



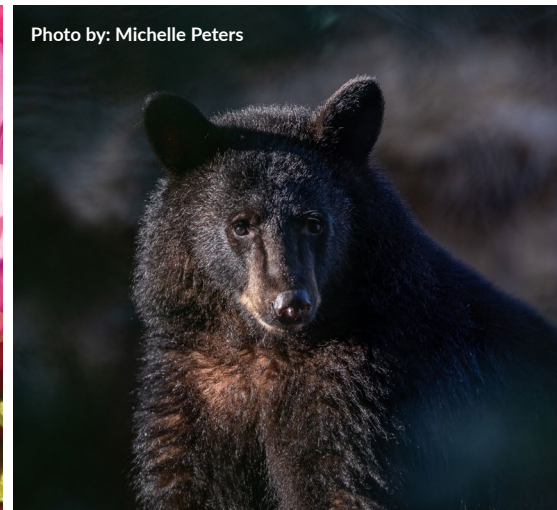
Celebrating **CONSERVATION IMPACT**

At the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Introduction
- 4 Positive Impact Model
- 5 Conservation Leadership Levels
- 6 Global Impact Map: Active Collaborations in 2025
- 8 Species Recovery
- 12 Conservation Leadership
- 16 Community Wellbeing
- 18 Coexistence Solutions
- 21 Acknowledgments



Working Together for A World WHERE PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE THRIVE

At the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, our vision to inspire everyone with wildlife every day and work together for a world where people and wildlife thrive—calls each of us to a renewed sense of purpose. It reminds us why we are here, why our work matters, and how, together, we can make a lasting difference for both people and the natural world.

Connecting People with Nature in an Urban World

The world is a very different place than when we opened our doors in 1875. Today, it's estimated that over 80% of the US population lives in urban areas and is growing more disconnected from nature. Yet, that connection is essential—for the health of our planet and our communities. Every encounter with the living world, whether it's hearing a bird sing, watching a gorilla family, or walking through our vibrant gardens, reminds visitors that wildlife and wild places are worth caring for.

Our Zoo & Garden serve as a living bridge between people and nature. Here, we show that plants and animals are not distant wonders—they are part of our shared world. As biodiversity continues to decline globally, the role we play in awakening wonder and inspiring stewardship is more vital than ever.

Creating Exceptional Experiences, Lasting Impact

Our commitment goes beyond providing a great day at the Zoo. We aim to create exceptional experiences with wildlife—moments that move people to care and act. Through our species recovery efforts, coexistence & sustainable solutions, conservation leadership programs, and urban habitat programs, we are showcasing that conservation happens everywhere—from communities coexisting with wildlife to pollinator-friendly gardens in our own neighborhoods to using science to save species.



Together, We Inspire Hope and Action

A thriving world for people and wildlife is not only possible but already in motion here at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. Together with inspiring communities coexisting with wildlife in our region and around the world, as well as the organizations who support them, we are leading the zoo world and our communities to cultivate real impact for a brighter future. I hope you are inspired by this report to join us.

