



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

TRANSFORMING CONSERVATION TOGETHER



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To Our Wildlife Allies,

The theme of our 2025 annual report, “Transforming Conservation Together,” reflects an incredible shared journey through our 109th year. With you by our side, along with our partners, allies, and community, we made it a year of extraordinary conservation milestones and renewed hope for the future. We write to you with deep gratitude, knowing every achievement in these pages is possible because of your support.

This year, we saw our past and future connect in remarkable ways. The 50th anniversary of our Frozen Zoo® was a testament to how we innovate, preserving genetic lifelines for countless species and opening doors to possibilities once out of reach. That same forward-looking spirit also fueled our critical conservation initiatives, helping secure the future for wildlife and natural places.

A standout moment was celebrating one full year of giant pandas being back at the San Diego Zoo, reminding us all of what’s possible when we collaborate. At the San Diego Zoo Safari Park, landmark conservation reproduction and reintroduction programs continued to make a difference in San Diego and beyond. And across our eight Conservation Hubs worldwide, teams and communities came together to help protect ecosystems and ensure wildlife thrive for generations to come.

Our dedication to our mission shines not just through science, but the ways we engage wildlife allies, moving them toward understanding and then toward action. In 2025, we reached new and familiar audiences alike with the help of award-winning storytelling, inspiring education programs, and millions of visits to our parks. Each of these moments of connection sparks a deeper passion for protecting wildlife and natural places, bringing us one step closer to fulfilling our mission.

Thank you for being a vital part of our Alliance as we work toward a bright future for wildlife, people, and the planet we all share. Your support inspires us every day, and we are deeply grateful for you.

Together for wildlife,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shawn Dixon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Shawn Dixon
President and Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven S. Simpson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Steven S. Simpson
Chair, Board of Trustees



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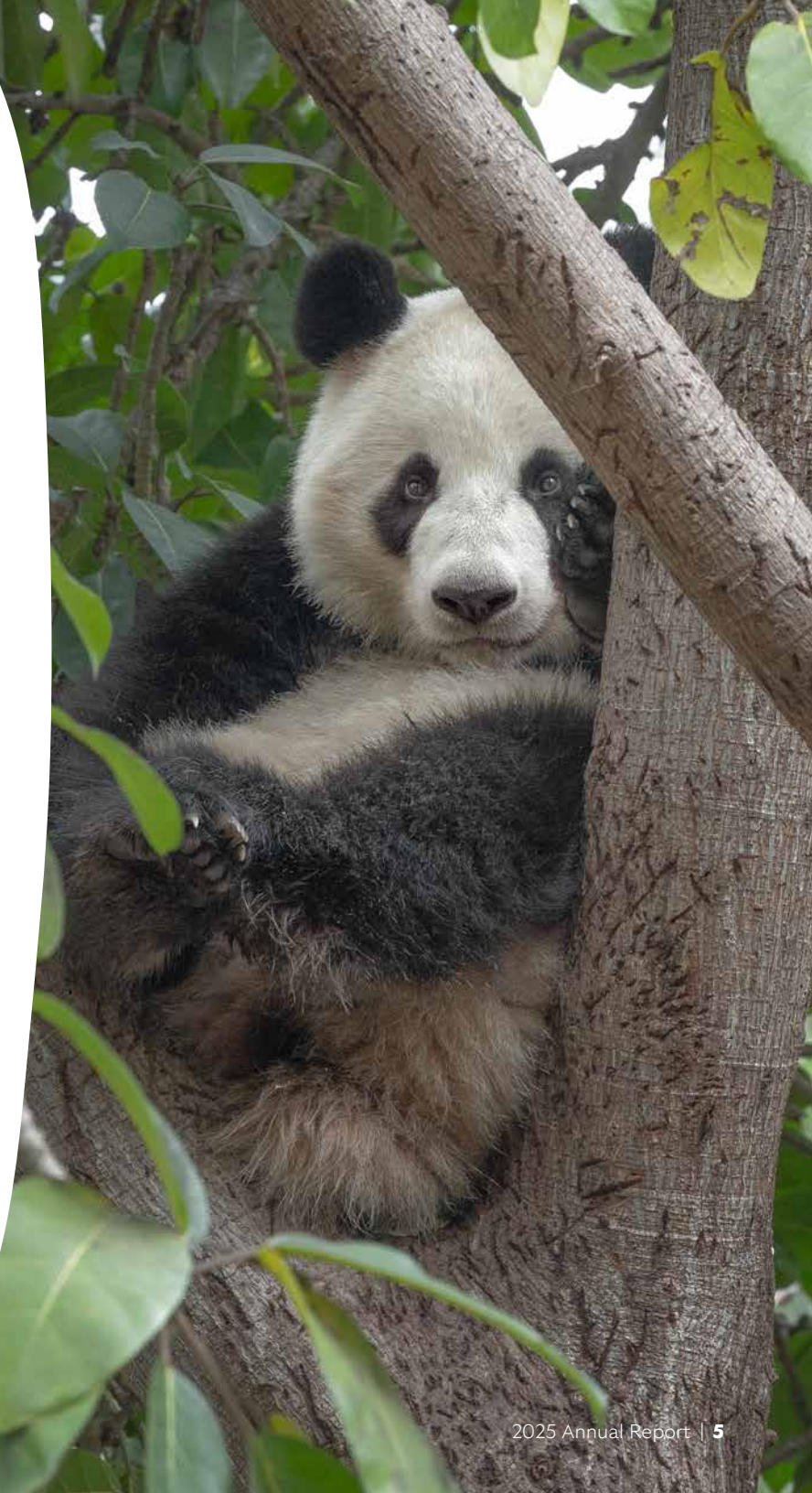
Who We Are

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance is an international nonprofit organization with the goal of being the most effective conservation organization for the world. It all begins with our two conservation parks, the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park, where millions of guests from around the world join us to connect with wildlife every year.

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

With more than 100 years of expertise, we integrate wildlife health and care, science, and education to develop sustainable conservation strategies at home and 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 an array of 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 Rhino

Represents the icon of our no place like it on Earth Safari Park.

The Lion

Represents the founding of the San Diego Zoo more than a century ago.

The Bird

Represents our groundbreaking historical and ongoing conservation efforts.



Our Two Wildlife Conservation Parks

At the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park, we welcome millions of guests and foster connections with wildlife. Our parks fuel our mission, allowing us to invest alongside our allies and partners in our vision of a world where all life thrives.



We care for more than 15,000 animals and over 2 million plants at the Zoo and Safari Park.

Our Responsibility

With over a century of experience, we've honed a unique set of skills and strengths that has become a significant contributor to vital global conservation efforts. The privilege of working

with and gaining a deeper understanding of wildlife comes with a responsibility to use our insights to secure the future for wildlife, people, and the planet—and to inspire others to join us.



**San
Diego
Zoo**

It Began with **A ROAR**

when the San Diego Zoo was founded to foster connections between people and wildlife. Approximately 4 million guests every year join us to make lasting memories and connect with wildlife.

Spanning 100 acres in the heart of Balboa Park in downtown San Diego, we offer allies of all ages countless opportunities to learn about animals, plants, conservation, and the ecosystems we share through inspiring and educational experiences.



Step into Ecosystems

With each new step to every one-of-a-kind habitat, you're immersed in **ecosystems from across the globe**. Guests can journey from savanna to seashore, explore the wonders of the Land Down Under, meander through lush rainforest, and so much more.



Enjoy the Views

Take a stroll through buzzing aviaries and forests with trickling streams, and experience bird's-eye views from Bashor Bridge, Skyfari®, and our signature double-decker buses. Everywhere you look, you'll discover **different ways to connect with nature**.



Fuel Your Exploration

In our **30 unique dining locations**, you'll find tasty options ranging from quick bites, sips, and snacks to gourmet dining.



Where Plants Thrive

We're an **accredited botanical garden**, caring for more than 700,000 individual plants of over 3,100 species. The Zoo is also a haven for endangered and illegally trafficked plants, and we've earned Level IV accreditation as an arboretum—the highest rank awarded by ArbNet.



Wildlife Wonders

From giant pandas exploring bamboo forests at Denny Sanford Panda Ridge to orangutans swinging through the treetops, **new discoveries await around every corner**. We care for more than 12,000 unique and endangered animals representing over 680 species.



Finding Inspiration

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

Engaging Adventures

Discovery awaits in experiences that bring allies even closer to wildlife.

- Inside Look tours
- Wildlife encounters and experiences
- Exclusive VIP Experiences
- Plant Days and Orchid Odyssey
- Seasonal events, including HaGLOWeen, Jungle Bells, and Food, Wine & Brew





Conservation Begins Here

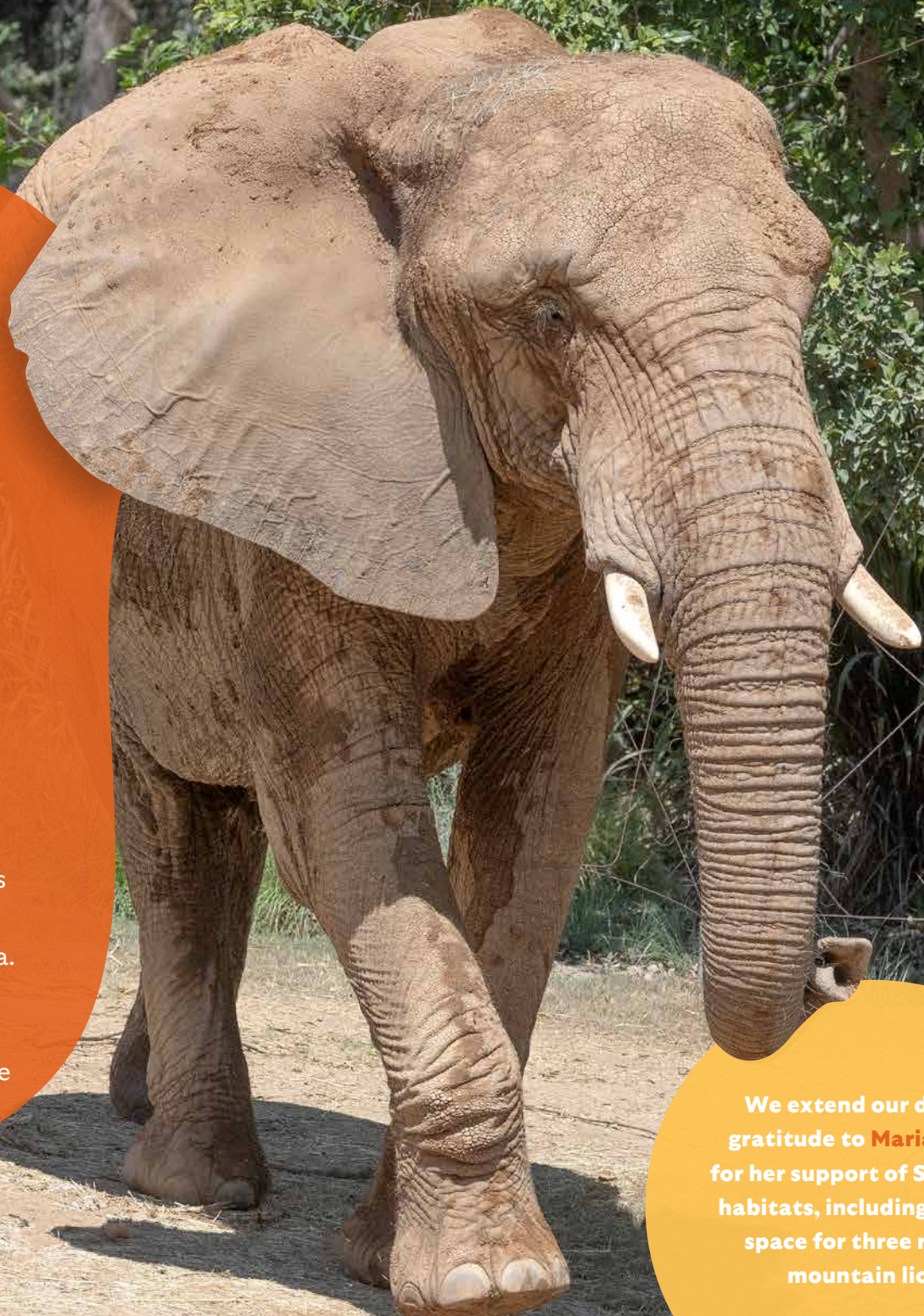
A renowned veterinary hospital and museum-accredited pathology archives are based at the Zoo. At the Scripps Building, our Disease Investigations team works to address wildlife disease and performs health surveillance, and our Wildlife Nutrition and Curatorial teams collaborate to provide world-class care.



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 Australian forests and Asian rainforests to the chaparral of North America's Southwest and vast savannas of Africa. Life-changing moments happen here every day, inspiring **over 1.3 million allies who visit us each year** to join our efforts to save, protect, and care for wildlife worldwide.



We extend our deepest gratitude to **Marian Frank** for her support of Safari Park habitats, including a special space for three rescued mountain lions.



Now Boarding

Take a ride on our **iconic Africa Tram**, inspired by the legendary safari trains of Africa. Each guided 2.5-mile adventure whisks you away to expansive savannas to experience towers of giraffes, crashes of rhinos, flocks of rare birds, and so much more.



Tasty Treats

Delicious menu options abound at our **17 dining and snacking locations**, from small bites to full-service meals and delectable seasonal offerings.



Places to Play

Interactive areas **engage our youngest allies with wildlife-themed fun**, including Mawazo Woods Discovery Area, Conservation Carousel, and Camp Play Area at Tull Family Tiger Trail.



Denny Sanford Elephant Valley

With your support, we're transforming the heart of the Safari Park with the reimagining of Elephant Valley. This dynamic new experience is a one-of-a-kind place where guests walk alongside the herd and connect with them on an entirely new scale, becoming part of a movement **working to secure their future for generations to come.**



Encounter Wildlife

We care for **more than 3,000 animals representing over 293 species.** You'll discover endless opportunities to connect with the world's wildlife, from tigers prowling bamboo forests to gorillas interacting across leafy glades and a platypus swimming through bubbling streams.



