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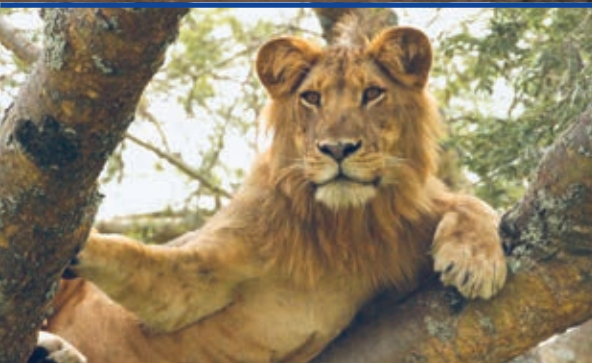


Disney

CONSERVATION

FUND

CARRYING FORWARD A CONSERVATION LEGACY



THE



Disney

CONSERVATION

FUND





THE DISNEY CONSERVATION FUND

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CARRYING FORWARD
A CONSERVATION LEGACY

*By John Baxter
and Diane Hancock*

Disney
EDITIONS

LOS ANGELES • NEW YORK





TIGER BACA

REQUIREMENTS



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FOREWORD



Let me begin by saying thank you. Regardless of how you came to open this book, all of us at the Disney Conservation Fund appreciate your interest in saving wildlife. Within these covers, you will find stories that sprang from a shared love and respect for nature and reflect a commitment to preserving and protecting wildlife and its habitats that started nearly a century ago with Walt Disney himself. The extraordinary photographs and heartfelt words spotlight the remarkable work and countless contributions made by individuals all around the globe. As you read, you'll see that this book is about celebrating what together we have accomplished, while also telling the wonderful stories of people who believe they still have much more to do.

When Walt Disney Imagineers began exploring the idea of creating a theme park focused on animals and nature at the Walt Disney World Resort, the potential to make a real difference was enormous. That sparked a conversation about how such a theme park could inspire millions and how Disney might begin working with conservationists well before the park's opening to save wildlife and wild places.

This led to the creation of the Disney Conservation Fund in 1995, three years before the first Guest walked through the turnstiles at Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park. Building on Walt's legacy, we developed the fund with the goals to save wildlife, inspire action, and protect our planet, and it has since become a highly respected conservation program, funding projects spanning more than half the world's countries and counting.

As we celebrate twenty-five years, we continue to look for ways to broaden our reach. To this end, for those of us particularly focused on the environment and animals, Disney's new partnership with National Geographic is a dream come true. It presents many more possibilities for the future.

At Disney, we're proud of our achievements in conservation over the past quarter century and are determined to have an even bigger impact in the next twenty-five years through the Disney Conservation Fund and the efforts of the organizations we support. Our goal is to inspire people to take action for nature in their communities and around the globe, recognizing that by working together we can and will make a positive and lasting difference for this place we call home.

—KIM SAMS

Director, Disney Conservation Fund
Disney Enterprise Social Responsibility



PAGES 2-3: African lions survey the savanna.

PAGES 4-5: A Disney's Animal Kingdom Cast Member helps a Guest earn her Wilderness Explorers' Tiger Badge on the Maharajah Jungle Trek, Walt Disney World Resort.

ABOVE: A boy gets help from Minnie Mouse as he plants trees in Madagascar.



WALT DISNEY'S CONSERVATION LEGACY



You've probably heard people talk about conservation. Well, conservation isn't just the business of a few people. It's a matter that concerns all of us. It's a science whose principles are written in the oldest code in the world, the laws of nature. The natural resources of our vast continent are not inexhaustible. But if we will use our riches wisely, if we will protect our wildlife and preserve our lakes and streams, these things will last us for generations to come.

—WALT DISNEY, 1950

OPPOSITE: A family photo of Walt Disney taken at Smoke Tree Ranch, Palm Springs, California.

IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE that Walt Disney had a transformative and lasting impact on our culture through the pioneering and perfecting of animation, family entertainment, and theme parks. Among Disney's less obvious legacies, however, is his support of nature and habitat conservation.

Disney first touched on the conservation theme in 1942 with the release of *Bambi*, in which animals and nature are the heroes. Despite the film's exquisite artistry and years of meticulous background research by the staff working on the movie (which included studying and filming the movements of live animals in the studio), *Bambi* was not a huge box office success. However, it always did draw lavish praise from conservationists.

But more important, the animal footage compiled by Disney staff during the making of *Bambi* gave Walt an idea for a new project. Beginning in the late 1940s, he sent film crews to remote locations across America and eventually around the world to capture dramatic footage of unencumbered wildlife. The result was the groundbreaking and immensely popular True-Life Adventures series, which won eight Academy Awards over its twelve-year life span (1948–1960) and created the template for the modern nature documentary.

By the 1950s, Disney was beginning to reach such a vast movie and television audience that the entertaining and informative depiction of animals and nature in the True-Life Adventures series kindled a spirit of conservation in millions of Americans.

OPPOSITE: A Disney nature photographer working on the film *The African Lion*, March 1953.



Walt  Disney

PRESENTS
**THE ACADEMY AWARD
SHORT FEATURE**



"Seal Island"

A TRUE LIFE ADVENTURE

*PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE PRIBILOF
ISLANDS IN THE BERING SEA*

PRINT BY **TECHNICOLOR**

DISTRIBUTED BY
**R K O
RADIO
PICTURES**



As I look back over the past seventy years, I think it's fair to say that there is no institution anywhere that has had more of an impact on our love of nature than Disney. The nature theme has been core to the corporation and has resulted in a large number of programs and films produced by the company. However, perhaps the most significant development from the perspective of conservation was the creation of the Disney Conservation Fund, which is now celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. I look forward to even greater conservation endeavors by Disney in the future, in keeping with the tradition and the great vision that Walt himself provided.

—RUSSELL A. MITTERMEIER, PH.D.
Chief Conservation Officer, Global Wildlife Conservation and
Chair, IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group

OPPOSITE: Poster for *Seal Island*, 1948.

For the first time, audiences could see the plains, deserts, mountains, waterways, and forests of their planet not as mere background scenery for human activity but for what they really were: balanced ecosystems that supported a variety of unique and fascinating life-forms.

Even Walt, who had always revered nature, found the experience of producing the films for the series eye-opening: “The immediate need for education and practice in using our natural resources of soil, forest, water, wildlife, and areas of inspirational beauty to the best advantage of all, for this generation and others to come, is . . . apparent to every observant citizen. My interest in these problems has been sharpened by our motion picture production of wildlife subjects and the relation of animal life to all the other conservation issues during the past few years.”

The True-Life Adventures series was often more entertaining than educational, but whatever its lasting value as documentary, its legacy fueled a mainstream appreciation of wildlife conservation and set many modern-day conservationists on their career paths. It was this same power to reach a wide audience on an emotional level that eventually inspired the creation of Disney’s Animal Kingdom theme park, Disneynature films, and the Disney Conservation Fund.

OPPOSITE: Poster for *Nature’s Half Acre*, 1951.

MORE
AMAZING THAN
"SEAL ISLAND" or
"BEAVER VALLEY"!

Walt Disney
Presents
A TRUE LIFE ADVENTURE
**NATURE'S
HALF
ACRE**

PRINT BY
TECHNICOLOR
DISTRIBUTED BY
RKO RADIO PICTURES, INC.

