crowned cranes alongside an open-air safari truck.

With more than 70 million people around the world tuning in to welcome the new year, we shared stories of hope and created new allies for wildlife.



“

As part of my bucket list, my daughter signed us up to work on our hometown float! As a San Diego native, **it was a dream come true, and we’ve made it an annual tradition.**

— A volunteer float decorator



Tuning In
Season two of our podcast *Amazing Wildlife* took listeners on a journey around the globe through one of a kind stories and behind-the-scenes looks.

Hosts Rick Schwartz and Marco Wendt explored the metamorphosis of caterpillars in the Southwest, dove into a fresh perspective on polar bear conservation in the Arctic, and investigated unique insights for koala reintroduction in Australian forests.



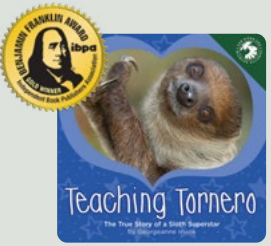
Listen In!



San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Press

Publishing
San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Press offers books for all ages, inspiring allies worldwide through illustrated children's books, adult nonfiction, and more.

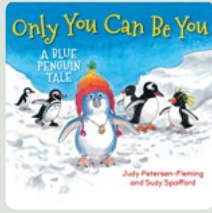
New This Year



TEACHING TORNEO:
The True Story of a Sloth Superstar
By Georgeanne Irvine



AMAZING OMEO:
A Baby Koala's True Story of Survival
By Georgeanne Irvine



ONLY YOU CAN BE YOU:
A Blue Penguin Tale
Written by Judy Petersen-Fleming
Illustrated by Suzy Spafford



We won **The Knot's Best of Weddings Award** and the **Couples' Choice Award from WeddingWire**—in addition to receiving a 5-star rating on both websites for 2023, raising visibility for our organization and support for our mission.

“

I cannot say enough about how amazing the San Diego Zoo Safari Park was. The cost compared to other venues, and the added **value of the venue being a nonprofit dedicated to conservation**, there is no better choice.

— Kara C., via The Knot



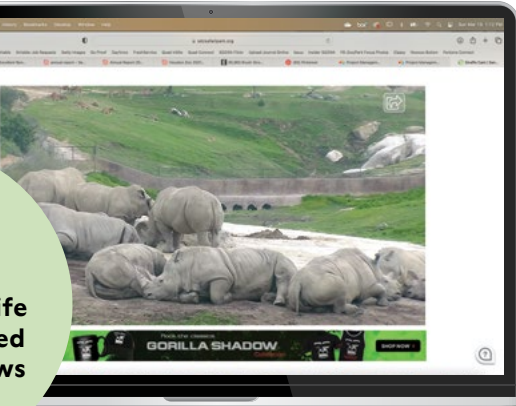
Bringing Smiles Where They're Needed Most
The San Diego Zoo Wildlife Explorers television channel is now available in **368 hospitals, clinics, and Ronald McDonald Houses in 48 states; Washington, DC; and 14 countries**, including Ukraine, added in 2023. This heartwarming and educational wildlife programming brings happiness, hope, and healing to more than 25 million children and their families.



Citizen Science & Technology
Wildlife allies across the globe help researchers classify trail camera photos on their computers and smartphones through **Wildwatch Kenya** and **Wildwatch Burrowing Owl**.

AniML
Our Conservation Technology Lab launched AniML, an innovative package of tools to identify wildlife in trail camera images from around the globe. **AI models can automatically identify and categorize images in a matter of days—a process that's historically taken scientists and volunteers months to accomplish.** With AI and volunteers working side by side, conservation can move even faster.


Our live streaming wildlife cameras garnered 30.5 million views in 2023.



Visit Our Parks from Anywhere
Millions of people from around the world join us at the Zoo and Safari Park each year without ever setting foot on grounds. Live streaming wildlife cameras and online content with complimentary educational programming keep our allies engaged, offering a closer look at wildlife and their habitats.