Verdant Vistas

Here we care for **more than 1.3 million plants of over 3,700 species.** Our **accredited botanical gardens** transport you into habitats from around the globe, from the Baja and Old World Succulent Gardens to the California Nativescapes Garden.

We've achieved Level IV accreditation as an arboretum—the highest rank awarded by ArbNet.

Choose Your Adventure

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

- Wildlife and Safari Experiences
- Zip lining on Flightline Safari
- Roar & Snore overnight camping
- Ultimate Safari
- Wildlife encounters
- Balloon Safari
- Seasonal adventures, including Butterfly Jungle, Autumn Festival, and Wild Holidays



Remarkable Reserve

The Biodiversity Reserve, a maintained wilderness of vital native coastal sage scrub habitat, makes up nearly 1,000 of the Safari Park's 1,800 acres. It is designated as a protected area by 30x30 California, an effort to protect 30% of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030.





Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center for Conservation Research

At this home base for innovation—and our Conservation Science and Wildlife Health teams—you'll find our library, laboratories, Wildlife Biodiversity Bank, Conservation Education Lab, and The Eddy Family Outdoor Learning Lab.



A Conservation Center

The Safari Park was **founded as one of the boldest preservation projects in history, and it continues to lead the way for conservation.** Programs to save and protect California condors, western burrowing owls, rhinos, and other endangered species are headquartered here, along with the state-of-the-art Paul Harter Veterinary Medical Center.

Everyday Allies

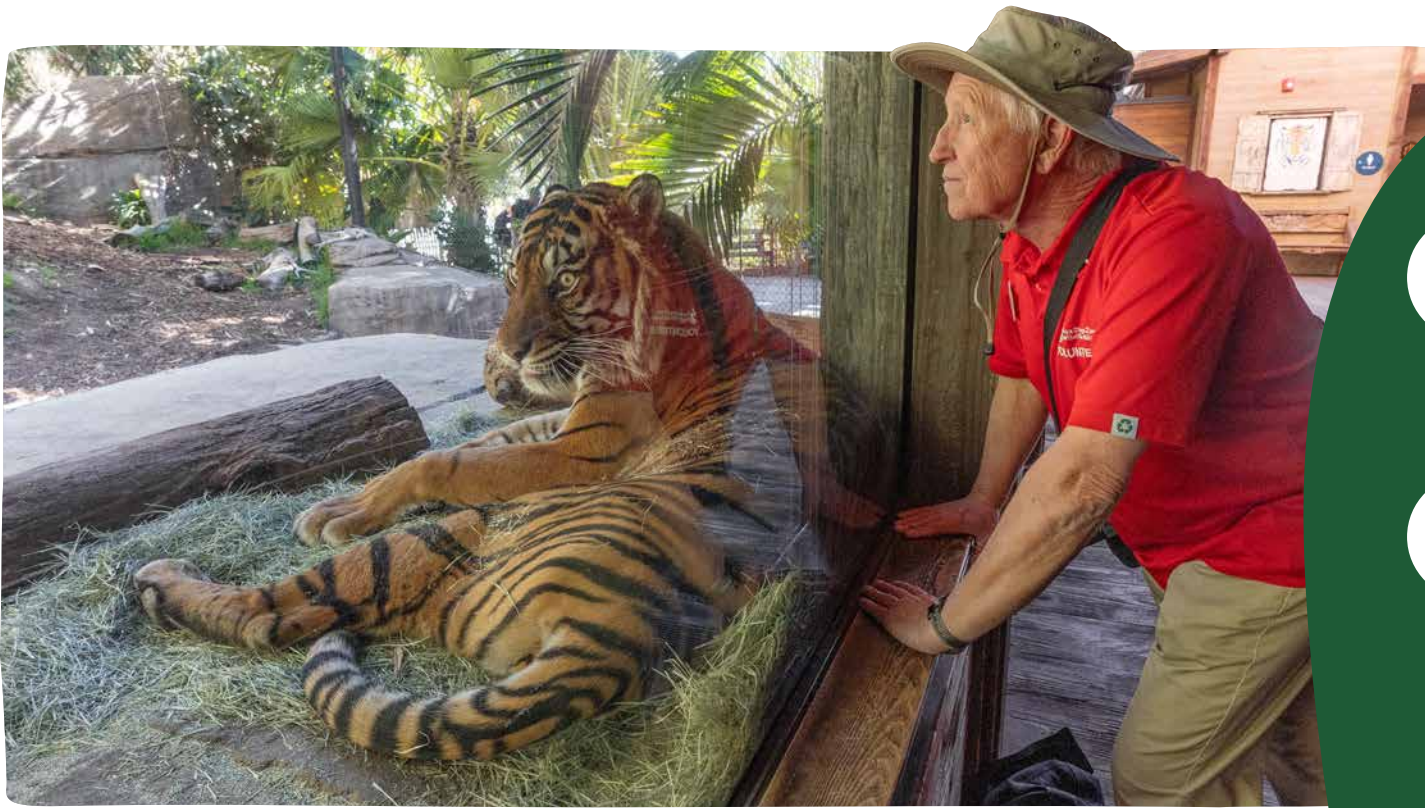
Each year, around 5.3 million guests join us to connect with wildlife at the Zoo and Safari Park. Every single one of those visits, the lifelong memories they create, and the positive impact they make for wildlife across the globe are only possible because of the thousands of team members and volunteers making it happen each and every day.



“

My work gives me the chance to **inspire action for conservation** on behalf of our mission. When I see the “light bulb” going on for guests, **it brings me joy.**

—**SAM F.**, Tours/Transportation



3,000+
Dedicated Team Members

worked to fulfill San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance's mission in San Diego and across the globe in 2025.



1,889
Invaluable Volunteers

work alongside our teams. They share their passion for conservation with guests of all ages, lend their unique skills and expertise behind the scenes, and are making a difference for our mission.



264,000+
Hours of Service

contributed by our volunteers.



2025 Milestone Moments

From heartwarming highlights at the Zoo and Safari Park to conservation achievements and global media impact, these are some of the moments that defined our year.

8 critically endangered

Fijian iguanas found a safe haven at the Zoo after being trafficked (page 45).



50 Years

We marked 50 years of the Frozen Zoo and looked ahead to what's next for this pioneering and irreplaceable resource (page 28).



Number 1

We're the largest provider of informal STEM education in San Diego County (page 76).



117 million+

visits to our website from people across the globe.



About 5.3 million

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



100

We celebrated 100 years of partnership and conservation with Taronga Conservation Society Australia (page 68).



Hidden Gems

A plant species previously unknown to science was discovered growing at the Zoo (page 24).

365 Days

We celebrated one year of countless allies connecting with giant pandas Xin Bao and Yun Chuan (page 51).



+1

An endangered okapi calf was born at the Zoo for the first time since 2021 (page 55).



90 critically endangered

Pacific pocket mice raised at the Safari Park were released into local, protected native habitat (page 41).



249.7 billion+

media impressions, reaching allies worldwide.



Approximately 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 pages 80–83 for more about how you can join us).



29,000+

donors generously supported our mission, helping wildlife in San Diego and worldwide.



Nearly 250,000

learners joined us for one-of-a-kind educational programming (page 76).

2025 Honors & Awards

We received global recognition for everything from our conservation work and on-grounds experiences to our podcast and websites.



With Purpose

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance was named “Nonprofit of the Year” at the PRWeek Purpose Awards for the way we engaged global audiences with our mission.



The Power of Storytelling

Teams won 12 awards in 8 categories at the 2025 San Diego Press Club Excellence in Journalism Awards, recognizing our websites, conservation newsletters, magazine, and illustrations.



Top Honors

For the second year in a row, we won the Sweepstakes Award for our Rose Parade float. Its theme, “Friendship Across the Earth,” celebrated the historic arrival of giant pandas. More than 50 million viewers in 170 countries tuned in (page 92).



Taking Home Silver

The fourth season of *Amazing Wildlife: A San Diego Zoo Podcast* (page 93) was honored with a silver Signal Award.



Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Awards

Earned Media Excellence

Recognizing the vital role of public relations and earned media in inspiring audiences.

North American Conservation

Honoring our impactful Southwest Conservation Hub programs supporting threatened species, including the Pacific pocket mouse, desert tortoise, mountain yellow-legged frog, burrowing owl, and kangaroo rats.

Volunteer Engagement Award

Celebrating the teamwork behind Wild Heroes, which supports wounded service members, veterans, and their families through activities like guided hikes and wellness workshops, achieving measurable health improvements.



20+ Years

Dr. Debra Shier, Brown Endowed Associate Director of Recovery Ecology, received the prestigious Richard Buchholz Conservation Behavior Award from the Animal Behavior Society, honoring more than two decades of groundbreaking work in wildlife behavior and conservation science focusing on our Southwest Conservation Hub (page 36).



Excellence in Bloom

The American Public Gardens Association's prestigious Garden Excellence Award honored our exceptional contributions to horticulture, conservation, education, and sustainability (page 25).



Love Notes

For the third year in a row, we won both The Knot's Best of Weddings and WeddingWire's Couples' Choice awards.



Awarding Impact

Our Wildlife Biodiversity Bank (page 26) was recognized for delivering measurable, positive outcomes for wildlife and ecosystems as a finalist for the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) Conservation Award.

Rooting for Conservation in 2025

The dedicated experts on our award-winning Horticulture teams care for more than **2 million plants at the Zoo and Safari Park**, cultivating and maintaining lush landscapes that support wildlife and inspire millions of visitors each year. From nurturing rare and endangered plant species to designing sustainable and inspiring habitats, their work is vital to our mission of connecting people to nature and protecting biodiversity. This year there was much to celebrate.

15 cycad cones

from 2 endangered species were pollinated using both fresh and frozen pollen. This groundbreaking milestone offered valuable insights into pollen viability and conservation techniques.

Engaging Allies

Countless guests each year celebrate vibrant plant life and engage with experts at the Zoo and Safari Park. Both are **accredited arboretums** and **USDA Plant Rescue Centers** that care for trafficked wildlife.

Nearly 20,000 guests attended monthly Plant Days and Orchid Odyssey at the Zoo, stepping into the Carnivorous Plant Greenhouse and Orchid House. They also embarked on special Botanical Bus Tours that have become so popular they now take place weekly.

2,000+ guests at the Safari Park joined **81 Botanical Tram Tours**, while more explored lush garden trails, celebrating diverse plant life.

Self-guided plant tours offer insights into our botanical collections and gardens, unveiling hidden gems at each park.

Branching Out

A previously unknown species, called the dainty bamboo palm, was discovered growing in Fern Canyon at the Zoo.



50 years

rescuing and caring for orchids in San Diego and around the world.



Nearly 50 years of our browse program

What began as a eucalyptus farm now feeds hundreds of animals daily.



1,778,200 linear feet of plant material and browse items—including shoots, bark, buds, leaves, and branches—were farmed, serving wildlife from insects to giant pandas.

Phase 1 of a 15-acre master plan to expand our browse farm was completed.

Our profound gratitude to Carol Ann Greenfield and Larry David Greenfield, M.D., for their support of wildlife nutrition.

Honoring Excellence

In recognition of outstanding achievements in horticulture, conservation, education, and sustainability, we received the prestigious **Garden Excellence Award** from the American Public Gardens Association.

20+ years

of the micropropagation lab and cryopreservation, advancing conservation for endangered plants.

Wildlife Biodiversity Bank

Our Wildlife Biodiversity Bank is made up of six collections of living and nonliving biological materials preserved by our teams. Biobanks like ours lay the foundation for trailblazing conservation solutions by bridging today's samples with tomorrow's scientific potential.

Our biobanking began in 1975 with the founding of our Frozen Zoo, and today it's the most extensive resource of its kind in the world.



In 2025

219 species and subspecies were added to the Frozen Zoo, including **23** species new to the collection. **1,758** vials of gametes and reproductive tissue were frozen.



Cells preserved in the Frozen Zoo are the building blocks of life, offering limitless conservation potential for species like the **red panda, cells of which are** shown here.



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

53,861 samples of genetic materials, including blood, tissue, DNA, and cells.

Gametes from **2,495** individuals representing **485** species.

67 million+ seeds representing **535** types of plants.

Slides of tissue sections from **1,867+** species, dating back to the 1930s.

11,767 individual cell lines representing about **1,352** species and subspecies.

Together with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), we formed the first Center for Species Survival: Biodiversity Biobanking, representing our enduring commitment to save wildlife in the face of the increasing losses of species and ecosystem variety.



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)



Pathology Archive

Healthy and diseased tissues preserved in formalin, paraffin, and on microscopy slides



Native Plant Gene Bank

Seeds, plant cuttings, and herbarium vouchers (pressed and dried specimens)



Clinical Repository

Adipose-derived stem cells, whole blood, plasma, serum, and bodily fluids



Tissue and DNA Bank

Blood, tissue, derived DNA, and cells



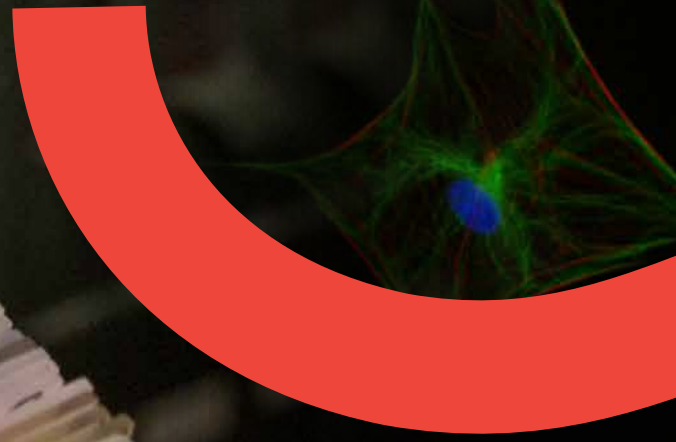
What began as a revolutionary idea in 1975 has grown into **the world's most extensive repository of living wildlife materials**, preserving the genetic legacy of life on Earth.