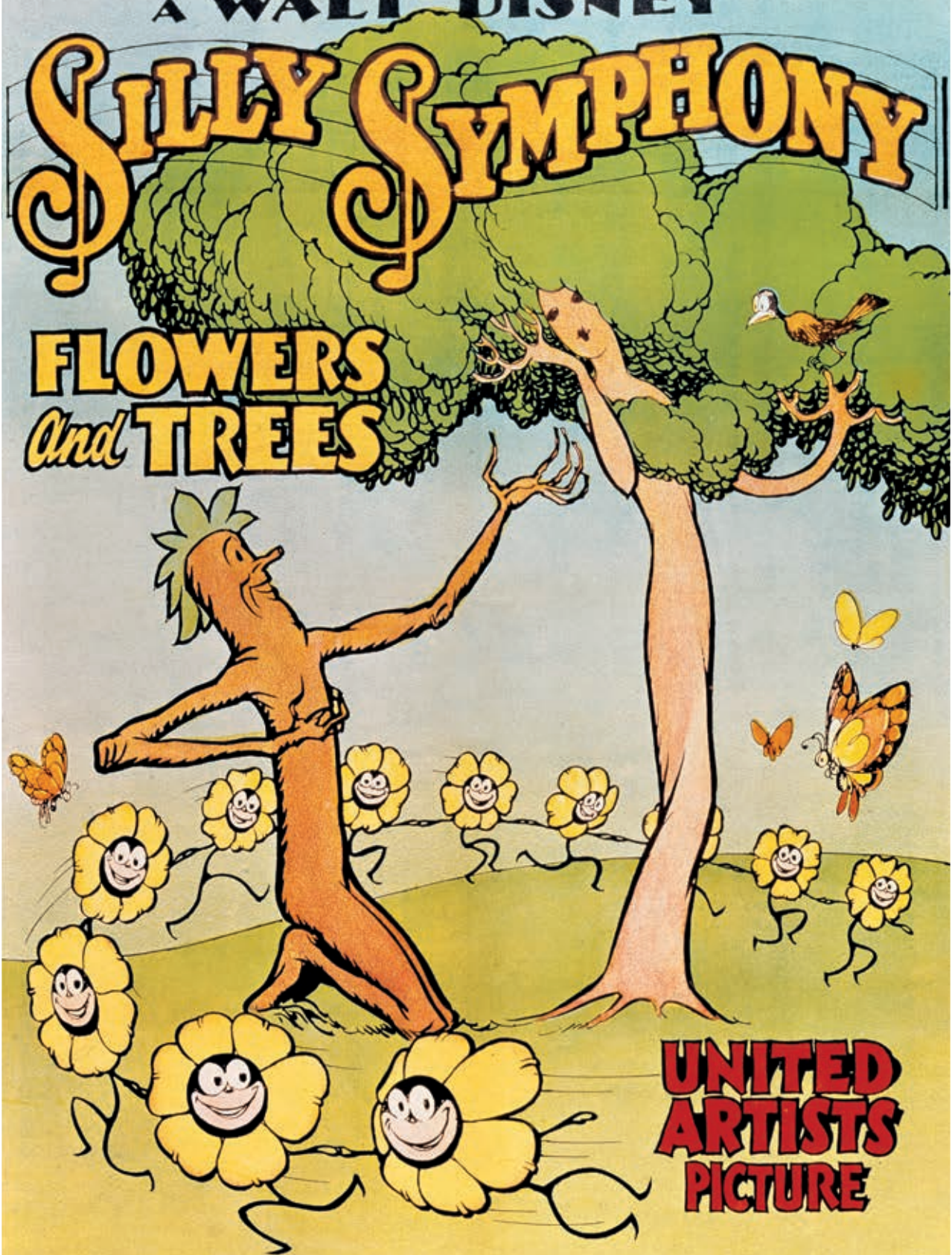


MICKEY MOUSE
PRESENTS

A WALT DISNEY

SILLY SYMPHONY

FLOWERS
And TREES



**UNITED
ARTISTS
PICTURE**



NATURE AS PART OF THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY



Nature has been a recurring focus in Disney experiences from the earliest days of the Disney Studio, which won its first Academy Award in 1932 for the short *Flowers and Trees*. In the decades that followed, nature themes provided the basis for animated and live-action films, park attractions, such as Jungle Cruise, and even Guest accommodations beginning in 1971, when Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort & Campground opened at the Walt Disney World Resort.

And since the 1990 launch of Disney's official corporate policy that's aimed at reducing the company's environmental footprint, and the creation of Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park a few years later, the idea that nature should be both appreciated and protected has become fully integrated into the Disney culture . . . and message.

OPPOSITE: Poster for *Flowers and Trees*, 1932.

Disneynature

For more than ten years Disneynature films—including *Earth*, *Oceans*, *The Crimson Wing: Mystery of the Flamingos*, *African Cats*, *Wings of Life*, *Chimpanzee*, *Bears*, *Monkey Kingdom*, *Born in China*, and *Penguins* (to date)—have featured some of the most remarkable stories in nature.

These films were (and continue to be) created by very small groups of amazingly talented Disneynature filmmakers who are sent into the most remote areas around the globe—sometimes multiple days away from civilization, for three to four years at a time, to record inspiring stories and offer insight into incredible characters and regions that most would otherwise never realize exist. The Disneynature teams bring back thousands of hours of footage of their wild and human stars to tell the stories of what they’ve witnessed and craft it into a compelling, fun, and engaging adventure. The creation of these films would not be possible without working closely with leading conservationists, scientists, zoologists, and educators. All help ensure the facts and information presented in the films is accurate and reflective of our latest understanding . . . and discoveries.

Each film presents an eloquent case for greater understanding of wildlife and the planet we share. The films can also serve a greater purpose, as was the case with *Born in China*, where audiences in China for the first time saw their wildlife on a grander (yet not embellished) scale and were amazed by the beauty and spectacle of the natural world residing within their nation’s borders. Many in China now better recognize the need to protect such unique habitats and ecosystems.

Film-going audiences have been turned into conservationists just by attending, as a portion of the first-week ticket sale proceeds for these movies has been directed to specific conservation initiatives run by nonprofit organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, the Jane Goodall Institute, Conservation International, the National Park Foundation, African Wildlife Foundation, and Wildlife Conservation Network. Each film’s contribution can be linked directly to an impressive conservation outcome. The Disneynature movies honor Disney’s nature film legacy by transcending it. Like all of Disney’s conservation efforts, the underlying philosophy is that promoting a love of and connection to wildlife is the best way to ensure current and future generations seek its preservation.



ABOVE: Cinematographer filming for *Bears*.

OPPOSITE: Disneynature celebrates ten years of wonder, majesty, and magic.



Disney nature

10 YEARS

Disney nature

10 YEARS
of Storytelling and Protecting Wildlife



Disney nature
earth

+

The Nature Conservancy 

3 Million trees planted in Brazil's most endangered forest.



Disney nature
oceans

+

The Nature Conservancy 

40,000 Acres of a new marine protected area established to conserve coral reefs in The Bahamas.



Disney nature
AFRICAN CATS

+


AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

65,000 Acres of savanna protected to create conservation corridors in Kenya.



Disney nature
chimpanzee

+



the Jane Goodall Institute

130,000 Acres of wild chimpanzee habitat protected in the Congo. 60,000+ local youths educated, and chimpanzees cared for.



Disney nature
BEARS

+

 National Park Foundation.

Conservation projects across 400,000 acres supported, park visitors educated, animal and plant species protected.



Disney nature
Monkey Kingdom

+

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL 

Conservation projects supported across one million acres in Indonesia, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka, benefiting hundreds of species and protecting fresh drinking water for local populations.



Disney nature
BORN IN CHINA

+

 WWF

495,000 Acres of forest protected to restore key corridors for wild pandas and establish a new snow leopard conservation program in China.



Disney nature
PENGUINS

+

 WCN 

Protecting habitats for penguin feeding and breeding grounds across the southern tips of all southern hemisphere continents.



If Disneynature films are used right, they will give kids an interest, a fascination, so they will want to find out more. Once kids are motivated, nothing will stop them.

—JANE GOODALL, PH.D., DBE
Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute
and United Nations Messenger of Peace

Key thing about conservation is we need local people to care about what they have in their backyard, and these Disneynature supported projects are tying into communities around the world. We are not separate from nature, we are part of it, and Disneynature always reminds us—save nature, live better.

—M. SANJAYAN, PH.D.
Television host and CEO, Conservation International

ABOVE: Drs. Jane Goodall and M. Sanjayan discuss conservation while in the forest location of a Disneynature shoot in Sri Lanka.

OPPOSITE: The global impact of Disneynature films, in collaboration with the Disney Conservation Fund.

From the grassland vistas visible at Disney’s Animal Kingdom Lodge to the sands of Disney’s Vero Beach Resort in Florida, and to the lush tree-lined walking trails at the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, Disney experiences allow Guests to learn more about African animals, track the migration paths of loggerhead sea turtles, or discover native flora and fauna. Nature also comes to life in the theme parks, like at The Land Pavilion in Epcot, which fosters a deeper understanding of sustainable farming, and The Seas with Nemo & Friends, which features a saltwater aquarium in which Guests can snorkel and scuba dive alongside a variety of sea creatures or chat it up at Turtle Talk with Crush.