Explore the World with Us
Our sustainable, 100 percent carbon-neutral expeditions take wildlife allies on unforgettable adventures to some of the most awe-inspiring places on the planet. Hosted by our conservation experts, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Adventures **supports the future of sustainable travel, helps preserve vital wildlife habitats, and responsibly assists local communities that depend on tourism while fueling our conservation efforts.**

EXPLORE. CONNECT. PROTECT.
In 2023, passionate wildlife allies joined us for the following life-changing experiences:



- Botswana Explorer Safari
- Jaguars of Brazil's Pantanal
- Classic Galápagos Experience
- Great Amazon River Expedition
- Monarch Butterfly Migration
- Patagonia Wilderness and Wildlife Explorer
- Madagascar Wildlife Adventure



We earned over 148 billion media impressions in 2023—an increase of more than 32% over last year.

Allies Worldwide
In 2023, we garnered **652 million** views across social media and **147 billion** total media views.
This represented more than **\$1.2 billion** in media value and enabled us to reach wildlife allies across the globe.

- Social Media and Web**
-  **83.3 million** YouTube views
 -  **2.2 million** Facebook fans
 -  **2.5 million** TikTok followers
 -  **1.2 million** Instagram followers
 -  **180,000** Twitter/X followers
 -  **31,000** Pinterest followers
 -  **29,000** LinkedIn followers
 -  **15.3 million** Flickr photo views
 -  **731 million** Giphy views

-  **122,095,701** views on our websites
-  **30,524,157** views on live wildlife cams

One Health Approach: Our Commitment to All Life Thriving

Our global community starts right here in San Diego. We bring people through our two front doors, the Zoo and Safari Park, and also engage with new allies and partners where they are. Together we find new ways to bring hope, inspiration, and smiles as we share resources and inspire passion for nature, from on-grounds events and supporting our local military community to speaking engagements and our commitment to ensuring our parks are inclusive for all. Dive into some of this year’s highlights in the following pages.



Sharing the Fun

We hosted a **Fall Jamboree** for more than 100 youngsters and their **families at Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego**. They enjoyed a sneak preview of October festivities, with entertainers from the Zoo’s HalGLOWeen celebration and the Safari Park’s Autumn Festival, plus a story time with author Georgeanne Irvine, who read *Teaching Tornero* (for more about publishing, see page 102).



This Year

We met people and shared expertise through **speaking engagements** at universities and community organizations, including **Rotary Club**; hosted filmmakers at the Safari Park in partnership with **Jackson Wild** for the **2023 Latinx Film Lab**; put our conservation message before an audience of millions at the Rose Parade; shared what we do through **Visit California** and **Visit San Diego**; and so much more.



Localized Grants

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awarded multiple grants in support of our conservation work—including programs saving the Pacific pocket mouse, Hawaiian birds, and mountain yellow-legged frogs—and helping bring our community engagement programs to students and teachers in our Southern California region.

Our Military Community

San Diego is home to one of the United States’ largest military communities, and we’re proud to have a long history of creating connections with them.



SALUTING OUR U.S. ARMED FORCES

Making It Possible

We thank the late Jim Bashor, a U.S. Army veteran, and his wife Dianne Bashor for their philanthropic contributions establishing the **Bashor Family Patriots Fund**, which **guarantees active duty service members year-round admission** to our parks and supports critical community engagement opportunities on grounds for wounded warriors across our region.

In 2023, more than 100,000 active duty military personnel received complimentary admission to the Zoo and Safari Park.

Wild Heroes

Through the Bashor Family Patriots Fund and collaboration with Naval Medical Center San Diego, Camp Pendleton, and other military resources, our Wild Heroes program provides **opportunities for wounded armed forces personnel and their families to visit the Zoo, connect to the healing aspects of nature and wildlife**, and spend time with other veterans as they transition to civilian life.

766 service members and their family members participated in the Wild Heroes program—a nearly 40 percent increase over 2022.

