



Snowy owl *Status: vulnerable*

Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy
2020 Wildlife Conservation Awareness Survey

February 8, 2021

Prepared by Common Good Strategies

**Presentation to the
Toronto Zoo Board of
Management**

March 1, 2021

Objectives and Methodology

Objectives

The Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy commissioned Common Good Strategies to conduct an online survey to understand the public's familiarity of wildlife conservation initiatives and the behaviours they are adopting to contribute.

The survey was also designed to gauge how perceptions of wildlife conservation relate to broader understanding of environmental issues, and to see how the public perceives the Toronto Zoo and others working in this space.

Methodology

A total of 1,002 residents of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) responded to the survey between August 29th and September 7th, 2020 using Leger 360's online panel platform.

The average response time was 10 minutes, and quotas were set for income, age, gender, and geography. At the regional level, responses are roughly representative of the GTA population.

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<http://goodstrategy.squarespace.com/>

Other reports authored by Steve include:

- *COVID19 and Housing: Will new opportunity emerge from crisis? (June 2020)*
- *COVID19 and the repercussions for mental health in Toronto (April 2020)*
- *Food Security during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Toronto's food crisis is imminent (April 2020)*
- Several Toronto Foundation *Vital Signs* reports

Respondents by Region

City of Toronto	441
Peel (Mississauga, Brampton)	210
York (Markham, Vaughn, King, etc.)	171
Durham (Ajax, Pickering, Whitby, Oshawa)	99
Halton (Oakville, Milton, etc.)	82

Masai giraffe *Status: endangered*



This presentation to the Toronto Zoo Board of Management focusses on the following findings of the report:

- Conservation Awareness
- Perceptions of the Toronto Zoo
- Awareness of animal extinction in the GTA

The full report is provided on the Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy's web page at

<https://www.wildlifeconservancy.ca/!/pdfs/Toronto%20Zoo%20Wildlife%20Conservancy%20Conservation%20Awareness%20Study%20-%20February%208,%202021.pdf?>



Black-footed ferret *Status: endangered*



Conservation Awareness

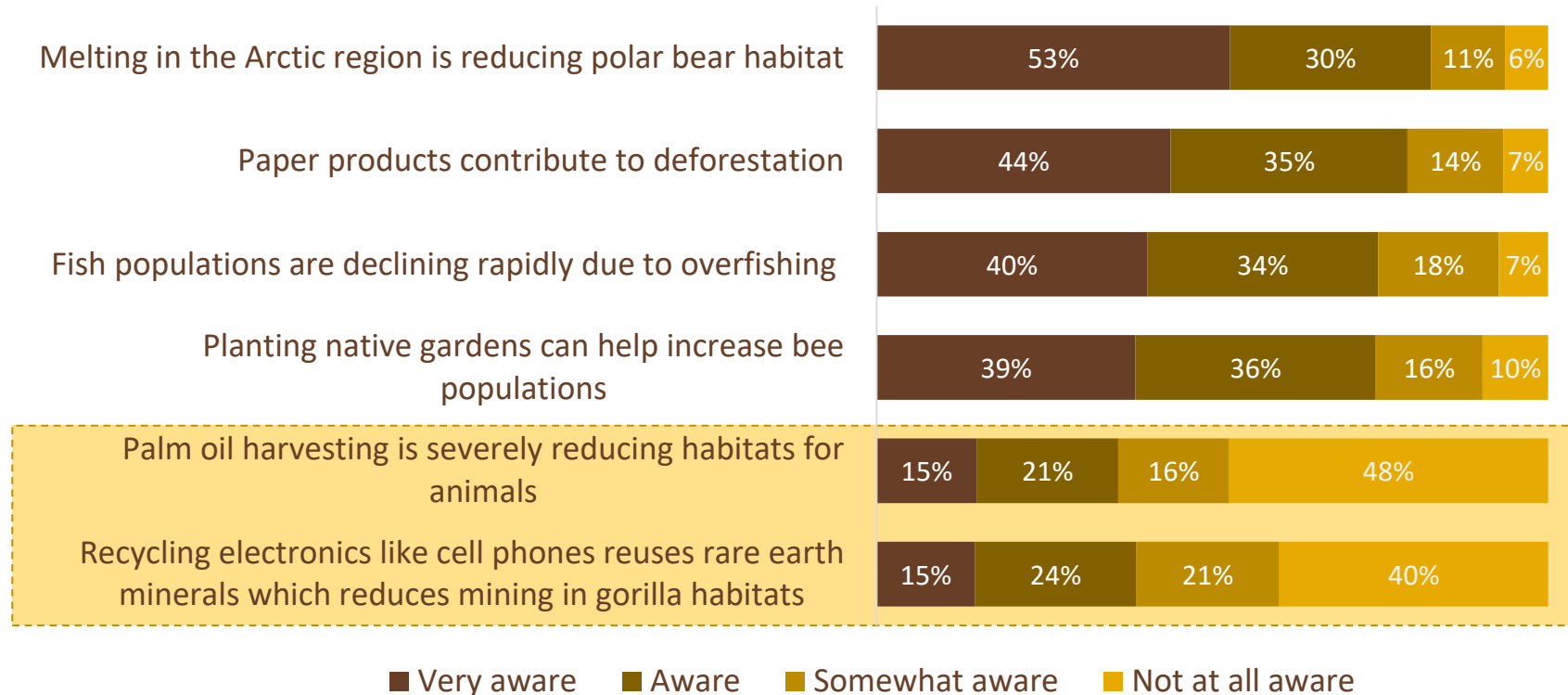
*The Sumatran rainforest
will mostly disappear
within 20 years*