For half a century, our Frozen Zoo has been a beacon of hope, safeguarding the genetic blueprints of our planet's most vulnerable species. As we honored its remarkable impact this year, we also launched our most ambitious chapter yet, expanding this vital work across the globe to secure the future of wildlife for generations to come.

50 YEARS

of SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION

Protecting what is precious today and restoring what could be lost tomorrow.



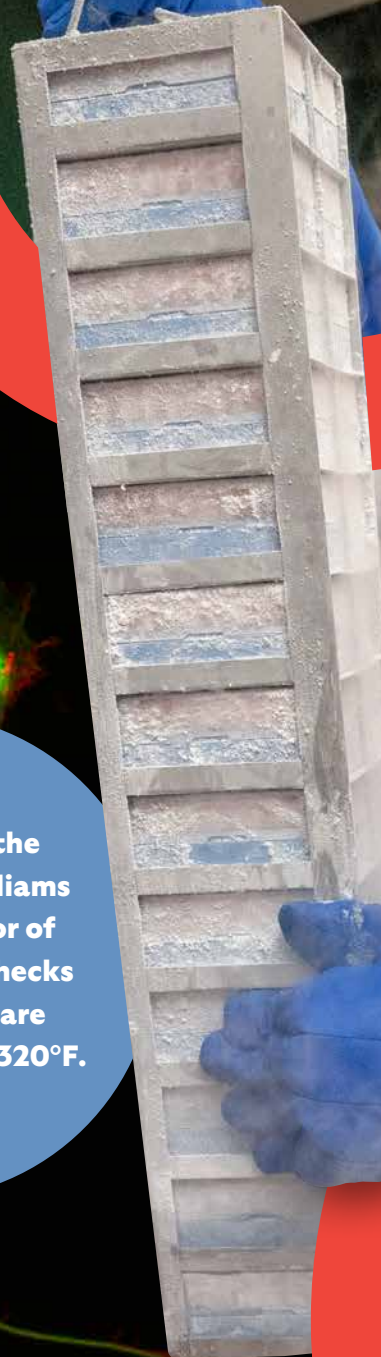
One of a Kind

The Frozen Zoo stores 11,767 living cell lines from **1,352 species**, representing a staggering 50% of species categorized as extinct in native habitats.

Biobanking supports advancements in genetic rescue, population sustainability, disease resistance, and climate adaptation.

Samples from 219 species were banked this year, including 23 species new to the collection, among them Aruba Island rattlesnake, oak pollen, yellow tree monitor, common chuckwalla, European fire salamander, New Mexico ridge-nosed rattlesnake, Bolson tortoise, and Attwater's prairie chicken

Marlys Houck, the Elizabeth J.F. Williams Endowed Curator of the Frozen Zoo, checks samples, which are cryopreserved at -320°F.



Forever Pioneering



Planting Hope

This year, new methods have allowed the banking of plants that couldn't be frozen through traditional methods, including endangered oaks and cycads.

First Ever

We banked cells from a critically endangered Lord Howe Island stick insect. It's the first insect in the Frozen Zoo and the first time this critically endangered species, once thought to be extinct, has been banked anywhere.

Dr. Kurt Benirschke's visionary idea to freeze animal cells laid the foundation for the Frozen Zoo. His guiding principle, a quote from historian Daniel Boorstin, **"You must collect things for reasons you don't yet understand,"** has continued to lead it forward ever since.



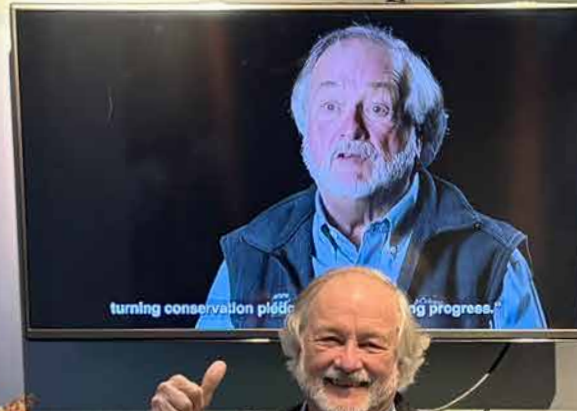
50 years in,
we're just
getting started.

A Bold Vision

With new pilot sites in Kenya, Vietnam, Hawai'i, and Peru, our goal is to biobank every endangered species by 2075. Announced at the IUCN World Conservation Congress this year, this collaborative effort invites conservationists worldwide to help protect the planet's incredible species and ecosystem variety for future generations.

Dr. Oliver Ryder, Kleberg Endowed Director of Conservation Genetics, was part of the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance cohort in attendance at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi. Dr. Benirschke brought Dr. Ryder on board in the early days of the Frozen Zoo.

Biobanking for Conservation



Join us in
our mission
to biobank all
endangered
species by 2075!

100+
professionals from 45
countries pledged to join us.



WILDLIFE

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 determine the health of our planet. Through a holistic One Health approach, we honor, celebrate, and advocate for that connection every day.

A Vital Balance

Biodiversity losses, challenges to climate resilience, and global pandemics are severe and interconnected crises that cannot be addressed in isolation. Habitat degradation, invasive species, the illegal wildlife trade, pollution, and challenges to human-wildlife coexistence drive these crises and impact all of us. We work with partner organizations and allies around the world to address these complex issues so all life can thrive.

PEOPLE

One Health



Sustainable Conservation Solutions

Our approach to protecting and restoring wildlife and habitats is collaborative, innovative, and multidisciplinary. Working together with 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 loss of biodiversity, empowering those who live alongside wildlife to be stewards of nature.



Skills & Expertise

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

ECOSYSTEMS

Building Alliances to Thrive

Conservation begins with people, and a world where all life thrives is only possible when local communities, governments, conservation organizations, allies like you, and wildlife explorers of all ages work together.

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.

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 88 for a list of partners, and page 102 for more about how you can join us.

Our work begins in San Diego **and spans the globe.**



OUR WORK

We contribute to **94% of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals** and **91% of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets** through our work.



IN 2025

34
projects

11
countries

6
continents

1,577
animals of **8 species**
released or translocated

1,590
acres of habitat directly **protected**
or **restored** through our work



Southwest





Southwest Conservation Hub

The Southwest is a breathtaking mosaic of lush wetlands, rugged forests, rolling grasslands, and towering mountains stretching from coast to desert across the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. At its heart lies San Diego County, home to our headquarters and, astonishingly, more imperiled wildlife than anywhere else in the continental United States.

We collaborate with partners to safeguard local wildlife and the ecosystems we share by boosting wildlife 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.

PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

Close to Home

The Southwest's unique landscapes are home to countless intriguing and threatened species, including desert tortoises, mountain lions, native oaks, red diamond rattlesnakes, burrowing owls, butterflies, mountain yellow-legged frogs, Torrey pines, and California condors.

Our Backyard

Nearly 1,000 of the Safari Park's 1,800 acres are dedicated to the Biodiversity Reserve, one of the last native coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats in the region. Here our scientists study wildlife behavior and develop methods to foster human-wildlife coexistence.

For the Future

We're dedicated to 30x30 California's goal of conserving 30% of the state's lands and waters by 2030. Together the Biodiversity Reserve and our Samataguma Ranch Reserve safeguard nearly 2,000 acres of native habitat.



Spadefoot Success

Native western spadefoots rely on rain-fed seasonal pools. By maintaining these ponds in the Biodiversity Reserve, our team helped hundreds of tadpoles grow into young spadefoots.



Another First

Our team successfully banked Nuttall's scrub oak pollen in the Frozen Zoo for the first time, providing a critical resource for future restoration efforts.



San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance has been **an exceptional partner, and together we hope to achieve great success in managing sensitive species and natural ecosystems** in this highly biologically diverse area.

—**SARAH M.**,
Program Coordinator, San Diego Management and Monitoring Plan

Community Engagement

California Biodiversity Day

Festivities highlighted rich local biodiversity as guests explored native plant gardens, learned about wildlife rescues, and connected with our conservation efforts.



Help from Our Friends

Volunteers joined our teams in the Biodiversity Reserve to monitor wildlife and remove invasive species like stinknet, helping preserve native habitat.

Bee-ing Allies

Now a Bee City USA affiliate, the Zoo supports pollinator conservation by planting native flora, reducing pesticides, and educating communities to protect vital species, including bees and butterflies.



Wild Weekend: Southwest

This special event at the Safari Park brought our ongoing conservation work to life for guests, inspiring new allies.

Building Resilience

Our conservation reproduction programs boost populations of threatened and endangered wildlife, preparing them for success in new landscapes and introducing them into protected areas of native habitat where they can thrive.

Hope on the Range

1 When an orphaned and injured pronghorn was found in New Mexico, teams sprang into action in an interstate emergency rescue mission. **He's now thriving with the herd at the Safari Park**, where we've been caring for an endangered pronghorn subspecies since the 1970s.





Our Biggest Year Yet

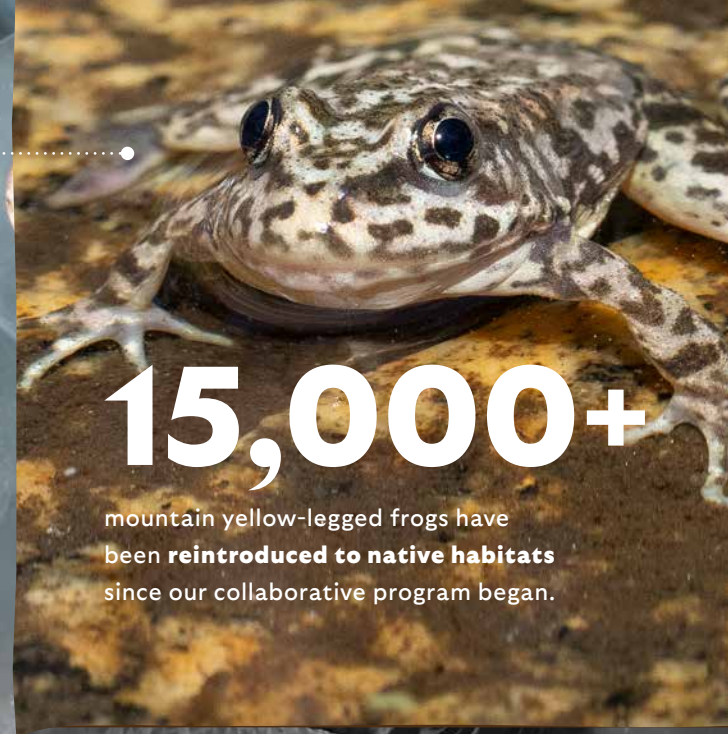
863

endangered mountain yellow-legged frogs and 481 tadpoles were reintroduced into the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains.



230+

eggs were fertilized through artificial fertilization, a major breakthrough in assisted reproduction for this species.



15,000+

mountain yellow-legged frogs have been reintroduced to native habitats since our collaborative program began.

Tiny Mouse, Gigantic Impact

90

critically endangered Pacific pocket mice born at the Safari Park were reintroduced

into the Laguna Coast Wilderness and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.



Nearly 500

have been reintroduced since this collaborative program began. The species was once believed to be extinct.

New Insights

Data revealed that mixing mice populations boosts survival and reproduction, offering a model for genetic rescue in other endangered species.



250

Emaay, the 250th California condor chick hatched at the Safari Park, was released into native habitat in a landmark moment for this native species, which once came within a breath of extinction.



**Pacific
Islands**





Pacific Islands

Conservation Hub

The Pacific Islands are home to an abundance of wildlife found nowhere else on Earth. Their extraordinary biodiversity abounds from coastal reefs to mountain ridges and includes some of the rarest birds and reptiles. Unfortunately, these remote ecosystems are highly vulnerable to invasive species and diseases, habitat fragmentation, wildfires, and challenges to climate resilience.

Through initiatives in Hawai'i, Fiji, Palau, the Channel Islands, and on the island of Rota, we work with partners and local communities to recover threatened species, restore ecosystems, and develop sustainable solutions to preserve these unique habitats.



Together for THREATENED WILDLIFE

At our Maui Bird Conservation Center (MBCC) and Keauhou Bird Conservation Center (KBCC), we collaborate with partners and local communities to help restore Hawai'i's endangered native bird populations.

On San Clemente Island in Southern California and on the western Pacific Island of Rota, teams use tailored methods to ensure endangered San Clemente Island loggerhead shrikes and critically endangered aga (Mariana crows) can survive their most vulnerable stages and thrive in their native habitats.

● Feathered Treasures

At MBCC, we care for 12 critically endangered kiwikiu, of which only 135 remain in native habitat. With a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, we're studying key behaviors to help ensure their survival and eventual successful reintroduction to the forests.

Hope Takes Flight

Five 'ālalā (also called Hawai'iian crows) hatched and cared for at our bird centers and released on Maui in 2024 are thriving. Ongoing monitoring and supplemental feeding by partners, along with our shared expertise, has helped ensure these birds have the best chance at success. Their reintroduction is a historic first on the island and a critical milestone for a species declared extinct in native habitats in 2002.



8 Fijian iguanas rescued from illegal wildlife trafficking found a safe haven at the Zoo thanks to a collaborative effort with partners. The species is critically endangered.

Precision Care

Our San Diego and Hawai'i teams joined up for bird care and technical trainings, including the introduction of handheld units that can rapidly detect avian malaria, which is one of the largest threats to critically endangered populations. These portable machines provide results in under two hours, enabling swift, informed decisions for bird health and conservation efforts.