Dave Jenike,
Zoo Director

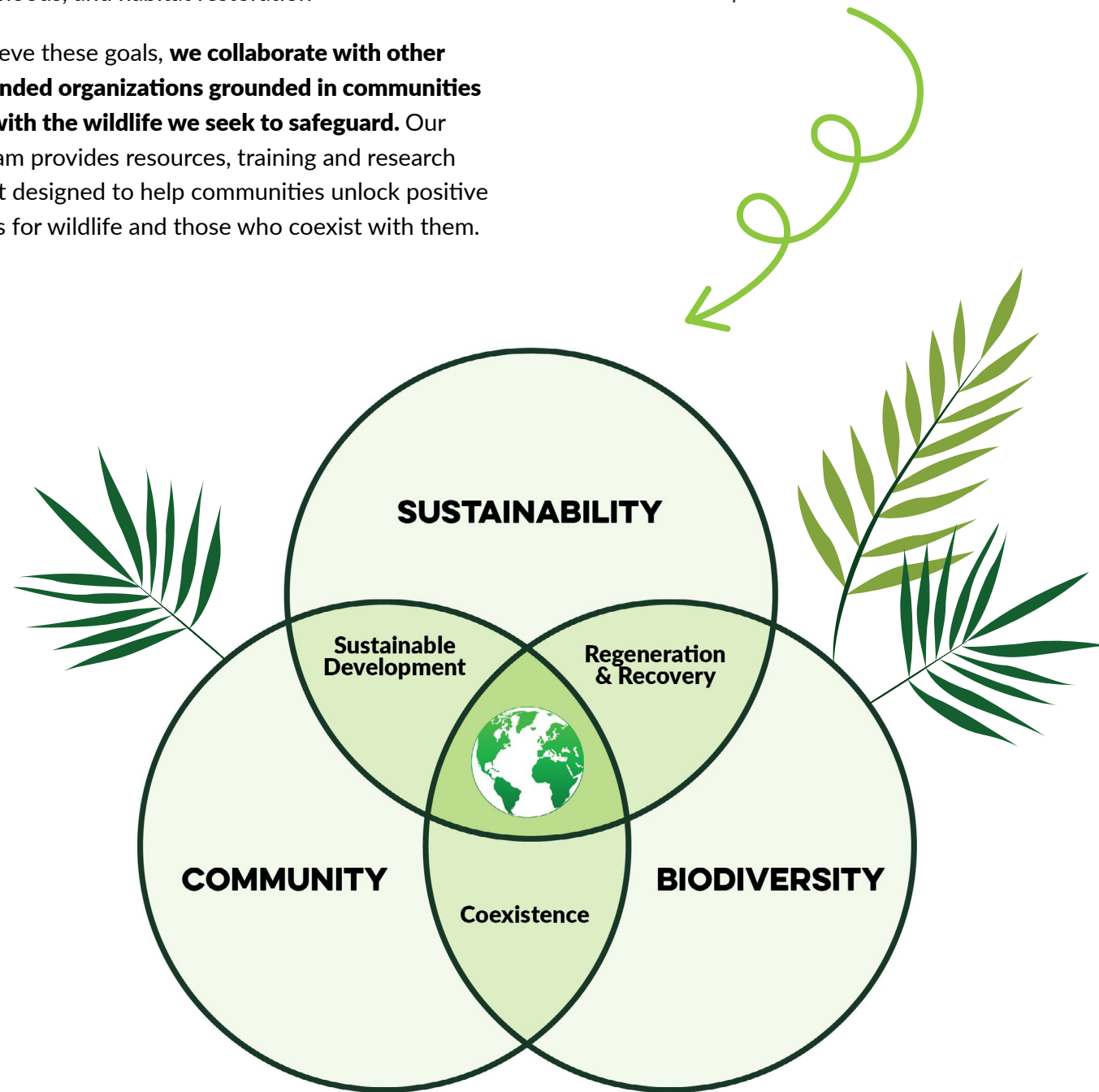
The Zoo's integrated approach to conservation combines ecological and human dimensions to achieve coexistence and positive impact. Our science-driven leadership of diverse projects spans multiple areas of focus where we seek to amplify:

- Community engagement and activation
- Wildlife coexistence, reduced conflict, and species recovery
- Sustainable regenerative practices, livelihoods, and habitat restoration

To achieve these goals, **we collaborate with other like-minded organizations grounded in communities living with the wildlife we seek to safeguard.** Our Zoo team provides resources, training and research support designed to help communities unlock positive impacts for wildlife and those who coexist with them.

THE POSITIVE IMPACT MODEL

Our **Positive Impact Model** guides cross-departmental collaboration around biodiversity conservation, sustainability, and community engagement through shared impact goals of coexistence, habitat regeneration, and sustainable development.