Even some Disney enthusiasts aren’t aware that a third of the land initially purchased for the Walt Disney World Resort was set aside as a permanent conservation area. Additionally, forty-five minutes south of the resort, on what was once a cattle ranch, sits The Nature Conservancy’s Disney Wilderness Preserve. The Walt Disney Company purchased 8,500 acres of wetlands and pine flatwoods in Central Florida. Coveted by environmentalists, the territory sits at the very headwaters of the Everglades, and is a haven for hundreds of native wildlife species, plus is a living laboratory for training in land-management practices and features a network of trails for all to enjoy.

Behind the scenes on Disney property, an army of conservation and animal-care experts—members of the company’s Animals, Science and Environment (ASE) team—carry out Disney’s long-term commitment to preserving nature. The ASE department provides the best in animal care, imparts conservation skills and insights with Guests and Cast Members through on-site engagement and experiences, and works globally to share their expertise and drive programs to positively impact conservation and animal welfare.

OPPOSITE: Tiger cubs enjoy watermelons as part of the enrichment program provided by Disney’s Animals, Science and Environment team at Disney’s Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.

PAGES 24–25: Guests enjoy a hike through The Nature Conservancy’s Disney Wilderness Preserve.







THE BIRTH OF THE DISNEY CONSERVATION FUND AND DISNEY'S ANIMAL KINGDOM



The legacy of conservation awareness that Walt Disney established with his True-Life Adventures series entered a dynamic phase in 1989, when Disney Imagineers began exploring the idea of creating a theme park focused on celebrating animals at the Walt Disney World Resort. The following year Chairman Michael Eisner green-lighted development of a basic plan by Imagineer Joe Rohde that included a theme park, an Epcot-style pavilion, and a nontraditional zoo/safari experience. “Disney’s Wild Animal Kingdom,” as Eisner dubbed it on the spot, would use theater and storytelling to celebrate wildlife and the emotional connection between people and animals.

And from opening day, Disney Guests, inspired by their experiences at Disney’s Animal Kingdom, could add a personal contribution at merchandise locations around the park to join Disney in protecting wildlife and wild places through the Disney Conservation Fund.

OPPOSITE: Macaws take flight around the Tree of Life at Disney’s Animal Kingdom.
The tree serves as the iconic centerpiece for the park.





When we Imagineers started the development of Disney's Animal Kingdom, we knew that we were entering a new territory of storytelling. These stories were not fantasies, but real. They were not classic tales, but ongoing epics whose conclusions are still unknown. They were not ours alone, but shared with people all around the world, who lived with and cared about the lives of wild creatures. We could not tell such stories unless we ourselves participated in the reality we were describing, contributed to the epic struggle, and shared our skill and our commitment with people around the world. Thus, we concluded that an entity like the Disney Conservation Fund was essential to our story. Without it, our own words and actions would be empty. The story of Disney's Animal Kingdom and the Disney Conservation Fund is not just a story that we tell. It's a story we are living every day, every one of us. All of us on Earth share this planet with every living creature and with the systems that sustain them. For decades, through the actions of the Disney Conservation Fund, we've worked towards our dream: a dream of a future for our children in which there is still magic in the forest, the magic that comes from the countless miraculous creatures, some yet undiscovered, that share with us a tiny delicate place amidst a sea of distant stars.

— JOE ROHDE

Creative Executive, Walt Disney Imagineering

OPPOSITE: A member of the gorilla troupe and her baby at Gorilla Falls at Disney's Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.



Disney's Animal Kingdom advisory board on the savanna, when the park was under construction. Pictured left to right: the late Roger Caras; P. Dee Boersma, Ph.D.; Karen Allen; William Conway, D.Sc.; Ray Mendez; the late Bill Burnham, Ph.D.; John Lukas; the late Michael Hutchins, Ph.D.; and Terry Maple, Ph.D. Not pictured: Ted Beattie; W. Ron DeHaven, D.V.M.; Russell Mittermeier, Ph.D.; Merlin Tuttle, Ph.D.; and Seema Paul.

Although Disney was already involved in animal-related work through Discovery Island in Bay Lake and The Living Seas (now The Seas with Nemo & Friends) at Epcot, Disney's Animal Kingdom was on an entirely different scale. To build their knowledge of animal-care facilities and habitats, Rohde and his handpicked Imagineering team attended meetings conducted by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, sought advice from animal specialists, and hired a respected zoological curator as a consultant.

As the experts weighed in, however, it became clear that much more was at stake than just the success of a theme park. Disney wielded global influence, and Animal Kingdom would be a statement to the world about wildlife and the challenges they faced; zoo and conservation leaders saw it as a unique opportunity to engage and educate millions of Guests visiting the resort each year, and Disney agreed. To that end, Imagineering invited an advisory board of top zoo, animal welfare, and conservation professionals to help formulate policy and offer guidance on design and development.

The advisers helped Disney expand its commitment to conservation by developing a strategic approach to support threatened species in the wild. It was this simple idea that eventually led to the creation of the Disney Conservation Fund. Today—just over twenty-five years later—the Disney Conservation Fund has evolved to become a respected leader in international conservation, supporting field research, conservation education, and community engagement in 120 countries. And now Disney's Animal Kingdom is not only a universally respected, state-of-the-art animal park and conservation laboratory, but with its engaging and persuasive advocacy on behalf of all wildlife, it is also a model of entertainment in the service of education and nature.





CONNECT TO PROTECT



In celebration of the opening of Pandora—The World of Avatar, Disney Parks and the Disney Conservation Fund launched “Connect to Protect,” a mobile adventure that invited Guests to participate in conservation “missions” with a virtual scientist while exploring the incredible Valley of Mo’ara and helping protect the habitats of at-risk animals on Earth.

Upon entering Pandora, thousands of Guests using the My Disney Experience app exchanged instant messages with one of Pandora’s virtual ecological specialists, learned about some of the more exotic elements of the environment, and received important messages about conservation.

After completing one or more Connect to Protect missions, Guests unlocked a contribution, up to \$10 each, from Disney Parks through the Disney Conservation Fund. They could then choose how that contribution would help protect or restore habitats important to one of ten threatened categories of animals: apes, elephants, butterflies, coral reefs, cranes, monkeys, rhinos, sea turtles, sharks and rays, and tigers.

And just six months after Pandora opened, Disney reached the goal of \$1 million in unlocked donations, which generated grants of \$100,000 to each of the ten projects committed to protecting habitats for at-risk wildlife. This was all thanks to the support of more than three hundred thousand Guests who had participated and “completed” a mission. Their actions helped support conservation organizations working to protect sea turtles off the coast of Florida, tigers and rhinos in Indonesia, elephants in Kenya, and so much more. It also connected kids and families to the animals that need our help and encouraged them to have fun together while experiencing the majesty and the magic of nature.

Connect to Protect is an excellent example of how technology can complement and coexist with nature and drive further action. By reaching Guests through their mobile devices, Disney Parks and the Disney Conservation Fund hope to inspire them to learn more about nature and experience the outdoors, whether it’s here on Earth or on the moon of Pandora.

OPPOSITE: Nighttime in Pandora—The World of Avatar, Disney’s Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.



PARTNERSHIPS TO PROTECT THE MAGIC OF NATURE



Whether it's in the Disney theme parks, on a big or small screen, or through experiences that bring people face-to-face with animals around the world, dedicated experts work hard to convey the magic of nature and become ambassadors for the many species they work with—and on behalf of. Through company-wide partnerships, every effort is made to ensure animals are represented in accurate and respectful ways.

One such example of this is the research that went into the making of the 2019 live-action film Disney's *The Lion King*. More than two years before director Jon Favreau's groundbreaking feature film was slated to hit theaters, the filmmaking team spent weeks observing the incredible African species residing at Disney's Animal Kingdom and at Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge to expand their up-close, real-life character inspirations. (And that was before their research trip to Africa.)

The team shadowed the experts from Disney's Animals, Science and Environment (ASE) team, which allowed them to gain unique insight from the Cast Members responsible for the daily care of each animal, and to experience the social dynamics, behaviors, and personalities of each species. As the filmmakers marveled at the beauty of these animals, they captured reference photographs of the natural behaviors of the individual species to ensure accuracy in the film. "Our company is dedicated to protecting all wildlife and celebrating the important role animals play in the world. The steps the Walt Disney Studios took to bring to life animals in this film as realistically as possible is just one example," says Mark Penning, vice president of Disney's Animals, Science and Environment.