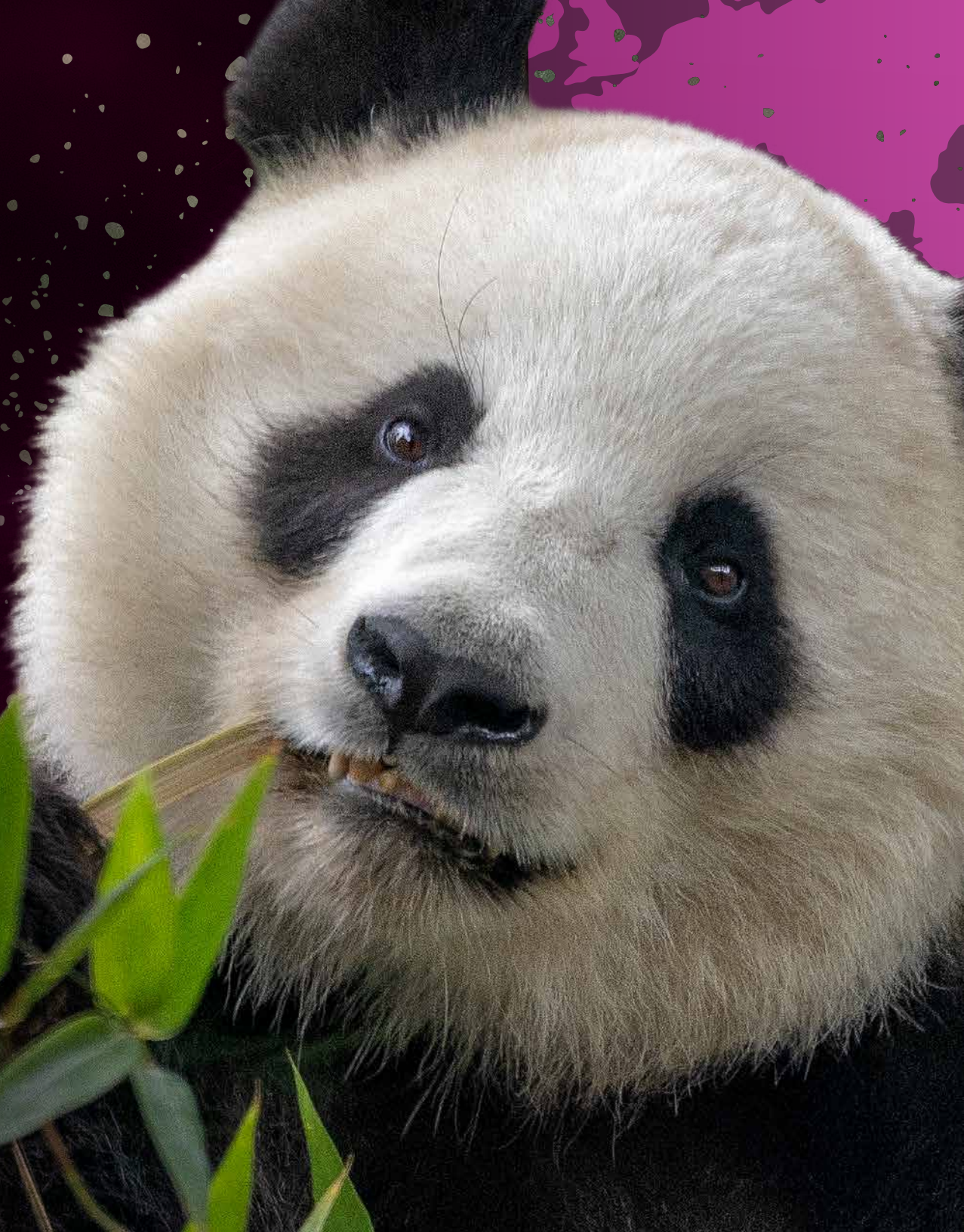


“What brings me hope is the **deep commitment shown by our partners**, including San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, and the public **to secure a better future for these birds.**

—**DR. LISA “CALI” C.**, Project Leader, Kaua'i Forest Bird Recovery Project



Asia





Asia

Conservation Hub

Asia is home to nearly 15% of the world's tropical forests, including multiple threatened areas vital to wildlife found nowhere else on Earth. However, human behaviors like illegal logging and wildlife trafficking are taking a toll on species across the continent.

Together with local

communities and partners, we're working to protect Asia'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.

Community

TOGETHER FOR WILDLIFE



One Step at a Time

At Vietnam's Pu Huong Nature Reserve, we're engaging local communities in conservation science, including trail camera monitoring, collecting samples for biobanking, and other activities that put conservation into action for species including pangolins and Asian bears.



Wild Weekend: Asia and Lunar New Year

During this special weekend at the Zoo and the Safari Park, guests connected with tigers, giant pandas, and other wildlife in new ways, celebrating the ecosystems of Asia and becoming allies for wildlife.

From the forests of Vietnam to the islands of Java and Sumatra, we work alongside local communities to reduce wildlife trade, promote sustainable incomes, monitor species, and create holistic strategies for thriving ecosystems.

Celebrating New Arrivals

Caring for wildlife at the Zoo and Safari Park helps secure brighter futures for species worldwide.

I am excited to contribute my small part, especially protecting wildlife and preserving natural habitats in the conservation areas right in my homeland. I believe **our efforts today will help create a more sustainable future for the next generations.**

—**MRS. LÊ**, Research and Administrative Assistant,
Institute for Ecology and Conservation of Nature (IECN)

“



At the Safari Park, the first Père David's deer was born in 22 years—a big win for a species that's been extinct in native habitats since 1939.

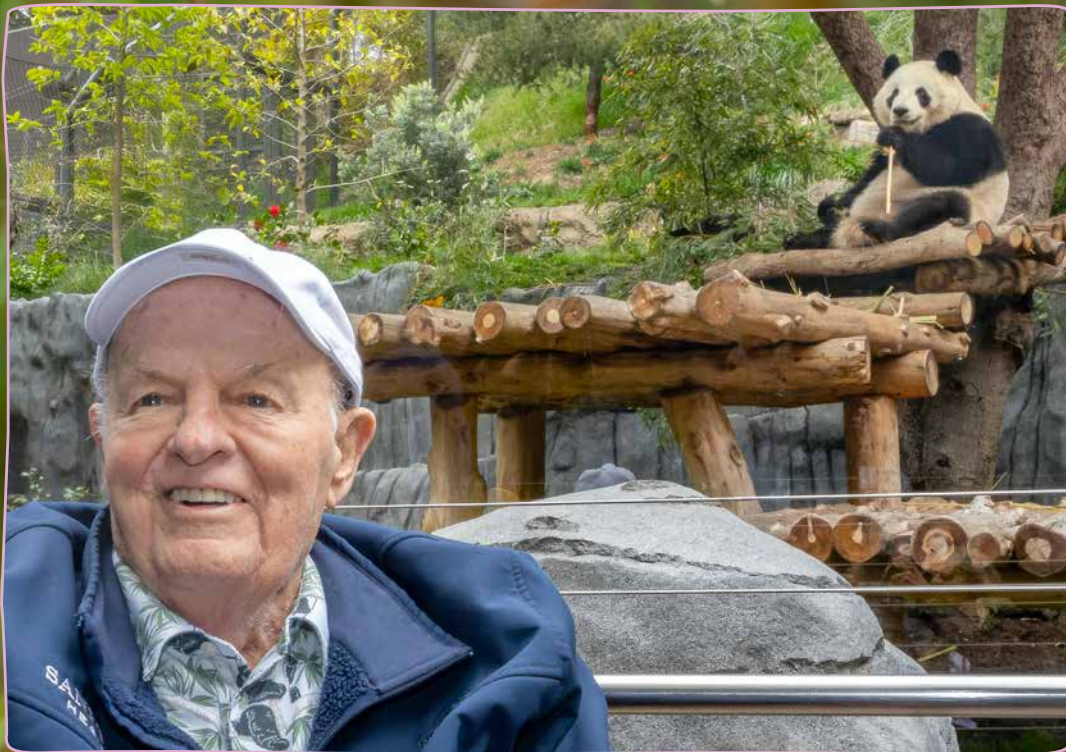


Labu, a 14-year-old Sumatran orangutan, joined the group at the Zoo. The species is critically endangered.



We care for all milk storks in North America through a collaborative conservation breeding program, and this year saw the 11th hatch.

Black-and-White Milestones



Thank You, Denny

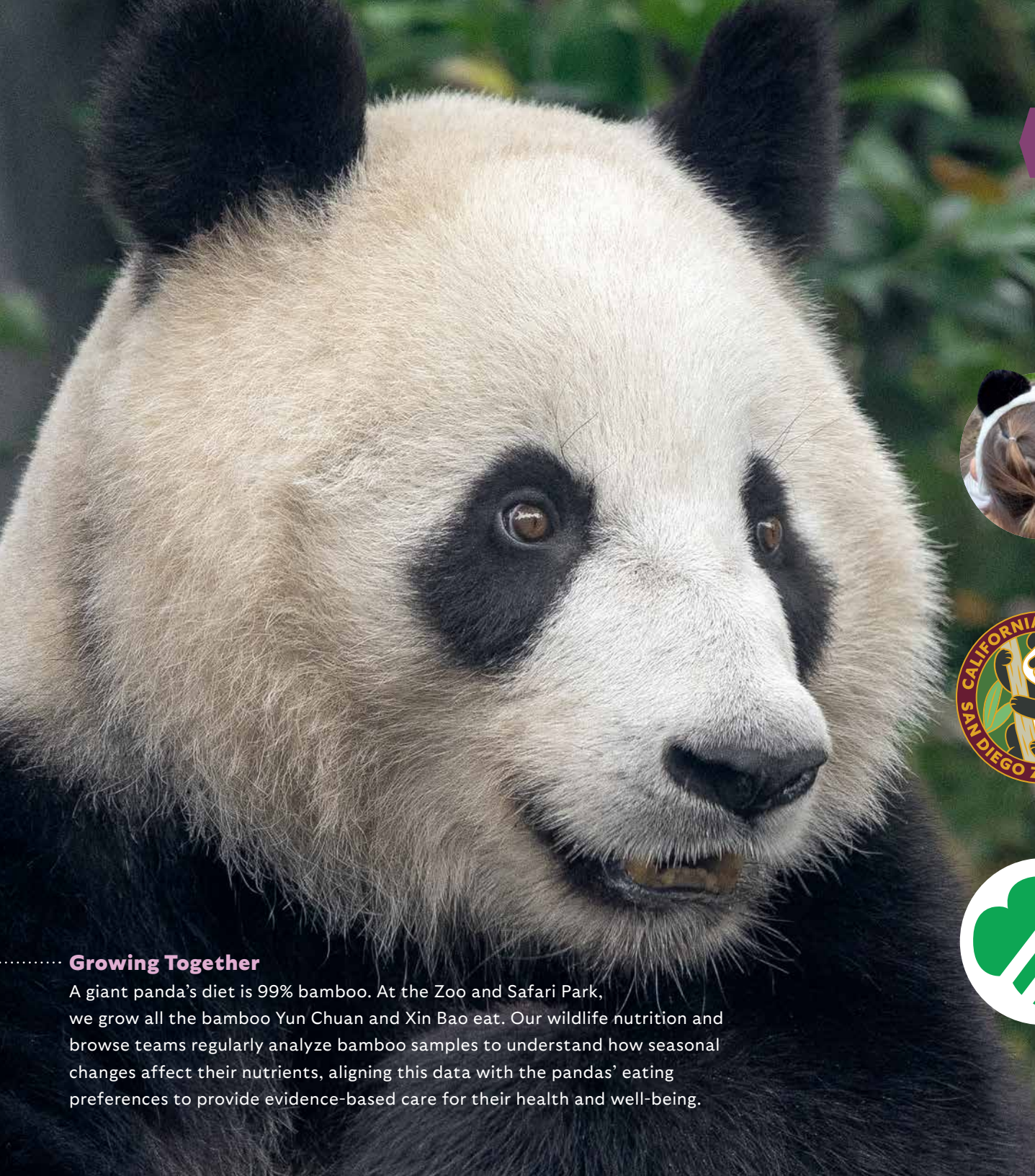
Early in the year, we celebrated the naming of Denny Sanford Panda Ridge in honor of Denny's most recent transformational gift. His generosity has helped create a lush, immersive habitat where Xin Bao and Yun Chuan thrive across dynamic landscapes, inspiring countless visitors as they learn about the bears' conservation story and connect with wildlife in ways that last a lifetime. **We extend our deepest gratitude to Denny for his extraordinary contributions and his enduring impact.**

Denny Sanford



PANDA
RIDGE

San Diego Zoo



Growing Together

A giant panda's diet is 99% bamboo. At the Zoo and Safari Park, we grow all the bamboo Yun Chuan and Xin Bao eat. Our wildlife nutrition and browse teams regularly analyze bamboo samples to understand how seasonal changes affect their nutrients, aligning this data with the pandas' eating preferences to provide evidence-based care for their health and well-being.

Pandas All Year Long

In Xin Bao and Yun Chuan's first year at the Zoo, countless wildlife allies connected with the bear pair, creating memories and supporting conservation efforts for this iconic species through everyday moments and special celebrations alike.



On National Panda Day, the first 2,000 children to visit Panda Ridge received panda ear headbands and got into the spirit with fun activities and photo opportunities.



We marked the first anniversary of California Panda Day on August 8, celebrating the day we introduced the bear pair to the world. The first 2,025 guests received a special commemorative pin.



Together with Girl Scouts San Diego, we kicked off cookie season at Panda Ridge. Girl Scouts met inspiring female leaders, toured the habitat, and even presented Xin Bao with an honorary Girl Scout membership.





African Forest Conservation Hub

African forests are a globally significant carbon sink, helping support climate resilience. Critically important to the health of our planet, the region contains the world's second-largest tropical rainforest, an abundance of rare plants, and some of the most endangered primates on Earth.

In Cameroon's Ebo forest, a biologically diverse area within the threatened Guinean Forests of West Africa, we work hand-in-hand with local communities to protect wildlife and promote coexistence. Together our teams and local partners protect vulnerable species and habitat while celebrating the cultural and ecological heritage of one of the largest, most intact, and vital rainforests remaining in the region.

Grassroots

CONSERVATION

For residents of the 40 communities surrounding Ebo forest, this unique ecosystem is both a vital resource and their home. Community-driven initiatives, including the Gorilla and Chimpanzee Guardian Clubs, promote **sustainable, inclusive, and equitable conservation efforts within this threatened, biologically rich area.**

Working alongside our teams, community members monitor habitats, lead community engagement activities, and improve livelihoods through sustainable projects such as cassava processing and soap-making. Together we ensure that land management respects local needs, honors cultural heritage, and protects wildlife for generations to come.