Support for Military Families

We participate in homecomings, welcoming home sailors and marines **after deployments in the Western Pacific**, along with special recognition of the **Month of the Military Child**, holiday parties, **Fleet Week**, and more. And, for over 20 years, we’ve hosted the Navy’s Sailor of the Year event.

In Our Family

On nearly every team across our organization, there is a team member who is a veteran, serves in the military, or is part of a military family. Members of our Military Team Member Resource Community (TMRC) work to create spaces for our military community.



Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

At its heart, conservation is about people. Our two beautiful parks welcome millions of visitors from around the world, and our global conservation efforts begin with the people who share ecosystems with wildlife. We are stronger together and have an even greater impact when we continually strive to ensure we honor, respect, and engage all members of our community.



Pride in San Diego
With our Team Tourism partners—the San Diego Tourism Authority, the San Diego Convention Center, and the San Diego County Lodging Association—we joined worldwide celebrations for LGBTQIA+ Pride Month at San Diego’s Pride Parade, one of the largest in the nation. **Our theme “San Diego Welcomes All” joyfully celebrated every member of our community.**

Accessible Employment

We’re working to **reach a more diverse pool of job candidates**, hiring more team members with varying abilities and forging new alliances as we work with various workforce groups to be an employer of choice for all.



Increasing Accessibility

To make veterinary medicine a more accessible career path for underrepresented communities, our Wildlife Health team offers a veterinary mentorship program. We’re one of the only zoos with this kind of program.



Plant-a-Seed

This program helps develop talent pipelines, diversify the future of conservation professionals, impact underserved communities, develop relationships with other local nonprofits, and enhance diversity of students participating in our education programs.

In collaboration with three other nonprofits—Youth Empowerment, Junior Achievement, and Paving Great Futures—our Plant-a-Seed program helped **over 200 youths and young adults** learn about career paths within our organization.

World-Class Experiences for All

We strive to **ensure our locations are accessible to all guests**. The Zoo and Safari Park are both Sensory Inclusive sites as certified by KultureCity, a nonprofit that advocates for people with sensory processing disorders who may find noises, smells, lights, or crowds overwhelming.



Guests can reduce sensory overload by borrowing “**sensory bags**” that offer items such as **noise-cancelling headphones and fidget toys**. Signage across the parks and on our accessibility maps indicates areas of quiet respite and noisy, busy locations.

In 2023, about **2,000 sensory-inclusive bags were distributed** to guests, making our parks more accessible and enjoyable for all.

Conservation through Collaboration

As an alliance, we make the greatest conservation impact by pooling expertise and collaborating strategically across the globe. We are grateful to all our partners and contributors for their collaboration, innovation, and insight. Our collective efforts are stronger through our shared commitment to a world where all life thrives.



- Ahura Resorts Conservation Foundation
- AIDER
- Amazon Center for Environmental Education and Research (ACEER) Foundation
- Amazon Conservation
- Amazon Shelter
- American Bird Conservancy
- Aquarium of the Pacific
- Arizona Game & Fish
- Association des Chefs Traditionnels Riverains de la Forêt d’Ebo Forest (ACTRIFE)
- Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Polar Bear Research Council
- AZA SAFE, Chelonian Taxon Advisory Group
- AZA Saving Animals from Extinction (SAFE)
- AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP)
- Australian Museum Research Institute

- Belau National Museum
- BKSDA West Sumatra
- Bosques Amazónicos
- Botanic Gardens Conservation International
- Bureau of Land Management
- CalFIRE
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve
- California Department of Parks and Recreation (TPNSR)
- California Natural Diversity Database
- California Plant Rescue
- California State Parks
- California State University, San Marcos (Professor Christina Simokat)
- Caltrans
- Campo Kumeyaay Nation
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Cayman Islands Department of Environment
- Center for Plant Conservation
- Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)
- Centro Bartolomé de las Casas
- Centro de Innovación Científica Amazónica (CINCIA)
- Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICESE)
- Cesar Australia