STEPPING UP as Conservation Leaders

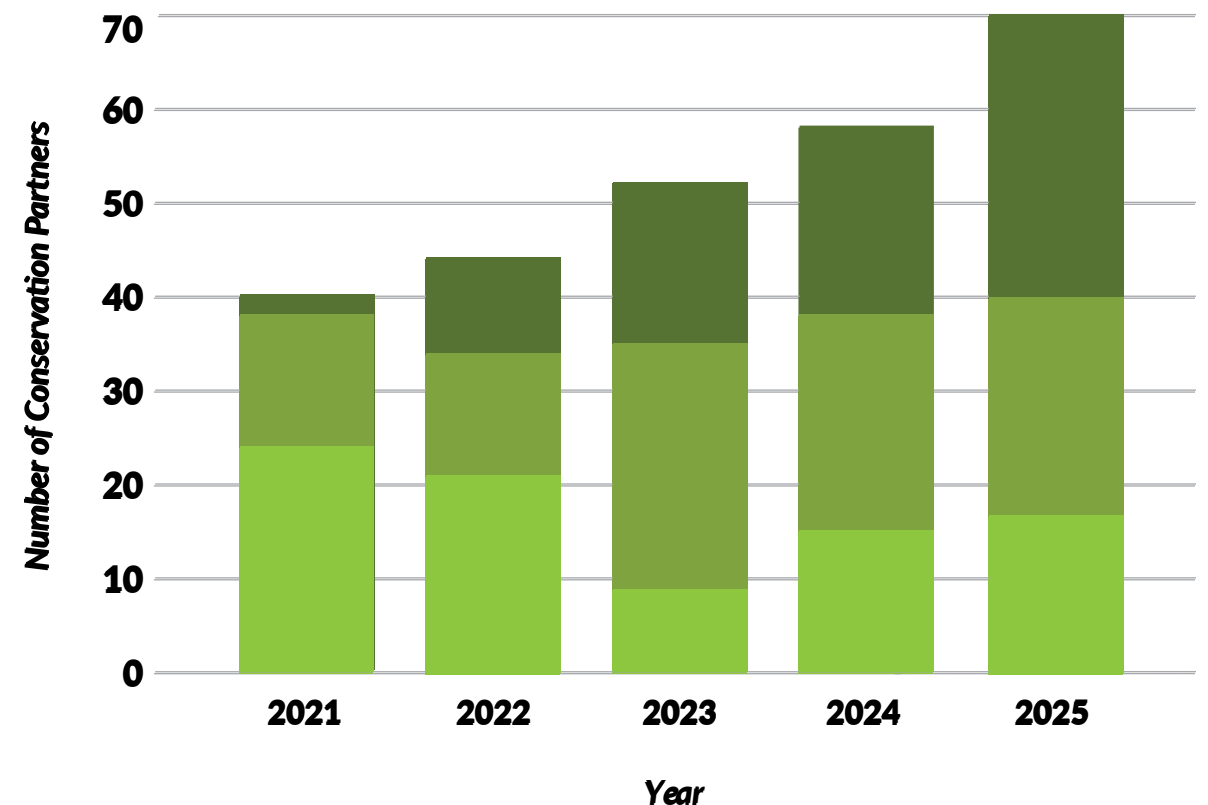
We are **intentionally deepening our partnerships toward true collaboration.** We want to mobilize our diverse staff to build buy-in and connections to our mission, while simultaneously increasing our impact and resources shared with deserving partners.

To accomplish this, we are transitioning our least active partnerships (**LEVEL 1**) where the Zoo shares revenue via philanthropic support toward more activity sharing, coordination, and communication (**LEVEL 2**), and lastly, true collaboration when the Cincinnati Zoo takes leadership in a component of a project, adding our unique skills to address the need of our partners (**LEVEL 3**).

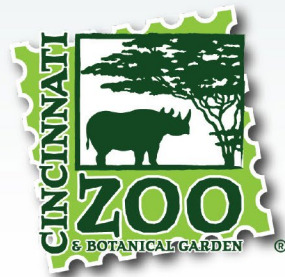
Through proactive involvement of our Zoo's diverse staff, we are increasing the potential for impact for conservation projects around the world. **In 2025, we cultivated new partnerships for new conservation opportunities,** which start at Level 1, as well as transitioned many partners to Levels 2 and 3.

- **Level 1: Philanthropic Only**
- **Level 2: Activity Sharing**
- **Level 3: True Collaboration**

COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS



GLOBAL IMPACT MAP: Active Collaborations in 2025



NORTH AMERICA

1 CINCINNATI, OHIO Bowyer Farm (A), Box Turtle Rescue (B), Cincinnati Parks (C), City of Cincinnati (D), Coexistence Fellow (C), Keep Cincinnati Beautiful (E), ODNR (F), Reds Community Makeover (G), Talbert House (H)

2 ARCTIC CREW's Polar Bear Signature Project

3 ARIZONA Mexican Wolf Recovery Program

4 BAHAMAS Coexistence Fellow, Youth Engagement Partnership

5 CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO Coexistence Fellow, Mexican Wolf Recovery Program

6 COLUMBUS, OHIO American Burying Beetle Releases

7 COSTA RICA Sloth Conservation Partner, ZooTeens

8 DETROIT, MICHIGAN Coexistence Fellow, Invertebrate Conservation & Community Garden Partner

9 KENTUCKY Kentucky Clover Restoration Project

10 NEW MEXICO Mexican Wolf Recovery Program

11 PORTLAND, OREGON Coexistence Fellow, Sea Otter Conservation Partner

12 TAMPA, FLORIDA Florida Manatee Releases

13 TEXAS/MEXICO Ocelot Project

14 WASHINGTON, DC Endangered Species Act Advocacy

SOUTH AMERICA

15 BRAZIL Giant Armadillo Conservation Partner, Jaguar Conservation Partner, Coexistence Fellow, Tamarin and Forest Conservation Partner

AFRICA

16 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Bonobo Conservation Partner