The Guardian, May 2013

Sumatran orangutan *Status: critically endangered*

People are aware of many environmental issues, but are not aware of palm oil harvesting or rare earth mineral impacts on wildlife

Degree of awareness of environmental issues

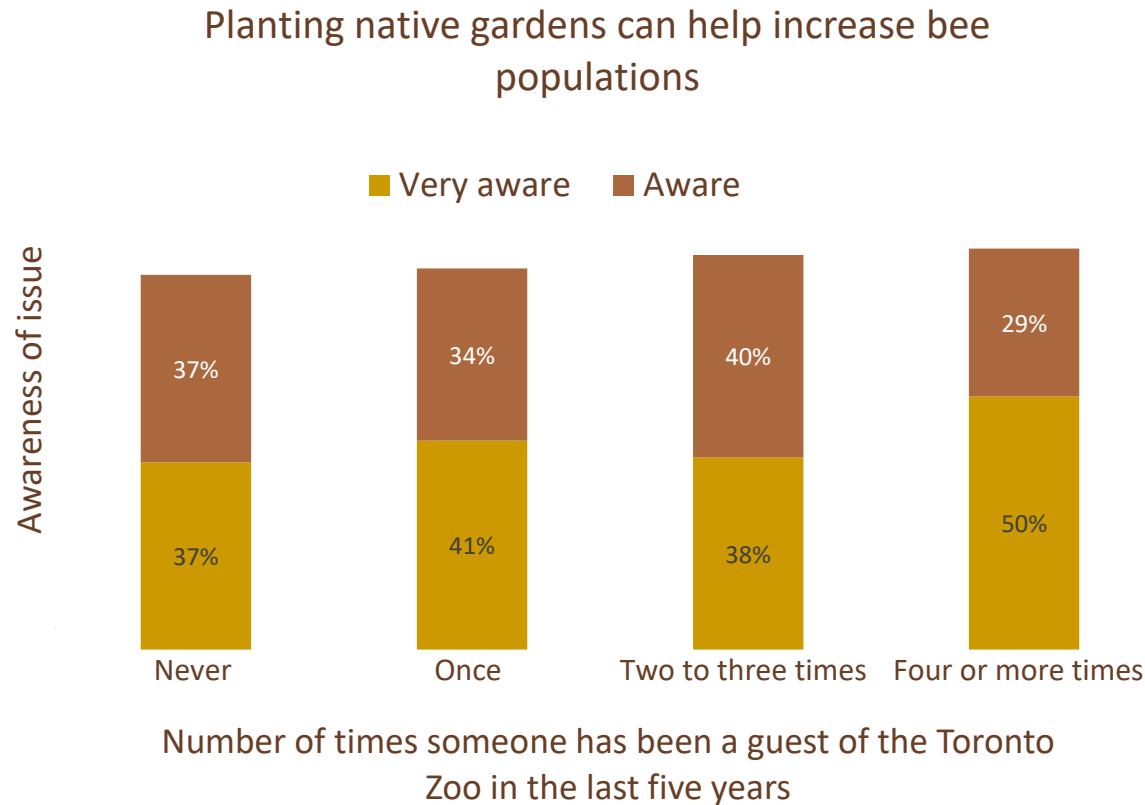


While more than 7 in 10 were aware or very aware of issues such as pollinator decline and deforestation,

