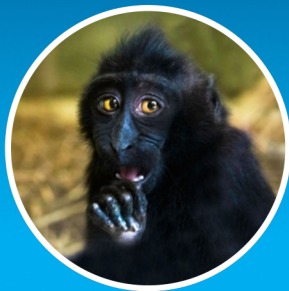


# Championing Conservation

Drusillas Park's Conservation Strategy for 2030



NO ORDINARY ZOO!



# Introduction

As our world changes and the delicate balance of our ecosystems teeters on the edge, the imperative to conserve and protect our planet's biodiversity has never been more urgent.

Threats to wildlife are wide-ranging and have been exacerbated by the evolution of humans. Scientists estimate that the current rate of species extinction is between 1,000 and 10,000 times higher than the natural background extinction rate, primarily due to human activities.

Zoos are in a perfect position to play a pivotal role in this fight for nature and this strategy will set out our roadmap and objectives over the course of the next 5 years, demonstrating our commitment to helping preserve wildlife.

We must inspire and empower people and communities to love and protect nature for today, tomorrow, and generations to come.



# Our Strategic Cornerstones

## Conservation

We must adopt an integrated approach to protecting animals in our care and in the wild

## Research

We must build out our capabilities to deliver research that can contribute towards enhanced animal welfare management and the conservation of wildlife

## Education

We must teach others about the importance of preserving natural biodiversity and embolden them to act on our vision



# Our Vision and Mission

1

## Vision

A world where wildlife thrives and nature is preserved

2

## Mission

To use our position of influence for meaningful change with outcomes that contribute to species survival and habitat restoration



# Our Objectives

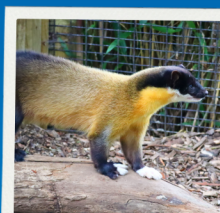
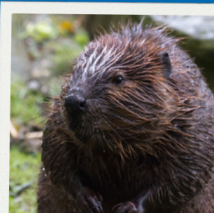
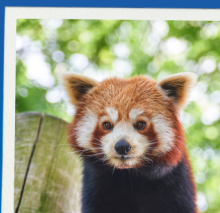
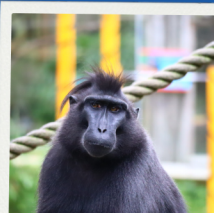
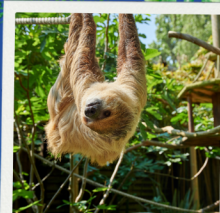
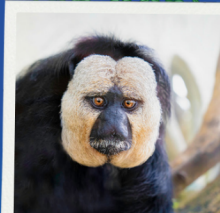
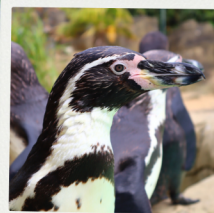
1 Endeavour to halt species extinction and work as an integrated member of the zoo community founded on a one plan approach

2 Establishing Drusillas as a recognised leader in the conservation of native British and Sussex wildlife

3 Formalise and diversify our global conservation efforts by establishing the Drusillas Conservation In Action charitable fund

4 Build out our capabilities to deliver meaningful, evidence-based, conservation research to inform conservation action and animal welfare

5 Deliver impactful conservation education to manifest the need and action required for wildlife conservation



# Objective 1

## Endeavour to halt species extinction and work as an integrated member of the zoo community founded on a one plan approach

- By supporting target 4 of the **Global Biodiversity Framework** we will prioritise homes for threatened species that have a large focus on recovery, increasing the number of species holding at least a 'vulnerable' status in our collection from 34% to 50% by 2030
- Increase the amount of managed and monitored **EEP/ESB** species at Drusillas from 50% to 75% by 2030
- Investigate whether we could take further action in the recovery of threatened species by understanding whether we could support **conservation translocation** or species reintroduction.
- Recognise and adopt global initiatives such as **reverse the red**, by leveraging the IUCN Red List to select species and conservation projects that are appropriate for Drusillas
- Increase our in situ **conservation partners** to 10 (from 4) and increase our local conservation partners to 4 (from 1).



## Objective 2

### Establishing Drusillas as a recognised leader in the conservation of native British and Sussex wildlife



- We will manage our 15-acre site as a quality habitat for native species, creating a roadmap of activities for **enriching biodiversity** within our perimeter which will align with national and local conservation strategies
- Grow our **native conservation** partnerships to 4 from 2, so we establish working partnerships with Peoples Trust for Endangered Species, South Downs National Park, Rewilding Britain, and The Sussex Wildlife Trust that will aim to conserve and restore Sussex wildlife and habitats, beginning locally in the South Downs and extending throughout Sussex and the UK
- **Encourage and support** staff to get involved with native conservation work by supplying resources, time, and budget alongside our biodiversity roadmap

## Objective 3



### Formalise and diversify our global conservation efforts by establishing the Drusillas Conservation In Action charitable fund