17 KENYA Coexistence Fellow, Lion Conservation Partners, SORALO

18 MADAGASCAR Coexistence Fellow, Lemur & Ecosystem Conservation Partner

19 REPUBLIC OF CONGO Gorilla Conservation Partner, Coexistence Fellow

20 SOUTH AFRICA African Penguin Conservation Partner, Cheetah Conservation Partner, Coexistence Fellow, Vulture Conservation Partner

21 TANZANIA Coexistence Fellow, Giraffe Conservation Partner, Lion Conservation Partner

22 ZIMBABWE Lion Conservation Partner

ASIA

23 INDIA (NORTHEAST) Coexistence Fellow, Elephant Conservation Partner

24 INDIA (SOUTHERN) Cobra Coexistence Partner

25 MALAYSIA Coexistence Fellow, Orangutan Conservation Partner

26 MONGOLIA Pallas's Cat Conservation Partner

27 NEPAL Snow Leopard & Fishing Cat Projects

28 PALMYRA ATOLL Sihek Recovery Project

29 SUMATRA, INDONESIA Sumatran Rhino Recovery Project

30 THAILAND Bring The Elephant Home, Elephant Conservation Partner, Coexistence Fellow

SPECIES RECOVERY

The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden is committed to saving wildlife and restoring healthy habitats—around the world, across the country, and right here in our own backyards.

Our dedicated animal keepers and scientists are stewarding the Zoo's participation in critical reintroduction programs, which include breeding and caring for animals for release into the wild, as well as propagating endangered plants to return to native landscapes. We're also working to safeguard the futures of endangered species through advanced animal and plant research led by the Lindner Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife (CREW).



This innovative work is enhanced by the partnerships we've cultivated with other leading conservationists, including those in governmental and non-governmental organizations. By applying our plant and animal expertise and research skills, the Cincinnati Zoo is leading the way in promoting sustainable populations of imperiled species and enhancing lively, biodiverse landscapes that are healthier for both people and wildlife.

Photo by: Mark Dumont



AMERICAN BURYING BEETLES:
In 2025, 30 founders were collected from Nebraska; 1,365 adults were reared at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden; 611 were released at The Wilds—including 203 pairs that produced an estimated 612 larvae.



BOX TURTLES:
24 turtles were recovered from a planned demolition site in West Carrollton, Ohio and brought to the Zoo. We are working with Ohio's Division of Wildlife to identify release sites.



BOX TURTLE RESCUE!



FLORIDA MANATEES:
In 2025, 2 manatees were reintroduced to the wild, 3 manatees returned to Florida, and 3 more arrived in Cincinnati; since participating in the Manatee Rescue and Rehabilitation Partnership in 1999, 35 manatees have been cared for at the Zoo, and 28 of those have been reintroduced to the wild.



Photo by: Cincinnati Zoo





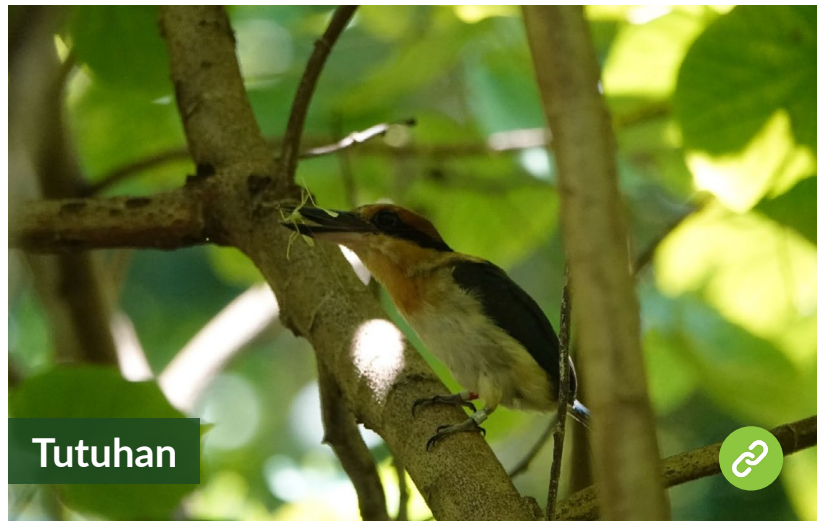
MEXICAN WOLVES:
2 Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden staff are leading the AZA Mexican Wolf SAFE program to support bi-national conservation and recovery efforts; 1 incoming Coexistence Impact Fellow is from Fundación Tonkawa.



CREW POLAR BEARS:
Over 12,000 biochemical data points were analyzed from 59 polar bears, creating the first curated serum reference intervals for the species.



SIHEK:
In 2024, 9 birds were introduced to Palmyra Atoll, including 3 from the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden; in 2025, Tutuhan from the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden was the first sihek to produce eggs in the wild in over 40 years.