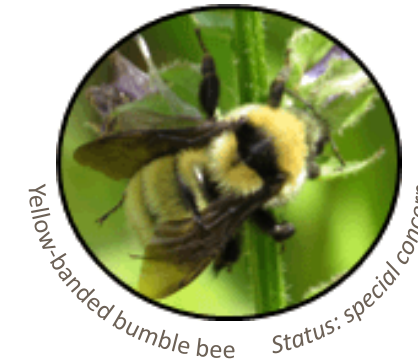
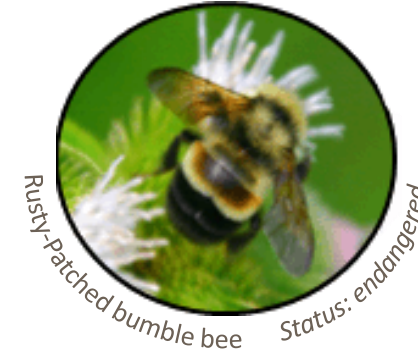
less than 4 in 10 were similarly aware of issues around recycling electronics or palm oil harvesting.

Base: Almost entire sample (n=992 to 1000)

Frequent Toronto Zoo attendance has no relationship with awareness of issues around decline in bee populations...

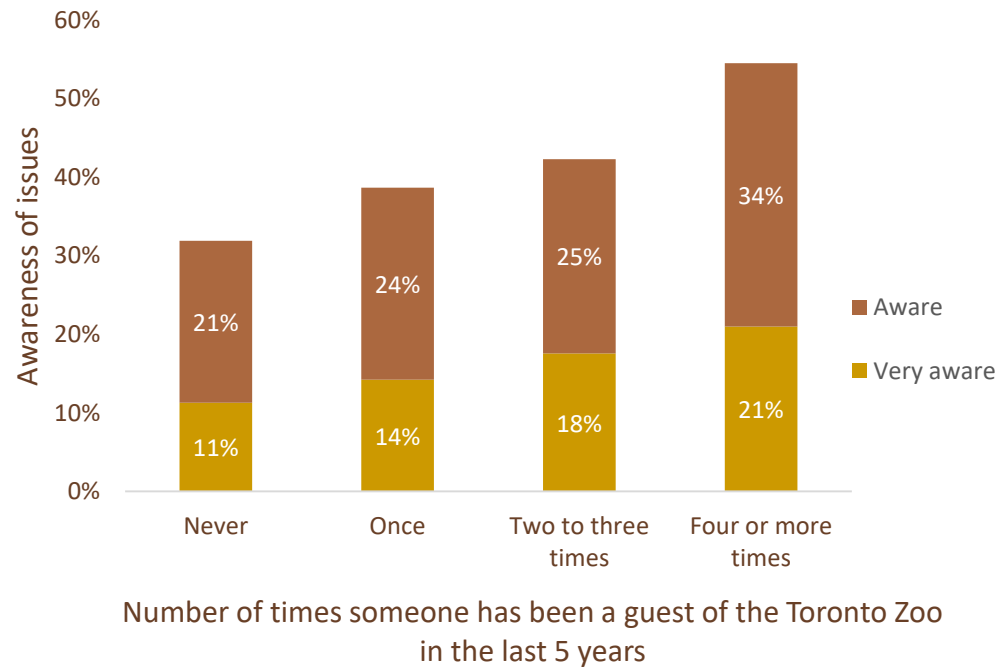


Base: Total sample (n=1002)



