ZSL 200 YEARS OF WILDLIFE



CREATING A WORLD WHERE WILDLIFE THRIVES

Annual Impact Review 2025-26

zsl.org

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Our Royal Charter

Our charitable purpose, as set out in our Charter, is the advancement of zoology through a variety of means. These include:

- Conducting scientific research
- Promoting the conservation of biological diversity and the welfare of animals
- Caring for and breeding endangered and other species
- Fostering public interest
- Improving and disseminating zoological knowledge
- Participating in conservation worldwide



Pictured: We unveiled a mosaic celebrating our first female Curator of Reptiles, Dr Joan Procter, by artist Linder (pictured). One of Joan's enduring legacies is changing attitudes towards reptiles, like the Komodo dragon (left).

Cover: We launched a cheetah reintroduction programme in Zambia.

WELCOME

A pivotal year

This year has been about two things: celebrating 200 years of ZSL's extraordinary history, and ensuring we're set to meet the challenges of the future

On 29 April 2026, we turned 200 years old. It's a remarkable achievement, and I couldn't be prouder to be leading us into such a special year. When ZSL was created in 1826, it was with an urgent mission: to improve humanity's understanding of wildlife. Animals were poorly understood, and ZSL's vision was to create a space where scientists could study and learn about animals.

It's fair to say that we've run with it. Today, we have not one but two Zoos, which welcome over two million visitors a year to be inspired by wildlife; we're home to more than 500 species, many of them threatened with extinction or already extinct in the wild; and we employ hundreds of scientists and conservationists working to understand and protect wildlife around the world. We've also helped to nurture some of the most celebrated minds in zoology – the likes of Charles Darwin, Dame Georgina Mace, Joan Procter and Sir David Attenborough – shaping the field of zoology and inspiring millions.

But we are not resting on our laurels. Our founding mission is more important than ever and, in this report, you'll read about the urgent work we're undertaking to ensure that we live in a world where wildlife thrives.



In Zambia, we're in the midst of an ambitious project to reintroduce cheetahs to the Luangwa Valley, a wilderness area that has the potential to become a stronghold for these iconic cats. In Senegal, we're working to protect the last known packs of West African wild dogs; in French Polynesia, we're moving closer to the reestablishment of multiple species of Partula snails; and in Nepal, we're helping local communities coexist with growing populations of tigers, rhinos and elephants. Looking ahead, we're working on reintroductions of four Extinct in the Wild species (the Vietnam pheasant and three Mexican pupfish) cared for at our Zoos.

Closer to home, we are supporting the reintroduction of several UK species, such as the black-veined white butterfly, and are leading the restoration of the Thames. We have also been commissioned by the UK Government to develop a new way of measuring ecosystem health; ecosystem services are fundamental to life on Earth, and understanding their resilience to change will play a major role in driving global policy in the years to come.

Finally, this year we were able to make a major announcement that reflects the scale of ambition we have for years ahead. Thanks to the most significant donation in our history, we will be creating a new wildlife health centre at our Regent's Park headquarters. This investment will supercharge our science, helping us to upscale disease monitoring and interventions around the globe, and augment the world-class care we give to our animals. And it marks the first phase of much more to come.

Kathryn England
CEO, ZSL

A message from our Chair of Trustees



Our 200 years of wildlife science, conservation, and public engagement are a heritage any institution would be proud of. But anniversaries are only meaningful if they mark a springboard to what comes next. With the announcement of our new wildlife health centre, and the many exciting projects under way mentioned in this report, I am confident that ZSL's next chapter will be worthy of that legacy.

As a developmental biologist, I have spent my career studying how cells communicate to build complex living systems. I've also been fortunate enough to help to shape the UK's biomedical landscape through the establishment of the Francis Crick Institute. These experiences reinforce a fundamental insight: that health is not the product of any single system, discipline or species. When we treat human health as separate to the animals and environments around us, we limit our ability to understand and respond to the challenges we face.

That is why I am so excited about ZSL's commitment to wildlife health. It's not just about helping to prevent the next pandemic, though that alone would justify the investment. It is about protecting the ecosystems that sustain us, preserving species on the brink of extinction and ensuring that the science of wildlife health is properly valued. ZSL has been working at this intersection for decades; we know what is needed, and we're ready to meet the challenge.

Professor Sir Jim Smith FRS FMedSci

OUR VISION

A world where wildlife thrives

WHO WE ARE

We're ZSL, a science-driven conservation charity working to restore wildlife in the UK and around the world. We work to help wildlife and people thrive together.

WHAT WE DO

We inspire, inform and empower people to protect and restore wildlife.

HOW WE DO IT

We look for answers through science, we work with people to find solutions.

WE BELIEVE

- Nature can recover.
- Conservation works best when it's powered by science.
- People and nature can thrive together.

OUR VALUES
How we behave

We are innovative, inspiring, ethical, collaborative, inclusive and impactful.

IMPACT AREAS
We focus on these areas to help us deliver our vision

PROTECTING SPECIES	RESTORING HABITATS	TRAINING CONSERVATIONISTS	CREATING CHANGE
From research to fieldwork, and in our Zoos, we identify and conserve the species at risk of extinction – and get them on the road to recovery.	By collaborating with communities around the world we protect and restore healthy ecosystems so people and wildlife can thrive together.	We share skills and knowledge to build a movement of conservationists equipped with the expertise, tools and networks to protect and restore wildlife.	We create positive change for wildlife and people by inspiring and empowering everyone, from children to politicians, to notice, care and act for nature.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS
By 2030, we will:

Support and protect at least 200 threatened species and move 60 of those at greatest risk of extinction towards global recovery.	Support communities in 10 priority regions to catalyse ecosystem recovery and help people live better with wildlife.	Increase global conservation capability by supporting more than three million young people and 5,000 career professionals in their development.	Strengthen the safeguards for nature by inspiring 20 million people to advocate for wildlife and influencing more than 20 key policies to be nature positive.

10 WAYS WE MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR WILDLIFE THIS YEAR

We started the reintroduction of cheetahs to Zambia's Luangwa Valley, three decades after their disappearance from the region, and our work was vital to the recent agreement to protect a major cheetah habitat straddling the Angolan-Zambian border (read more on pages 17 and 39).





Senior Curator Paul Pearce-Kelly and Senior Research Fellow Dr Chris Yesson contributed to **new research alerting the world to the imminent loss of warm-water coral reefs**, demanding the world's government take action to avert dangerous tipping points. The *Global Tipping Points Report 2025* brought together expertise from 160 researchers from across the globe.

Zookeepers from Whipsnade supported the ongoing reintroduction of Endangered scimitar-horned oryx in Chad. We've been working alongside partners to reintroduce oryx since 2016 and, in 2023, they were officially downlisted from Extinct in the Wild.



We helped to end the badger cull in England. Working with farmers, vets and the UK Government, we co-designed a new strategy to control bovine tuberculosis in a more inclusive, effective and sustainable way. We're also working with the National Farmers' Union to scale up and test badger vaccination on farms in Cornwall.

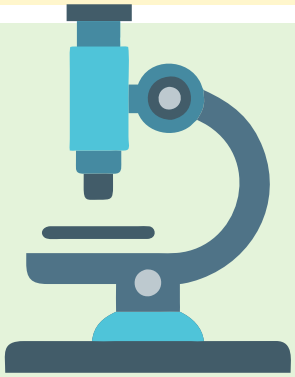


We deployed 20 six-tonne oyster reef cubes in the North Sea, alongside our local partner, and released 4,000 adult oysters and 35,000 juvenile oysters, in a bid to **create a new native oyster reef**. The cubes will give the oysters a haven from which to start to repopulate other areas of the North Sea, where native oysters disappeared a century ago.



We brought two Critically Endangered species of frog from Ghana to London Zoo – the Atewa slippery frog and the Afia Birago's puddle frog. Both species are found in only one reserve, and we were alerted to their imminent threat of extinction from the expansion of mining in the region. The frogs are now being cared for by amphibian experts at London Zoo.

We're working with scientists at the Francis Crick Institute to **investigate the evolution of mammalian placentas**. ZSL's veterinary team have provided samples from several recent animal births. Understanding how placental cells interact with the mother's immune system inside the uterus could unlock major advances in medical care, such as improving the success of organ transplants.



We welcomed 2,100,000 visitors to our Zoos, including almost 150,000 students and young people on educational trips, helping people to form lasting connections with wildlife, learn about our conservation work and understand how to take action themselves.

We published 240 scientific research papers, helping to alert governments to conservation issues, driving policy change and improving conservation action on the ground.



Our vets gave 20 rare hazel dormice the all-clear, ahead of a release into a Leicestershire woodland. The dormice, including three raised at Whipsnade Zoo, were quarantined at our vet hospital and given a health screening by our vet team ahead of their reintroduction. ZSL has supported the reintroduction programme since 2001, helping to release more than 1,000 dormice.