- Chia Café Collective
- Chicago BG
- Chui Mamas
- Churchill Northern Studies Centre
- City Farmers Nursery
- ClarividUS
- Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
- Climate Science Alliance
- Clubs des Amis des Chimpanzés
- Clubs des Amis des Gorilles
- Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
- Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (CONANP)
- Community Assistance in Development (COMAID)
- Connections Public Charter School
- Conservación Amazónica (ACCA)
- Conservation Biology Institute
- Copenhagen Zoo
- Drexel University
- Edwards Air Force Base
- El Paso Zoo
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
- Espacios Naturales y Desarrollo
- Ewaso Lions
- Field Projects International
- Forestal Otorongo

- Fort Worth Zoo
- Gaia
- Galápagos Conservancy
- Galápagos National Park Directorate
- Genus plc
- Gerencia Regional de Desarrollo Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre Loreto
- Gerencia Regional de Desarrollo Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre Madre de Dios
- Giraffe Conservation Foundation
- GIZ
- Global Conservation Consortium for Cycads
- Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
- Government of Vietnam
- Grevy’s Zebra Trust
- Hawai’i Academy of Arts & Sciences
- Humboldt Institute
- Illumina
- In Situ Lab Initiative
- International Iguana Foundation
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC)
- IUCN SSC Bear Specialist Group
- IUCN SSC Cycad Specialist Group
- IUCN SSC Orchid Specialist Group
- IUCN SSC Iguana Specialist Group
- Jardim Zoológico
- Jocotoco Conservation Foundation

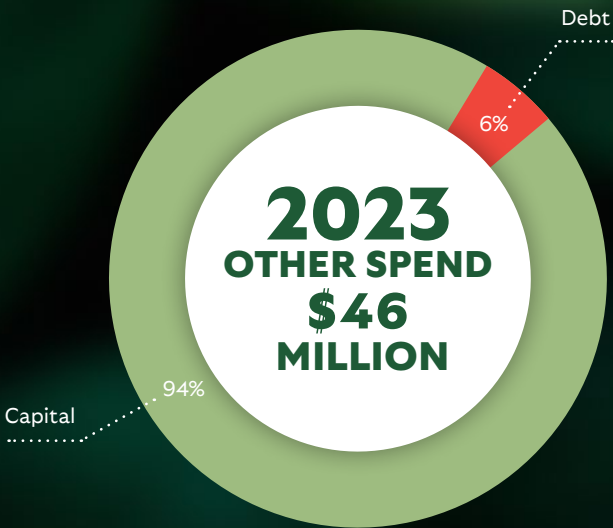
- Kalepo Community Conservancy
- Kamehameha Schools
- Kansas City Zoo
- Kaua’i Forest Bird Recovery Project
- Kealakehe High School
- Kenya Wildlife Service
- KfW
- Kirimon Community
- Kupu
- Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research
- Lewa Wildlife Conservancy
- Limbe Wildlife Centre
- Living Coast Discovery Center
- Loisaba Conservancy
- Los Angeles Zoo
- Maderacre
- Manú Endemic Station
- Manú National Park - SERNANP
- Master Gardener Association of San Diego County
- Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project
- Meru Betiri National Park
- Metropolitan Airpark LLC
- Ministry of Environment, Cambodia
- Ministry of Health, Cambodia
- Ministry of Waterways and Environment, Republic of Fiji
- Mississippi State Chemical Laboratory