Tutuhan



BOTANICAL GARDEN:
188,661 total plants were planted; 15,000 visitor interactions were logged at the Zoo's Garden Engagement Station; 2,410 Horticulture staff hours were donated to community projects; 13,775 plants were sold to local gardeners; 1,092 attendees across public programs; 60,000 plants were trialed of 887 different varieties; 5,890 plant-pollinator interactions were collected by the Pollinator Watch Team; and over 4,000 gardens have been registered through our Plant for Pollinators program since 2019.

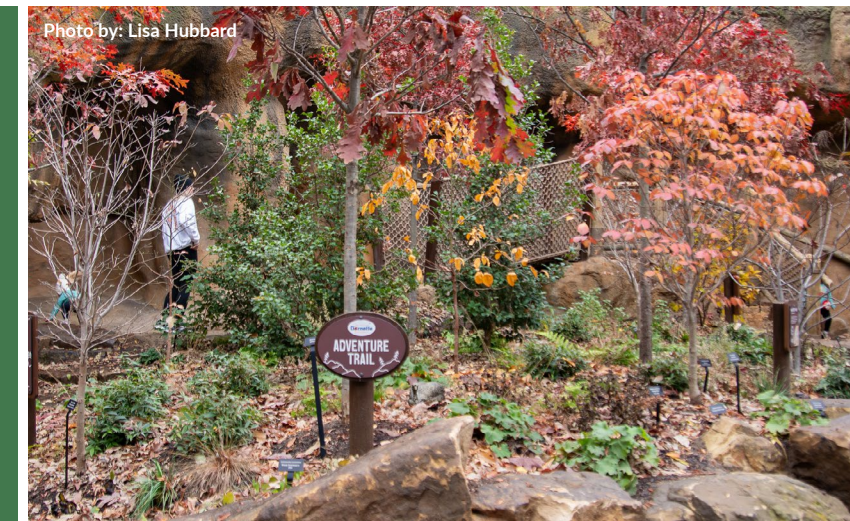


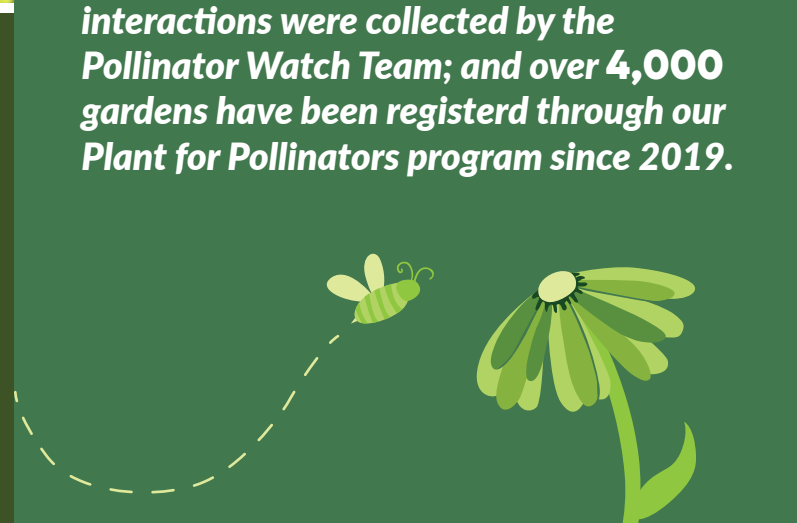
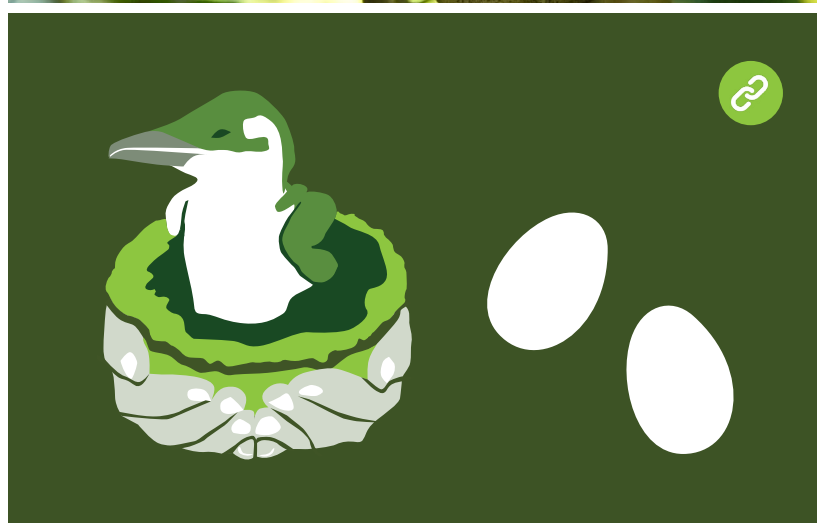
Photo by: Lisa Hubbard

BEAR RIDGE ADVENTURE TRAIL:
The new Bear Ridge Adventure Trail and habitat features a representation of the Appalachian mixed mesophytic forest ecoregion that includes a microforest with 30 trees and 40 shrubs, as well as a mixture of 700 native grasses and sedges.