OUR TARGETS FOR 2025-26

What we said we'd do in our last Annual Review

Return cheetahs to Zambia's Luangwa Valley	SEE PAGE 17	✓
Launch Inside Nature, an online learning resource for biology students	SEE PAGE 20	✓
Protect West Africa's last wild dog population in Senegal	SEE PAGE 21	✓
Ramp up UK species recoveries and develop our Centre for British species	SEE PAGE 25	IN PROGRESS
Identify key habitats for the conservation of the UK's sharks	SEE PAGE 25	IN PROGRESS
Scale up our restoration of the Greater Thames Estuary	SEE PAGE 29	✓
Support coexistence in Nepal and secure vital wildlife corridors	SEE PAGE 33 AND 39	✓
Launch our Nature Comms Academy, aimed at 16-to-25-year-olds	SEE PAGE 44	✓
Expand our postgraduate research training programme	SEE PAGE 45	✓
Celebrate ZSL's 200th anniversary throughout 2026	SEE PAGE 57	✓
Incentivise investment in conservation through wildlife impact bonds	SEE PAGE 62	IN PROGRESS
Expand the habitat for our Asian elephant herd at Whipsnade Zoo	SEE PAGE 81	IN PROGRESS

ZSL AROUND THE WORLD

We work around the world to restore wildlife and rebuild healthy ecosystems

We run an extensive global network of collaborations and projects across over 60 countries (each represented by a dot on this map), with a focus on six biodiversity-rich areas. We work in regions where our expertise in science-led conservation can make the greatest difference to the protection of species; where we can reduce species extinction risk, improve ecosystem health, strengthen human-wildlife coexistence and inspire change through close collaboration with local partners. Find out more at zsl.org/regions and read on to discover some of our key areas of activity in 2025-26.



1 UK

In the UK, our two conservation Zoos help us to educate and inspire millions of visitors to respect and protect wildlife. The Zoos are also home to scientific research and veterinary work, and a hub for our UK conservation projects including: the restoration of the Thames Estuary, the introduction of UK species such as the dormouse, the vaccination of badgers against bovine tuberculosis, and studies of sharks on the Welsh coast.

2 South Asia

We are working with the governments of Nepal and India to conserve the Terai Arc, a transboundary landscape of forest and grasslands that supports Bengal tigers, Asian elephants, greater one-horned rhinos, gharials and pangolins. We work closely with local communities living around protected areas to develop sustainable, nature-based livelihoods and mitigate the impacts of conflict with wildlife.

3 Southeast Asia

Our coastal habitat recovery programme in the Philippines has been working with local communities to restore large areas of mangrove and beach forest, and we are now supporting the creation of Asia's first large-scale, offshore marine protected area. In Thailand, our work focusses on the critical issue of human-wildlife coexistence – we are working with local communities and government to reduce conflict with key species like Asian elephants and Indochinese tigers, while also combatting illegal wildlife trade through partnerships on pangolin and tiger cyber-trafficking investigations.

4 Indian Ocean

We lead a conservation science programme across the Indian Ocean, involving more than 20 research organisations working to improve understanding of how marine protected areas support the preservation of marine species, from seabirds to sharks, and identify ways of conserving coral reef ecosystems. Understanding the effects of human activity, such as plastic pollution, overfishing and climate change, is key to our work.

5 Eastern and Southern Africa

We work with local partners in the conservation of key species, such as the black rhino, African wild dog and cheetah, across major savannah ecosystems. Our goal is to grow conservation capacity within the region, improve connectivity, foster human-wildlife coexistence and coordinate action between and within countries. In Mozambique, our focus is on helping coastal communities improve livelihoods through locally led marine protection combined with sustainable fishing practices.

6 West and Central Africa

We work in Cameroon, Gabon and the Republic of Congo to protect the West Congo Basin, home to African forest elephants, western lowland gorillas and chimpanzees. In Benin, we're working to conserve the W–Arly–Pendjari Complex, West Africa's largest protected area, and in Senegal we are fighting to save the region's last African wild dogs.





While ZSL's conservation work spans the globe, the UK remains at the heart of our mission to restore wildlife, advance scientific knowledge and inspire people to value and protect nature. By combining world-leading science with practical conservation action, and inspiring millions of visitors to our two conservation Zoos, we are helping to secure a future where the UK's people and wildlife can thrive together.

Across the UK, we are restoring species, habitats and ecosystems on land, in rivers and at sea. From supporting the return of the chequered skipper butterfly to England, to contributing expertise to beaver reintroductions and the recovery of water vole populations, our conservation teams work in partnership with government, land managers and communities to help species return to landscapes where they once flourished. We are also restoring vital habitats; we're working to improve the health of the Thames and reconnect people with one of the UK's most important urban rivers.

Our scientific expertise also plays a vital role in understanding the threats and health risks faced by the UK's wildlife on land and at sea; providing early warning of emerging threats, informing conservation action and helping to safeguard the health of UK wildlife.

- Along the Welsh coastline and in the Thames Estuary, our marine teams are working to monitor and understand the behaviour of threatened shark populations, including Critically Endangered angelsharks and tope, to inform conservation action.
- Through the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP), we lead the monitoring and investigation of stranded whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals, marine turtles and some shark species around the English and Welsh coastlines, providing invaluable insights into the health of marine ecosystems and man-made threats they face, such as pollution and fishing.
- Our Garden Wildlife Health programme combines veterinary science with reports from thousands of members of the public to monitor disease in familiar species such as garden birds, hedgehogs, amphibians and reptiles.
- Our long-running research in Cornwall has supported the UK Government's transition to more inclusive, effective and sustainable bovine tuberculosis control, ending badger culling and encouraging badger vaccination instead.



Pictured (clockwise from top left): Through CSIP, we investigate the health of stranded whales and other marine life; our Garden Wildlife Health programme uses citizen science to monitor British garden species, like hedgehogs; our badger research in Cornwall has contributed to the end of badger culling.

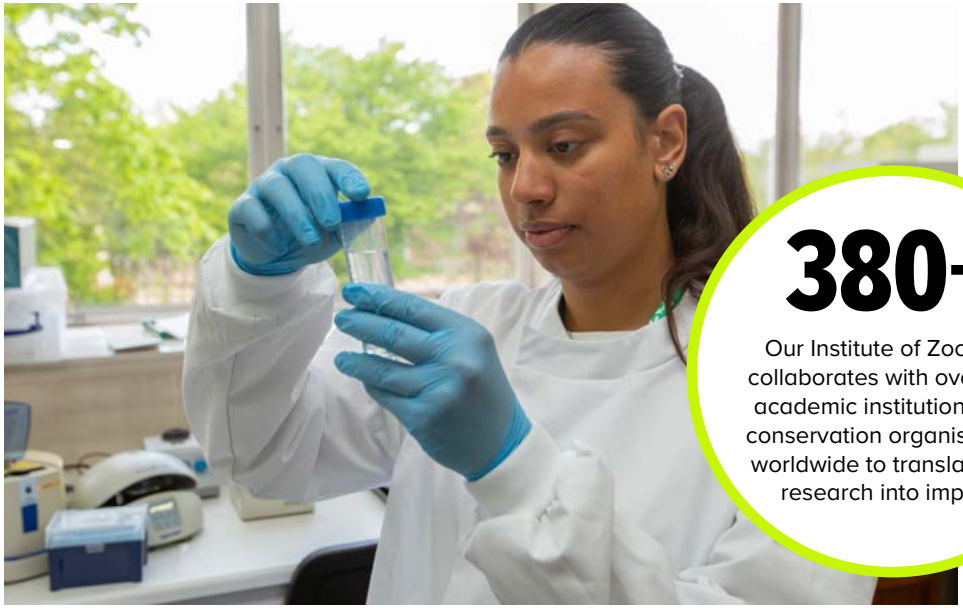
POWERED BY WORLD-LEADING CONSERVATION SCIENCE

Science is the most powerful tool we have to make conservation effective

Our work is driven by science, and much of that is led by ZSL's Institute of Zoology. Our research is focussed on developing solutions to several global conservation challenges.

Wildlife health

ZSL is at the leading edge of wildlife health research; we have trained hundreds of wildlife health professionals from dozens of countries and built surveillance networks that feed into national and international biosecurity systems. Our scientists are at the forefront of tackling several wildlife health issues, including the disease-driven declines of global amphibians, investigating the health of the UK's garden wildlife, and research into diseases carried by fruit bat colonies in Ghana. We also lead the investigation of stranded marine mammals in England and Wales, through the Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme, and we are working with UK farmers to understand the benefits of badger vaccination for the protection of cattle from bovine tuberculosis.



380+

Our Institute of Zoology collaborates with over 380 academic institutions and conservation organisations worldwide to translate our research into impact

Partnerships

We increase our impact by sharing our scientific discoveries worldwide, through academic partners such as University College London and the Royal Veterinary College; collaborations like the UK Biodiversity Alliance (with Natural History Museum and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew); relationships with the UK Government and the governments of the countries in which we work; and at intergovernmental forums led by the United Nations and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Recovery of small populations and extinct in the wild species

In the face of unprecedented biodiversity and habitat loss, effective strategies for saving small populations from extinction, and restoring species already lost from the wild, are urgently required. In 2026 we led the creation of the IUCN SSC Extinct in the Wild Action Partnership, which we now chair, and we are supporting the restoration of several EW species. We have also been integral to the recovery of several island species on the brink of extinction, such as the sihek and Partula snails.

Coexistence between wildlife and people

Relationships between wildlife and people have become, in many cases, unsustainable; scientific research is essential for developing strategies for coexistence. Our research on cheetahs and African wild dogs continues to reveal how humans are impacting the behaviour and movement of those species, and we lead a continent-wide programme of partners from several African countries working to safeguard the long-term future of these two species.

Mitigating the impacts of climate change on wildlife

Climate change is a significant threat to biodiversity, and our researchers are working to assess the vulnerability of certain species and ecosystems. Our science has drawn attention to the dire threat faced by the African wild dog, and developed mitigation strategies for northeast Atlantic seabirds – which will face keen challenges as prey behaviour changes and ocean storms intensify.

Global biodiversity monitoring and forecasting

To restore wildlife, we first need to understand where it most needs our help. We collect, manage and analyse data to support our conservation work and inform the actions of national and international decision-makers.