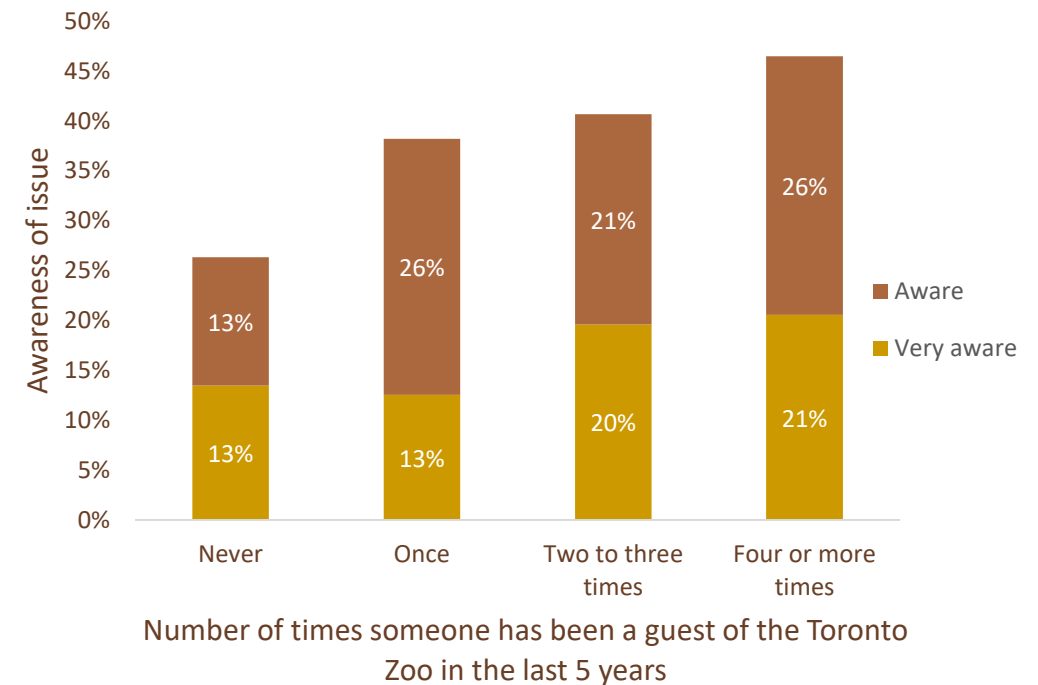
But frequent Toronto Zoo attendance is correlated with more knowledge of electronic recycling and impacts of palm oil harvesting

Recycling electronics like cell phones reuses rare earth minerals which reduces mining in gorilla habitats



Base: Total sample (n=1002)

Palm oil harvesting is severely reducing habitats for animals



Base: Total sample (n=1002)



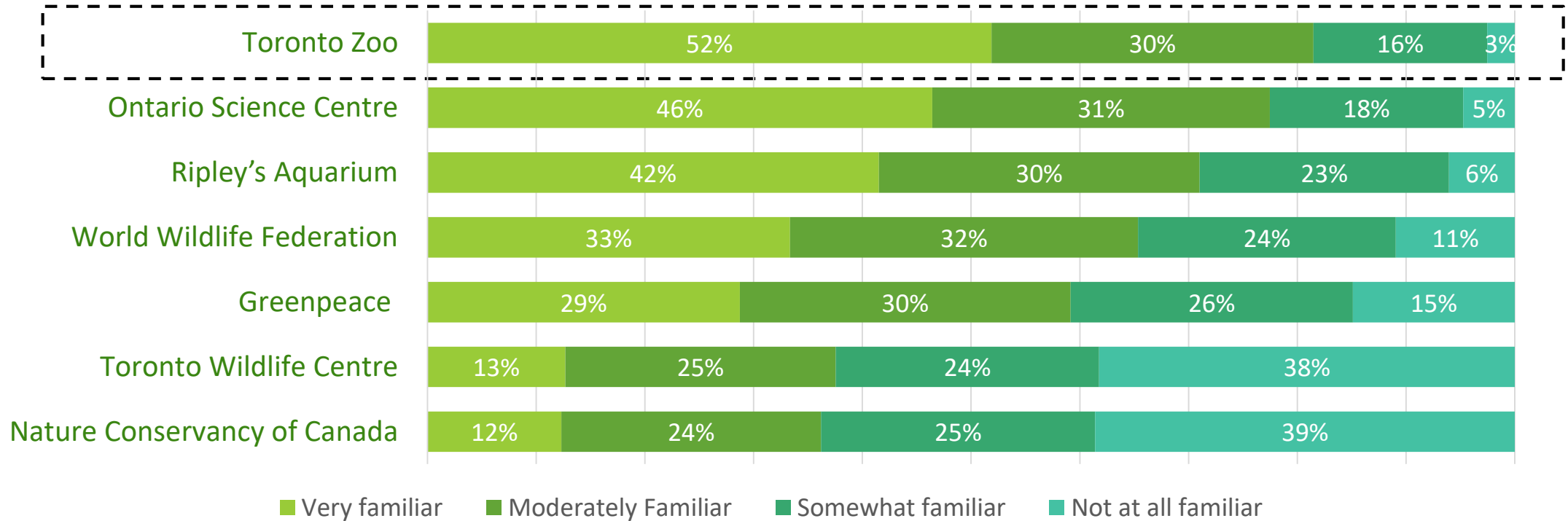
Child with Western Lowland gorilla *Status: critically endangered*