Wild Weekend: African Forest

During this special weekend at the Zoo, guests gained fascinating insights into our conservation field work in the region.

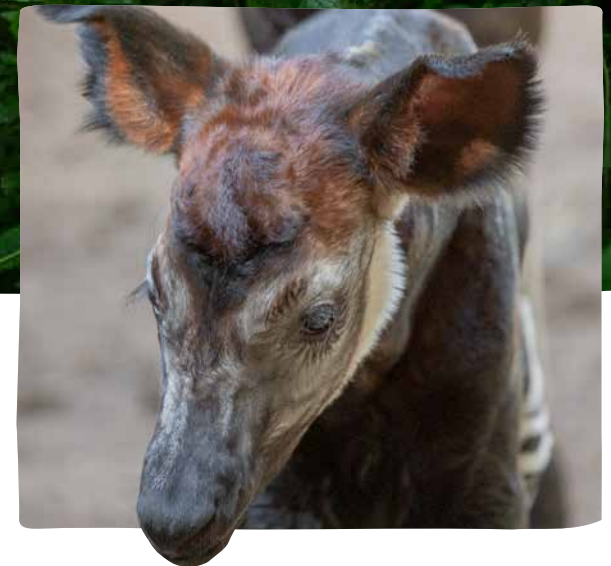


30 trail cameras and acoustic recorders deployed in Mbam Djerem National Park are enhancing understanding of wildlife diversity and abundance in this unique forest-savanna ecosystem. **The data will train AI models to improve endangered species monitoring and inform timely conservation strategies.**

10 new trail cameras are helping shed light on a population of critically endangered chimpanzees pushed out of their habitat by unsustainable cocoa farming. **We're working with local communities, the government, and wildlife rescue partners to foster coexistence and protect remaining habitat.**

“ 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 A.**, Cameroonian and Co-Leader, African Forest Conservation Hub



Rescue, Rehabilitate, Reintroduce

We support Limbe Wildlife Centre as they engage local communities and rescue and rehabilitate wildlife affected by the illegal bushmeat and pet trades, including chimpanzees, gorillas, birds, and countless other species in need. This year, they reintroduced dozens of African grey parrots and reptiles into native habitats and worked toward adding and expanding capacity, including a large new mixed-species habitat in the forest.

700+ people attended community football (soccer) tournaments and outreach events, which combined sports with conservation engagement, educational awareness, and opportunities for youth empowerment and alternative livelihoods.

Increasing Populations

Kimara, the first okapi calf at the Zoo since 2021, was born to mom Subira and dad Kapu. We're working to protect endangered okapis in their central African forest habitats.





Oceans

Conservation Hub

Oceans play a vital role in sustaining life on our planet and contributing to climate resilience. These immense ecosystems cover over 70% of Earth's surface, generate 50% of the oxygen we breathe, and absorb 2 billion tons of carbon annually, which is about 25% of human-generated carbon dioxide emissions. Billions of people also rely on oceans for food and livelihoods.

As human activities threaten ocean health and climate resilience, protecting these vital ecosystems is more urgent than ever. Through innovative technologies and global partnerships, we leverage our expertise throughout San Diego, the Pacific Northwest, across the Arctic, and in southern Africa to safeguard oceans and marine life.

An underwater photograph of a kelp forest. The kelp stalks are thick and brown, with large, flat, yellowish-green blades extending outwards. The water is clear and blue, with several small fish swimming in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting sunlight filtering through the water.

Cutting-Edge

CONSERVATION

From Hudson Bay's icy waters to Southern California's kelp forests, we're advancing technology and research to better understand and protect marine wildlife and habitats.

Help for Kelp

In partnership with Scripps Institution of Oceanography, we're working to restore San Diego's kelp forests by developing cryopreservation methods. Early success in freezing and growing kelp is paving the way for future restoration efforts along the coastline.

“ Our collaboration with San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance monitoring the health and reproductive status of the critically endangered Southern Resident killer whale population **gives me a strong feeling of hope for this species’ future.**

—**DR. DEBORAH G.**, Killer Whale Scientist, SeaDoc Society



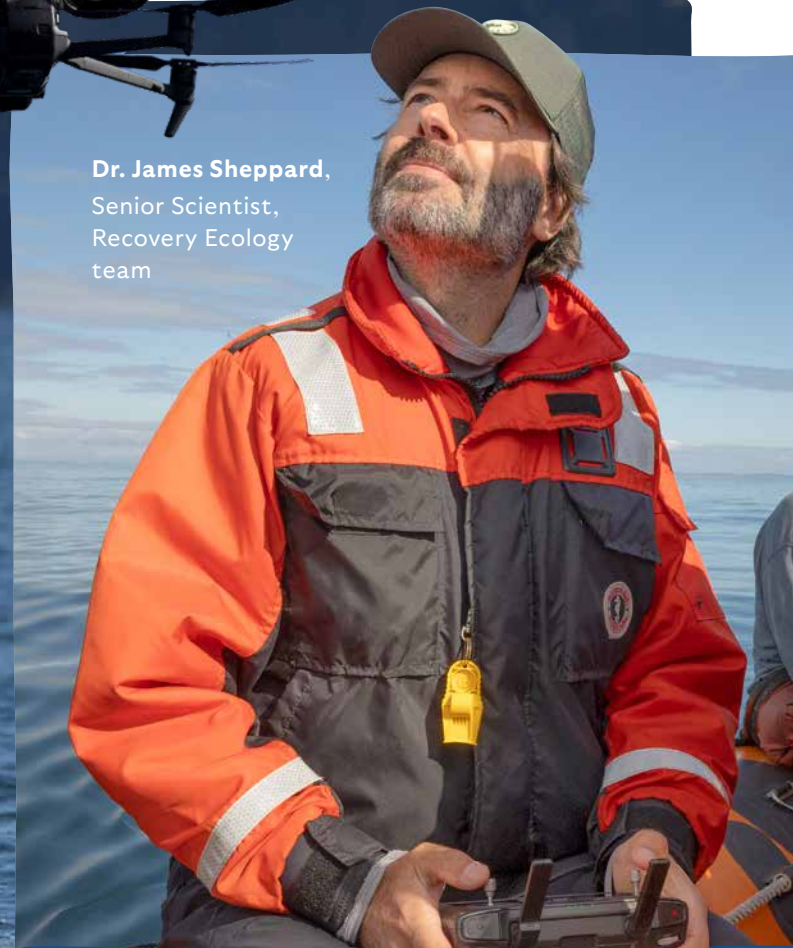
Collected under NMFS Permit #27052

Every Breath We Take

We’ve improved methods to noninvasively collect breath samples from critically endangered Southern Resident killer whales, using drones and new protocols to extract more DNA. **This breakthrough enables deeper health and reproductive analyses—vital for a population of fewer than 75.**



Dr. James Sheppard,
Senior Scientist,
Recovery Ecology
team



Flight School

A two-day “drone academy” trained pilots in collecting behavioral and health data on killer whales, empowering local researchers with tools to enhance monitoring and improve conservation outcomes.

We thank the Zuest Family Foundation for their support of these innovative and vital drone programs for the conservation of critically endangered killer whales.

Polar

POWER

Hope on Sea Ice

In a scientific first, we documented polar bears hunting seals on melting summer sea ice, changing understandings about their habitat needs and reshaping survival models.

New Polar Mini DenCams

A new generation of custom automated cameras is monitoring polar bear maternal dens, enabling remote observation of mothers and cubs during a critical life stage and improving future research and conservation efforts.



Keeping Up with Polar Bears

GPS transmitting devices and trail cameras are part of a long-term monitoring program with our partners to better understand polar bear feeding dynamics and movement with sea ice changes.

25

location ear tags

32

remote cameras monitoring



Wild Weekend: Oceans

During this engaging weekend at the Zoo, guests became immersed in our conservation efforts across the world's oceans and along our own Pacific coast.





Amazonia

Conservation Hub

The largest tropical rainforest in the world, the Amazon is often called the “lungs of the planet” for its role in generating oxygen, regulating global weather, and supporting climate resilience. It’s also one of the most ecologically rich and varied places on Earth, with countless species found nowhere else. Nevertheless, many regional and global

challenges threaten Amazonia’s wildlife, local people, and habitats.

To safeguard the Peruvian Amazon’s biological and cultural richness, we leverage advanced technology, genomics expertise, and wildlife monitoring while supporting local conservation efforts.



Science AT THE SOURCE

The Stiefel-Behner Research Program at Cocha Cashu Biological Station in Manú National Park and the Wildlife Conservation Laboratory at the Los Amigos Biological Station, both in Peru, have fostered technological advancements that allow us to monitor and care for wildlife in ways we could only imagine a few short years ago.

Great Strides

The Wildlife Conservation Laboratory processed thousands of samples using an automated lab robot, boosting efficiency and biobanking capacity. This innovation maximizes limited freezer space and advances genomic preservation for Amazonian wildlife.

2,672 & **3,037**
blood samples **biopsy samples**

from **1,100+** bats, **760** birds, **500** mammals, **150** reptiles and amphibians, **390** fungi

“

Without San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance’s support with technology and genetic testing we wouldn’t be able to reintroduce as many animals as we do. **They have made a difference to hundred of lives over the years.**

—**NICK W.**, Communications and Fundraising, Amazon Shelter



Community & Coexistence

71 trail camera stations were installed across the Manú Biosphere Reserve, allowing scientists to noninvasively collect data, including hair samples, of Andean bear populations. Our team trained park guards, community members, and volunteers in data collection techniques.

Slow and Steady

Little Cashew was born to mom Xena in February, the first sloth birth at the Zoo since 2022. He is thriving as a wildlife ambassador, inspiring countless guests to support efforts to protect native habitats, including the cashew trees where sloths often live.



Wild Weekend: Amazonia

This engaging weekend helped connect guests at the Zoo to our conservation work and wildlife in Amazon forests in enriching ways, creating new allies along the way.



Australian
Forest





Australian Forest

Conservation Hub

Australia's forests, primarily located along the northern and eastern coasts of the continent, are home to some of Earth's most unique and iconic wildlife. The majority are eucalyptus forests, which provide food, shelter, and resources for wildlife and local people alike. Unfortunately, they're also highly vulnerable to bushfires

and drought, which are growing in frequency and severity due to habitat fragmentation and challenges to climate resilience.

For 100 years, we've worked closely with Australian partners to better understand wildfire impacts, care for displaced wildlife, and develop strategies to boost fire resilience while preserving habitats for native species.



COLLABORATING TO PROTECT **Unique Wildlife**

One hundred years ago, in 1925, the first koalas arrived at the San Diego Zoo, launching a partnership with Taronga Conservation Society Australia that has continued ever since.

Today, the Zoo is home to the largest koala colony outside Australia, while the Safari Park cares for the only platypus outside Australia, advancing understanding of these unusual and threatened species.

Little Joeys, Big Impact

Two koala joeys born at the Zoo were named by Taronga in celebration of our century of partnership. The arrival of Inala (meaning “place of peace”) and Bunji (meaning “friend”) increased the global population of this vulnerable species.



Global Leaders

The third annual Echidna Summit at the Safari Park united global experts to advance echidna care, breeding, and conservation throughout zoos and native habitats.



To secure the future of the platypus, we must take a multipronged approach. With our teams of behavioral biology and welfare experts, ecologists, geneticists, reproductive biologists, population managers, cultural programs staff, and science communicators, **we are set up to succeed.**

—**DR. JUSTINE O.**, Manager of Conservation Science, Taronga Conservation Society



2

more echidna puggles hatched at the Safari Park. We are world leaders in echidna reproduction, and our expertise can help save critically endangered populations in native habitats.



Wild Weekend: Australian Forest

In March, guests at the Safari Park said g'day to iconic Australian wildlife and learned how we're working to save, protect, and care for them.



Savanna



Savanna

Conservation Hub

Africa's savannas are home to some of the planet's most iconic and endangered wildlife. Spanning nearly half the continent, these sprawling, carefully balanced grassland ecosystems serve as the backbone for intricate 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.

Coexistence

IN ACTION

Conservation starts with people, and our work in northern Kenya is driven by those who live here. Our teams and partners lead efforts to foster human-wildlife coexistence, protect wildlife, and work alongside communities through fieldwork, workshops, and other collaborative **community-led conservation solutions.**



Thriving Together

De-Fence Strategies

With the help of giraffes at the Zoo, we tested eye-catching deterrents, called flashers. Now deployed along stretches of fence infrastructure in northern Kenya, they keep giraffes from becoming ensnared.