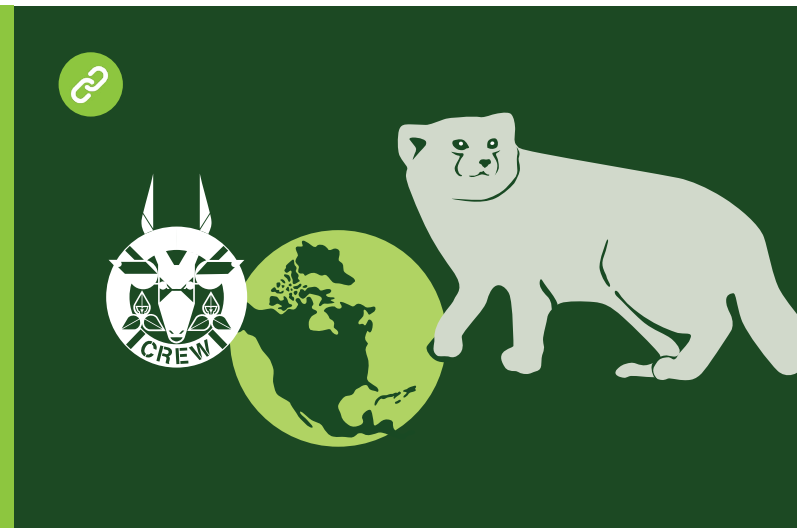


Photo by: CREW

Kentucky Clover in Culture



CREW EXCEPTIONAL PLANTS:
60 plants of Cumberland sandwort propagated through tissue culture are now a self-sustaining population of over 300 reproducing individuals; over 1,000 Kentucky clover plants were mass-propagated and transplanted to their natural habitat.



CREW IMPERILED CATS:
We performed 52 reproductive exams, semen collections, and artificial inseminations in 8 felid species across 25 zoos in 21 states.

CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP

Becoming an impactful leader is a lifelong journey, and here at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, we aim to reach emerging and practicing conservationists at all stages in that journey to cultivate passion, develop essential skill sets, and inspire a coexistence-driven approach to conservation.

We encourage and empower people of all backgrounds and ages to have experiences that foster a deep connection to nature and an action-oriented ethic. Starting with youth educational experiences and building up to intentional skill-building trainings for graduate students and professional conservationists from around the world, the Zoo is creating a powerful ripple effect that contributes to a global network of environmentally and communally minded leadership practices.

Our programs are intentionally designed to welcome a wide range of participants so that conservation efforts can be led by passionate, diverse voices. By facilitating increased access and resources to underserved communities, we're committed to supporting leaders whose unique perspectives and problem-solving skills can lead to sustainable solutions that benefit people and wildlife both.



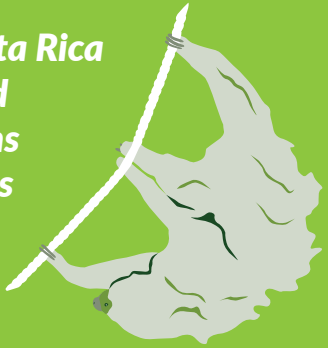
Photo by: Cincinnati Zoo



Photo by: Mike Cisneros

ZOOTEN ADVENTURE WITH PURPOSE:

14 teens traveled to Costa Rica for a Zoo-sponsored field experience, while 6 teens traveled to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium for the Teen EcoSummit.



COEXISTENCE IMPACT FELLOWS:

6 Fellows joined us in May for our 3rd annual "Fellows Week"; as a result of an IMLS grant, our next cohort is expanding to include 8 Hoffman Coexistence Fellows.

See the map below for an overview of the 2025 Fellows' project locations and conservation organizations.

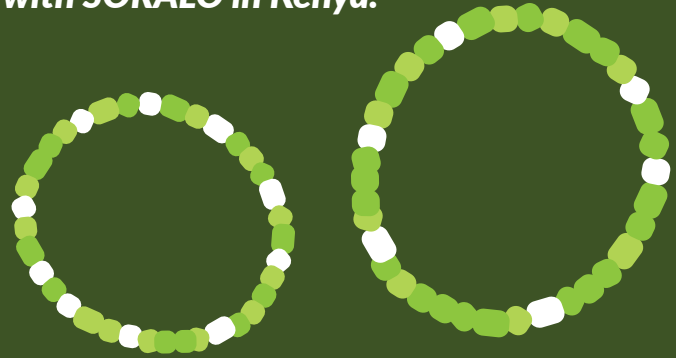


Geographic Regions of Hoffman Coexistence Fellows 2025



AZA CONSERVATION AWARD:

We received the William G. Conway International Conservation Award recognizing our 19 years of partnership with SORALO in Kenya.



