

To: Board of Management

From: Senior Director, Wildlife & Science

Subject: **TORONTO ZOO WILDLIFE & SCIENCE BOOKLET 2019**

Date: 2020-01-14

SUMMARY:

This report provides the Board with a summary of the draft Toronto Zoo Wildlife & Science Booklet 2019. The Toronto Zoo website has additional information on these activities and programs. There are a number of informational brochures also available.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Senior Director, Wildlife and Science recommends that:

- 1. The Toronto Zoo Board of Management receive this report for information.**

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The booklet is produced in-house. The cost to print the booklet is covered by the operating budget.

COMMENTS:

The annual Wildlife & Science booklet, produced by the Wildlife & Science Division of the Toronto Zoo, summarizes the conservation efforts that have taken place within the past year. It is used as a communicative, promotional, and informative tool for the exchange of information between guests of the Toronto Zoo, as well as affiliated organizations and partners. 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's Wildlife Conservancy which coordinates all donations to the Toronto Zoo.

The booklet showcases the Toronto Zoo's commitment to becoming a Conservation Centre of Excellence as outlined in the 2015 Strategic Plan, by supporting the renewed mission and vision, using the Zoo's core values and institutional goals and objectives, as a guideline.

Last year was an exciting year for the Zoo with its many accomplishments including the launch of the new Wild Encounters experiences, which generated over \$100,000 in sales in the summer months alone, and the launch of the new Wild For Life Podcasts.

The Toronto Zoo celebrated the opening of Terra Lumina: An Enchanted Night Walk Into A Bright Future which provides an immersive experience along a 1.5 km walking path with vibrant lighting, multimedia effects, and breathtaking video projections. The Zoo also hosted its first ever PRIDE event, SickKids Dream Day, Brew at the Zoo, and Polar Dip. Staff also participated in a new shared engagement opportunity at a key activation site adjacent to Bremner Blvd, across from the CN Tower and Rogers Centre, which allowed us to increase our Zoo presence in the downtown core and to develop a greater community impact.

The Toronto Zoo received multiple awards including the Colonel G. D. Dailey Award for species propagation for the Wood Bison recovery program; the Rudolf Ippen Young Scientist Award was presented to our former veterinary resident; four awards were received from the Toronto Star Readers' Choice awards, including the top award for the Best Day Trip Destination; and the Zoo was also recognized with the 2019 Excellence in Marketing Award for its "Come See All That We Do At The Toronto Zoo" campaign.

The Zoo's bat program was awarded approximately \$30,000 funding through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Small White Nose Syndrome Grants Funding Program, and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization provided a sponsorship of \$1,095,000 over five years to conduct important bat research with species at risk bats in Ontario.

The booklet has been expanded to provide further details about the "hidden" Zoo and to be more inclusive of other branches and initiatives. It highlights that the Toronto Zoo is a registered research facility and participates in animal-based science programs. The Zoo received its Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice which recognizes an institution's commitment to achieving high standards of animal ethics and care in science. As animal welfare has always been a top priority for the Toronto Zoo, we are taking a more scientific approach to evaluate the well-being of animals in our care and are implementing an Animal Welfare Assessment process which is highlighted under the new Animal Welfare section.

The booklet highlights the Zoo's Browse Program, an essential requirement for the nutrition, enrichment, and welfare of various animals that encourages natural behaviours. It also highlights the Behavioural Research & Enrichment Program, including carnivore enrichment and the second annual Enrichment Giving Tree initiative; as well as a section on "From Passion to Action" which draws attention to our Zoo Keepers' drive and desire to initiate fundraising initiatives and events such as Saving Species Days. The booklet thanks our many partners, supporters, affiliates, and donors, including our corporate volunteers.

The publication features a twelve-page spread that showcases the year's achievements including new babies and upcoming additions, annual events, newsworthy stories, new features, and commendations!

Other initiatives included in the booklet are: Conservation Research, Veterinary Science, Reproductive Sciences, Nutrition Science, Citizen Science, Community Outreach, Horticulture, and Facilities & Infrastructure.

The Toronto Zoo prides itself on its programs that inspire action and facilitate public involvement in conservation. The Wildlife & Science Division carries out education

programs and research dedicated to the conservation of wildlife and their habitats. Research in nutrition, veterinary medicine and pathology, reproduction, conservation biology, and species-specific studies contribute to the well-being of animals and species recovery.

The Learning & Engagement Branch offers a wide variety of formal and informal educational activities that give participants a unique learning experience. Formal education programs provide the public the opportunity to connect with the natural world and participate through interactive learning, such as Zoo School. 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. Toronto Zoo Volunteers dedicate over 39,000 hours annually and are an invaluable component to the Learning & Engagement Branch.

The Toronto Zoo is a leader in local and international conservation, and has a strong record of environmental protection and of energy efficient operation management. With the help of the Zoo's Green Plan, "Wildlife Conservation and Sustainable Living," the Zoo has motivated staff, volunteers and the public to live sustainably in balance with nature. The Zoo is actively involved in conservation awareness programs for both staff and public, such as our Phone Apes Cell Phone Recycling Program, Staff Carpooling Program, and construction of green energy projects on site to help in the Zoo's journey of becoming a carbon neutral institution. In 2019, the Toronto Zoo opened a new temporary exhibit, Washed Ashore - Art to Save the Sea which displayed sculptures built completely from plastics found in oceans and waterways around the world. Toronto Zoo also created its own sculpture named 'Poly' the Polar Bear, built with plastic from local shoreline cleanups, from the Zoo's site, and local supporting organizations.

The Horticulture Branch oversees several initiatives in accordance with the Zoo's greening efforts, many of which extend beyond the boundaries of the Zoo. New initiatives included planting spring blossom trees to begin development of a Spring Blossom Festival; transferring pollen from our Corpse Flower 'Pablo' into the McMaster Corpse Flower and donating two corms to the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, hosting the Orchid Oasis festival, completing the new Greenhouse entrance and surrounding gardens, and the opening of the Greenhouse daily to allow guests to enjoy our extensive collection of plants.

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ATTACHMENTS:

Wildlife & Science Booklet 2019 – Draft

To be available prior to the February 6, 2020 Toronto Zoo Board of Management Meeting