Mississippi State University	OI Malo	San Diego Natural History Museum	State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife	U.S. Geological Survey	Volcano School of Arts & Sciences
Mpala Research Centre	Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium	San Diego State University Soil Ecology and Restoration Group	Stellenbosch University	U.S. Navy	VulPro
Mugie Conservancy	OVIS	San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD)	Stony Brook University	U.S. Navy Environmental Division, Naval Base Coronado	Waiākea High School
Naibunga Lower Community Conservancy	Pacific Bird Conservation	San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy	Tabaconas Namballe National Sanctuary	Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos	Waimea Valley
Namunyak Conservancy	Palau Community College	San Francisco Zoo & Gardens	Taricaya EcoReserve	Universidad Nacional San Antonio Abad de Cusco	Washington University in St. Louis
Nannapa Community Wildlife Conservancy	Palm Beach Zoo	San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians	Taronga Conservation Society	Universidad San Francisco de Quito	Wild Orca
National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation (NNOCCI)	Peninsular Pronghorn Recovery Program (PPRP)	SANParks Veterinary Wildlife Services, Kruger National Park	The 'Alalā Project	Universitas Andalas	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Cameroon Biodiversity Programme
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	Perú Verde	Santa Ana Zoo	The Global Owl Project	University of Alberta	Wildlife Research & Training Institute
NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center	Polar Bears International	Sarara Foundation	The Huntington	University of British Columbia	World Parrot Trust
NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center	Project Mecistops	Save the Elephants	The Living Desert	University of California, Davis	Zoetis
National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands	Rainforest Expeditions	Save the Indonesian Nature and Threatened Species (SINTAS)	The Nature Conservancy	University of California, Los Angeles	Zoo Antwerpen
National Trust of Fiji Islands	Re:wild	Save the Tasmanian Devil Program	The Peregrine Fund	University of California, San Diego	Zoo Aquarium Madrid
Natural Resources Conservation Agency of West Sumatra	Reteti Elephant Sanctuary	Science for Wildlife	The University of Queensland Koala Ecology Group	University of California, Santa Cruz	Zoo Dresden
Nature Conservation Foundation (Hornbill Nest Adoption Program)	Riverbanks Zoo & Garden	Scripps Institution of Oceanography	The University of Sydney	University of Copenhagen	Zoo Duisburg
NatureFiji-MareqetiViti	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	Sera Wildlife Conservancy	The Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College	University of Hamburg	Zoo Leipzig
Neotropical Primate Conservation	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	Servicio Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (SERNANP)	Three Mountain Alliance	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Zoo Miami
Ngardok Nature Reserve	Ruko Community Conservancy	Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre (SERFOR)	Town of Churchill	University of Manitoba	Zoo Planckendael
Ngilai Community Conservancy	Salk Institute for Biological Studies	Silvio Marchini, Ph.D.	TRAK TFRC	University of Nottingham	Zoo Zürich
North Carolina State University	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District	Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute Milk Repository	Turks and Caicos Islands Government Department of Environment and Coastal Resources	University of Oxford	ZooParc de Beauval
Northern Mariana Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife	San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District	South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)	Turtle Survival Alliance	University of Rome Tor Vergata	ZooTampa at Lowry Park
Northern Rangelands Trust	San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)	Spectacled Bear Conservation Society	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service	University of Saskatchewan	
Norwegian Polar Institute	San Diego Botanic Garden	Stanford University	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	University of Suffolk	
OI Jogi Wildlife Conservancy	San Diego Foundation			University of Vienna	
	San Diego Habitat Conservancy (SDHC)			University of Washington	
	San Diego Management & Monitoring Program (SDMMP)			VetinWild	

Financials

More toward Our Mission

As a nonprofit organization, all revenue supports our mission. Revenue above expenses is reinvested to pursue conservation priorities, capital projects, and operational needs.



\$2.4 BILLION ANNUALLY

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance drives \$2.4 billion in economic activity across the greater San Diego region each year, benefitting and supporting our greater community in countless ways.



Ways to Support

Your generosity today makes all the difference.

We are all connected. Everything we do to save, protect, and care for wildlife in San Diego and in eight Conservation Hubs across the globe is only possible with the generosity of allies like you. Please join us in securing the future for wildlife, people, and the ecosystems we all share.

Cash

The gift of cash provides immediate support for San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and is a tax-deductible charitable donation.

Special Events and Experiences

When you join us for a safari experience or tour or attend special events throughout the year—including our annual Food, Wine & Brew celebration and black-tie fundraising gala, Rendezvous In The Zoo (R·I·T·Z)—you're in for an adventure that benefits wildlife.

Vehicle Donations

Donate your car, truck, motorcycle, boat, or RV to make some space in your garage while fueling crucial conservation efforts across the globe. You may also qualify for a tax deduction.