PROTECTING THE PRIDE



The jarring truth is that the world has lost half of its lion population since 1994—the same year the original *The Lion King* was released. As a demonstration of Disney’s long-standing commitment to education and conservation, the company wanted to support the efforts being made to keep lions alive . . . and at the very least keep their numbers steady.

As human population growth and development rise across Africa, lions increasingly face threats from the bushmeat trade, poaching, conflicts with humans, and loss of habitat, as land is converted for agriculture and infrastructure usage. Today, only about twenty thousand lions remain, but there is still an opportunity to bring lions back and help safeguard the diversity of wildlife across the African savanna, preserving thriving habitats for both animals and people.

In celebration of the release of Disney’s *The Lion King* in 2019, The Walt Disney Company announced a global conservation campaign to raise awareness and support the dwindling lion population across Africa. “*The Lion King* Protect the Pride” campaign focused on stabilizing and revitalizing their numbers, with Disney lending its support to the Wildlife Conservation Network’s (WCN’s) Lion Recovery Fund (LRF) and their vision to double the lion population across Africa by 2050 through efforts that engage communities to ensure a future for African wildlife and their habitats.

Through direct donations and the generosity of fans and Guests, Disney contributed \$3 million to the Lion Recovery Fund through the campaign. This donation marked the largest single contribution in the history of the Disney Conservation Fund, which had already invested \$13 million specifically to protect African wildlife spanning more than thirty countries.

To kick off *The Lion King* Protect the Pride campaign, Disney and the WCN assembled eighty of the world’s leading lion conservation experts from eighteen countries representing more than fifty organizations to participate in the Lion Footprint Forum at the Walt Disney World Resort. During the meeting in May 2019—the first of its kind in twenty years—participants collaborated to develop strategies to address the challenges impacting lion populations and help ensure a future for the species, as well as other wildlife across Africa. Resulting ideas and project proposals will be considered for support through the LRF. Additional information about the LRF’s lion conservation efforts may be found at LionRecoveryFund.org.

OPPOSITE: African lion perched in a tree in Uganda.

THE LION RECOVERY FUND



Wildlife Conservation Network's Lion Recovery Fund (LRF) drives investments to game-changing actions by funding effective, vetted partners who work collaboratively to increase lion populations. It targets site-based results on the ground supporting protected area management and community-based conservation solutions, plus focuses on campaign strategies that build public, political, and philanthropic engagement.

The practical plan to save lions involves expanding their lands, connecting their home ranges, and protecting them through stronger ranger networks, as well as collaborating with people who are sharing the land with lions. In Chad, the LRF is enabling a major survey of lions and prey species with the organization African Parks that will guide the future management and conservation efforts for the park and encourage decision-makers to protect the areas of land with the largest remaining wildlife populations. In Zambia, the LRF supports the Zambian Carnivore Programme and Conservation South Luangwa as both tackle the twin threats of snaring and human-wildlife conflict by leading anti-poaching patrols, outreach, and education efforts to improve livestock management to prevent both human-lion and human-elephant conflict. These are just two of the many programs LRF is supporting across the continent of Africa.

The Lion Recovery Fund has a vision to restore lions across Africa, and Disney's powerful storytelling is a perfect way to further these efforts. Wildlife Conservation Network was proud to collaborate with Disney on The Lion King to inspire people around the world to bring lions roaring back.

—CHARLES KNOWLES
 Founder, Wildlife Conservation Network

OPPOSITE: More than eighty participants attended the Lion Footprint Forum at the Walt Disney World Resort in May 2019.



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR WILDLIFE AND WILD PLACES



The Disney Conservation Fund's (DCF's) mission is to provide financial support for programs that save wildlife, inspire action, and protect the planet. Since its creation on Earth Day in 1995, one of the ways the fund carries out this mission is by awarding annual conservation grants to nonprofit organizations leading comprehensive community conservation programs and initiatives that inspire kids and families to take action for wildlife and the planet. Projects are judged and selected on how they integrate science and community engagement to create a holistic conservation approach that both protects animals and empowers communities. The DCF has also supported the International Fund for Animal Welfare's Global Disaster Response Grants program to help organizations prepare for disasters and quickly mobilize resources and care for both wild and domestic animals in times of natural and man-made disasters.

Education and awareness can be equally as important as funding. As accredited members of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Disney's Animal Kingdom, Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge, and The Seas with Nemo & Friends, as well as the Disney Conservation Fund, support the AZA Saving Animals from Extinction initiative that focuses their collective expertise and leverages their massive audiences to save species like African lions, cheetahs, gorillas, sea turtles, sharks, and rays.

Disney's Animal Kingdom and The Seas with Nemo & Friends were recognized with a 20 Year Achievement in Conservation Award by the AZA in 2018. This award recognizes the significant impact Disney has had supporting community-based conservation through the efforts of six hundred organizations working to save wildlife and wild places in more than half the countries in the world and inspiring the next generation of conservationists. Additionally, DCF has been honored with awards from the Chicago Zoological Society, the University of Florida, and Wildlife Conservation Society.

Expanding the effort to educate and inspire continues. Disney welcomed National Geographic to the family in 2019. For more than 130 years, the strength of National Geographic has been its commitment to intrepid exploration and discovery, cutting-edge science and innovation, and powerful storytelling to change the world. This partnership explores new pathways for conservation education and awareness including streaming of National Geographic’s impact-driven content on Disney’s direct-to-consumer streaming service, Disney+, and new fascination to audiences yet to be reached.

Ahead are the stories of the people, projects, and organizations that represent a fraction of the many inspiring organizations and conservationists Disney has been honored to support. Their stories and photos capture the essence of why the fund was created and demonstrate the depth and breadth of the Disney Conservation Fund’s worldwide impact.



ABOVE: White rhinos graze at Disney’s Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.

PAGES 42–43: Map depicting the number of projects supported by the Disney Conservation Fund by country.

NUMBER OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED



Disney
CONSERVATION
FUND

01-10

11-30

31-50

51-100

101+

MARINE PROJECTS
HAVE BEEN INCLUDED
WITH THE COUNTRY
WITH THE NEAREST
LAND MASS





ARCTIC OCEAN

ARCTIC OCEAN

RUSSIA

KAZAKHSTAN

MONGOLIA

CHINA

INDIA

PAKISTAN

SEYCHELLES

INDIAN OCEAN

OCEAN

ANTARCTICA

Greenland Sea

Barents Sea

Kara Sea

Laptev Sea

East Siberian Sea

Norwegian Sea

North Sea

UNITED KINGDOM

NETHERLANDS

GERMANY

POLAND

UKRAINE

ROMANIA

BULGARIA

GEORGIA

UZBEKISTAN

KYRGYZSTAN

TAJIKISTAN

CASPIAN SEA

PORTUGAL

SPAIN

ITALY

CYPRUS

ISRAEL

LIBYA

EGYPT

SENEGAL

MALI

NIGER

CHAD

SUDAN

GUINEA

GHANA

NIGERIA

CAMEROON

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

GABON

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

UGANDA

RWANDA

KENYA

ANGOLA

MALAWI

ZAMBIA

ZIMBABWE

NAMIBIA

BOTSWANA

SOUTH AFRICA

TANZANIA

MOZAMBIQUE

MADAGASCAR

MAURITIUS

SRI LANKA

MALDIVES

NEPAL

BHUTAN

MYANMAR (BURMA)

THAILAND

VIETNAM

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

INDONESIA

PHILIPPINES

SINGAPORE

BORNEO

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

SOLOMON ISLANDS

FUJI

NEW ZEALAND

Sea of Japan

YELLLOW SEA

EAST CHINA SEA

PHILIPPINE SEA

SEA OF OKHOTSK

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SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

TRISTAN DA CUNHA

AUSTRALIA

GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT

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GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT

GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

GUAM

PALAU

SOLOMON ISLANDS

CORAL SEA

TASMAN SEA

NORFOLK ISLAND

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TASMAN SEA

TRISTAN DA CUNHA

AFRICAN PEOPLE & WILDLIFE

NORTHERN TANZANIA BIG CATS CONSERVATION INITIATIVE



With nearly a decade of support provided by the Disney Conservation Fund, African People & Wildlife has excelled at developing win-win solutions for big cat conservation in areas where rural people live alongside lions, leopards, and cheetahs. By ensuring that both people and big cats benefit from our work, we are reducing conflict and giving people room to breathe and to consider lions in a different way. These conditions are absolutely necessary for the conservation of big cats in the twenty-first century.