Major projects with long-term datasets include:

- Living Planet Index (LPI)
- UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP)
- Serengeti cheetah project
- Indian Ocean marine conservation programme
- Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis and Health Surveillance (DRAHS)
- Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered (EDGE)
- Samburu-Laikipia Wild Dog Project, Kenya

THE ROLE OF ZSL'S CONSERVATION ZOOS

Our two conservation Zoos, London and Whipsnade, are an integral part of our global mission



Restoring lost and declining species

A major focus of our work is the return of Extinct in the Wild (EW) species to the wild, and a number of EW species in our care are part of ongoing restoration programmes – including the Socorro dove, three species of Mexican pupfish and several species of Partula tree snails. This year, we coordinated the release of over 7,000 Partula snails in French Polynesia, and uncovered promising signs that a second species may have reestablished. **(Read more on page 15.)**

A safeguard for species on the brink

We currently care for 560 species and subspecies threatened with extinction at London and Whipsnade Zoos, including 17 Extinct in the Wild species – the most of any zoo in the world. Our Zoos are part of 164 national and international breeding programmes designed to maintain healthy populations in Zoos and guard against extinction. **(Read more about our work with Extinct in the Wild species on page 16.)**

Sharing our expertise in wildlife care

Our zookeepers, curators and veterinary team regularly lead workshops in animal care or publish studies on the species in our care, to improve their welfare and protection around the world. Little is known about some of our rarest species, so our research into areas like diet and breeding behaviours can significantly improve wild conservation. **(Read more about how we're improving wildlife health on page 19.)**

Bringing people closer to wildlife

A core aim of our Zoos is to inspire visitors to care for the natural world. Our engagement team deliver more than 3,500 talks per year to visitors, and our conservation education teams welcomed almost 150,000 students to the Zoos and delivered conservation-related sessions to around 77,000 students, with our Education Access Scheme growing to support 128 local schools. As well as helping school students, we also deliver training to teachers, designed to build their confidence in nature-based teaching. **(Read more on page 43.)**

Whipsnade's white rhino herd grows

On New Year's Eve, we celebrated a new addition to our southern white rhino herd. The male calf, named Mick in honour of a former long-serving staff member of Whipsnade Zoo, will play a vital role in the European breeding programme, which maintains a healthy and genetically diverse back-up population in conservation zoos like Whipsnade. Just 17,500 southern white rhinos remain in the wild, where they are threatened by habitat loss and illegal hunting to supply the international rhino horn trade. Excitingly, Mick is the 60th white rhino born at the Zoo since 1971, when Whipsnade Zoo was chosen by the South African Government to start the first European breeding programme for the species **(read more about Whipsnade's history of breeding rhinos on page 24)**.

194

threatened species and subspecies are safeguarded in our Zoos
(52 mammals, 42 birds, 33 fish, 38 invertebrates, 17 reptiles and 12 amphibians)

17 Extinct in the Wild

80 Endangered

42 Critically Endangered

55 Vulnerable

47%

of our Zoo animals are of conservation importance (including those not yet assessed or with out-of-date assessments by the IUCN Red List)

Species extinction risk is determined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). For further info on species extinction risk, visit **iucnredlist.org**

IUCN RED LIST

200 YEARS OF WILDLIFE

From pioneering science to unforgettable animals, conservation breakthroughs and cultural milestones, ZSL has spent two centuries shaping the way we understand, care for, and protect wildlife

From the first scientific Zoo to the rise of wildlife television and today's conservation work, our story runs alongside some of the greatest cultural, scientific and technological changes of modern history. This timeline traces our journey across four eras – placing our milestones alongside the inventions, ideas and moments that transformed how people experienced the natural world and their connection to wildlife.

Read more about how we've celebrated this special year on page 57.



1826
ZSL IS FOUNDED
ZSL founded by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. It's the first Learned Society to admit females – the first female Fellow is Sophia Raffles. ZSL was granted a Royal Charter in 1829.



1849
REPTILE HOUSE
World's first Reptile House opens at London Zoo. We opened the first public aquarium four years later.

1830
SCIENTIFIC PAPERS
ZSL's first scientific output appears at the inaugural Committee of Science meeting. Secretary Nicholas Aylward Vigors presents a paper on quails, following Richard Owen's presentation on the anatomy of an orangutan.



1890
CONSERVATION BEGINS
The first recorded mention of conservation in ZSL's history – the ZSL Silver medal is awarded to the Edmondston family for protecting the great skua over 60 years.



1901
OKAPI REVEAL
The shy okapi is first introduced to the western world by ZSL Fellow Sir Harry Johnston, who explores the dense forests of the Congo with the help of local people.



1961
GLOBAL RESEARCH LEADER
ZSL's Institute of Zoology is established and grows into a world-renowned research centre working at the cutting edge of conservation science.





1916
TRAILBLAZING CURATOR
Evelyn Cheesman is appointed Assistant Curator of Insects, the first woman in a curatorial post at ZSL. Dr Joan Procter, ZSL's first female Curator of Reptiles, was appointed in 1923.

1954
DAVID ATTENBOROUGH
The first series of *Zoo Quest* airs on the BBC, Attenborough's first presenting role. He accompanies London Zoo keepers on worldwide animal collecting expeditions. The show allows British TV-viewers to encounter many exotic animals for the first time.



1931
WHIPSNADE ZOO OPENS
The world's first open zoo. The larger animals have to be walked up to the Zoo from Dunstable railway station.

1962
PIONEERING PARTNERSHIP
Caroline, an Arabian oryx from Whipsnade Zoo, is loaned to the world herd in Phoenix, Arizona, marking the first international co-operative breeding programme. The herd is crucial to the successful reintroduction of oryx to their native lands across the Arabian peninsula.



1998
WORLD REPORT
The first *Living Planet Report* is released – now a collaboration between ZSL and WWF.

2024
ORYX RETURN
Scimitar-horned oryx downgraded from Extinct in the Wild – after oryx bred at Whipsnade are released into the wild in 2014. In the same year, we also rescued 53 Darwin's frogs facing extinction.

2007
PROTECTING UNIQUE LIFE
ZSL launches the EDGE of Existence programme, prioritising the world's most Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered species for conservation.

2026
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!
ZSL celebrates 200 years of science, conservation and culture that connects us all.



PROTECTING SPECIES

From research to fieldwork, and in our Zoos, we identify and conserve the species at risk of extinction – and get them on the road to recovery

This impact area contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:



Pictured: ZSL coordinates the IUCN's African Wild Dog Working Group, and is working to protect West Africa's last wild dog population.

PROTECTING SPECIES

STRATEGIC GOAL FOR 2030

To support and protect at least 200 threatened species and move 60 of those at greatest risk of extinction towards global recovery

Progress towards our target

Progress falls within a range

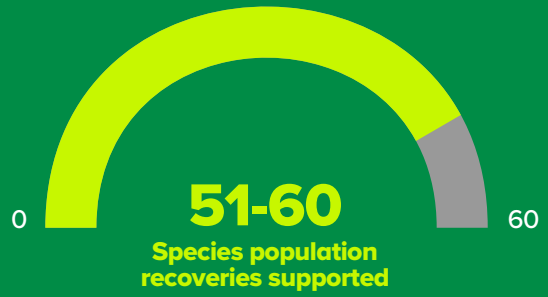
MILESTONE 1: BY 2026

Support the conservation of more than **200 species** through managed breeding programmes, scientific research and the advancement of animal care



MILESTONE 2: BY 2026

Support the recovery of **60 globally threatened or Extinct in the Wild species** through science-driven conservation activities



MILESTONE 3: BY 2026

Work towards restoring populations of **10 nationally threatened UK species**, supported by advanced breeding techniques and pre- and post-release expertise



MILESTONE 4: BY 2030

Achieve measurable improvements in the global conservation status of at least **10 of our 60 target species**