Perceptions of the Toronto Zoo

Photo provided to the Toronto Zoo by Karl De Jage

Respondents were more familiar with the Toronto Zoo than other organizations we asked about

To what extent are you familiar with the following organizations?



Base: Total sample (n=1002)

The Toronto Zoo successfully provides information on conservation activities, but many are unconvinced the Zoo plays a key role in stopping wildlife extinction

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree or disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ No opinion



INSIGHTS

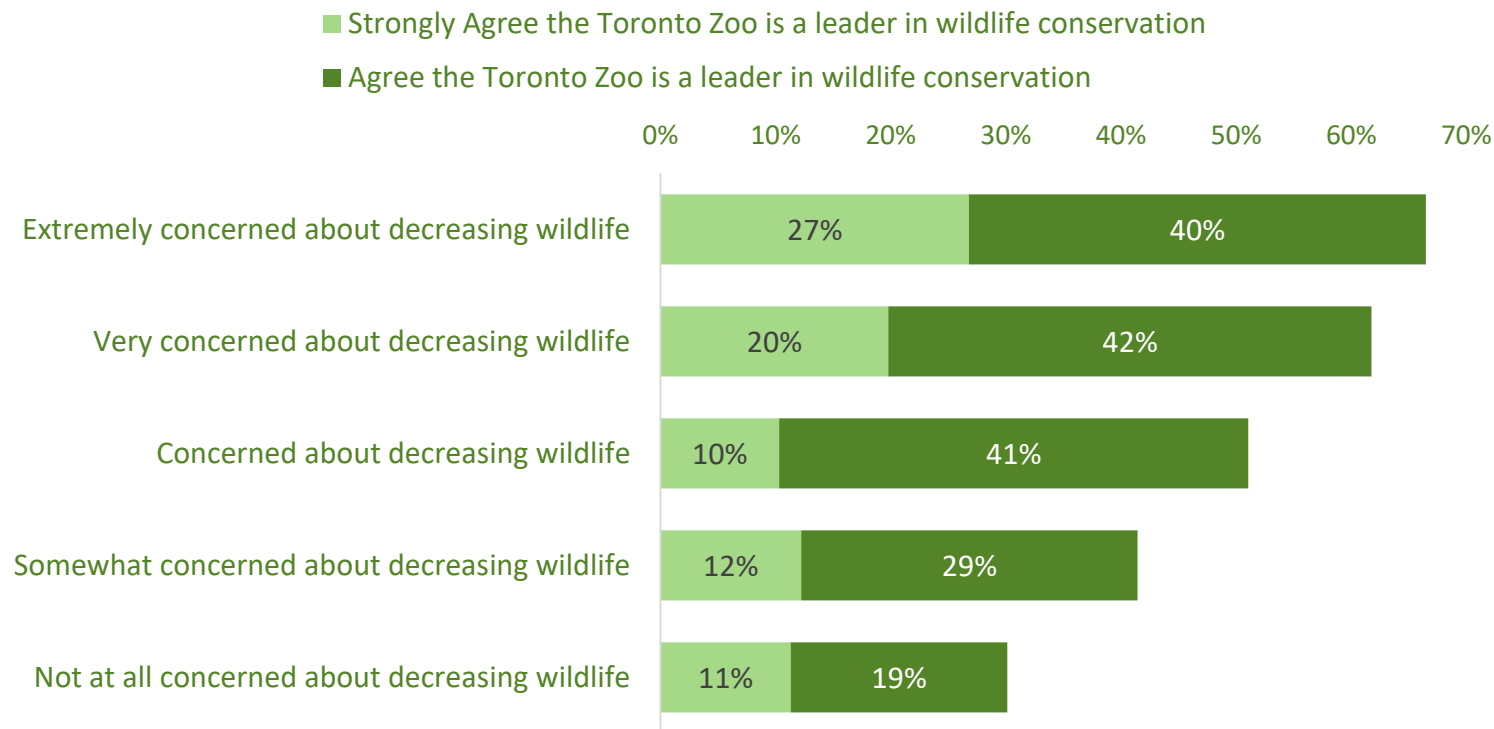
72% of respondents thought the Toronto Zoo was doing a good job providing information on animal conservation, and 29% of people strongly agreed