—LALY LICHTENFELD, PH.D.
Chief Executive Officer, African People & Wildlife

OPPOSITE: A woman enters her family's "Living Wall" in northern Tanzania.

PAGES 46–47: Members of African People & Wildlife's Warriors for Wildlife team examine carnivore prints and record data following a human-wildlife conflict incident in northern Tanzania.









ZSL AMERICA

THAMES EUROPEAN EEL CONSERVATION PROJECT



The critically endangered European eel has been undertaking its incredible migration across the Atlantic for more than forty million years, but recently the numbers arriving into European rivers have declined. Those that do arrive face barriers such as dams and weirs that stop them from accessing upstream habitat. The Disney Conservation Fund has provided incredible support to the Zoological Society of London's (ZSL's) European eel project, enabling us to take another step towards a world where wildlife thrives and where specifically eel passes are being built that reconnect broken migratory pathways in the river Thames and its tributaries that open up more habitat to the eel. Citizen science volunteers from local communities are trained to gather vital information as the eels migrate through these passes. By doing so, with the Disney Conservation Fund's generous support, we are nurturing the development of the next generation of conservationists, helping us to bring people closer to wildlife.

—JOE PECORELLI
ZSL Conservationist

OPPOSITE: ZSL citizen scientists working closely to protect the critically endangered European eel.

ACTION FOR MANTAS (THE MANTA TRUST) MANTA CONSERVATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING



One of the most challenging aspects of conservation is finding support to employ local individuals. In projects like this one, engaging directly with local stakeholders is of utmost importance, and having passionate local project leaders is absolutely critical to the project's success. Funding from the Disney Conservation Fund has allowed us to transition students that participate in our capacity-building program into leadership positions where they can take a more direct role in working with the community to translate the science we produce into conservation action. It's impossible to understate how important the consistency of this support has been in maintaining a presence in the community and therefore advancing our conservation goals.

—JOSHUA STEWART, PH.D.
Associate Director, The Manta Trust

OPPOSITE: With support from DCF, The Manta Trust and partner organizations are working to improve the conservation outlook of this threatened species by working directly with local stakeholders to reduce entanglement in fishing gear and collisions with speedboats.





THE UNIVERSITY
OF CENTRAL FLORIDA RESEARCH
FOUNDATION, INC.

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION FOR WADING BIRDS AND
OYSTER REEFS



We have been engaged in community-based oyster restoration for over thirteen years, and our efforts have added over ten million oysters to the Indian River Lagoon on the east coast of Central Florida. We are especially excited about our current funding from Disney that includes three focal areas: 1) continuing our restoration efforts with eco-friendly materials; 2) use of the best science to understand the impact of restoration on threatened/endangered wading birds, with a focus on the birds' foraging capacity on restored, natural, and dead oyster reefs; and 3) partnering with young citizen-scientists at Nemours Children's Hospital to process the thousands of bird photos that we have obtained from our restoration area to understand abundance, diversity, and habitat utilization.

—LINDA WALTERS, PH.D.
Project Lead, University of Central Florida

OPPOSITE: A University of Central Florida undergraduate collaborates with a young citizen-scientist at Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando, Florida. Their collective goal is to process large numbers of photographs of threatened/endangered wading birds using restored ecosystems.

ZOO CONSERVATION OUTREACH GROUP

GIANT ANTEATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM



The Zoo Conservation Outreach Group (ZCOG) leveraged funding from a 2018 Disney grant to build a coalition of Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA)-accredited donor facilities and provide the Brazil-based Anteaters & Highways research team with the resources they needed to quantify and evaluate the impact of roadway mortality on giant anteater populations in Mato Grosso do Sul, a state in southwestern Brazil. Thanks to this support, the Anteaters & Highways team has been able to apply GPS satellite tracking technologies to study the movement behavior of over fifty giant anteaters; monitor over fifty thousand miles of highways to help develop anteater mortality mitigation measures; and provide training opportunities for Brazilian university students and young people pursuing a career in science. Disney's trust in ZCOG and the Anteaters & Highways project has instilled hope in those battling to protect giant anteaters and the communities in Brazil that will ultimately be responsible for their conservation.

—DANIEL HILLIARD, PH.D.

Executive Director, Zoo Conservation Outreach Group

OPPOSITE: A giant anteater emerges from its high grass cover in the Brazilian Cerrado.





PAINTED DOG CONSERVATION CHILDREN'S BUSH CAMP, ZIMBABWE



Many local communities lack access to the educational tools that we take for granted. Even a basic introduction to computers is a life-changing experience. The long-term committed support from Disney has enabled us to bring such life-changing experiences to these communities, providing an exciting means of communicating conservation messages at the same time.

—PETER BLINSTON

Executive Director, Painted Dog Conservation

OPPOSITE: Children from rural villages in the Hwange area of Zimbabwe learn about painted dogs and wildlife, and are introduced to technology for often the first time.

SANTA BARBARA ZOOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

CALIFORNIA CONDOR NEST GUARDING PROGRAM



The support of the Disney Conservation Fund has enabled us to grow and adapt our nest guarding program in response to the changing needs of the reintroduced condor population. Our partnership has contributed to a number of important California Condor Recovery Program milestones. For instance, in 2015 we were able to share with the public, for the first time ever, a livestream of a wild condor nest—from deep within the backcountry. And in 2016 we achieved for the first time positive wild population growth across the entire reintroduction program, which began in 1992. Two years later, in 2018, we had a record-breaking number of nests in Southern California, and had the first successful fledge of a wild condor chick in Santa Barbara County since 1982. These and our other achievements would not have been possible without the steadfast partnership of Disney.

—ESTELLE SANDHAUS, PH.D.

Director of Conservation & Science, Santa Barbara
Zoological Foundation

OPPOSITE: Condor 326 was the first in the reintroduction program to fledge in the wild.





UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA/PURPLE MARTIN
CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
MIGRATORY SONGBIRD CONSERVATION IN BRAZIL



We work with the purple martin, a long-distance migratory swallow that travels up to 13,640 miles (or 22,000 kilometers) annually between North and South America. Like other species of aerial insectivore (birds that feed on insects while on the wing), martin populations are declining steeply for reasons not well understood. Determining the causes of this decline and conserving migratory animals that have such large ranges poses a unique challenge. The Disney Conservation Fund has been instrumental in helping us successfully meet this challenge. With their support, we have developed a truly international team, from Canada to Brazil, that conducts research, outreach, and education activities across the vast range the purple martins cover. With Disney's support, we have been able to use new tracking technologies to discover important migratory routes and habitat required by martins across the Americas, as well as get people of all ages interested in the flights and plight of this amazing bird.

—KEVIN FRASER, PH.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada

OPPOSITE: Purple martins at a breeding colony, before their migratory journeys to Brazil.

CLEVELAND ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LITTLE FIREFACE PROJECT

OK

Indonesia's island of Java is heavily deforested, and most Javan slow lorises live in unprotected areas where they depend on local people for their survival. With Disney's support, we have been able to hold annual community events, to build a local school, and to monitor the health of the slow loris population continuously, which has in turn dramatically reduced wildlife trade in the area.

—ANNA NEKARIS, PH.D.

Professor of Primate Conservation and Project Director,
Cleveland Zoological Society

OPPOSITE: Slow lorises are the only venomous primates.





INTERNATIONAL SNOW LEOPARD TRUST PROTECTING INDIA'S THREATENED SNOW LEOPARDS



To conserve snow leopards and the natural ecosystems and species that rely on them, we cannot ignore the well-being of the people sharing these habitats. Only genuine, long-term partnerships can improve the lives of local communities and foster the support needed for conservation. That is the change that the Disney Conservation Fund has made possible, and together we've been able to expand conservation for the cats across remote and otherwise unprotected regions.

—DR. CHARUDUTT MISHRA
Executive Director, International Snow Leopard Trust

OPPOSITE: The regal snow leopard is native to the mountain ranges of Central and South Asia.