OVERVIEW



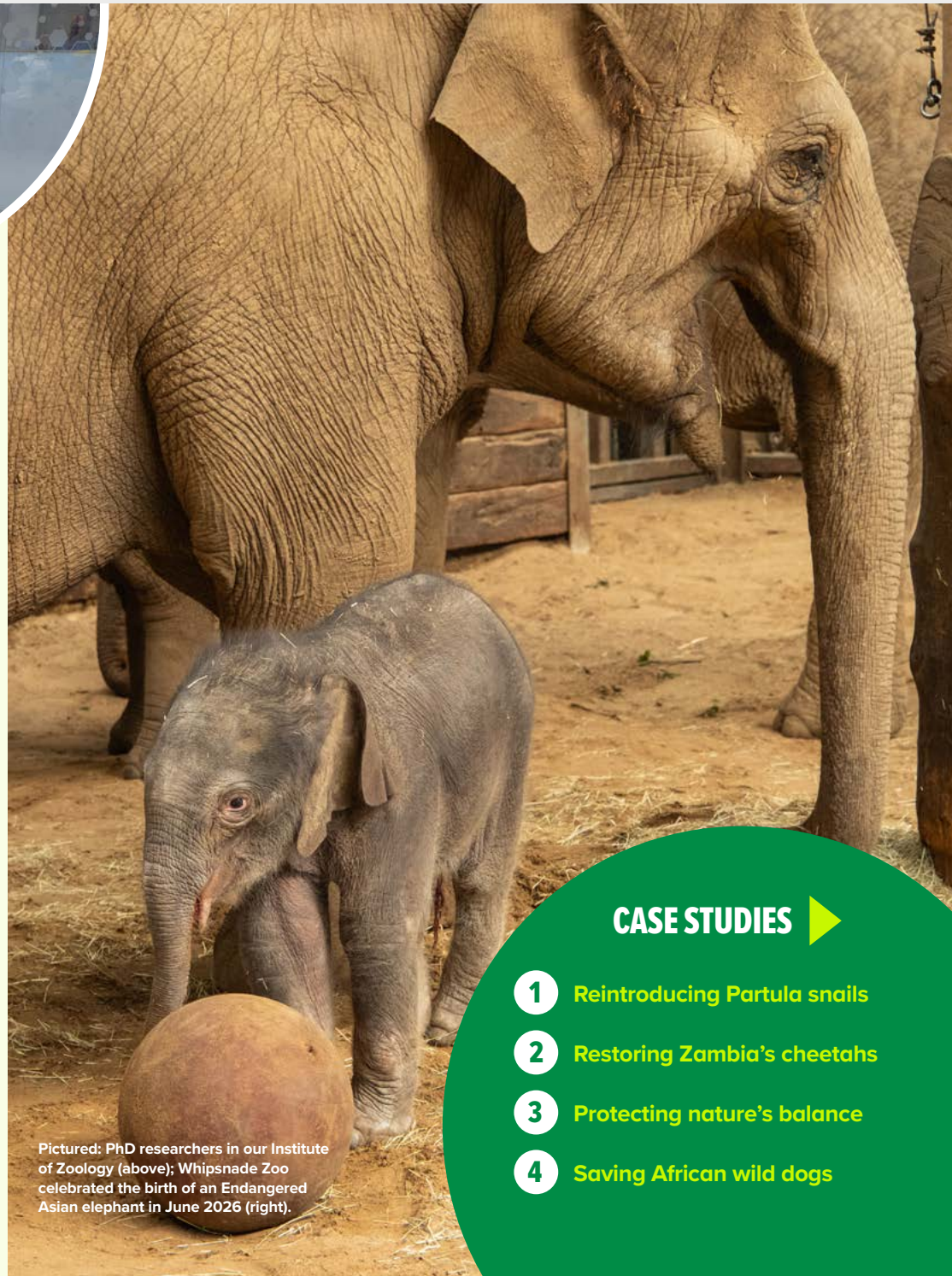
At ZSL, we're working to protect over 200 threatened species that we've identified as those we can best help. From umbrella species, like tigers and elephants – whose conservation benefits the countless other animals who share the habitats they rely on – to lesser-known animals like Partula snails that are equally valuable to the ecosystems they play a role in.

Conserving species is a long-term process that requires tailor-made solutions and the support of governments and local communities; we are experts at working with national and local stakeholders to understand the challenges to a species' recovery and helping to overcome those barriers. Being able to call on the animal care expertise of our zookeepers and veterinarians, scientists in our Institute of Zoology, on-the-ground field conservationists, and experts in innovative finance, we're best placed to meet a wide variety of challenges, and this combined expertise sets us apart as a conservation organisation.

Our field teams are working in biodiversity hotspots around the world, such as central Africa and Southeast Asia, to reintroduce species, improve on-the-ground protection, boost policy protection for wildlife, restore habitats and improve coexistence between wildlife and local people.

At our Institute of Zoology, our researchers are developing the science that underpins our work in the field. Much of their research focusses on understanding the key challenges facing wildlife – such as the impacts of habitat loss, diseases, pollutants and climate change – and developing solutions to these problems. And through our work on global tools like the Living Planet Index, we can monitor how biodiversity is responding to new and existing threats, helping to prioritise efforts to combat species losses.

In our two conservation Zoos, we safeguard healthy and thriving populations of threatened species – protecting them from extinction should their wild counterparts disappear, and providing source populations for releases back into the wild. Our Zoos are also centres of learning for animal care; our zookeeping and veterinary teams develop expertise in animal care, which they share with others around the world – advancing skills and knowledge in the global conservation community about how to care for rare and complex species.



Pictured: PhD researchers in our Institute of Zoology (above); Whipsnade Zoo celebrated the birth of an Endangered Asian elephant in June 2026 (right).

CASE STUDIES

1 Reintroducing Partula snails
2 Restoring Zambia's cheetahs
3 Protecting nature's balance
4 Saving African wild dogs

1

SAVING SNAILS FROM THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION

Decades-long zoo breeding programme restoring Polynesian eco-engineers

Overview

Considered the 'Darwin's finches of the invertebrate world', Partula snails are a group of tiny tree snails endemic to French Polynesia that earned their nickname for their role in evolutionary research. They play an important ecological role on the Pacific islands, recycling nutrients from decaying plant matter, and they are significant in Polynesian cultural heritage.

In the 1980s, Partulas started to disappear – falling victim to a species of invasive, predatory snail: the rosy wolfsnail. The wolfsnail was brought to the islands to control another invasive snail, the giant African snail – an introduced food source that quickly became a pest. Sadly, the wolfsnail preferred to hunt the smaller, slower, native Partulas.

In 1991, London Zookeeper Dave Clarke led a team to Polynesia that saved the last nine individuals of one species of Partula, bringing them into human care. An estimated 30-40 species of Partula disappeared entirely – many of the remaining species are Extinct in the Wild, relying on zoos to survive. For more than 30 years, London Zoo has coordinated the conservation breeding programme of multiple species and subspecies of Partula, working with other zoos around the world to grow populations of these important snails.

In 2015, we began the first reintroduction of Partula snails to Polynesia, and since then over 30,000 Partula snails from 14 species and subspecies – many bred at London and Whipsnade Zoos – have made the journey to French Polynesia. In 2024, we found evidence that one species – *Partula tohiveana* – had successfully reestablished on the island of Moorea, and it was formally downlisted by the IUCN, from Extinct in the Wild to Critically Endangered. This is a groundbreaking moment: the first time an Extinct in the Wild invertebrate species has been downlisted.

30,000+
Partula snails across **14 species and subspecies** have been released since reintroductions began in 2015

7,162
Partula snails were reintroduced to French Polynesia this year

17
Extinct in the Wild species cared for at London and Whipsnade Zoos



Pictured: One of over 30,000 Partula snails we've helped return to French Polynesia.



2025-26:
Historic release and second species gains foothold

In September, 7,162 Partula snails (comprising 11 species and sub-species) were flown to French Polynesia and released onto their native islands of Tahiti, Moorea, Huahine and Raiatea. It's the single largest reintroduction in our history, a major effort involving London and Whipsnade Zoos and 12 other partner zoos.

Before release, each snail's shell was marked with a small dab of white UV reflective paint, which glows blue under UV light. The paint helps the team find released snails and monitor the recovery of the species – different coloured UV paint is used for each release, so we can track the process of our reintroduced snails. Excitingly, extensive post-release monitoring confirmed very few losses to predators at most release sites.

During the releases, the team discovered an unmarked, juvenile *Partula varia* – making it the first confirmed wild-born member of this reintroduced snail species in over 30 years. Proof that this Partula species is successfully breeding in the wild is the first step towards downlisting the species and, in the wake of *P. tohiveana* being downlisted last year, is an indication that ZSL's long-term commitment to Partula restoration is paying off. The team also found the first evidence of wild-born *P. tohiveana* living outside of their original release area on their native island of Moorea, indicating that the species is expanding its range.

Construction was completed of a small, predator-proof reserve at the Fare Natura Ecomuseum on Moorea. The reserve was formally opened with the local community and is designed to provide a semi-natural habitat for the particularly vulnerable ground-dwelling species *Partula navigatoria*. The reserve will be closely monitored; if successful, in-situ predator exclusion reserves could play an important role in other invertebrate reintroductions.



Watch our short film *Guardians of the Small* using the QR code below



Pictured: Senior Curator Paul Pearce-Kelly (left) and the wider Partula release team (above); ZSL is ramping up plans to reestablish wild Vietnam pheasants (right).

ZSL's Extinct in the Wild programme

ZSL is at the forefront of restoring Extinct in the Wild (EW) species. We lead the recovery of 21 EW species, 17 of which are under our direct care in our conservation Zoos, and we are driving the wild recovery of EW species through our leadership of the recently formed IUCN EW Action Partnership. Alongside our success with Partula snails, we have played a vital role in the reintroduction of scimitar-horned oryx to Chad (downlisted in 2023), and the ongoing releases of siheks to Palmyra Atoll.

In the coming year, we will be ramping up plans to reestablish a wild population of Vietnam pheasants, last seen in the wild in 2000. We have secured funding and will be working with other European zoos and in-country partners to identify release sites, transport pheasants from European zoos to a breeding facility in Vietnam and build up a population of birds for release. Pheasants at London and Whipsnade Zoo have even been fitted with small radio transmitters to trial a new monitoring technique, designed to help us monitor pheasants once they're released into the dense Vietnamese jungle.



2

RETURNING CHEETAH TO EAST-ZAMBIAN WILDERNESS

Landmark reintroduction to Luangwa Valley, decades after disappearance

Overview

Fewer than 7,000 cheetahs survive today, distributed over three million km^2 covering 21 countries in Africa and Asia. Sarah Durant, Professor at ZSL's Institute of Zoology, leads the Africa Range-Wide Cheetah Conservation Initiative (CCI), a programme funded by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation that works with stakeholders across African range states to improve protection for cheetahs by strengthening local protection, improving connectivity across landscapes and fostering coexistence between local communities and wildlife.

In 2018, ZSL's scientists, together with the Zambian Government and national experts, identified the Luangwa Valley as Africa's most promising region for the recovery of cheetahs. The 70,000km^2 wilderness in east Zambia was once home to cheetahs until their disappearance in the 1990s, and could ultimately support between 300 and 700 cheetahs. While many of Africa's remaining cheetah populations are very small and may not be viable in the long term, their return to Luangwa would set a positive precedent for projects of this scale and the future of the species.

