



Conservation and Education Activities Report July 2008- July 2009

Executive Summary

The Conservation and Education Activities Report, produced by the Conservation, Education & Research Division of the Toronto Zoo, outlines all the conservation efforts within the past year (July 2008-July 2009). The report is used as a communicative, promotional and informative tool. It allows for the exchange of information between guests of the Toronto Zoo as well as affiliated organizations. Conservation efforts are made possible by the continued support of local and international grants and collaborations from various institutions and organizations. This support is managed through the Toronto Zoo Foundation who coordinates all donations to the Toronto Zoo.

The Conservation and Education Activities Report contains information about five initiatives including: Conservation and Research initiatives, Education initiatives, Animal Care Initiatives, Horticulture Initiatives and Environmental Initiatives.

The Toronto Zoo prides itself on its programs that inspire efforts and facilitate public involvement in conservation. The Conservation, Education and Research Division carries out programs and research dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and its habitat. Research into nutrition, medicine and pathology, reproduction and species-specific studies, contributes to the well-being and lifestyle of animals.

The Education Branch offers a wide variety of both formal and informal educational activities that give participants a unique learning experience. Formal education programs based in the Education Auditorium and Conservation Connection Centre provide the general public with an opportunity to connect with the natural world. Zoo School- a unique program stemming from a partnership between the Toronto Zoo and the Toronto Independent High School-aims to provide an extraordinary experience while earning a high school credit. It combines lessons in a stimulating classroom setting, with special talks, guided tours and cooperative activities. Informal education programs such as the Serengeti Bush Camp and touch-tables throughout the zoo, serve to share information about species at risk, their habitats and related conservation projects. The Toronto Zoo volunteers dedicate over 26,000 hours annually, and are an invaluable component to the Education Branch.

The Animal Care Branch maintains a diverse collection of animals in accordance with standards for the well-being of animals, current animal welfare legislations and modern zoo industry practice. The Animal Care staff contributes to the Zoo's conservation efforts through public education using behind-the-scenes tours, keeper talks and demonstrations, as well as shows at the Zoo's Water side Theatre. Staff and animal training, research, and development and implementation of animal husbandry are also facets of the Animal Care Branch.

The Horticulture Branch oversees several initiatives in accordance with the Zoo's greening efforts, many of which extend beyond the boundaries of the Zoo. Two examples of this include the International Seed Exchange and Dog-Strangling Vine invasive species project. In addition, a plan record system is being developed in hopes of encouraging home gardeners to visit the Zoo.

Appendices:

Appendix I describes the Toronto Zoo Foundation and its conservational projects and activities. It also states the Toronto Zoo Foundation's Mission statement.

Appendix II describes our activities with various international conservation programs. These include the World Conservation Union (IUCN), CBSG, International Species Information System (ISIS), Species Survival Plans (SSPs), Studbooks, various Advisory Groups under the auspices of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), Botanical Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), the Canadian Organization for Tropical Education and Rainforest Conservation (COTERC) and Polar Bears International (PBI).

Appendix III describes the various zoo and conservation organizations in which Toronto Zoo retains membership. These include, but are not limited to, American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA), Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), Canadian Museum Association (CMA), Conservation Council of Ontario (CCO), Ontario Environment Network (OEN), and Polar Bears International (PBI).

Appendix IV lists the numerous Advisory, Interest and Preservation group affiliations for Conservation, Education and Research staff.

Appendix V lists the projects currently supported by the Toronto Zoo Endangered Species Reserve Fund and their coordinators in 2008. This fund was established for the purpose of funding projects that assist in the conservation of endangered species. Current projects include, but are not limited to, Panamanian Frog Rescue, BFF Reintroduction in Grasslands National Park, Project 400-Ontario Road Ecology, Polar Bear Biodiversity Studies, First Nations Ways of Knowing Turtle Island Conservation, Great Lakes Outreach, and the Ontario Crayfish Program.

Appendix VI lists the SSP species at the Toronto Zoo.

Appendix VII lists the active research proposals for 2008 and 2009.

Appendix VIII lists the operating projects for 2008 and 2009.

Appendix IX lists Toronto Zoo publications in 2008 and 2009 in Ecology/Field Conservation/Reintroduction, Nutrition, Reproductive Physiology/Technology, and Veterinary Medicine/Physiology.

Appendix X lists the funding agencies that have assisted the Toronto Zoo in research and conservation efforts.

Appendix XI lists the websites of organizations and agencies that partner with the Zoo or that share similar conservation goals as the Toronto Zoo.