THE MARINE MAMMAL CENTER
HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL CONSERVATION
AND EDUCATION PROGRAM



The Disney Conservation Fund helped The Marine Mammal Center launch its Hawaiian monk seal hospital and education center, Ke Kai Ola, in 2014. The program has grown every year. Since opening the center in Kona, we have successfully rehabilitated twenty-eight Hawaiian monk seals (a majority of which were young pups that otherwise would not have survived) and launched and expanded a range of community outreach and education programs. We are now getting hundreds of residents, visitors, and schoolchildren involved in caring for Hawaiian monk seals and the ocean that both humans and seals depend on. The center's Hawaiian Monk Seal Conservation and Education Program and the efforts of its partners are key to the survival of this endangered species, found only in Hawaii.

—CLAIRE SIMEONE, DVM

Director, Hawaiian Monk Seal Conservation Program

OPPOSITE: A Hawaiian monk seal rests after her health assessment was performed by experts at the Marine Mammal Center. The satellite tag, NOAA permit #18786, on her back will monitor her movements in the wild.





GREVY'S ZEBRA TRUST

GREVY'S ZEBRA CONSERVATION OUTREACH, KENYA



The Disney Conservation Fund's support has made our dream come true of expanding the Grevy's Zebra Trust's programs into remote areas of northern Kenya where little is known about the wildlife species in this vast landscape. Working with warriors—who monitor zebra and raise awareness about conservation in the community—has become a very enriching experience for me personally. Warriors are individuals with determination to accomplish a lot despite the harsh environment. On behalf of the communities that I come from, there is no better way of saying thank you to the Disney Conservation Fund than to devote my time and life working with these warriors to save our diminishing heritage for current and future generations.

—PETER LALAMPAA
Field Director, Grevy's Zebra Trust

OPPOSITE: Grevy's Zebra Warrior Dominic Leparnat collecting data on a Grevy's zebra herd in Samburu, Kenya.

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL
WELFARE (IFAW)
DISASTER RESPONSE AND PREPAREDNESS WORLDWIDE



The Disney Conservation Fund has been an incredible collaborator since 2000 in the International Fund for Animal Welfare's (IFAW) mission to make the world better for animals. We are truly grateful for the fund's generous support of IFAW's work to rescue animal victims of disasters, prepare communities for future disasters, preserve critical habitat for endangered animals, and educate youth about the importance of protecting nature.

—AZZEDINE DOWNES

President and Chief Executive Officer, International Fund for Animal Welfare

OPPOSITE: A rescued horse is led to higher ground after being caught in floodwaters.

PAGES 72–73: An IFAW responder comforts a badly burned dog rescued from California's 2018 Camp Fire, the most destructive wildlife fire in the state's history.









GREENING AUSTRALIA

TASMANIA ISLAND ARK BUSHRANGERS, AUSTRALIA



Islands such as Tasmania are important places for the protection of endangered species. The Bushranger Education Program is restoring and creating habitat in the Midlands Biodiversity Hotspot for threatened mammals such as the Tasmanian devil, the Eastern barred bandicoot, and the spotted-tailed quoll. With the support of Disney, the program delivers biodiversity and planting days and provides a unique opportunity for one thousand students to network with university researchers, aboriginal elders, and landholders to restore globally important landscapes. The program supports teachers with professional development resources to embed the program into the Australian science curriculum.

—NEL SMIT

Education Manager, Greening Australia

OPPOSITE: Tasmanian devil being released by Greening Australia's research partners from the University of Tasmania.

COASTAL PLAINS INSTITUTE
BUILDING COMMUNITIES THAT CONSERVE WETLANDS



Support from the Disney Conservation Fund has allowed us to incorporate an educational component into our research, enabling us to involve area citizens in our conservation efforts. That in turn has increased local knowledge of and interest in amphibians and the ephemeral wetlands on which they depend.

—REBECCA MEANS
Director, Coastal Plains Institute

OPPOSITE: A captive-bred adult striped newt being released into Florida's Apalachicola National Forest wetland.





GLOBAL PENGUIN SOCIETY
PENGUINS, PEOPLE, AND THE PLANET

SK

The magic of Disney has reached our penguins thanks to the absolutely fantastic support received from the Disney Conservation Fund. Together, we have been able to benefit 1.6 million penguins, involve over six thousand kids in our educational program, and protect thirty-two million acres of habitat for penguins and many other species. This powerful partnership is changing the world, benefiting penguins, people, and the planet!

—PABLO GARCIA BORBOROGLU, PH.D.
President, Global Penguin Society

OPPOSITE: A Magellanic penguin at one of the largest Magellanic penguin colonies, Punta Tombo, Patagonia Argentina.

CHEETAH CONSERVATION BOTSWANA

LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS PROGRAM



Disney Conservation Fund's support of our livestock guarding dog initiative has made it possible for our community members to live together with wildlife. I would like to share a quote from one of our recipients, Ms. Puisano Mosimanewakgang, which I think says it all: "After receiving a livestock guarding dog from CCB [Cheetah Conservation Botswana], my conflict has stopped; we are now well aware of wildlife in our area and are coexisting peacefully with them."

—CONNIE KING MODISE

Farming for Conservation Officer, Cheetah Conservation Botswana

OPPOSITE: Cheetahs on the lookout. Trained dogs help discourage them from an easy meal of domestic livestock.

PAGES 82–83: Disney Conservation Heroes are awarded for their dedication to furthering conservation efforts in their communities.





COURAGEOUS
RESILIENT
BRAVE INSPIRING



PROTECTORS
TEACHERS
DEDICATED STRONG



ACTION-TAKERS
PRESEERVING
RESTORING



CELEBRATING OUR DISNEY CONSERVATION HEROES

THE DISNEY CONSERVATION FUND HAS RECOGNIZED MORE THAN 185 HEROES FOR THEIR TIRELESS EFFORTS TO SAVE WILDLIFE, PROTECT HABITATS, AND INSPIRE COMMUNITIES TO TAKE PART IN CONSERVATION EFFORTS. TO READ MORE ABOUT THESE AMAZING PEOPLE, VISIT [DISNEY.COM/CONSERVATION](https://www.disney.com/conservation)



PASSIONATE LEADERS BOLD UNWAVERING





SAVING AFRICAN ELEPHANTS WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY



We are proud of the work the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has accomplished with Disney's support over the past five years—particularly our forest surveys of Kenya's elephants, which have helped strengthen elephant conservation policies throughout the country. Previously, Kenya faced challenges protecting its forest-dwelling elephant populations, but with Disney's support, WCS has helped address this critical conservation issue. We have also worked closely with partners to promote habitat connectivity and reduce human-elephant conflict. Disney's partnership has proved critical in sustaining our long-term commitment to protecting Kenya's elephants in the face of increasing threats to their survival.

—TIM TEAR, PH.D.

Executive Director, Africa Program, Wildlife Conservation Society

OPPOSITE AND PAGES 86–87: African elephants fitted with GPS radio collars deliver data showing the best natural locations to provide elephant crossings.





SAVING AT-RISK BUTTERFLIES FLORIDA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



As butterfly populations continue to decline precipitously worldwide, the Disney Conservation Fund has provided critical support to help advance needed research, habitat restoration and management, and the recovery of wild populations that are at risk of extinction in the wild.

—JARET DANIELS, PH.D.

Curator and Director, McGuire Center for Lepidoptera and Biodiversity,
Florida Museum of Natural History



ABOVE: Federally endangered Miami blue butterfly pupae in the Florida Keys are released in an effort to restore wild populations.

OPPOSITE: Schaus swallowtail butterfly larvae.

PAGES 90–91: Monarch butterflies.









SAVING BAHAMIAN CORAL REEFS PERRY INSTITUTE FOR MARINE SCIENCE



Disney's support has been instrumental in our efforts to reverse the decline of Bahamian coral reefs by funding extensive assessments of reef health, collecting important data for planning the expansion of the Bahamas' network of marine parks and protected areas, as well as the restoration of critically endangered coral species.

—CRAIG DAHLGREN, PH.D.

Executive Director, Perry Institute for Marine Science



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE AND PAGES 94–95: Caribbean coral reefs.





SAVING SUMATRAN TIGERS WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY



The Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS's) partnership with Disney is vital as we work to significantly improve the conservation status of the critically endangered Sumatran tiger in Indonesia. Through Disney's support, WCS is training communities living near forested areas on ways to prevent human-wildlife conflict, such as building tiger-proof enclosures to protect their livestock. In addition, WCS and partners host annual events that emphasize the importance of Sumatran tiger conservation within local communities.

—WILLIAM MARTHY, PH.D.

Senior Program Manager for Terrestrial Conservation, WCS Indonesia

OPPOSITE: Sumatran tiger.