A near-decade-long planning process alongside the Zambian Government, our partner NGOs and regional experts, including habitat suitability modelling and a comprehensive disease-risk analysis, has brought us to this landmark moment: the reintroduction of a dozen cheetahs to the protected area in summer 2026.

6
cheetahs were reintroduced to a soft-release facility at North Luangwa National Park in June 2026, to begin their acclimatisation

377
PATROLS
were undertaken by rangers through the Luangwa region to remove illegal snares, weapons and ammunition from the protected areas



Pictured: The reintroduction of cheetahs to Luangwa Valley is a landmark moment for the species.

2025-26:
Preparing the region for the cheetah's return

Preparing the ground for the return of cheetahs requires a three-pronged approach: boosting security, infrastructure and conservation capacity in the region; ensuring that communities living in the area can successfully coexist with cheetahs; and establishing a release site for the cheetahs themselves.

Though the North and South Luangwa National Parks were established in 1972, both protected areas have limited security. Teams of rangers, cheetah monitoring specialists and community engagement officers from the local community and wider Zambia have been in training ahead of the reintroduction, and hundreds of patrols have been undertaken to remove snares, weapons and ammunition from the protected areas.

After their translocation from South Africa, the founding cheetahs spent their first weeks in temporary enclosures, before being released into a larger, 2,000-hectare sanctuary for six months. This period in the sanctuary, free from the pressures of other large predators, will afford the cheetahs the opportunity to breed and encourage them to stay in the national park. Moreover, the building of these facilities, alongside the construction and maintenance of roads, airstrips, vehicles, firebreaks, fencelines and a basecamp, has created a wealth of additional jobs for local Zambians.

Support and development of local communities are core components of any reintroduction project, and funding is being used to provide training, employment and livelihood development opportunities to local people. We have been working particularly closely with the Nabwalya Chiefdom, which sits in a key location between the two national parks. As custodians of the landscape, it's crucial they reap the benefits of the reintroduction programme and support connectivity across the Valley. Specific work has been undertaken, led by partner organisation Frankfurt Zoological Society, to improve food security and protect crops and livestock from wildlife. It is hoped that this will benefit the community's wellbeing and attitudes towards conservation while reducing the reliance on bushmeat hunting and the use of snares, which can accidentally injure cheetahs.

8
CHEETAH GUARDIANS,
including three women from Nabwalya, were trained to lead monitoring of the reintroduced cheetahs

27
farmers undertook training in conservation-friendly agriculture, designed to boost crop yields

160
local community members were employed by the programme, improving the economic wellbeing of their households



The Luangwa Valley reintroduction is a multi-partner project with the Zambian Government, Frankfurt Zoological Society, Conservation South Luangwa, the Zambian Carnivore Programme and the Endangered Wildlife Trust.

"This project will have a huge legacy and profound benefits for both wildlife and local people, safeguarding the Luangwa Valley for years to come."

Rosemary Groom,
ZSL's Southern Africa Cheetah Coordinator



Pictured: Once the cheetahs begin breeding, it's hoped they can establish a self-sustaining population; Rosemary Groom, ZSL.

3

PROTECTING NATURE'S BALANCE

Meeting the wildlife health crisis

Overview

The biodiversity crisis and the coronavirus pandemic are two expressions of the same underlying problem: humanity's disrupted relationship with the natural world. Our Living Planet Index shows that monitored wildlife populations have declined by an average of 73% since 1970; at the same time, the frequency of zoonotic disease outbreaks – infections that jump from animals to humans – has risen sharply, with three-quarters of all emerging infectious diseases originating in wildlife.

Yet wildlife health – the science of monitoring, diagnosing and mitigating disease in wild populations – remains the neglected pillar of global health security. Human health, and the health of our domestic livestock, is monitored intensively while national funding for wildlife health is extremely limited or non-existent in most countries, infrastructure is fragmented, diagnostic capacity is concentrated in wealthy nations and the workforce is under-resourced. Strengthening it requires coordinated action: investment, expansion of surveillance networks, development of the specialist workforce and visible public engagement with the science.

ZSL has been at the leading edge of wildlife health research for 200 years. We were the first British zoo to appoint a dedicated vet, and our veterinary team has cared for thousands of animals across hundreds of species. Our scientists have discovered novel pathogens, tracked disease outbreaks across continents, trained hundreds of conservationists from dozens of countries and built surveillance networks that feed into national and international biosecurity systems. This year, we unveiled plans for a major new investment in this area, a wildlife health centre, that will expand our animal care, research and global conservation work.

8,100
SAMPLES
collected by the clinical and pathology teams (blood, genetic material, faeces, parasites, urine, etc) for analysis, archiving or research to inform the care of animals in our Zoos and beyond

30
veterinary students taught by ZSL this year



Pictured: Veterinarians at Whipsnade Zoo conduct a heart exam on a chimpanzee.

2025-26:

Launching plans for a new wildlife health centre

On 29 April 2026, ZSL's 200th anniversary, we unveiled ambitious plans for a new wildlife health centre, made possible by the most significant donation in our history, and published a new report calling on governments around the world to address the wildlife health funding gap. The centre, to be built at our Regent's Park headquarters, will integrate world-class care for our Zoos' animals, a teaching hospital for trainee vets and scientists, and wildlife disease research – from monitoring emerging diseases in the wild to strengthening early warning systems that could prevent the next pandemic. The new facility will enable us to massively grow our existing training opportunities for vets and conservationists, helping us to increase our impact around the world.

Importantly, it will bring veterinary science to the public; the centre will have the UK's first public viewing gallery in a vet hospital, where visitors and school students will be able to watch live procedures and learn about animal care.

"Our wildlife health centre won't just have an impact on animal care here in the UK, it will change the way animals are cared for across the world."

Dr Amanda Guthrie,
ZSL's Head of Wildlife Health Services





Investigating butterfly reintroduction health risks

We work closely with Natural England to investigate and monitor the health risks of wildlife reintroductions across Britain. We are currently involved in the restoration of 16 UK species, including dormice and beavers. This year we worked with Knepp Wildlife Foundation to investigate the risks of reintroducing black-veined white butterflies – a species extinct in the UK since the early 1900s.

Our vets examined over 100 potential hazards, including the risk of viruses, bacteria and parasites. We found that the risk of introducing a novel pathogen with the butterflies is very low, but highlighted the challenges the introduced butterflies will face from parasitoid wasps and flies, and steps Knepp could take to manage those interactions. The project has been approved, paving the way for the reintroduction of these once-lost butterflies.



Taking students Inside Nature

This year, thanks to funding from generous supporter Lucy Panter, we launched Inside Nature, a new and freely available online learning resource designed to bring real-world wildlife health science to GCSE, A-Level and equivalent level college students undertaking biology and related subjects. Featuring dissection workshops filmed in our veterinary hospital and explained by our pathologist Dr Simon Spiro, the learning resource allows students to watch and understand the inner workings of some of our incredible species – bringing to life classroom teaching like never before. Videos include the dissections of an African wild dog heart and circulatory system, a white stork respiratory system and a scimitar-horned oryx digestive system, and each video is accompanied by animations, microscopic imagery and downloadable worksheets containing exam-style questions linked to the curriculum. Since its launch in November 2025, six videos and learning packs have been made available, with more in the pipeline. Teachers have downloaded the resource 510 times, supporting the education of an estimated 15,300 students this year.



Pictured: Veterinarians assess an x-ray (left); Dr Simon Spiro being filmed for Inside Nature (right).

