



Wilder Calgary Zoo
INSTITUTE

This is what happens when
passion and giving collide.



2021
Gratitude Report



Thank you to our pack.

How do you provide exceptional care to over 1,000 animals daily? How do you bring a species like the whooping crane back from the brink of extinction? How do you build conservation connections that will guide the next generation? How do you make the world wilder? The answer to all these questions begins with you.

You sustain work that makes a world of difference — not only for the animals residing at your zoo, but for threatened and endangered species around the world and the communities living alongside them. This year's annual gratitude report is all about you and your impact.

After some unexpected changes, we opened two new habitats in 2021. 'Tanuck', the Malayan tapir and white-handed gibbon brothers, 'Maximus' and 'Majimel', are enjoying their new home in the redeveloped Gateway to Asia. A new space was created for 'Nettles', the North American porcupine orphan from the wild. You made these habitats a reality.

When you read about the conservation of burrowing owls, the restoration of an icon, or about a young man transformed by his time at the zoo, know that you are at the center of these stories. None of this work is possible without you.

We know 2021 was another tough one for so many, but we hope these stories fill you with joy and happy memories because that's what you've brought to so many others with your generosity.

Thank you for sparking hope and helping create a better future for wildlife!

In gratitude,



Steven Ross
Chief Development Officer, Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo



Wilder what?

2021 was full of many changes. Including a big one for your zoo! The Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo was born. Who is the Wilder Institute? What does this mean? We hope to answer some of your most pressing questions on what this big change means for you and the future of wildlife conservation.





Grow.

This is what happens when your generosity sprouts world-class care.

What do they eat? This is often one of the first questions from young and old alike. And with more than 1,000 animal residents, the answers are as varied as the species that call your zoo home. But there's one thing that the tallest giraffe to the tiniest tortoise have in common. Some of what they eat is sustainably grown, right on zoo grounds.

When it was discovered that your gorilla troop may be growing, the health and welfare of the troop was a top priority. But how do you ensure warm-weathered species, like the western lowland gorilla, receive a natural meal, even on the coldest days of a Calgary winter? Harvest it yourself of course! In one of two onsite greenhouses at your zoo, you will find rows of banana trees thriving in rich soil and basking under grow lamps. But it's not the bananas were after, it's the leaves! Tropical browse like banana leaves doesn't just make for a natural meal for gorillas, but also provides natural enrichment for the troop.

Just alongside the 35 banana trees, you will see the beginning of something just sprouting out of the ground. *Aframomum melegueta* is a special ginger variety known to promote heart health in gorillas. Naturally found in the swampy, tropical lowlands of the central African rain forests where western lowland gorillas call home, finding the best seeds for our gorilla troop was no easy task. As with everything we introduce into our animal habitats, the browse we offer goes through strict nutritional analysis and is carefully allotted to each species based on the greatest need. With your support, we were able to find just the right seeds to start growing this healthy gorilla snack.

But we can't quite grow everything from scratch, so some food is sourced from local growers. Such as the 110 dump trucks of willow gathered from a local farm. Perfect browse for moose, the willow is brought in and set up in the new aeroponics section of one of



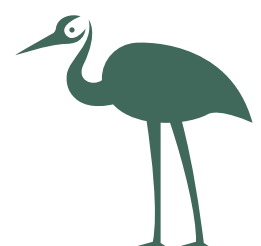
the greenhouses that your generosity made possible last year. This automated, self-sufficient growing system allows the willow to properly mature without the use of soil so it can be given to the animals at its peak, ensuring a nutrient-rich (and tasty) snack.

Each of the animals that call your zoo home receive specialty diets and enrichment activities, and because of you, the banana leaves our troop are tasting and the willow our moose are munching are part of a larger effort to create sustainable ecosystems for everyone. Because of you, and the support of our valued sponsor Nutrien, your zoo is actively living our value of sustainability, and we can't thank you enough.

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Who is the Wilder Institute?

The Wilder Institute is the Calgary Zoological Society's conservation portfolio focused on species translocations/reintroductions and community conservation. This conservation portfolio was managed through the Calgary Zoo Foundation which has been rebranded as the Wilder Institute. Simply put – the Wilder Institute is the conservation arm of the zoo's work. We simply rebranded the old Foundation to allow us to further grow our conservation work!





Build.

This is what happens when your vision sparks discovery.

On an overcast day last June, shovels hit the dirt in Wheatland County, Alberta. This moment marked a dream 40-years in the making, along with a new future for wildlife. Located on 330 acres of land, these shovels were breaking ground on a new wildlife conservation centre which stands to be a beacon of hope to endangered species.