PAGES 98–99: Sumatran tiger lounging at Disney's Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.









SAVING GREAT APES GORILLA REHABILITATION AND CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER (GRACE)



The Disney Conservation Fund (DCF) has played a pivotal role in the Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education Center's (GRACE's) work rehabilitating orphaned Grauer's gorillas, a critically endangered subspecies, and protecting their wild counterparts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. From supporting our education and community conservation initiatives to providing expertise to help train our Congolese team, DCF has been an invaluable partner that we can always count on. We are incredibly grateful for all that DCF has done for GRACE.

—SONYA KAHLENBERG, PH.D.

Executive Director, Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education Center



ABOVE: The GRACE team celebrates their recognition as Disney Conservation Heroes.

OPPOSITE: Lubutu, a male Grauer's gorilla orphan at GRACE.

PAGES 102–103: GRACE educators celebrate nature's awesomeness with kids in an interactive game.





SAVING MIGRATORY BIRDS INTERNATIONAL CRANE FOUNDATION



Those who witness crane flocks discover an ancient creature's response to a crowded and changing world. Our challenge is to rediscover old balances and create new ones, linking cranes, the land, and people.

— THE LATE JIM HARRIS
Senior Vice President, International Crane Foundation



ABOVE: A college student teaches at the International Nature School.

OPPOSITE: Each fall Siberian cranes must travel from their Arctic breeding grounds to subtropical China.

PAGES 106–107: Cranes at China's Yellow River Delta.









SAVING MONKEYS FUNDACIÓN PROYECTO TITÍ AND SAVE THE GOLDEN LION TAMARIN



Thanks to Disney's amazing long-term support and partnership, we are now protecting, connecting, and creating more forests for cotton-top tamarins, a very tangible benefit for the monkeys and also for the local communities.

—ROSAMIRA GUILLEN

Executive Director, Fundación Proyecto Tití

The Disney Conservation Fund's support has made it possible for our Brazilian team to implement a long-term, science-based plan that will keep the golden lion tamarins safe from extinction.

—LOU ANN DIETZ

President, Save the Golden Lion Tamarin



ABOVE: A plush cotton-top tamarin is being used to educate students who live among this endangered species.

OPPOSITE: A golden lion tamarin and her baby.

PAGES 110–111: A cotton-top tamarin offers its direct gaze.





SAVING SEA TURTLES
ARCHIE CARR CENTER FOR SEA TURTLE
RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



Disney's long-term support has allowed us to successfully implement a strategic approach to solving the critical issues threatening Florida's sea turtle populations.

—KAREN A. BJORNDAL, PH.D.
Distinguished Professor, University of Florida



ABOVE: A hatchling makes its way to the open ocean near Disney's Vero Beach Resort in Florida.

OPPOSITE: Commercial fishers removing derelict traps from the waters
around the Florida Keys.

PAGES 114–115: Just hatched loggerhead turtle headed to sea at Disney's Vero Beach Resort in Florida.



X-14



X







SAVING SUMATRAN RHINOS INTERNATIONAL RHINO FOUNDATION



With fewer than eighty left, Sumatran rhinos may be the most endangered large mammals on the planet. To save them (and eventually increase their numbers), the Disney Conservation Fund provides critical support for Indonesian Rhino Protection Units—highly trained anti-poaching teams that continuously patrol protected areas where rhinos live, to monitor other wildlife, deactivate snares, put out wildfires, arrest poachers and intruders, and investigate wildlife crimes. This protection is essential for the continued survival of the species.

—SUSIE ELLIS, PH.D.

Executive Director, International Rhino Foundation



ABOVE, OPPOSITE, AND PAGES 118–119: Sumatran rhinos at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in Way Kambas National Park, in Indonesia.





SAVING SHARKS AND RAYS WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY



This project aims to safeguard the last surviving members of the four most threatened families of sharks and rays: sawfish, angel sharks, wedgefish, and giant guitarfish. Disney's support has enabled Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) experts to coordinate with other leading shark scientists and conservationists through the Global Sharks and Rays Initiative. Together, we are working globally to understand, protect, and recover these endangered sharks and rays before it's too late.

—LUKE WARWICK

Associate Director, Sharks and Rays Program
Wildlife Conservation Society

OPPOSITE: Caribbean ray at Castaway Cay, The Bahamas.

PAGES 122–123: Castaway Cay, The Bahamas.









DISNEY'S CONSERVATION COMMITMENT



Beyond philanthropic support, Disney is committed to making a conservation impact through the expertise, talent, and dedication of its employees and Cast Members. Disney's Animals, Science and Environment (ASE) works to provide the best in animal care, instill knowledge, and inspire conservation actions among Guests and Cast Members through on-site engagement and experiences, and collaborates globally to share their expertise and promote programs that benefit, preserve, and promote wildlife, people, and the planet. More than 180 Disney Cast Members have led or participated in conservation projects ranging from studying purple martins nesting at Walt Disney World Resort to protecting cotton-top tamarins and their forests in Colombia to restoring coral reefs in the Bahamas to advancing sea turtle conservation right outside Disney's Vero Beach Resort in Florida.

In addition, Disney Cast Members help monitor and protect the populations of key species in the Wildlife Management and Conservation Area, a more than eight-thousand-acre protected natural parcel at Walt Disney World Resort. Disney also serves as a licensed wildlife rehabilitation center, with its veterinarians and animal-care experts helping to rescue and rehabilitate hundreds of injured and orphaned animals each year.



ABOVE: Disney Cast Members created a welcoming habitat for pollinators like butterflies and bees at the solar facility powering the Walt Disney World Resort.

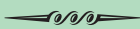
OPPOSITE: Scientists (like the one on the right) from Disney's Animals, Science and Environment team help educate Guests about sea turtle nesting at Disney's Vero Beach Resort in Florida.

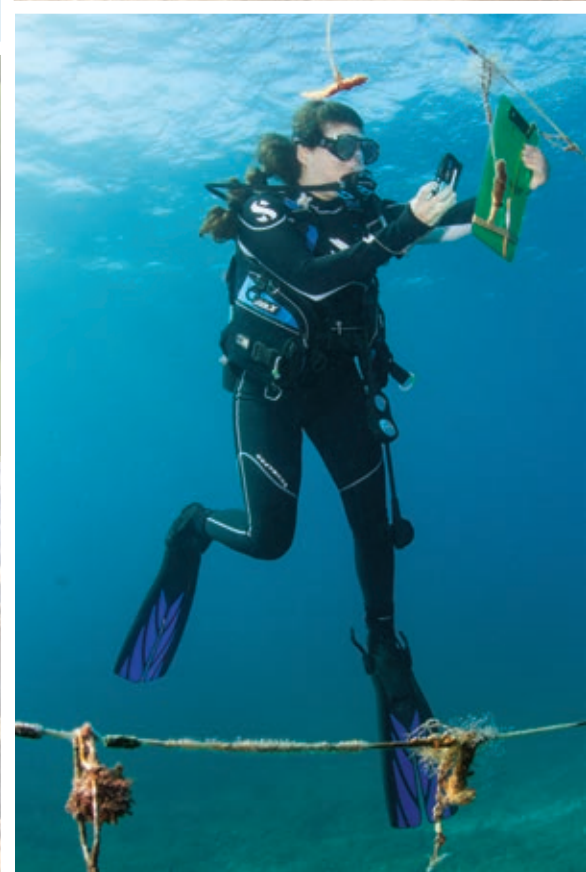
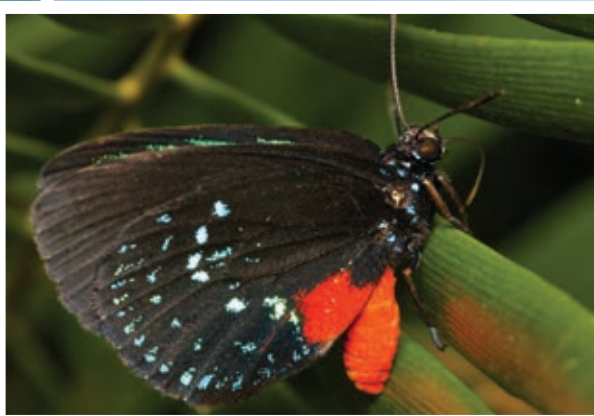
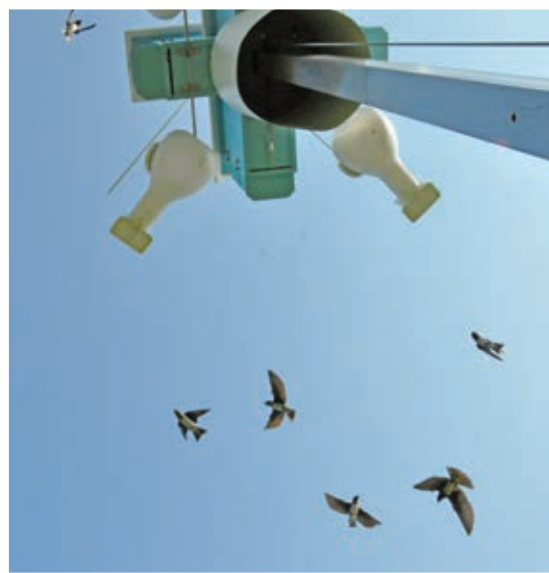
PAGES 126–127: Members of Disney's Animals, Science and Environment team lend their expertise as they help to make a difference for wildlife and their habitats around the world.