4

SAVING THE WEST AFRICAN WILD DOG

Protecting the region's last wild dogs in Senegal

Overview

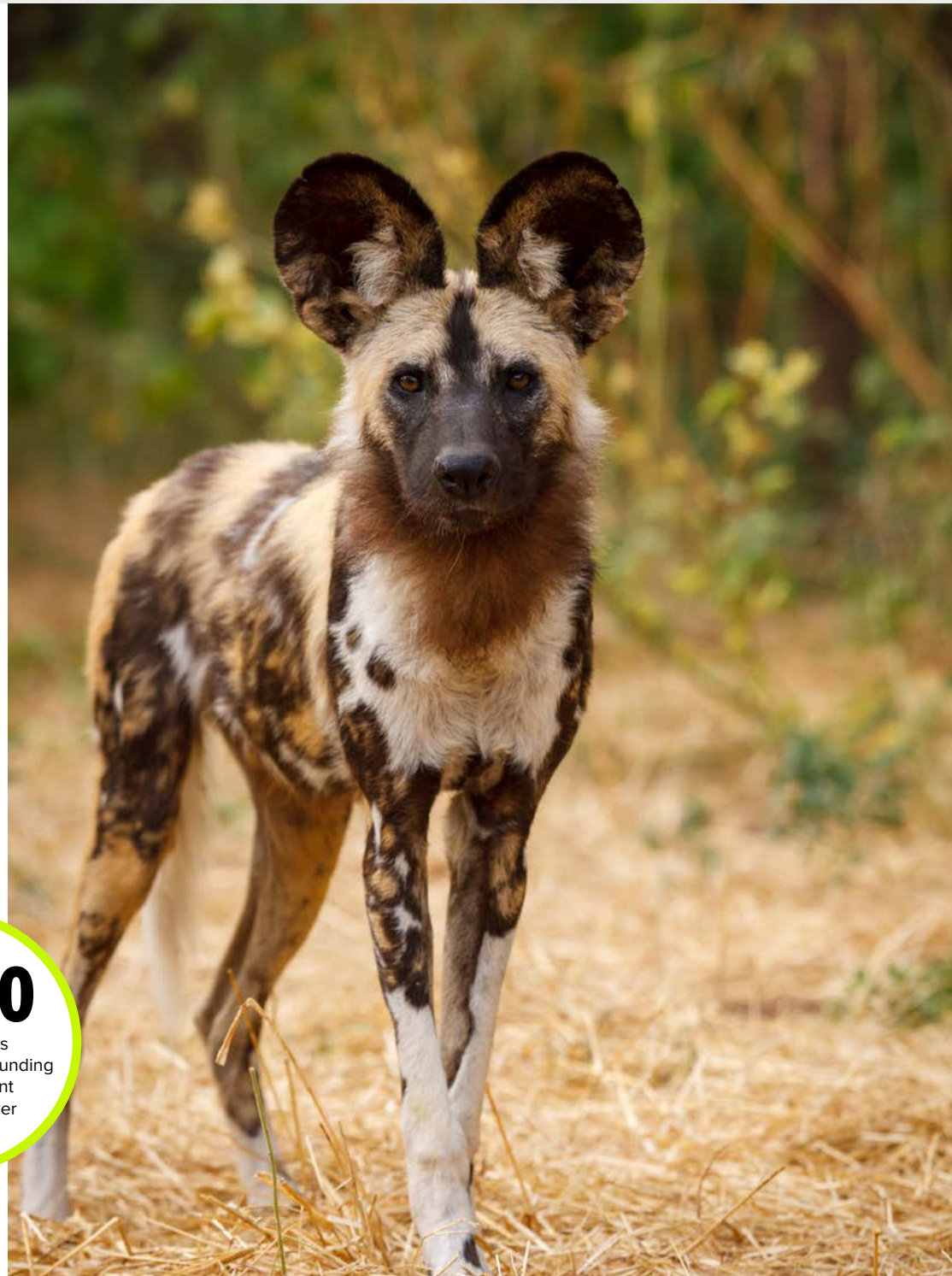
The African wild dog is an Endangered species, with its last strongholds in southern and eastern Africa. Thousands of kilometres away, West Africa's last few wild dogs teeter on the brink of extinction in Senegal's Niokolo-Koba National Park. Just two or three packs remain in the protected area – an estimated 30 individuals – and sightings have been declining since 2021. Loss of prey due to poaching, accidental capture in poachers' snares and infectious disease transmitted by unvaccinated domestic dogs are the main barriers to recovery.

Without urgent, coordinated intervention, West Africa is on track to lose its wild dogs entirely – and with them, an apex predator that can shape entire ecosystems. ZSL's wild dog programme in Senegal was launched in 2022 after UNESCO called for emergency action to save this last population. The multi-partner conservation programme has launched a national action plan for wild dog conservation, with the support of Senegal's Ministry of Environment. Our approach combines work inside the park – such as snare-removal patrols and park-wide camera-trap surveys – alongside working with the local communities to improve coexistence with wildlife and vaccinating domestic dogs to control disease spillover into the park.

Through this approach, the programme aims to double the population to six packs of wild dogs by the end of 2026, and benefit other species in the park such as lions, chimpanzees and giant eland.

10,000
local people engaged in community training and outreach

2,500
domestic dogs vaccinated in surrounding area, to prevent disease spillover



Pictured: There are an estimated 6,600 adult and juvenile African wild dogs across the continent.

2025-26:

Tackling disease spillover and poaching alongside local communities

This year, we launched the region's first domestic dog vaccination campaign, vaccinating over 2,500 domestic dogs in the villages bordering Niokolo-Koba National Park. This will help to control the spread of rabies from domestic dogs to the park's remaining Africa wild dogs and, crucially, also protects local people. Infectious disease is a particularly high risk for sociable species like the wild dog; one infected dog can easily spread disease to the entire pack, leading to swift population collapse.



11,158 km²
covered by camera-trap surveys

Snare-removal brigades continued patrolling the park, and camera-trap surveys in collaboration with Senegal's Direction des Parcs Nationaux are investigating the population decline. Historically, wild dogs have been recorded outside the park, so the monitoring team deployed camera traps across the wider landscape – including into northern Guinea's Badiar National Park – to establish the first baseline for terrestrial mammals across the entire cross-border ecosystem.

Our work with local communities bordering the park is now fully under way. Guided by village leaders, we've identified 300 households to take part in our livelihoods programme, and we have begun training participants in poultry farming. The approach is designed to boost food security in the communities and reduce the need for bushmeat hunting. We also launched an education programme, reaching 700 children in 12 local schools; school children were able to visit the park for the first time and learn about the role wild dogs play in the park's ecosystem. Through these activities, we hope to help local communities connect with wild dog conservation and learn about the risks of domestic dog diseases to humans and wildlife.





Coordinating continent-wide African wild dog conservation

Projet Lycaon, our Senegal programme for African wild dogs, is just one part of ZSL's work with the species. ZSL staff coordinate the African Wild Dog Working Group, the part of the IUCN/SSC Canid Specialist Group which deals with this species, leading on Red List assessments, Green Status assessments and conservation planning. We also lead a field project in Kenya, and have worked with partners on field projects in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In a quarter-century of conservation-oriented research, we have developed a range of tools to help wild dogs coexist with people, including reducing disease transmission from domestic dogs, resolving human-wildlife conflicts and coping with climate change.



Image © Amber Rainsford

Pictured: Chief threats to African wild dogs include disease and conflict with humans; in Senegal, we launched a domestic dog vaccination campaign (left).

Success stories from ZSL's history

SUPPORTING NEPAL'S TIGER RECOVERY

Nepal's tiger population tripled in just over a decade, and the country stands as a symbol for big cat recovery. Bhagawan Raj Dahal, ZSL's Country Representative for Nepal, reflects on ZSL's role in the success and the future of Nepal's tigers.



Research published in 2025 ranked Nepal as the most nature-connected country on earth – a country where "the perceived overlap between self and nature... or a sense of oneness with nature" is at its greatest. It's perhaps no surprise, then, that when a national survey in 2009 of the country's tiger population found that there were just 121 tigers left, the government didn't hesitate to act.

The following year, Nepal was one of 13 tiger range countries that committed to doubling their wild tiger populations by 2022. In the event, Nepal would go one step further – almost tripling its tiger population to 355. Today, the country is home to 429 tigers.

Parsa: A model for tiger recovery

ZSL first began working in Nepal in 1992, supporting the Nepal Government and the National Trust for Nature Conservation. ZSL's vets and conservationists provided training to Nepalese vets working in protected areas, and technical support for wildlife monitoring. Then, in 2014, ZSL took on a partnership role in Parsa National Park, supporting Nepal's Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation.

Parsa's location made it the perfect site to grow the tiger population. Bordering Chitwan National Park, the home of three-quarters of the country's tiger population, Parsa would act as the ideal dispersal site for tigers leaving Chitwan in search of new territory, as well as tigers moving north from India.



"The number-one threat facing tigers in the 2000s was the international trade in their body parts," explains Bhagawan Raj Dahal, ZSL's Country Representative for Nepal. "Our first step was to work with law enforcement to increase patrols, train rangers in tiger monitoring and data analysis, and support the construction of new guard posts designed to deter poaching and the illegal extraction of natural resources in the protected area.

"Tigers are an umbrella species. They require highly intact habitats – by conserving them, we ensure habitats for a huge number of other species in the same ecosystem."

Bhagawan Raj Dahal,
ZSL's Country Representative
for Nepal



"Secondly, deforestation, infrastructure projects and cattle grazing had degraded the available habitat for tigers and their prey species, such as deer and wild pigs – so we worked with our partners to restore the grasslands, remove invasive plants and construct watering holes."

"Finally, we sought to mobilise the local community in tiger conservation," explains Bhagawan. "Their collaboration would be crucial to the long-term success of tigers. And between 30-50% of the revenue collected in Nepal's lowland national parks goes back into local communities – so we knew that, if we could improve the national park as an ecosystem and bring more tourism, local people would feel the benefits too."

ZSL established close ties with local communities living on the edge of Parsa, helping them to set up community groups, and setting up quick-relief funds for wildlife victims and community banks to support local development. We also provided training in alternative livelihoods such as agroforestry and ecotourism. These reduced pressure on the core protected area and helped families to generate greater income.

Tiger conservation efforts in Parsa have had profound results. In 2013, the year before ZSL became involved, Parsa's tiger population was just seven; today, it stands at 71 – a ten-fold increase.

Adapting to new challenges

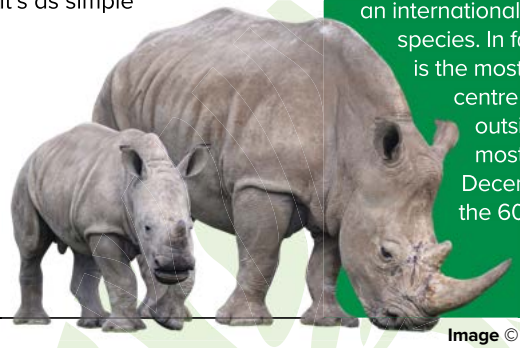
Today, ZSL works across six of Nepal's lowland protected areas – Parsa, Chitwan, Banke, Bardia, Koshi Tappu and Shuklaphanta.

The turnaround in Nepal's tiger population has been widely celebrated, and is thanks in part to ZSL's work to bolster protection, restore habitats and champion local people. However, growing tiger numbers presents a new challenge for conservationists: adapting to the increased likelihood of human-tiger interactions. Consequently, ZSL's work has shifted to focus on helping people to live alongside tigers.

Our approach includes improving these communities' access to financial and government services, providing training in alternative livelihoods that can both improve economic resilience and reduce reliance on natural resources inside protected areas, and providing physical infrastructure to protect livestock and community lands. Together, these work to lower the risk of humans coming into conflict with tigers and other wildlife (read more on page 33).