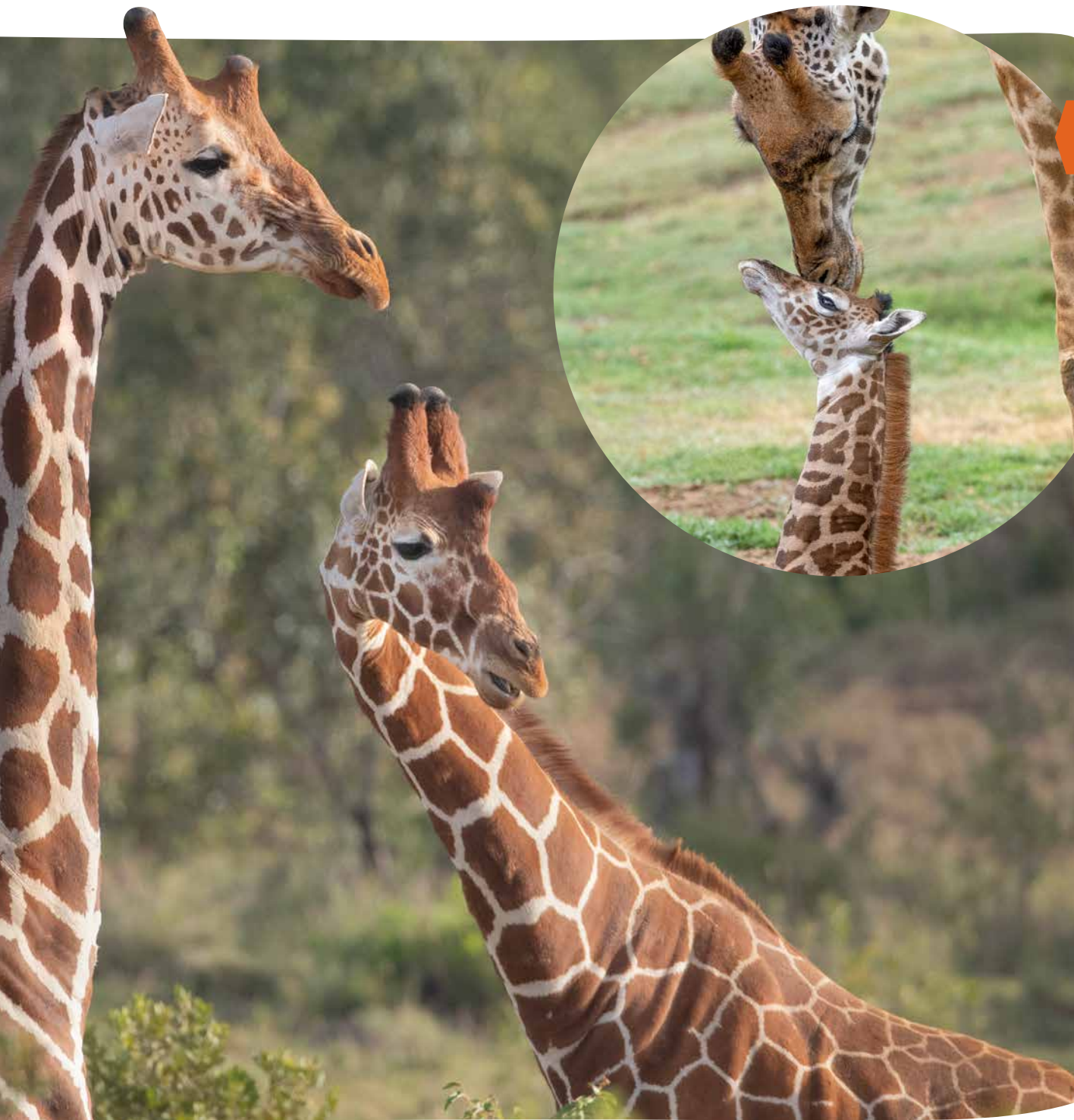
800+

community members in Kenya participated in World Giraffe Day celebrations, including performances by school groups and women's choirs. raising awareness of giraffe conservation.



Wild Weekend: Savanna

At this World Elephant Day weekend event, guests at the Safari Park learned how they're helping save, protect, and care for wildlife through our Savanna Conservation Hub.



Increasing Global Populations

Five new giraffe calves thrived at the Zoo and Safari Park this year, offering hope for the future of their endangered species.

“

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance’s expertise and conservation footprint in northern Kenya **places the Alliance as our go-to partner** when new, and often complex, conservation challenges emerge.

—**IAN CRAIG**, MBS, OBE,
Senior Africa Director,
WildLandscapes International

Science & Innovation



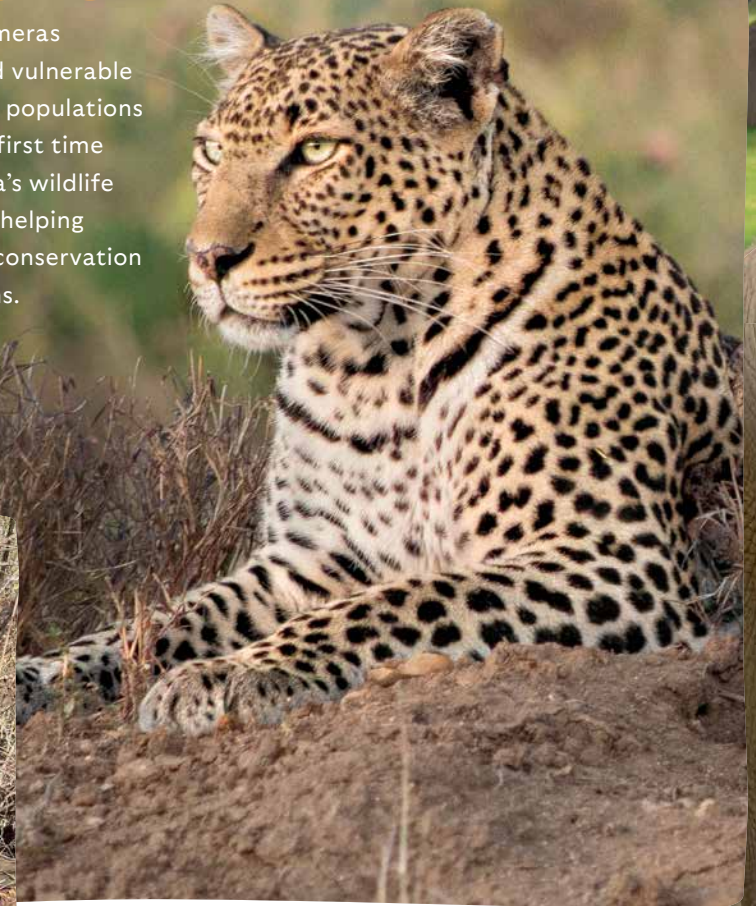
AI for Rhinos

Footage of rhinos at the Safari Park is used to “train” an AI model to recognize individual animals, improving the monitoring of critically endangered populations in native habitats.



150

trail cameras mapped vulnerable leopard populations for the first time in Kenya’s wildlife census, helping inform conservation solutions.



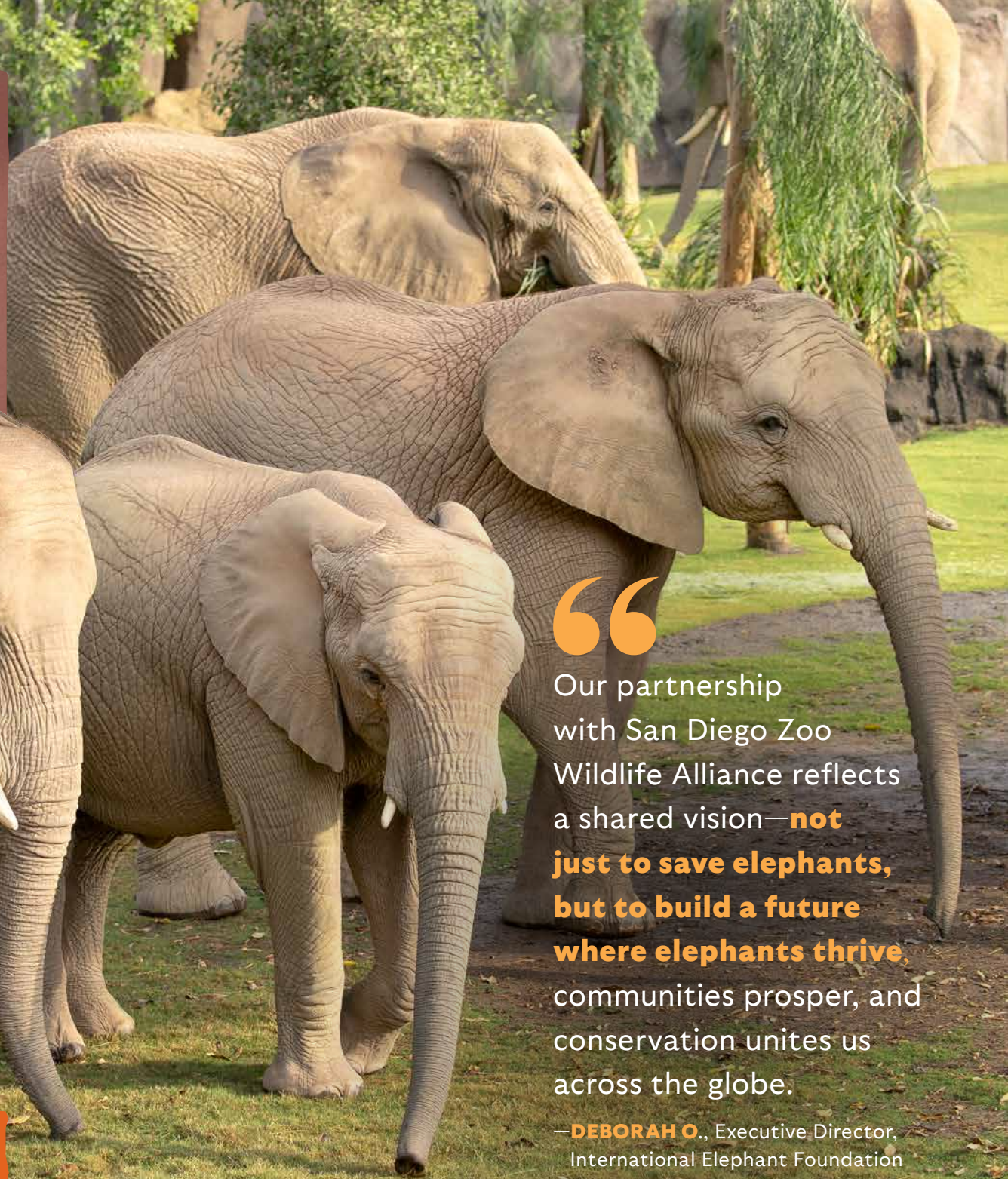
Science at the Source

Field labs help our experts and partners train locals in cutting-edge genetic research.



ELEPHANT VALLEY

We thank **Denny Sanford** for his generosity in support of Denny Sanford Elephant Valley and look forward to its opening in 2026.



Our partnership with San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance reflects a shared vision—**not just to save elephants, but to build a future where elephants thrive**, communities prosper, and conservation unites us across the globe.

—**DEBORAH O.**, Executive Director, International Elephant Foundation



Denny Sanford and CEO Shawn Dixon explore the new Elephant Valley before its opening.

Education

STARTS HERE

Sparking a Curiosity for Wildlife

Education is crucial to achieving our vision of a world where all life thrives. We inspire wildlife allies of all ages through hands-on learning at the Zoo, Safari Park, and Beckman Center. Our programs, ranging from field trips and camps to online resources, empower communities to protect biodiversity in San Diego and across the globe through our eight Conservation Hubs.

We are grateful to Price
Philanthropies Foundation for
their ongoing support of our
education programs.

Transformative Learning Experiences in 2025

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the donors whose generosity ignites lifelong learning through these programs and initiatives.

Nearly 250,000 students

visited us at the Zoo and Safari Park.



Over **34,000 students** participated in one of our **33 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.



Nearly **73%** of our school groups came from Title I-eligible schools.



We provided **670+ bus transportation reimbursements**, creating access to our programs for school groups who might otherwise not be able to attend.



Our **3 diverse education teams**, with 97 team members, spent nearly **190,000 hours** engaging with students through unique hands-on experiences.





Making an Impact

This year, our educational efforts transformed the lives of more than **108 million learners** at our parks, online, and through other programming. To learn more, visit **sdzwa.org/education**.

2,086

campers joined us at summer camps to connect with wildlife, explore conservation, and have fun. **Nearly 10%** attended at no cost to their families thanks to our generous donors.

600+

K-12 campers from local organizations, including YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs, connected with nature through **hands-on experiences**, inspiring conservation awareness and action.



127

educators participated in teacher workshops. Now in its 20th year, this program has trained educators from all 50 states and more than 29 additional countries, reaching nearly **3 million students worldwide**.

8,518

students and chaperones from across Southern California joined our **Exploring Conservation Science field trips**, discovering ways to save species and take meaningful action to protect wildlife.

5,892

2nd graders participated in the Habitat Heroes Program. This free, curriculum-based Zoo field trip includes up-close wildlife encounters and guided tours to inspire scientific discovery and habitat exploration. **We thank the Vassiliadis family for their generous endowment, which makes this program possible.**

Internships, Fellowships, and Externships

We provided real-world learning opportunities for students in 39 fellowships, 27 internships, and 29 externships across wildlife care, marketing, retail, IT, education, and more.

Local Learners

Crash Into Science engaged 1,600 6th graders from 8 Escondido schools, exploring rhino conservation through lessons, virtual specialist visits, and a Safari Park field trip.

Resources with Reach

Our **on-site library** serves team members and allies alike. Their wildlife fact sheets were downloaded **more than 1.9 million times**.

Countywide Education Needs Assessment

With generous support from the Prebys Foundation, we completed our first countywide education needs assessment, gathering insights from educators, students, and community members to shape impactful conservation learning experiences that inspire exploration, connection, and conservation action.

Education

ACROSS 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 help all life thrive. Here are just a few highlights from our Conservation Hubs this year, showcasing the many ways local allies are making an impact.



Outreach and Education

OCEANS

Local Voices

We engaged with local Indigenous communities living alongside polar bears in Hudson Bay, Canada, to gather understanding of traditional knowledge for coexistence strategies. On the northern California and Oregon coasts, we worked with communities contributing to **recovery planning for sea otters**.

SOUTHWEST

180

Native Biodiversity Corps students created 10 native gardens, shared conservation efforts with 500+ attendees at Intertribal Earth Day, distributed native seedlings, supported butterfly conservation, and planted 10 trees with San Diego's Urban Forestry team.





Building Capacity

AMAZONIA

41

participants from regional governments in Peru's Amazon joined us for a training course that **equipped them with practical tools** and skills to manage human-wildlife challenges and foster coexistence with jaguars.

SOUTHWEST

Building a Butterfly Network

We hosted our third North American Monarch Institute workshop, **equipping 16 teachers with monarch conservation skills and pollinator garden resources**, including grant opportunities.

ASIA

Accelerating Conservation

Partners in Vietnam were trained to use AI-powered software we developed for faster trail camera data analysis, **enabling proactive ecosystem management** and fostering global conservation collaboration.

AUSTRALIAN FOREST

Shared Care

With over 100 years of experience, we support zoos worldwide by providing training and guidance on koala care, **helping secure a brighter future for this vulnerable species**.