Almost half of respondents (49%) believed the Toronto Zoo is a Canadian leader in research around wildlife preservation, and 48% believed the Zoo plays a key role in stopping wildlife extinction

Base: Total sample (n=1002)

The more concerned someone is about decreasing wildlife the more likely are to believe the Zoo is a leader in conservation

Concern about decreasing wildlife versus agreement that the Toronto Zoo is a leader in wildlife conservation



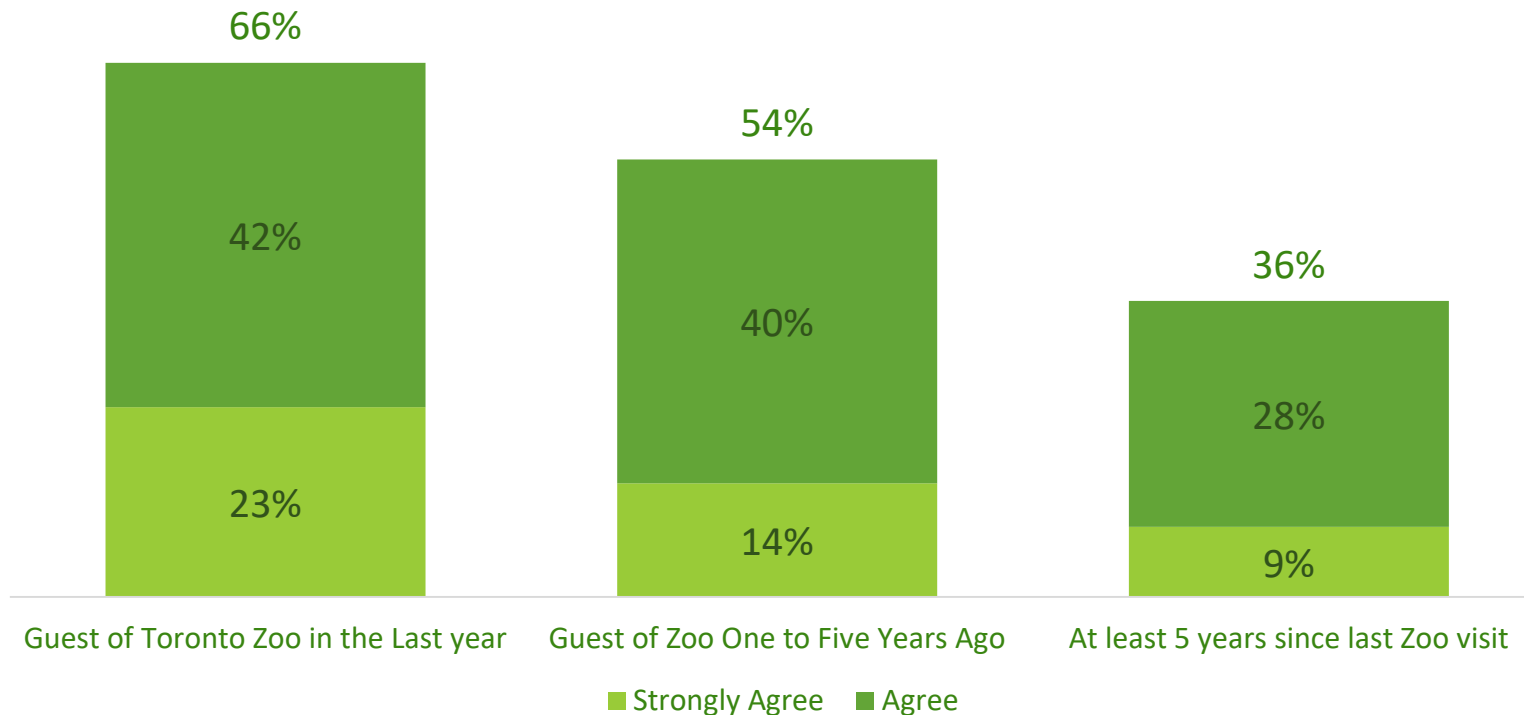
Base: Total sample (n=1002)



White rhinoceros Status: near threatened

Recent guests at the Toronto Zoo are much more likely to agree that the Zoo is a national leader in wildlife preservation

The Toronto Zoo is a Canadian leader in research around wildlife preservation



More recent guests are more likely to perceive the Toronto Zoo as a national leader in wildlife preservation, providing some evidence that the Zoo has been doing well in communicating its activities in recent years

Base: This excludes 130 people who indicated they had never been to the Toronto Zoo. Note that this report only reports data for respondents who completed the entire survey, which tends to overestimate the percentage of the population who have visited the Zoo at some point.