Despite the challenges, Bhagawan is confident about the future of his country's tigers. That Nepal has managed to grow its tiger population while tackling poverty and reeling from the 2015 earthquake is proof of the country's commitment to wildlife, he says. "Nature will always be a priority for us, it's a way of life, and the recovery of our tigers is an important symbol of that connection," says Bhagawan. "We can't live without nature – it's as simple as that."





Pictured: ZSL has worked to improve Nepal's grassland habitats (left); and Whipsnade Zoo has a long history of successfully breeding white rhinos (right).

Image © Amber Rainsford

Success stories from ZSL's history

Whipsnade provides safe haven for African icon

In 1970, southern white rhinos were in crisis. Rhino poaching was rampant, fuelled by the trade in rhino horn, and fewer than 500 rhinos survived in two parks in South Africa. With the species on the verge of extinction, the South African government decided that a breeding population needed to be set up in Europe.

They picked Whipsnade both for its huge size and the Zoo's successes in breeding other rare species, like European bison and Père David's deer. Later that year, a herd of 20 rhinos – seven males and 13 females – were relocated from South Africa, accompanied by the Zoo's then Head Zookeeper Harry Stevens.

It wasn't long before the move proved a success; on 23 June 1971, Whipsnade welcomed a baby rhino, becoming the first European zoo to do so.

More baby rhinos quickly followed and Whipsnade's herd has since helped to establish herds at other zoos, creating an international safety net for the species. In fact, Whipsnade Zoo is the most successful breeding centre for white rhinos outside of Africa. Mick, the most recent calf, born on 31 December last year, become the 60th southern white rhino born at Whipsnade since 1971.

LOOKING AHEAD

Protecting Species in 2026-27



Ramping up UK and overseas species recoveries

At ZSL, we're focussed on the reintroduction and recovery of species that are on the edge of extinction or have already been lost in the wild. This work brings together the animals in our Zoos, the expertise of our zookeepers and veterinarians, research conducted in our Institute of Zoology and our on-the-ground teams of conservation scientists. In the coming year, we'll be ramping up our efforts, in the UK and overseas.

Reintroducing four Extinct in the Wild species

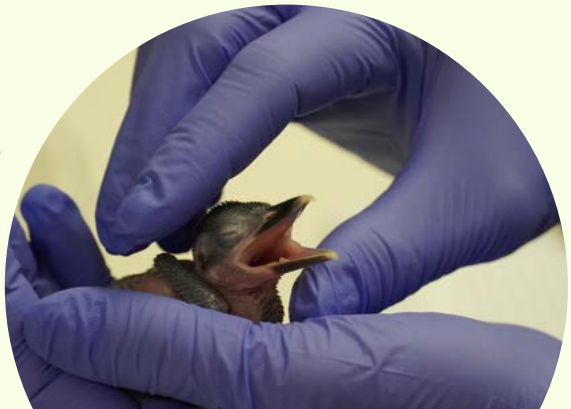
We are currently working on plans to reintroduce four Extinct in the Wild (EW) species: the Vietnam pheasant and three species of Mexican pupfish. In Vietnam, we're supporting the creation of a new breeding facility for the pheasants, and several birds from European zoos were flown to Vietnam to start building up a population ready for an expected release in 2030. Similarly, we are working towards transporting three species of Mexican pupfish to aquariums in Mexico, so that breeding populations can be established with the help of our aquarists. At the same time, we are working closely with communities to restore springs, so that they are ready to receive pupfish within the next few years. We continue to monitor the populations of released sihek, a species of kingfisher that disappeared from Guam but we helped introduce to Palmyra Atoll in 2024. The nine birds are thriving and we expect to release more zoo-bred siheks in the coming year, to further boost the population.

ZSL's centre for British species

Plans are under way at Whipsnade Zoo for the development of a national centre for British species recovery, putting us at the heart of conservation efforts for native wildlife. The new conservation breeding centre will initially care for six priority species (the hazel dormouse, water vole, pool frog, glutinous snail, European adder and red-backed shrike), supporting recovery efforts for these animals across the UK. The centre will also act as a space for convening experts and training conservationists in wildlife health analysis, release strategy and long-term monitoring, and help us to engage major national landowning partners in species recovery and broader habitat restoration work.

Ramping up UK species recovery

Alongside the building of a new British species centre, we will be accelerating plans to expand our team of researchers and vets who work with Natural England to reintroduce native species. We already support several UK reintroduction programmes, including dormice and beavers, by providing the disease and health risk analysis that ensures reintroductions are safe for any animals being released and for the ecosystems they are introduced to. By combining this team of vets with our reintroduction specialists from the Institute of Zoology, ZSL will be best placed to provide the full suite of reintroduction science.



Boosting UK shark conservation

One UK species group we'll be focussing more on in the coming year is sharks – specifically, those found in the Thames Estuary – thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. UK sharks are under threat, but little is known about exactly how sharks and rays use the Thames, which is a nationally important coastal ecosystem. We've commenced a new project to better understand how these animals use our capital's waterway, focussing on four species – the tope, spurdog, thornback ray and wonderfully named starry smoothhound. We'll be tracking animals and using baited cameras to understand where these species are most frequently found in the Thames, so that our conservationists working on Thames habitat restoration (see page 29) can prioritise the habitats that are most important for their survival. As part of the project, we're partnering with the University of Essex, youth organisation Youngwilders and local schools to get young people and school students involved, and offering training to teachers to boost expertise in out-of-school learning, as part of our wider mission to get more children learning about nature.

Pictured: ZSL is supporting the restoration of several EW species, including Mexican pupfish (above) and siheks (left).

RESTORING HABITATS

By collaborating with communities around the world we protect and restore healthy ecosystems so people and wildlife can thrive together

This impact area contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:



Pictured: We are working in the Philippines to restore mangrove ecosystems, vital for humans and wildlife.

RESTORING HABITATS

STRATEGIC GOAL FOR 2030

To support communities in 10 priority regions to catalyse ecosystem recovery and help people live better with wildlife

Progress towards our target

Progress falls within a range

MILESTONE 1: BY 2026

Prioritise in-country conservation leadership, drive **equitable standards** across our global programmes and enable capacity sharing between at least **10 partner organisations**



Capacity-sharing partners

MILESTONE 2: BY 2026

Support **10,000 households** in priority conservation regions to improve wellbeing and create an enabling environment for wildlife conservation and ecosystem recovery*



Households supported
(target surpassed)

MILESTONE 4: BY 2030

Support efforts to restore and recover **10 priority ecosystem types** at risk of collapse



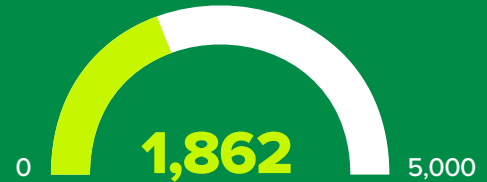
Ecosystem types supported

MILESTONE 3: BY 2030

Guide effective protection and restoration of key wildlife habitat across **10 priority conservation regions***



Regions where we are protecting and restoring habitats



Hectares of wildlife habitat restored*



KM² where habitat protection is supported*

*milestone wording updated in 2025-26

OVERVIEW

From replanting mangrove forests to rebuilding oyster beds, we are focussed on reviving the ecosystems that sustain life. Habitat loss is the single biggest driver of biodiversity loss, and growing habitats while improving connectivity between existing landscapes is one of the most effective ways we can conserve wildlife.

Our goal is ambitious: we aim to protect and restore more than 50,000 hectares of key wildlife habitats across 10 priority conservation regions, while recovering 10 threatened ecosystem types that are on the verge of collapse.

Environmental damage doesn't just impact wildlife – it directly affects people, particularly the least financially resilient, making communities more vulnerable to natural disasters, reducing food security and creating the conditions for disease spillover. Our approach is built on the belief that sustainable nature recovery can only be driven by engagement with local communities; communities are essential to habitat restoration and they must be empowered as stewards of their landscapes.

Communities play a key role in decision-making, integrating indigenous practices into restoration projects and aligning conservation goals with their needs and aspirations. We prioritise local leadership and ensure that conservation efforts are both fair and equitable for the people who live in these areas by employing our FAIRER framework. By sharing knowledge, providing education and skills training, and supporting community conservancies, we empower local communities to manage and restore their own ecosystems.

A key aspect of our approach is working with communities to improve coexistence with wildlife and understand the underlying issues of human-wildlife conflict. We aim to develop practical actions to reduce direct conflict, while also supporting capacity development and longer-term strategic planning. Ultimately, sustainable living is at the core of our mission – creating a future where both people and wildlife can thrive together.



Pictured: We're working in Nepal to help local communities adopt sustainable farming practices and reduce conflict with wildlife.

CASE STUDIES

1 Restoring the Thames
2 FAIRER conservation
3 Fostering coexistence in Nepal
4 Identifying ecosystem risk

1

RESTORING THE THAMES

Recovering essential habitats on London's waterways

Overview

The Greater Thames Estuary is one of Europe's most important wetlands. A 250,000-hectare mosaic of precious habitats such as seagrass meadows, saltmarshes and native oyster beds, it has historically supported a wide variety of marine life important to both marine biodiversity and the UK's fishing industry. However, these habitats have been degraded or lost – largely as a result of coastal development and poor water quality.

ZSL has been working to recover the Thames ecosystem for two decades – from on-the-ground habitat restorations to boost biodiversity, to big-picture research designed to drive policy change and address underlying causes of habitat decline. In 2011, ZSL led the first Thames Estuary oyster restoration project, involving the designation of a 284km^2 marine conservation zone and the reintroduction of thousands of oysters, while our long-term work on Thames connectivity has opened up areas of the Thames basin that were otherwise unreachable to the Critically Endangered European eel and other migratory fish.