Sponsorship and Licensing

From promotional opportunities to national cause marketing campaigns, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance offers a wide array of services that can help your brand be part of our efforts to save wildlife.

Thank you to our generous supporters and wildlife allies. We are so very grateful for you and for all you make possible!

Employer Matching Gifts

Many companies will match their employees' (and often retirees') contributions to our organization, doubling your impact for wildlife.

Foundation Grants

Partner with us to advance a broad range of projects and programs that save endangered species, fill laboratory and veterinary equipment needs, help underserved populations in our community, inspire the next generation, and so much more.

Stocks and Bonds

For gifts of appreciated securities, including stocks and bonds, you can receive a charitable income tax deduction and avoid paying capital gains tax on the appreciation.

Cryptocurrency

Donate your cryptocurrency today to make a difference for wildlife in San Diego and around the world.

“

The focus on **global conservation, with a credible and conscientious organization**, gives us the opportunity to leave the most impactful legacy.

— Shelly and Brian A., Donors

IRA Rollover

If you are 70-and-a-half or older, you can transfer up to \$100,000 from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) directly to San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance. This transfer counts toward your required minimum distribution and reduces your taxable income.

Wildlife Habitats

Giving to a new or improved habitat at our parks helps ensure we can continue providing the world's best care for wildlife. There's still time to make a gift to **Denny Sanford Elephant Valley** at the Safari Park, helping us transform the heart of the Safari Park and the future of elephant conservation worldwide. See page 85 for project updates.

Monthly Giving

Your monthly gift will fuel critical conservation worldwide, care for countless animals and plants at the Zoo and Safari Park, and offer sustainable hope to the extraordinary wildlife relying on us to survive and thrive each and every day. To learn more or become a Wildlife Hero, visit sdzwa.org/wildlife-hero.

To support our vital conservation mission, visit sdzwa.org/support-us, call us at **(619) 685-3219**, or email donations@sdzwa.org.

Create a Legacy for Wildlife



Your legacy gift helps us meet the challenges of today *and* tomorrow for generations to come. To learn more, visit zoolegacy.org.

Bequests

A bequest is one of the most popular and flexible ways you can help save, protect, and care for wildlife. Made through your will or living trust, you can gift a specific amount, an asset, or a percentage of your estate.

Memorials and Tributes

Donations to San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance can be a thoughtful way to honor or remember a loved one. All gifts have a meaningful impact and support our work to help wildlife around the world.

Gifts of Property & Retained Life Estate

A gift of appreciated real estate property, such as a home, vacation residence, or commercial property, allows you to leave a lasting legacy while avoiding capital gains tax and receiving a charitable income tax deduction. You can even donate your home today while retaining the right to live there for the rest of your life.

Charitable Remainder Trust

With a charitable remainder trust, you can transfer cash or appreciated property and choose to receive a fixed annuity payment or variable payments based on the trust principal. When the trust matures, the remaining amount passes to San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance.

Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)

Through a charitable gift annuity, you can transfer cash or appreciated property to our organization in exchange for fixed payments, with rates based on your age, for the rest of your life. When the annuity matures, the remainder passes to San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance.

Beneficiary Designation

For a simple and affordable way to support, you can designate us as a beneficiary of a retirement, investment, or bank account or your life insurance policy.

Leadership

Executive Team

Paul A. Baribault
President and Chief Executive Officer

Shawn Dixon
Chief Operating Officer

David Franco
Chief Financial Officer

Erika Kohler
*Senior Vice President
and Executive Director,
San Diego Zoo*

Lisa Peterson
*Senior Vice President
and Executive Director,
San Diego Zoo Safari Park*

Nadine Lamberski
DVM, DACZM, DECZM (ZHM)
*Chief Conservation and
Wildlife Health Officer*

David B. Gillig
Chief Philanthropy Officer

Aida Rosa
Chief Human Resources Officer

David Miller
Chief Marketing Officer

Wendy Bulger
General Counsel

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Wildlife Alliance**

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