Leaders of Tomorrow

AFRICAN FOREST

100+

students in Douala, Cameroon, Central Africa's largest city, celebrated **World Gorilla Day** by raising environmental awareness and collecting plastic bottles from their school, homes, and community to promote conservation efforts.

SAVANNA

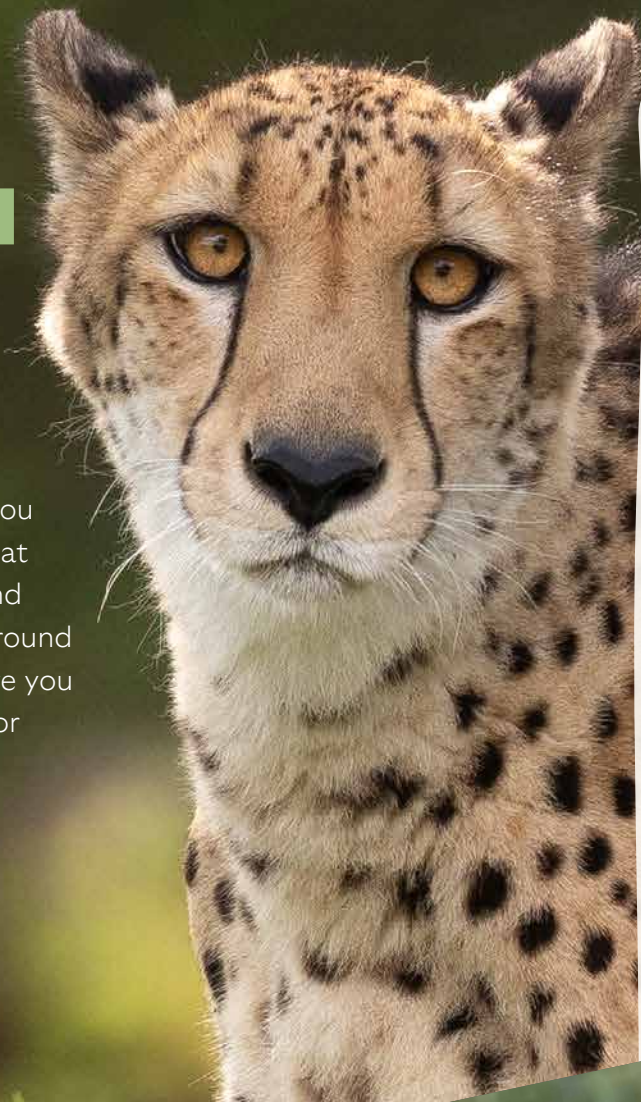
Emerging Professionals

We support Kenya's Wildlife Research and Training Institute by sponsoring eight Wildlife Management Diploma students, hosting two interns for practical conservation experience, and contributing to their guest lecture series.

PACIFIC ISLANDS

5 high school students from O'ahu and Hawai'i Island were trained in advanced molecular technologies to conduct real-world genomic sequencing of endangered Hawaiian birds.





Thank You TO OUR FAMILY

Your Support Makes It All Possible

As members, friends, donors, and allies, you make everything we do possible. You are at the heart of our work to save, protect, and care for wildlife, both in San Diego and around the world. We are deeply honored to have you so close to our mission and are grateful for your unwavering support.

*Thank you for being a part
of our family.*

Approximately
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.**

Member Benefits



Year-round admission to the Zoo and Safari Park



Priority access to our latest updates and happenings



Wild PerksSM discounts on special experiences, dining, merchandise, and so much more



Complimentary parking at the Zoo and Safari Park



Our bimonthly magazine, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Journal



Members enjoy exclusive events throughout the year, such as Member September, Member Appreciation celebrations, an exclusive preview of Jungle Bells, and regular early morning access to the Zoo and Safari Park.

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and Great Plains Zoo Denny Sanford Reciprocal Program

In honor of Denny Sanford's generosity to both San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and Great Plains Zoo in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, we proudly debuted a program that allows members of one organization to receive complimentary admission to the other. This powerful relationship allows us to share our vital conservation mission with new guests from South Dakota and around the world.





President's Clubs

These dedicated friends are committed to our vision of protecting wildlife. In addition to receiving all member benefits, they're invited to join us throughout the year for exclusive events to connect more deeply with our conservation work.



Other membership levels offer inspiring opportunities for exploration and adventure at our two incredible conservation parks, with varying benefits and options for all wildlife allies.



Membership Matters
Visit sdzwa.org/membership
to become an ally for
wildlife today.

“We are honored to be part of San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance’s family and to support their conservation efforts and projects like Wildlife Explorers Basecamp and Elephant Valley. Joining ZOO100 allows us to participate in the mission long after we are gone.

—HELEN AND LEO LARSON, ZOO100 members

Donor Clubs

As some of our closest allies, these devoted groups enjoy a range of exclusive benefits, including events, presentations about conservation, and updates from our executive team. For more information on how to join us, see page 104.

We are grateful to the 29,425 donors whose philanthropic gifts in 2025 supported our greatest needs; enhanced habitats at the Zoo and Safari Park; and advanced education, conservation, and wildlife care.

We thank Steve Benninga and his late wife Bobbie Benninga, whose legacy gift through our Heritage Guild will help ensure a brighter future for our planet.



Aardvarks

A circle of enthusiastic, longtime supporters, these donors are dedicated to our mission and stay connected with us throughout the year at special events.

Ocelots

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

Wildlife Heroes

This year, **5,500 monthly donors** were committed to saving and protecting endangered species and ecosystems around the world, showing their support through their sustaining monthly gifts.

Heritage Guild

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.

ZOO100

This vital circle of donors helps 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.



2116 Advisors

This distinguished group of philanthropists, conservation experts, and volunteer leaders provides insight, advocacy, and support to help achieve lasting impacts for wildlife and the planet. **We are honored and grateful for their commitment and leadership.**



Kathryn Vaughn, CEO Shawn Dixon, and Don Vaughn

Dennis Wilson with Maza the greater one-horned rhinoceros.



Nature, Connection, and the Next Generation

Our 2116 Advisors joined us at the Zoo for their third annual convening. At this half-day event, they met renowned journalist and author Richard Louv and our vice president of education, Lisa Biasillo, to explore the values that shape our conservation education programs and how connecting with nature can transform our lives.



Tori Gulley and Barbara May



Pete Trojnacki and Stephanie Petersen



Tom Fetter and Chuck Wheatley



A select group of wildlife allies joined us for the third annual WILD event, connecting with wildlife and our conservation science teams while enjoying entertainment, fine dining, and more.

We thank our WILD co-hosts: Chris and Rebecca Jacob, Werner and Myra Kern, Caroline Perry and Adam Ith, Tom and Cami Rosso, Tim and Emily Scott, Phil and Kirsten Senescall, Zoiner and Ashley Ellis Tejada



We thank WILD co-chairs Steve and Lauren Simpson and Rolf and Mary Benirschke for stewarding this evening under the stars.



RITZ 2025

A Very Cool Gala

Guests *cell-eb-rated* the 42nd Rendezvous In The Zoo (R·I·T·Z) gala—with fine wine and dining, exciting auctions, and dancing—benefiting the Frozen Zoo and its 50 years of pioneering efforts in biobanking conservation.

Thank you to our
2025 R·I·T·Z co-chairs:
**Robert Gleason, Marc
Matys, and Don and
Stephanie McGuire.**





An Alliance for the World



By upholding our values through four core pillars, we leverage more than a century of expertise, our dedicated teams, our strong partnerships, and our global network of allies to become the most effective conservation organization for the planet.

Here's more about how we collaborated, innovated, inspired, and thrived in 2025.

Collaborate

As an Alliance, we make the greatest conservation impact by uniting expertise and collaborating strategically across the globe. **We are grateful to all our partners and contributors for their teamwork, innovation, and insight.**

Amazon Conservation Association (ACA)
Aquarium of the Pacific
Arizona Game & Fish Department
Association des Chefs Traditionnels Riverains de la Forêt d'Ebo Forest (ACTRIFE)
Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)
Australian Network for Plant Conservation
Birch Aquarium
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Department of Parks and Recreation—Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve
California Plant Rescue
Center for Plant Conservation
Centro de Innovación Científica Amazónica (CINCIA)
Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada (CICESE)
China Center for Research and Conservation for the Giant Panda, National Forestry and Grassland Administration
China West Normal University, Giant Panda National College
China Wildlife Conservation Association
Chinese Academy of Sciences
Chui Mamas
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife
Conservación Amazónica (ACCA)
Conservation Biology Institute
Defenders of Wildlife
Djarum Foundation
Earth BioGenome Project (EBP)
Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
Ewaso Lions
Field Projects International
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Forestal Otorongo
Gerencia de Desarrollo Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre Loreto
Giraffe Conservation Foundation
Global Conservation Consortium for Cycads

Gobierno Regional de Madre de Dios	Oiled Wildlife Care Network	The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature
Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation	Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium	The Huntington
Government of Ontario – Ministry of Natural Resources	Organización Vida Silvestre (OVIS)	The Living Desert
Government of Vietnam – Pù Huống Nature Reserve	Palau Community College	The Nature Conservancy
Government of Vietnam – Vu Quang National Park	Peninsular Pronghorn Recovery Project (PPRP)	The University of Queensland Koala Ecology Group
Grevy's Zebra Trust	Polar Bears International	Three Mountain Alliance (TMA)
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Rainforest Expeditions	TRACE Wildlife Forensics Network
Honolulu Zoo	Reteti Elephant Sanctuary	UNESCO Lima—Proyecto Amazonia
Illumina	Reverse the Red	Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina— Facultad de Ciencias Forestales
Institute for Ecology and Conservation of Nature at Vinh University	Revive & Restore	Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)	Re:wild	Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta
IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)	Ruko Community Conservancy	University of Alberta
Kalepo Conservancy	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District	University of California, Davis
Kaua'i Forest Bird Recovery Project	San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District	University of California, Davis, SeaDoc Society
Kealakehe High School	San Diego Botanic Garden	University of California, Los Angeles
Kenya Wildlife Service	San Diego Foundation	University of California, San Diego
Leibniz Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research	San Diego Habitat Conservancy (SDHC)	University of California, Santa Cruz
Lewa Wildlife Conservancy	San Diego Management and Monitoring Program (SDMMP)	University of Copenhagen
Loisaba Conservancy	San Diego Natural History Museum	University of Illinois Urbana—Champaign
Maderacre	San Diego State University	University of Nottingham
Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project	San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD)	University of Southern California
Meru Betiri National Park	San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians	University of Washington Rota Avian Behavioral Ecology Program
Miami University	Sarara Foundation	U.S. Air Force—Edwards Air Force Base
Monarch Joint Venture	Save the Indonesian Nature and Threatened Species (SINTAS)	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Monterey Bay Aquarium	Science for Wildlife	U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service
Mpala Research Centre	Scripps Institution of Oceanography	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mushkegowuk Council	Sea Otter Savvy	U.S. Geological Survey
Naibunga Lower Conservancy	Sera Conservancy	U.S. Navy
Namunyak Conservancy	Servicio Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (SERNANP)	Volcano School of Arts & Sciences
Nannapa Conservancy	Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre (SERFOR)	VulPro
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)	South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)	Waiākea High School
Natural Resources Conservation Agency of West Sumatra	Species360	WildLandscapes International
NATURAL STATE	State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife	Wildlife Research & Training Institute (Kenya)
NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center	SUVA Research	World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA)
Northern Rangelands Trust	Taronga Zoo Sydney	Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

Innovate

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



Visit Our Parks from Anywhere

Live streaming wildlife cameras, online content, and complimentary educational programming keeps our allies engaged and experiencing wildlife—including giant pandas, koalas, polar bears, baboons, penguins, orangutans, and burrowing owls—and their habitats.

Approximately
53.7 million+
views on our live streaming
wildlife cameras.



San Diego Zoo
Wildlife Alliance

ADVENTURES



Experiences of a Lifetime

One-of-a-kind, carbon-neutral journeys led by conservation experts take wildlife enthusiasts to some of the planet's most breathtaking destinations.

In 2025, over 100 passionate wildlife allies joined conservation scientists and experts to experience 7 extraordinary adventures.

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

Inspire

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

Winning New Allies— and Honors

Our 2025 Rose Parade float, “Friendship Across the Earth,” transported over 50 million viewers in 170 countries on a journey across Asia’s magnificent ecosystems and honored Yun Chuan and Xin Bao, the first giant pandas to be welcomed to the United States in 21 years.

Sweepstakes Award

For the second year in a row, our float brought home the top honor of the event for the most beautiful entry, encompassing float design, floral presentation, and entertainment.



Upgraded infrastructure to improve water efficiency.



Strengthened vendor accountability to enhance supply chain sustainability.



We advanced our sustainability commitment in 2025

through internal improvements, stronger partnerships, and guest engagement, achieving progress in key areas.



Improved ecology messaging to help guests understand how these efforts support wildlife health and habitat resilience.



Modernized fleet systems to cut emissions and boost efficiency.



Unified waste operations, expanding organics management and green waste bins.



Season 4

of our *Amazing Wildlife* podcast explored fascinating conservation and wildlife topics, from meerkat social dynamics and the history of the Frozen Zoo to flamingo myths and parenting behaviors.



Engaging Readers

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Press offers books for all ages, inspiring allies through illustrated children's books and adult nonfiction as well as **book donations, educational talks, and supporting local initiatives** to inspire and connect with diverse audiences.



San Diego Zoo
**Wildlife Explorers
Network**

**Bringing Smiles Where
They're Needed Most**

This closed-circuit television channel delivers educational wildlife programming to 26.1 million children and their families, spreading happiness, hope, and healing during challenging times. Thanks to Denny Sanford's generous support, this heartwarming programming is now available in:

400

hospitals, clinics, and
Ronald McDonald Houses

48

states and
Washington, D.C.