Since 1985, your zoo has operated an off-site conservation breeding facility to address the mounting need for conservation breeding and reintroduction programs. Some of Canada's most endangered species, such as whooping cranes and Vancouver Island marmots, owe their existence to the facility's skilled team of animal care specialists and scientists. However, what was once a remote oasis for the breeding of some of North America's most endangered species, was becoming increasingly pressured by urban development and no longer suited for the sensitive breeding work happening there.

As the only zoo in Canada with an offsite breeding facility, your zoo is committed to taking on the immense challenges that species face, using science and discovery to sustain threatened wildlife in Canada and around the world. And so, thanks to your generosity, and the support of a group of like-minded philanthropists and sponsors called the Founders Circle, the new centre will be a step forward in providing the right level of seclusion and ample space to expand our conservation programs. Opening spring 2022, the new wildlife conservation centre will feature improved animal habitats for burrowing owls, greater sage-grouse, Vancouver Island marmots, whooping cranes, and Northern leopard frogs; expanded and purpose-built paddocks, pastures and shelters for hoofstock, and accommodation for resident animal care staff and a veterinary clinic.

Summer proved to be a busy time as soon after we broke ground at the new wildlife conservation centre, your zoo announced the start of a massive project to redevelop the Canadian Wilds zone and deepen our focus on Canadian Arctic conservation, including providing sanctuary to polar bears.



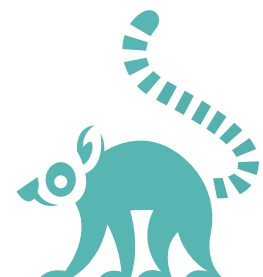
The revitalized 21-acre space will see larger, more complex habitats for some species, relocating other species to more suitable spaces and a new habitat for polar bears that need our help. It will also offer more engaging experiences and proactively use storytelling to inspire and educate visitors about the importance of biodiversity, the complex survival challenges facing iconic Canadian wildlife and wild spaces, and more importantly, help visitors discover how they can help save these animals from extinction.

From the cutting-edge science and research at the new wildlife conservation centre, to the immersive habitats and storytelling that will envelop the redeveloped Canadian Wilds, thank you for building a new future for wildlife and encouraging us all to reflect on the human connection to the natural world and our responsibility to protect it.

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Why did the Calgary Zoo Foundation need to be rebranded?

As part of our ambitious 10-year plan, we are deepening our conservation efforts globally and significantly increasing our fundraising efforts to support this critical work. To broaden our work internationally, we wanted a brand identity that is not geographically based and resonates globally as a conservation brand. We are taking this opportunity to launch an action-focused brand that highlights our deepest hopes and allows our organization to build a global coalition of change-makers to ensure the future stays wild, forever!





Boost.

This is what happens when your passion provides hope.

When people think about endangered or threatened ecosystems, often the Amazon rainforest or the Great Barrier Reef come to mind. But there's another, less well-known yet very important ecosystem that's endangered, and it's much closer to home.

Temperate grasslands, like the Canadian prairies, are considered some of the most endangered ecosystems on earth. They face threats such as habitat loss and fragmentation from prairie to crop conversion. The endangerment of grassland habitat in Canada has cascaded into the endangerment of many grassland species.

For thousands of years, burrowing owls have been a part of grassland ecosystems in Canada. Nesting exclusively underground, they don't dig their own burrows as their name implies. They take over pre-existing burrows dug by other prairie species such as badgers, ground squirrels, and coyotes. But over the past 40 years, the Canadian population of these tiny owls has declined dramatically. With estimates of fewer than 500 breeding pairs in Canada, the burrowing owl is one of the most endangered bird species in this country's grassland prairie.

But thanks to your support, your Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo has been working to boost wild burrowing owl populations since 2016 with a technique called head-starting. Together with Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Alberta Environment and Parks, we collect the youngest owlets – who are least likely to survive – from the wild and care for them over the winter to ensure they have a better chance of survival.

In 2021 you helped to give 20 burrowing owlets an encouraging push towards survival! These young owlets were brought in by our Conservation & Science field team last summer as the youngest siblings of their burrows. Burrowing owls typically lay 9 eggs, which

hatch over a period of a few days with the last to hatch often not surviving. To determine the youngest of the nest, feathers on the wings and tail are measured and compared to a growth rate chart. Each owlet is carefully examined and given a leg band to later identify them in the wild.



These 20 young and tiny owls were then brought to your zoo's offsite Wildlife Conservation Centre. There they received exemplary care from our Animal Care, Health & Welfare team over the fall and winter months. This coming spring these owls will be released in breeding pairs with the hope they will contribute to the wild population!

These owls will still have a tough road ahead of them, but you helped give them a "head start" by supporting them during a critical stage of their life. Your commitment is not only boosting the number of burrowing owls in the wild, but you are helping to ensure they are a part of the Canadian prairies for generations to come.

What is this 10-year plan?