OVERNIGHT ADVENTURES® & SSA SUPPORTING SORALO:

The Zoo's Overnight Adventures program & the SSA Group sold about 900 bracelets and necklaces crafted by Maasai mamas, raising over \$6,500.



FIELD TRIPS:

In 2025, over 77,000 students, teachers, and chaperones visited the Zoo on school field trips; over 20,000 of the attendees were able to visit for free through our LCEAF program.



ROUND UP FOR WILDLIFE:

In 2025, 35,858 people chose to take conservation action and Round Up for Wildlife, raising over \$64,500.



PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

In 2025, we engaged over 6,000 participants in after hours programs, 8,000 through our Zoo Troop and family programs, and over 16,000 campers for holiday and seasonal sessions.

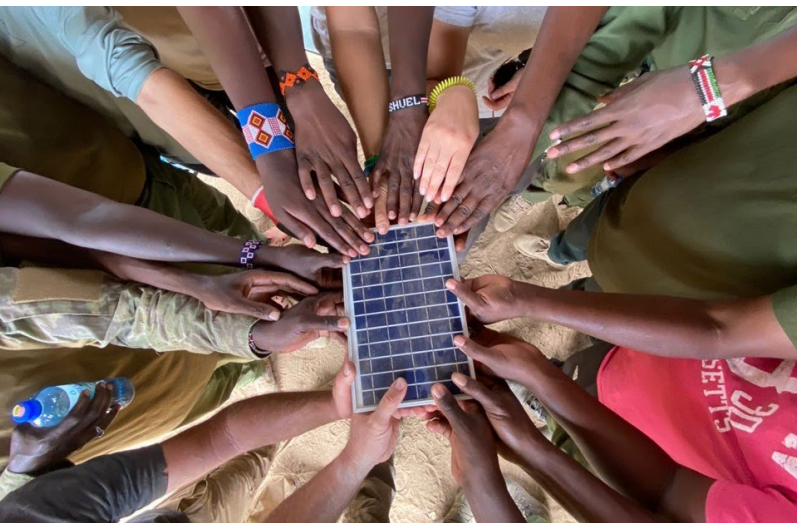


Photo by: Aye Owen

ACADEMIC SUCCESS:

1 research article was co-written by Zoo Staff and our partners at SORALO that demonstrates how zoos can be effective and intentional partners with community-driven organizations. We invite others to reflect on the inspiring principles for good partnerships from African community leaders.



VOLUNTEER SUPPORT:

253 ZooTeens logged 30,000 hours, 497 adult volunteers logged 106,668 hours, and 564 corporate volunteers logged 1,692 hours—contributing to over 138,000 hours donated to the Zoo!



COEXISTENCE CHAMPIONS:

Over 10% of Zoo full-time staff have now worked on-site with our partners in Kenya, Thailand, Mexico, and Costa Rica.

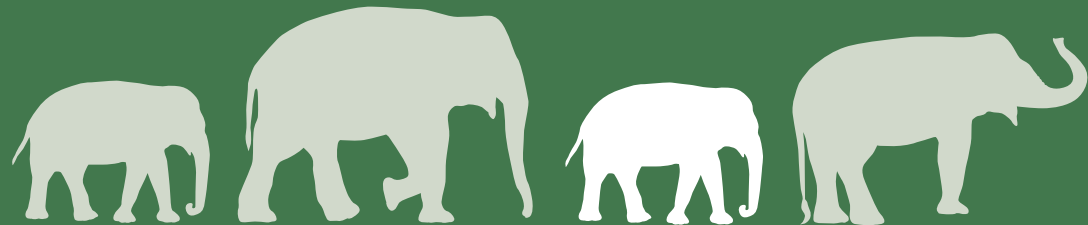


Photo by: Cincinnati Zoo

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

The interconnectivity between humans, wildlife, and the natural environment means that successful conservation efforts don't just impact plants and animals—they lead to better outcomes for people. A vital pillar of the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's mission is serving our community, which is reflected in our commitment to improving peoples' health and wellbeing when leading conservation initiatives closer to home.

By listening to and engaging with neighbors and local partners, we are better able to understand their needs and leverage our own expertise and resources to achieve our shared goals. The utilization of innovative practices like investing in solar energy and creating peaceful green spaces allows us to restore, regenerate, and promote healthy environments where people and wildlife can thrive.