14

countries



Connecting with Allies Across the Globe

249.7 billion+
media impressions

\$2.5 billion+
in media value,
enabling us to reach
more allies worldwide

Social Media and Web

 **213 million**
YouTube views

 **2.6 million**
Facebook fans

 **2.6 million**
TikTok followers


 **1.4 billion**
Giphy views

 **1.6 million**
Instagram followers

 **160K**
Threads followers

 **44K**
LinkedIn followers

 **193K**
X followers

 **30.7K**
Pinterest followers

 **117 million+**
views on our websites

 **53.7 million+**
views on our live wildlife cams

 **97.9K**
Bluesky followers

Thrive

Together we find new ways to bring hope, inspiration, and smiles as we share resources, inspire passion for nature, and ensure our parks are inclusive for all.

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

Honoring Service

Through the Bashor Family Patriots Fund, active duty service members enjoy year-round access to our parks, while wounded warriors benefit from meaningful on-site community engagement programs. **We are deeply grateful to the late U.S. Army veteran Jim Bashor and his wife, Dianne Bashor, for their incredible generosity.**

100,000+

active duty military personnel received complimentary admission to the Zoo and Safari Park.





Support for Military Families

We participate in a wide array of special events for service members and their families, including hosting a Month of the Military Child event, a Fleet Week recognition luncheon, and the Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard Sailor of the Year event.



Supporting Our Wild Heroes

In collaboration with Naval Medical Center San Diego, Camp Pendleton, and other military resources, our Wild Heroes program allowed **1,107 wounded armed forces** personnel and their families a chance to visit the Zoo through **16 events**, experience the healing power of nature and wildlife, and connect with fellow veterans during their transition to civilian life.

300

books were donated to Support the Enlisted Project (STEP), an organization providing essentials for children in military families.



Our Commitment to Culture and Belonging

At its heart, conservation is about people. We are stronger together and have an even greater impact by honoring, respecting, and engaging all members of our community.

Our Parks Are for All

In collaboration with KultureCity, we're proud to offer sensory-inclusive options, ensuring a more accessible and enjoyable experience for all guests. Special borrowable bags equipped with items like noise-cancelling headphones and fidget toys offer ways to help manage sensory overload, while accessibility maps, signage, and information in the app indicating quiet areas help guests plan their best day.

1,127

sensory-inclusive bags were distributed to guests.



Limitless Potential

We're hiring exceptional talent from all backgrounds and building partnerships with workforce groups to become an employer of choice for everyone.

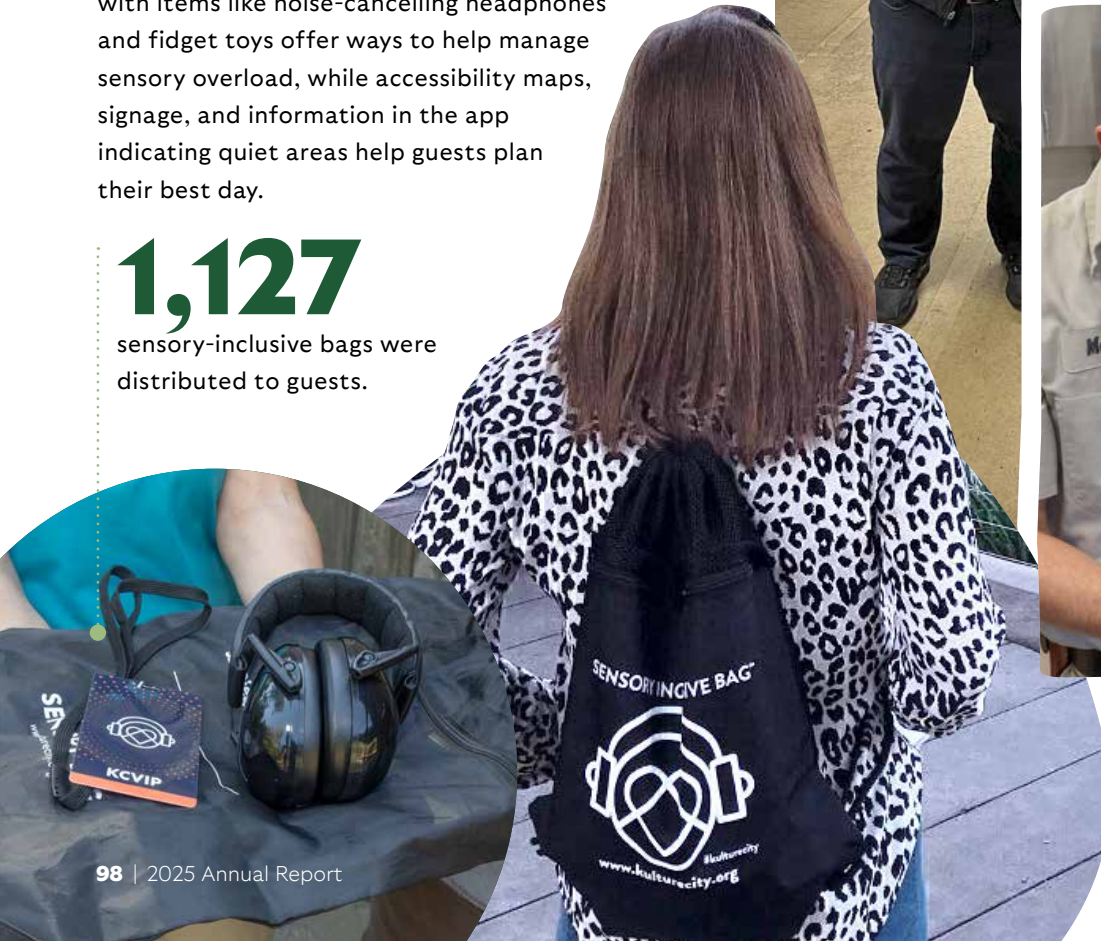
9

interns joined us at the Zoo in wildlife care, horticulture, retail, education, and more via Project Search, a program for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Opening Doors

Our Wildlife Health team provides a veterinary mentorship program for underrepresented communities, making a career in veterinary medicine more accessible and inclusive.





Taking Pride

We partnered with Team Tourism, including the San Diego Tourism Authority, San Diego Convention Center, and San Diego County Lodging Association, to join San Diego's Pride Parade, one of the nation's largest celebrations of LGBTQIA+ Pride Month.



500+

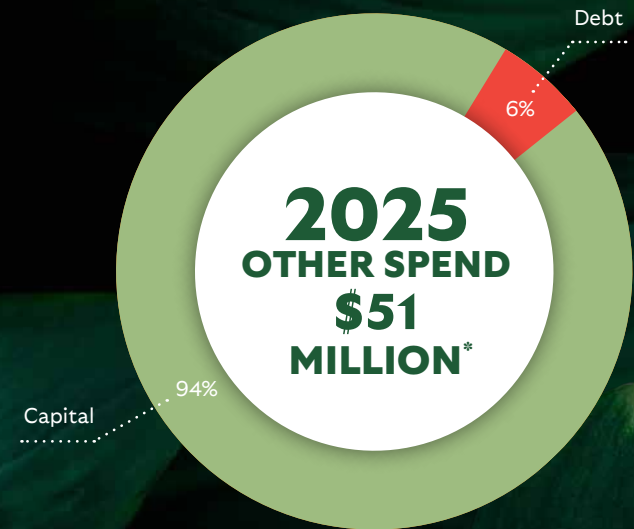
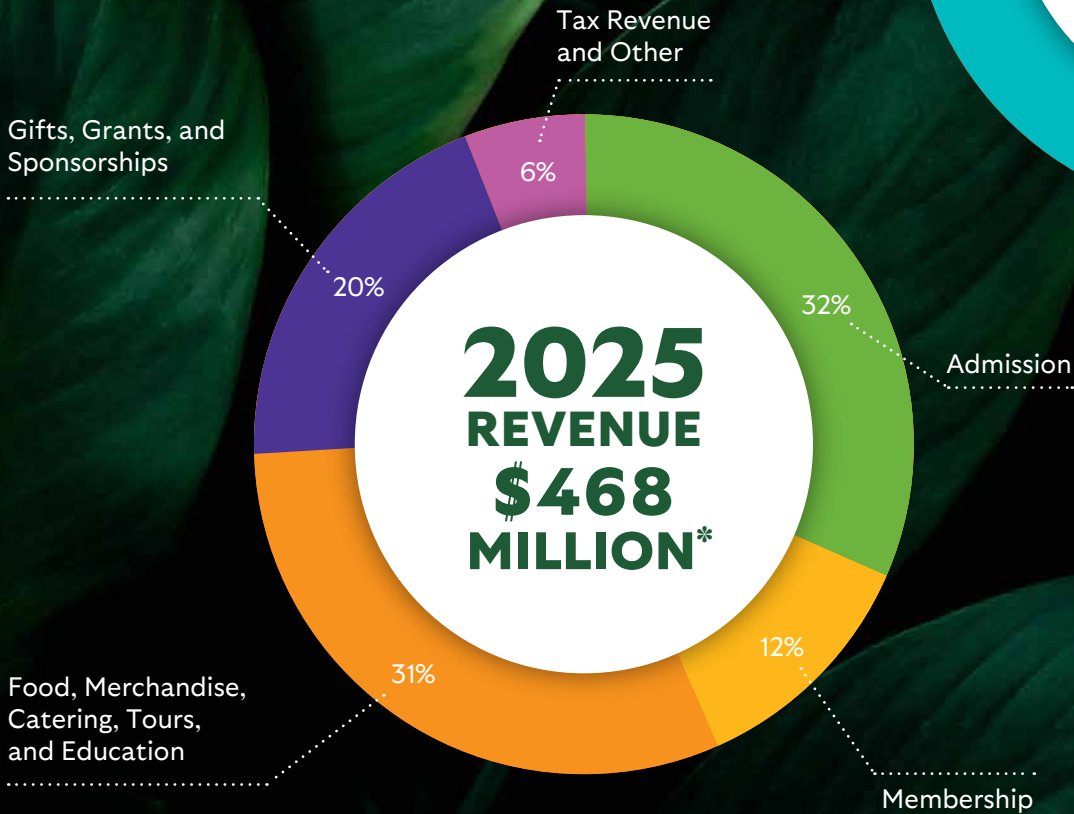
youths learned about career paths within our organization through our Plant-a-Seed program, in collaboration with other nonprofits and local schools.



Financials

More Toward Our Mission

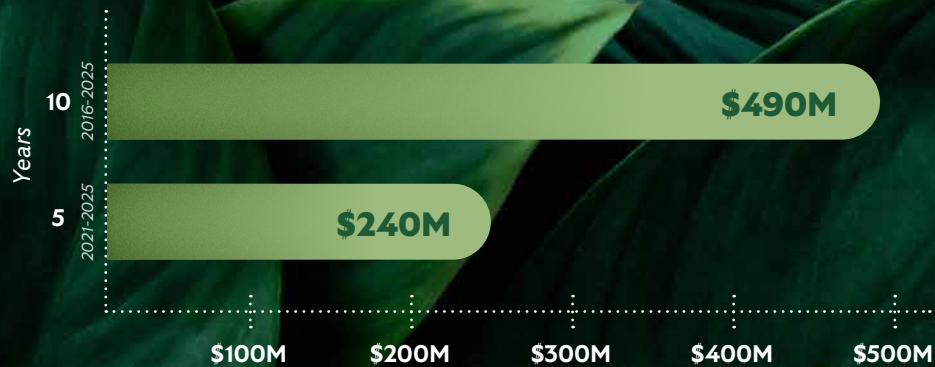
As a nonprofit organization, all revenue supports our mission. Revenue above expenses is reinvested to pursue conservation priorities, capital projects, and operational needs.



Capital Improvements

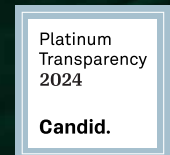
We proudly invest in our conservation parks and facilities, ensuring they remain vibrant, accessible, and welcoming spaces for all. In doing so, we're building a legacy of sustainability, well-being, inspiration, and opportunity for generations to come.

Here's a recent look at these investments.



\$2.1 BILLION

Economic activity across the greater San Diego region each year that is driven by San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, benefitting and supporting our greater community.



**Please note: These are unaudited numbers for 2025. Audited financials and IRS Form 990 will be available on sdzwa.org once they are completed.*

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. **Here are some of the many ways to support us.**

Membership

Beginning, renewing, or upgrading your membership—or joining one of our philanthropic groups of committed allies—are great ways to stay connected to the wildlife you love while furthering our mission and enjoying special benefits and programming.



For details, visit sdzwa.org/membership or see pages 80–83.

Gifts that provide immediate support and may qualify as tax-deductible charitable donations:

- Cash
- Stocks and bonds
- Vehicle donations
 - Car or Motorcycle
 - Truck
 - RV
 - Boat
- Cryptocurrency
- Monthly giving

To learn more or become a Wildlife Hero, visit sdzwa.org/wildlife-hero.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES

When you join us for a safari experience or tour and 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.

SPONSORSHIP AND LICENSING

From promotional opportunities to national cause marketing campaigns, we offer a wide array of services that can help your brand be part of our efforts to save wildlife.



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

Through your will or living trust, you can gift a specific amount, an asset, or a percentage of your estate. It's one of the most flexible ways you can help save, protect, and care for wildlife.

MEMORIALS AND TRUSTS

Donations 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 AND 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 us.

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 us.

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.

Other Giving

EMPLOYER MATCHING GIFTS

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

GIFTS TO FUND 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.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

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

IRA ROLLOVER

Those 70-and-a-half or older can transfer up to \$100,000 from Individual Retirement Accounts directly to us, counting toward the required minimum distribution and reducing taxable income.



The Zoo has been an important part of our lives, providing wonder, education, and fun for our family. **We love the conservation work that San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance does around the world and here at home.** We are proud that our donations can help make that possible.

—KARL AND LESLIE B.

Leadership

2025 Executive Team

Shawn Dixon

President and Chief Executive Officer

David Franco

Chief Financial Officer

Erika Kohler

Senior Vice President and Executive Director,
San Diego Zoo

Pat McTigue

Interim 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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'Aulani Wilhelm

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**San Diego Zoo
Wildlife Alliance**

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