In response to the growing number of endangered species in need of conservation efforts, the Wilder Institute aims to expand our conservation programs across Canada and around the world – targeting to double our number of conservation programs by 2030 – to secure a future for all living things!





Restore.

This is what happens when your collaboration brings back memories.

One of Carole (Stevens) Brawn's first memories of the zoo goes all the way back to the early 1940's, when she first dipped her toes into the wading pool on zoo grounds during a visit with her grandparents. The zoo looked quite different then as opposed to today (there was a wading pool!). But one thing remained the same – the watchful eyes of your zoo's oldest resident.

Dinny, the larger-than-life Brontosaurus, was constructed in 1937 along with 56 other concrete dinosaurs as a part of the former Natural History Park. At 120 tonnes, 34 feet wide, and 107 feet long, Dinny's imposing figure was a constant and welcoming sight each time Carole returned for further zoo visits.

Around this same time, Bob Brawn, born and raised in Calgary like Carole, was also discovering the zoo and all the magic it contained. And he too remembers the joy that the zoo and Dinny brought.

And as stories go, since then, three generations of Brawns have shared countless happy memories on St. George's Island. As Dinny witnessed the Calgary skyline develop, the river shift, and the world around him change and grow, the Brawn family grew and enjoyed family picnics at Dinny's feet and unforgettable experiences that connected them to the importance of wildlife conservation.

And while time allowed Carole and Bob's family to flourish and grow, that passage of time, along with the weather and destructive flood waters, wasn't so kind to Dinny. So, when it was time to show him some much-deserved love, the Brawn family's special memories of Dinny led them to generously support a Dinny makeover including a full restoration and a dedicated green space around Dinny. And on September 3, Dinny once again showed his glory, and the Brawn Family Foundation Dinny's Green was unveiled.

"Dinny is an iconic symbol of the Calgary Zoo. It's important to our family to highlight Calgary's past, as well as its future," said Kelley Buckley, one of the Brawn's children. "As kids, we couldn't wait to visit the zoo and spent most of the visit climbing Dinny and pretending he was our own personal pet. We hope the Dinny green space will bring as many happy family memories to visitors as it has for our family."



Like the Brawns, generations of families have gathered under Dinny's watchful eye with many memories including photos of children climbing his tail or families gathering underneath him to picnic, and thanks to the Brawn Family Foundation, along with you, there may not be a wading pool to dip your toes in, but Dinny will remain a treasured part of Calgary's future for years to come.

Does the zoo still consider itself a conservation organization? How does Dinny fit it?

Dinny carries a heavy burden – a historic figure and a symbolic reminder that extinct is forever. Not only is Dinny a cherished gathering space once again, but he inspires visitors to take a stand for wildlife. He shares the story that although extinct is forever, together we can make a difference for wildlife and wild places.

Your zoo is first and foremost a conservation organization and will continue to share the important work of the Wilder Institute through interpretive signage, visitor engagement, school programming, camps, and special events. The mission of both entities remains to take and inspire action to sustain wildlife and wild places!





Inspire.

This is what happens when your support motivates the next generation.

From field trips to school programs, birthday parties to summer camps, and volunteer opportunities to a first job, your generosity truly inspires the next generation.

In 2021, more than 65,000 youth attended our educational programs, summer camps, and field trips. Many of them making their first connections with the zoo, learning about protecting the natural world around them and forming connections with the endangered animals in our care.

The Junior Zoo Guide program, sponsored by RBC Foundation, continued to foster that connection. A total of 122 youth aged 14 – 17 completed more than 9,200 volunteer hours, engaging and exciting volunteerism while helping them prepare for a workplace environment.

And when it was time to land that first job, the ZooYouth Employment Program was on hand to help build critical skills creating a foundation for a lifetime of successful employment. Over the course of the pilot program, 57 youth received extensive, paid job preparation and job skills training.

But don't just take our word for it. Gregory started as a Junior Zoo Guide in 2018, and last year he received the invitation to apply and secured a position through the ZooYouth program. Here's what he had to say:

"Volunteering gave me a support group, a family, a massive, community in which I felt I actually played a role. Most of my best memories are from Volunteer Resources, just sitting in the break room. On-shift though, I made even more connections. I met staff across many departments: Animal Care, Visitor Engagement, Guest Relations, Communications, Event

Administration. Spanning oceans and continents, the zoo has given me relationships with many outstanding people I would have never met elsewhere. I learned so much about the animals, not just as species, but also as individuals. By the end of my four years with the Junior Zoo Guides, I learned more about myself than I did about the animals. I learned so many things that I never would have in school. Volunteering for Plan Your Visit made me discover how to be more outgoing. Penguins taught me to find the balance between strictly applying a rule and making sure a visitor's day is still the best possible. Gorillas taught me how to integrate a conservation message into every interaction. Looking back, I am so happy [in my interview] I asked, 'what can I do better next time', because that's what I live by. If I'm bad at something, I can get better. If I'm good at something, I'll try to be the best! Nothing ever stops me if I don't stop myself. Thank you for being my first 'job', and thank you for getting me my first real job. Thank you for teaching me to love working with people. Thank you for teaching me to be positive. Thank you for inspiring me to pursue conservation as a lifelong goal, not just a summer speech. Thank you for helping me find my feet like nobody else could."