Awareness of Animal Extinction in the Greater Toronto Area

"Not a single bee has ever sent you an invoice. And that is part of the problem – because most of what comes to us from nature is free, because it is not invoiced, because it is not priced, because it is not traded in markets, we tend to ignore it."

Pavan Sukhdev, United Nations report,
The Economics of Ecosystems and
Biodiversity, October 2010

Only 29% of respondents were aware that there were more than 10 endangered or threatened animals in the GTA

What is your best guess as to the number of species that are native to the Greater Toronto Area that are threatened or at risk of extinction?

Response	Percentage of respondents
None	6%
One or two	25%
Three to Ten	40%
More than Ten	29%

Base: Total sample (n=1002)

The following 20 species are at high risk in the GTA :

Endangered	Threatened
1. Monarch	1. Western Chorus Frog
2. Redside Dace	2. Bank Swallow
3. Tri-colored Bat	3. Barn Swallow
4. Northern Myotis	4. Bobolink
5. Little Brown Myotis	5. Canada Warbler
6. Blanding’s Turtle (Great Lakes/St. Lawrence population)	6. Chimney Swift
7. Acadian Flycatcher	7. Eastern Meadowlark
8. Cerulean Warbler	8. Eastern Whip-poor-will
9. Red-headed Woodpecker	9. Least Bittern
10. Yellow-breasted Chat virens subspecies	10. Wood Thrush

Source for at-risk animals in the GTA : Parks Canada, Rouge National Urban Park Action Plan; Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC)

Which animals did respondents believe are threatened with extinction in the GTA?

Birds: 73 respondents There are at least 4 species of birds that are endangered and 9 that are threatened in the GTA

Bees: 39 respondents American and Yellow-banded bumble bee is classified of special concern; Rusty patched bumble bee is endangered

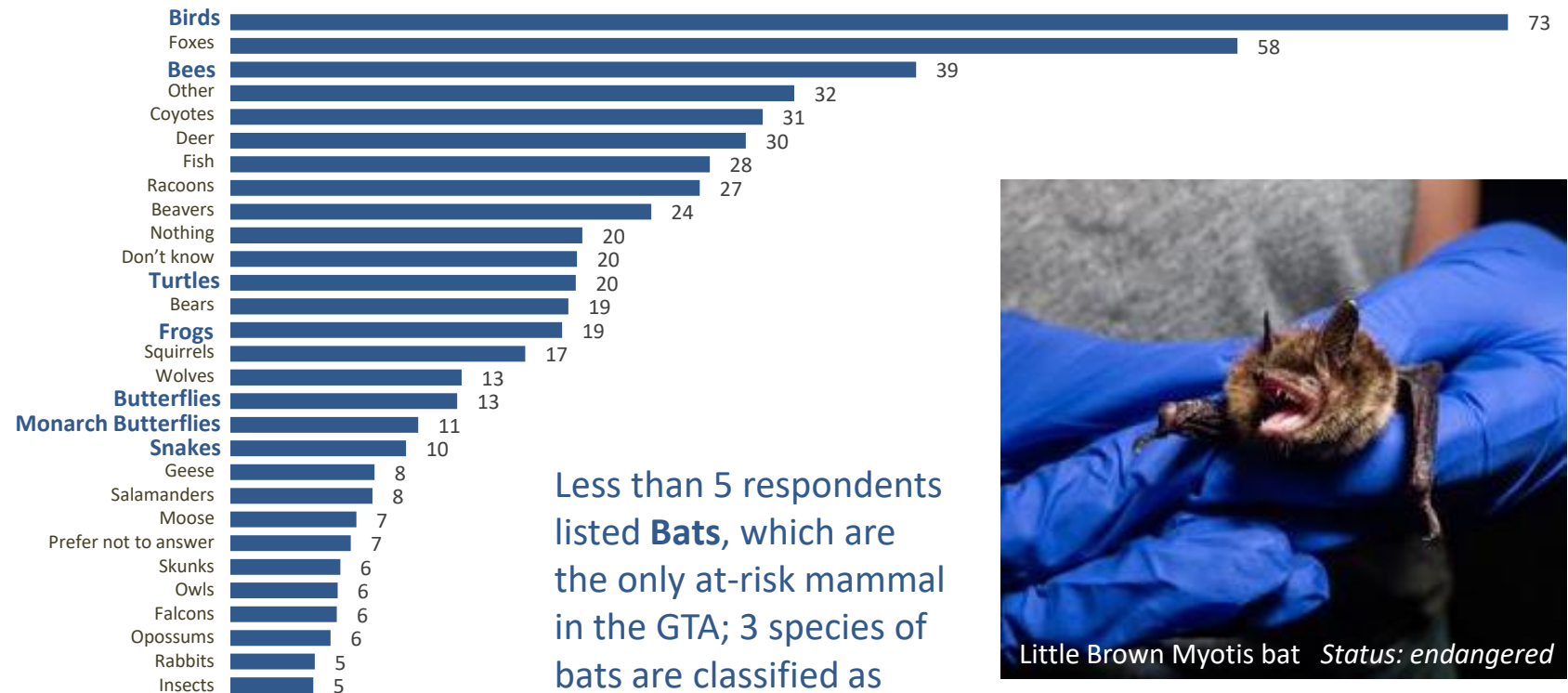
Turtles: 20 respondents The Blanding's turtle is endangered, while several other species are of special concern