A conservation approach that centers community wellbeing and resiliency in the face of climate change isn't confined to Cincinnati: we're modeling and facilitating similar approaches with partners across the world, resulting in solar installations in Kenya and community learning gardens in Thailand. In continuing to weave the thread between people, wildlife, and natural landscapes throughout our conservation work, we're redefining conservation at the local and global scale.



REDS COMMUNITY MAKEOVER: Horticulture marked 13 years joining the Reds, P&G, and Cincinnati Children's Hospital for this project; a 13,000 SQ FT urban learning garden with 1,402 plants was installed at the O'dell Owens Center for Learning in Walnut Hills.



WELLNESS GARDENS: Over 600 plants across a 3,800 SQ FT garden at the Hamilton County Crisis Center will benefit over 1,600 clients a year; over 250 plants at Hamilton County Youth Center garden can be tended by 160 young people.

SOLAR AT THE ZOO: 4.78 MILLION KWH of clean electricity was produced from solar panels across the Zoo's campus, preventing 2,000 metric tons of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere.

COMMUNITY SOLAR RESILIENCY PROGRAM: The Zoo donated 233 solar panels & installed 127KW of solar energy across 3 community partner sites, likely equating to over \$21,000 in annual electric bill savings.



STUFFED ANIMAL CLINIC: 319 cuddly "patients" were seen in 2025, a 74% increase from last year!

COEXISTENCE SOLUTIONS

Coexistence represents resilience in an ever-changing world, where we find ways for humans and wildlife to co-adapt and adjust to sharing landscapes. The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden models this conservation approach through our local and global partnerships, community projects and initiatives, and intentionally designed visitor experiences here on Zoo grounds.

But we don't stop at inspiration: we invite people to take action and join us in a movement larger than ourselves, one that positively transforms the environment for current and future generations to come. From sharing the stories of coexistence between people and wildlife here at home and around the world, to creating resources built upon our diverse expertise in topics ranging from horticulture to the human dimensions of conservation, we're creating accessible pathways to meaningful conservation action.

A commitment to coexistence demonstrates the critical intersection between conservation and sustainability. By rallying our audiences ranging from Zoo visitors to community members to other conservation organizations, we are scaling up regional and global impact in creating healthy, thriving landscapes for years to come.



IMPACT EVALUATION
8 coexistence impact evaluations are underway with community-driven partners; over 3,000 total surveys have been conducted by our partners.



ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden mobilized audiences to take action for people and wildlife by submitting public comments opposing the removal of the Endangered Species Act's blanket rule.



SOLAR & SHEEP AT BOWYER: Our 30 MW system will generate \$150,000 for Lebanon City Schools annually; 250–300 grazing sheep eliminate emissions from mowing, restore soil health, keep farmland in active production, and provide a source of local, organic meat.



TOM YUM SOUP: We uplifted our partnership with Bring the Elephant Home (BTEH) by offering Tom Yum Soup at Mai Thai's Market and Base Camp Cafe, allowing us to share the story of human-elephant coexistence in Thailand with our Zoo Staff and visitors.



LION COEXISTENCE WITH AFRICAN COMMUNITIES: Cincinnati Zoo and the AZA SAFE African Lion program brought 3 African-led organizations together to share best practices and design new ways to help communities live with lions. 13 African conservationists participated in an exchange in Zimbabwe.



Photo by: Dave Jenike

We Thank You

for your ongoing support of the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's Conservation Impact Programs!

We would especially like to thank the funders who have made the projects outlined in this report possible:

- The Andrew Jergens Foundation
- Arthur L. & Elaine V. Johnson Foundation
- Bank of America Charitable Foundation
- Charles Dewey
- Crosset Family Fund
- Duke Energy Foundation
- Ellen and Richard Berghamer Foundation
- Emerson Collective
- Gorilla Glue
- Greater Cincinnati Foundation
- Hugh H. Hoffman
- Institute for Museum and Library Services
- International Association for Bear Research and Management
- John Hauck Foundation
- Klosterman Baking Company
- Margot Marsh Biodiversity Fund
- United States Geological Survey

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Each of our projects and accomplishments so far are due to ongoing partnerships with every department across the Zoo and our many external partners both locally and globally. We are grateful for our creative, brilliant, and eager partners who motivate us every day. We can't wait to see what we will accomplish together in the next year!

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH!

conservation@cincinnati-zoo.org
Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden
3400 Vine Street
Cincinnati, OH 45220

Photo by: Lisa Hubbard





2025 CONSERVATION IMPACT REPORT

cincinnati-zoo.org