- Found our **charity**, 'Drusillas Conservation in Action', aiming to increase our support for in situ and ex situ conservation efforts
- This central fund will be used to finance the range of conservation and research activities and will result in **greater productivity** and reporting of our conservation expenditure moving forward
- Establish and build **grant programs** that recognise where financial support is needed, or where staff can apply for conservation and research trips abroad
- Build a new **culture** of conservation within our institution and deliver our new vision with clarity to obtain as much employee buy-in as possible





## Objective 4

**Build out our capabilities to deliver meaningful, evidence-based, conservation research to inform conservation action and animal welfare**

- We will expand our efforts to conduct, facilitate, and support **scientific research** that directly impacts conservation action and animal welfare at Drusillas and beyond, providing research opportunities for students, researchers, and Drusillas staff.
- Continue to support, and, where possible, initiate, research projects, that are working towards a real commitment to **in situ** field conservation, and that align with our conservation efforts.
- Build a **framework** to evaluate and assess whether our current in situ projects are best placed for our resources moving forwards, ensuring that our resource allocation is efficient and effective in practice.
- Build a stronger relationship with local **academic centres** so we can forge a working relationship founded on conservation, ecology, or research topics spanning the field of conservation.



# Objective 5

**Deliver impactful conservation education to manifest the need and action required for wildlife conservation**

- Aim to have **50%** of all zoo-related interpretation central to conservation messaging
- Build 5 new **animal habitats** that deliver conservation educational awareness to enhance public consciousness about local and global conservation issues, emphasising the importance of biodiversity, wildlife protection, and sustainable living practices
- Continue to deliver and provide stimulating, fun, and immersive sessions and workshops to over **13,000 students** each year
- **Strengthen our relationships** with local colleges, allowing undergraduate students, and where possible, post-graduate students, the chance to conduct research that can contribute to a one plan approach to conservation



# Over the last 3 years we have...



# In Situ Conservation

In just under 3 years, Drusillas has raised over £17,000 for the Sloth Conservation Foundation, enabling the charity to buy precious new equipment to help track and record **vital sloth data**.

In 2023, two Drusillas staff members travelled to **Costa Rica** to aid in field conservation including the building of new sloth bridges, planting trees as part of a community habitat restoration scheme, and assistance in collaring wild sloths for census data.

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Our partnership with Marwell Zoo and the **Grevy's Zebra Trust** dates back to 1996. Every year we have donated funds to an educational outreach program that has enabled multiple students to complete master's degrees, who now act as wildlife scouts and community liaisons for their local villages.

Our ambition is to continue our bursary and sponsorship schemes that enable higher education opportunities for future conservationists, that work towards meeting Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the **United Nations** program.



# Ex Situ Conservation

At the beginning of 2024, Drusillas cared for over **800 animals** across more than 80 different species. 50% of these species are part of a carefully managed EAZA Ex-situ Programme (EEP) built within the EAZA framework.

Our zoological responsibility is to ensure **viable populations** are managed to help secure a safe future for the many threatened species with which we share our planet.

Our objective is to reach an **EEP** percentage of 75% whilst coordinating at least 5 species in the next 5 years.

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Our partnership with The Peoples Trust for Endangered Species has seen Drusillas partake in frequent **dormouse** and water vole monitoring in the local vicinity to help support native wildlife restoration.

Additionally, we have collaborated with our local school community to help build **bug hotels** for our site, aiming to foster positive connections with wildlife preservation with the youngest in our community.

**Bat boxes**, swift boxes and owl boxes have also been built and installed all across our Park to help local wildlife nest and find a home within our grounds.



# Conservation Education and Research

In the classroom, over the last 3 years, we have delivered over 1,200 classes to students, whilst 870 schools have visited with over 30,000 students. Our Education officers have a combined experience of 40 years at Drusillas and get incredible feedback from the schools they educate (n.b. 2021 Covid-affected numbers).

**Beyond the classroom**, we have built 5 new animal enclosures with a total investment of £1.75m. These enclosures have replaced older spaces which have combined 2 enclosures into 1, providing greater capacity and space for the animals' welfare. Alongside these new naturalistic enclosures, we have increased our interpretation and signage across the Park to enhance our conservation messaging to wider audiences.

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Our unique **living collection** has been home to 13 research studies in the last 3 years, spanning from Drusillas staff to other academic organisations. Topics span from animal welfare projects to social science and visitor behaviour.

We are currently in a **partnership** with the Sussex University to deliver a scientific and peer-reviewed piece of research that supports a one plan approach to conservation.



# Drusillas Conservation in Action Charity

Formalising and diversifying our conservation income streams, enabling us to partner with more projects, charities, and support more fieldwork

Conservation grant programs



Increased in situ and ex situ conservation partners



Research Projects



Conservation sponsorships or bursary schemes



Supporting global species initiatives such as reverse the red



# The Future is in our Hands

We envision a world where zoos play a pivotal role in shaping a more sustainable and harmonious relationship between humanity and the natural world. We have the expertise to reverse negative species trends and give back to wildlife in a manner that is not only unique, but essential for the conservation of our planet. With an integrated and transparent approach, zoos can contribute significantly to the planet's restoration so wildlife can thrive in their natural habitats.