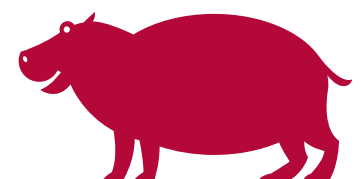
ZooYouth volunteer Gregory on the right.

Thank you so much for inspiring young animal lovers like Gregory. For helping them grow into the people they want to become. For helping them build a lifelong love for wildlife. For boosting their passion for conservation. And for restoring hope for the future.

Why did we select the name “Wilder Institute”? And who funds it?

The selection of “Wilder Institute” as our new name is meant to represent the call to action for the world we want to create - to make the world a wilder place. As one of Canada's leading conservation charities, we have a tremendous opportunity to inspire and educate our community on how each of us can make a difference for wildlife here in Canada and around the world. This was the main driver behind our choice to rebrand the Calgary Zoo Foundation as the Wilder Institute.

The Wilder Institute is managed by the Calgary Zoological Society – sharing its mission, vision, leadership team, and board of directors. The Wilder Institute receives operating funds from the Calgary Zoological Society and is also supported through project-specific government funding, grants and donations.



The pack impact

Here are a few more examples of the work your generosity sustained in 2021.



Published **10** high-impact scientific journal papers and chapters in leading conservation and science publications



Cared for **35** endangered species at the zoo



Supported **46** Species Survival Programs (SSPS) at the zoo



Ongoing conservation initiatives in **5** countries (Canada, USA, Madagascar, Kenya and Ghana)



21 Full-time scientists
2 Part-time Scientists

Released **303** individual animals into the wild as part of conservation translocation initiatives

24
greater-sage
grouse



245
northern
leopard frogs



14
Vancouver
Island
marmots



20
fishers



Can I still direct my donation to both conservation and the zoo? What does my donation support?

Yes! Gifts made to the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo can be directed to programs at the zoo or conservation programs, just let us know where you want your funds to go! A gift to support the global conservation programs which we lead in the areas of Community Conservation and Conservation Translocations flow through the Wilder Institute. Gifts to support things such as exceptional

care, new habitats, and inspiring educational programming flow through the co-branded Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo. The only difference you may see – is the name on the tax receipt.

By supporting the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo you are helping to restore balance and secure a future for all living things!

Your 2021 support in review

You are one of **7,748 donors**

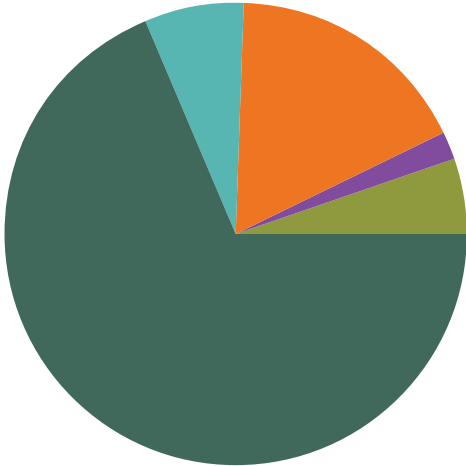
Together you gave **\$15,529,944**

304 monthly donors

657 first time donors



Gift Direction	% Raised
Capital	68%
Conservation	7%
Animal Care/Operating	18%
Education	2%
Endowment	5%



Rebranding comes with huge costs when revenues have been greatly affected by COVID-19. Donors may be disappointed to learn that the donations they thought were going to support the animals and the zoo staff instead have been spent on the rebrand.

The costs associated with rebranding and launching the Wilder Institute were not funded by donor funding, it was completed using operational revenue. We are fortunate that the patronage and event attendance of the zoo has provided us with the revenue capacity to make this important investment. An investment that will help create a new future for wildlife and people by bringing together the tools, resources, and expertise for successful conservation in Canada and around the world.

Still have more questions about the Wilder Institute? Visit wilderinstitute.org to learn even more about the conservation work your support makes possible.

Questions about giving? Reach out to donations@calgaryzoo.com





Ways to Give

Financial support for the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo can be provided in a variety of ways: from annual gifts and ZooCare contributions, to donations for special projects and planned gifts. We invite you to review our projects and programs to see what might interest you.

calgaryzoo.com

wilderinstitute.org

For more information, please contact the development office at the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo.

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