“You’ve probably heard people talk about conservation. Well, conservation isn’t just the business of a few people. It’s a matter that concerns all of us.”

—WALT DISNEY







For twenty-five years, the Disney Conservation Fund has been committed to protecting endangered habitats and species around the globe. Today's youth are increasingly disconnected from the natural world, and Disney is working to connect children and nature. I am personally grateful for our collaboration with Disney, which has resulted in, among other things, support for our chimpanzee conservation work and for Roots & Shoots, our global program for young people of all ages that empowers them to take action to make this a better world for people, animals, and the environment.

—JANE GOODALL, PH.D., DBE
Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute
and United Nations Messenger of Peace

OPPOSITE: Dr. Jane Goodall visits Disney's Animal Kingdom Cast Members in celebration of Earth Day, Walt Disney World Resort.

PAGES 130–131: Guests exploring Disney's Animal Kingdom Wild Africa Trek, Walt Disney World Resort.





CONNECTING GUESTS WITH NATURE



We share our earth with creatures that amaze, delight, and sometimes even frighten us. Research shows that children who are exposed to nature are healthier and happier, and it is widely believed that these outdoor experiences help instill conservation values that can last a lifetime. Making that human-animal connection is a powerful force in conservation. Disney's Animals, Science and Environment leads a variety of programs offering Guests at Walt Disney World Resort and Disney's Vero Beach Resort the chance to get up close with animals, see how Disney's dedicated animal team cares for them, and also learn what Disney is doing to protect them in the wild.

AQUA TOURS

An easy-to-use scuba-assisted snorkel unit keeps Guests afloat and supplied with piped air. Participants have a remarkable view of over sixty-five species of marine life in the 5.7-million-gallon, man-made saltwater ocean at The Seas with Nemo & Friends in Epcot. For those adventure seekers who are scuba certified, a DiveQuest experience is offered to get an even closer look at these aquatic species.

CARING FOR GIANTS

African cultural representatives share stories about conservation efforts for the elephants in their homeland. The animal specialists that care for the elephants at the park talk about their day-to-day responsibilities, while Guests observe the elephants from as close as eighty to one hundred feet away at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

SEA TURTLE NIGHT WALK

Disney's Vero Beach Resort in Florida is home to many nesting sea turtles. During nesting season, guided walks give Guests an up close look through night-vision goggles at a turtle laying her eggs, and then watching as she covers the nest and returns to the sea.

SENSE OF AFRICA

During Sense of Africa excursions, Guests set out on a three-and-a-half-hour tour, which includes the art and architecture of Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge, breakfast at Boma, and a private safari vehicle tour (including one backstage, where the compassionate Cast Members of the Animal Care team will lead Guests through a series of unique vantage points from which they can view some of the savanna's most beloved animals).

UP CLOSE WITH RHINOS

Guests go backstage at Disney's Animal Kingdom to meet massive white rhinos while learning about the behavior and biology of the species and partaking in discussions on the challenges that threaten their rapidly diminishing populations in the wild.

WILD AFRICA TREK

This privately guided three-hour expedition takes Guests through the savanna as they trek over rope bridges with crocodiles below, enjoy dedicated time observing animals from safari vehicles, and partake in refreshments at a reserved location in the heart of the savanna, where giraffes, rhinos, and more are right in front of them.

WILDERNESS EXPLORERS

The wilderness was meant to be explored, just as Russell declared in Disney•Pixar's *Up*. Guests can become a Wilderness Explorer and earn one of thirty complementary badges by going on self-guided missions around Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Proceeds from select fee-based experiences are directed through the Disney Conservation Fund and go to support nonprofit organizations that are leading efforts to save wildlife globally, and allow Guests to also play a role in protecting wildlife and habitats through their participation.



ABOVE: Young Guests learn the Wilderness Explorers' call at Disney's Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.



A PLACE FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE AT WISHING STAR PARK



Conservation is integrated into the very design and care of all the Disney parks and resorts. At the Shanghai Disney Resort, Wishing Star Park was created as a place where Guests could connect with the magic of nature. What was once developed land is now a hundred-acre lake with restored wetlands along the shoreline and a mile and a half of pathways that meander through open woodlands and shrub along the lake's edge. Many of the plant species included in the park were chosen particularly for their benefits to wildlife, including fruiting shrubs and flower gardens to provide food for native birds and butterflies. Even management of the park's vegetation is designed to benefit wildlife by scheduling work around peak breeding times for the park's birdlife.

Thanks to these efforts, wildlife has thrived at Wishing Star Park. Bird and butterfly monitoring programs and their participants have spotted over twenty species of butterflies and one hundred species of birds at the park, with new species being discovered every year. Some of the bird species are year-round residents that fill the park with the calls of the next generation each spring, while many others use Wishing Star Park as a safe stopover site to rest and refuel on long migratory journeys to and from breeding grounds.

This ever-changing community of wildlife—and the diverse habitats of the park—provide unique opportunities for Guests to connect with nature in an otherwise highly developed region of the world. Through Guest programming, community outreach efforts, partnerships with nonprofit organizations, and projects supported through the Disney Conservation Fund, Wishing Star Park and the Shanghai Disney Resort are showcasing the wonder and importance of the natural world and what can be done to preserve it.

OPPOSITE: Guests take part in bird-watching at Shanghai Disney Resort.

PAGES 136–137: Solar Array, a 270-acre, 50-megawatt solar facility that opened in 2019, provides renewable clean energy to Walt Disney World Resort.

I am proud to work for a company that not only has an exceptional theme park dedicated to animal care and conservation but also has permanently set aside more than twenty thousand acres for wildlife conservation in Central Florida and 450,000 acres in the Peruvian Amazon, opened a 50-megawatt solar array, is working to eliminate single-use plastic straws and stirrers at our locations around the globe, and both encourages and empowers our Guests to take conservation actions during their visit and at home. Not only are we committed to conservation at our Disney Parks and Resorts, but also in the wild. For the past twenty-five years, the Disney Conservation Fund and the expertise of our Disney teams have made an impact for more than four hundred species and their habitats around the world.

—MARK PENNING, BVSC

Vice President, Disney's Animals, Science and Environment







THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

- 🌿 The thousands of Guests who contribute to the Disney Conservation Fund to save animals and protect nature around the world.
- 🌿 The dedicated nonprofit organizations with which we have the honor of working.
- 🌿 The hundreds of Disney Cast Members who work together in so many ways—reviewing proposals, raising and monitoring funds, sharing stories that inspire people to make a difference, and expertly caring for animals and our planet each day—to make the fund successful.
- 🌿 The next generation, whose dedication to preserving nature will transform our world and carry on the legacy of the Disney Conservation Fund and Walt Disney himself.

These incredible people share the passion, dedication, and perseverance needed to protect wildlife and wild places and connect kids with nature—ensuring that we will leave future generations with a thriving, vibrant planet.

OPPOSITE: Shanghai Disney Resort Cast Members connect local youth with nature using unique Wishing Star Park guidebooks.

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PAGES 142–143: A reticulated giraffe and her calf explore the savanna at Disney's Animal Kingdom, Walt Disney World Resort.

ABOVE: Gladiator tree frog, Peru.



*You've probably heard
people talk about conservation.*

*Well, conservation isn't just
the business of a few people.*

*It's a matter that concerns
all of us.*

—WALT DISNEY

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