Frogs: 19 respondents The Western Chorus Frog is threatened

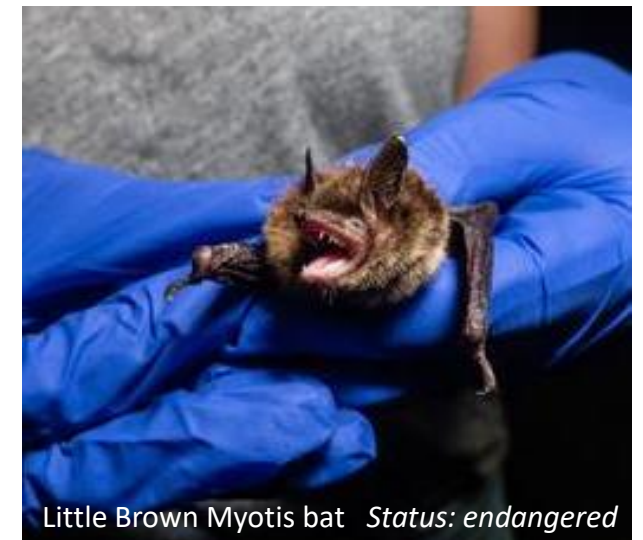
Butterflies / Monarch Butterflies: 13/11 respondents The Monarch butterfly is Endangered

Snakes: 10 respondents The Eastern Milksnake and Eastern Ribbonsnake are both of special concern

Can you name any of the animals in the Greater Toronto Area that are at risk of extinction?



Less than 5 respondents listed **Bats**, which are the only at-risk mammal in the GTA; 3 species of bats are classified as Endangered



Little Brown Myotis bat Status: endangered

Many people left this question blank, though some entered up to 8 species. Answers were coded into categories based on the response; the chart reflects the number of times a species or animal group was mentioned.

Some of the report's highlights:

- More frequent zoo visitation correlates with knowledge of palm oil and rare metals mining impacts on wildlife → *The Zoo has an important role to play in highlighting these less well known but critical environmental issues*
- People are familiar with the Toronto Zoo and knew of the role the Zoo plays in conservation education, *but only those with more frequent visitation understood the role the Zoo plays in stopping wildlife extinction*
- People had some understanding of the endangered species in the GTA, *but less than 5 of the 1,002 surveyed identified the most endangered species in the GTA (bats)*

Please see the full report on the Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy's web page at <https://www.wildlifeconservancy.ca/!/pdfs/Toronto%20Zoo%20Wildlife%20Conservancy%20Conservation%20Awareness%20Study%20-%20February%208,%202021.pdf?>

Red panda Status: endangered



Grévy's zebra Status: endangered