In early 2025, ZSL launched a major new coalition for the revival of the Greater Thames Estuary with 20 other charities, government bodies and landowners – including RSPB, Essex and Kent Wildlife Trusts, the Environment Agency and Essex and Kent County Councils. We are focussing on restoring six vital habitats found across the estuary: native oyster beds, seagrass meadows, saltmarshes, coastal grazing marsh, saline lagoons, and sand and shingle bird-nesting habitat.

600
seagrass cores were planted this year, as part of our seagrass restoration work

A QUARTER MILE
of river was restored in the River Crane, providing habitat for reintroduced water voles



1,400+
cetaceans, seals, marine turtles and large-bodied sharks were recorded stranded on the English and Welsh coasts by CSIP during 2025

Pictured: We are working to recover vital seagrass meadows in the Thames.





ZSL worked with the Mayor of London, the Environment Agency, Thames Water and other NGOs to develop the Clean and Healthy Waterways plan, launched in May 2026.

2025-26: Assessing Thames health and scaling up restoration

This year, ZSL published its second *State of the Thames* report, using a series of 21 indicators – from water quality to wildlife populations – to determine the health of the tidal Thames. By collating data and benchmarking indicators, the report will galvanise collective efforts to recover the ecosystem. The report highlighted improvements in sewage works, such as the Lee Tunnel, and the completion of the Thames Tideway Tunnel, in helping to drive improving water quality. However, it warned of the long-term declines of fish and some bird populations, and the increasing risk that climate change poses to the river.

Our fieldwork this year has included two large projects at either end of the Thames: a restoration of the River Crane tributary, and seagrass restoration in the Medway Estuary. The River Crane became a water vole reintroduction site in 2024, and this year we restored several sections of river, including removal of a concrete river wall, re-meandering the river channel and the creation of a 110m^2 wetland. Post-restoration monitoring shows immediate improvement in riverine invertebrate communities and physical habitat quality.

Seagrasses are an important home and nursery habitat for invertebrates, crustaceans and several species of fish, as well as helping to protect coastlines, but many meadows in the Thames have been lost or become fragmented. At the Medway's Copperhouse Marshes we continued our pilot study to understand the most effective and efficient methods for renewing this crucial habitat. Having identified the area as a suitable site for recovery through comprehensive modelling, 600 seagrass cores were planted this year by our team. The core-planting had an over 80% success rate, growing 10 times in size over six months of monitoring, and our research indicates early May as the optimal time for seagrass planting.



Pictured: Our team worked to restore a portion of the River Crane (top left), a site for water vole reintroductions (left); we monitor fish and other aquatic life in the Thames (above); and through CSIP, we monitor the health of stranded marine animals (right).

Investigating marine pollutants

ZSL is tasked with investigating the strandings of threatened marine species around the English and Welsh coastline, through the Defra and Welsh Government funded collaborative Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP). One of the primary goals of CSIP is to understand the threat that bycatch, pollutants and other pressures pose to our marine life. Our most recent research has shown that sea temperature and chemical pollution are associated with infectious disease mortality in short-beaked common dolphins. CSIP also found an association between temporal increases in mercury in harbour porpoises and infectious disease mortality. This research highlights how chemicals continue to impact our seas, and the urgent need for government action.



2

IMPLEMENTING A FAIRER APPROACH TO CONSERVATION

Driving equitable standards across our global programmes

Overview

As conservationists working in remote locations, often alongside indigenous and local communities facing complex social challenges, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that our projects work to the benefit and protect the rights of those who share the landscape with the wildlife we seek to conserve.

In 2023, we developed the FAIRER Conservation Framework (Fair, Accountable, Inclusive, Respectful, Ethical and Reflective), a set of principles, tools and safeguards designed to uphold the rights and reflect the needs, knowledge and values of local communities and ensure their active participation in the design and governance of our conservation programmes. The framework helps us to champion local rights, knowledge and leadership in biodiversity hotspots like the Congo Basin and the Philippines.

A key aspect of FAIRER is ensuring all voices within a local community are heard. From busy mothers to the elderly or people living with disabilities, to people from indigenous communities, many individuals have historically been excluded from, and continue to face barriers to, engaging in conservation; our conservationists work to understand these barriers and put in place systems and safeguards designed to ensure all community members are given the opportunity to meaningfully participate in conservation decision-making.

By collaborating with local and indigenous communities in this way, we have the best chance of building long-term trust and commitment, and embedding lasting positive change for wildlife and people.



Pictured: Our conservationists work closely with community members in biodiverse landscapes, such as Cameroon.

50+

TRAINING WORKSHOPS DELIVERED

Since FAIRER was established, we've delivered 50+ workshops (reaching 200+ people across 13 countries) to staff and partners on rights-based approaches and social safeguards to build knowledge and capacity across our programmes.

2025-26:

Strengthening inclusive coastal protection in the Philippines

Many coastal communities in the Philippines depend on marine ecosystems – particularly mangroves, seagrasses and coral reefs – for their livelihoods, food and protection from storms, but often lack the information and empowerment to protect and manage these crucial natural resources. Our ZSL Philippines team places communities at the heart of conservation decision-making across critical marine corridors.

We are supporting the Philippine Government with the creation of the country's first large-scale offshore marine protected area, designed to safeguard the rich waters of the Philippine Rise, an underwater plateau east of Luzon. To ensure local representation, we've worked across 10 municipalities from three provinces in the region to engage fishing communities, holding public consultations and using FAIRER principles to understand and integrate the needs of the communities that rely on the Philippine Rise and its surrounding waters for their livelihoods. The new protected area will recognise the rights of local fishers while guarding against unauthorised intrusion from international, industrial fishing vessels.

On the island of Panay, we are currently working with the University of the Philippines to provide technology on mangrove-friendly aquaculture practices and support the restoration of coastal greenbelts that ZSL initiated in 2008. Large areas of mangroves and seagrass beds have been lost – often to make way for unsustainable aquaculture – decreasing the nursery habitats for commercially important fish and reducing natural storm defences. Alongside local communities, since the project began, we have helped plant 300,000 mangroves in areas identified by the communities for restoration, and we delivered training to more than 200 community members and mobilised 3,000 mangrove restoration volunteers from local communities – so they can lead the continued replanting of these vital ecosystems.



300,000 MANGROVES PLANTED

and **3,000 community mangrove volunteers** trained, since ZSL began work on mangroves in the Philippines

19

public consultations held for Philippine Rise protected area





Pictured: Our conservationists are working to restore the Philippines' mangrove forests; we have facilitated several public consultations for the Philippine Rise protected area.

3

SUPPORTING COEXISTENCE EFFORTS IN NEPAL'S LOWLANDS

Working with communities to reduce conflict with growing wildlife populations

Overview

The Himalayan nation of Nepal provides a remarkable story of megafauna recovery. After devastating levels of trophy hunting and poaching in the 19th and early 20th centuries, often led by British colonials, left the country's wildlife severely depleted, Nepal's iconic species are now on an upward trend – thanks to concerted conservation efforts. Between 2009 and 2022, the country's greater one-horned rhino population grew by 317; Bengal tigers grew by 234; and the Asian elephant population increased by almost 100 individuals.

However, successful species recovery presents a new challenge for conservationists – how to ensure those animals can coexist with the human communities living on the edges of protected areas. With growing numbers of megafauna, conflict between wildlife and people in Nepal is increasing, and without the support of local people the gains of the previous decade could easily be lost.

We are currently focussing on improving the quality of habitats in three of Nepal's lowland national parks – Banke, Bardia and Shuklaphanta – to reduce the need for wildlife to leave the protected areas. We are also working with local communities on the edges of the national parks to improve these communities' access to financial and government services, provide people with training in wildlife-friendly livelihoods and install infrastructure designed to protect livestock and property from wildlife. These help to improve economic resilience and wellbeing while reducing reliance on natural resources, the likelihood of coming into conflict with wildlife and susceptibility to engaging in wildlife crime.

ZSL has been working in Nepal for over 30 years to support the Government's monitoring and protection of its wildlife.
Read more on page 23.



Pictured: Installing predator-proof enclosures is one of the ways we work with Nepali communities to reduce conflict with wildlife.

2025-26:

Restoring grasslands, supporting communities and improving protection

Across Bardia, Banke and Shuklaphanta we worked to restore 107 hectares of grasslands by cutting back tall grasses, burning dead areas and uprooting invasive weeds. We also established two new waterholes in Shuklaphanta, powered by solar power pumps. By restoring grasslands – essential habitats for tigers and rhinos – and increasing water sources we hope to decrease the number of large animals leaving the park in search of water.

Physically deterring animals from entering human settlements is appropriate in high-conflict landscapes; we installed almost three miles of new mesh fencing, maintained a further 8.5 miles of fencing around buffer-zone communities, and supported the construction of 243 predator-proof enclosures for livestock farmers. We also trialled 140 metres of bio-fencing in Bardia National Park, and we have distributed turmeric, ginger and lemon seeds and saplings to farmers in the area to plant; these plants generate income for farmers while acting as a natural deterrent to crop-raiding animals. To help deal with the occasions when wild animals do damage crops, we are also piloting a new public liability insurance scheme with 320 households, designed to reimburse farmers who experience crop damage by wildlife.

One of the key mechanisms we use for supporting local communities is encouraging the establishment of community banks. With seed funding from ZSL, community banks are a way of communally saving and investing in the development of the community and its local businesses for people who often don't have access to traditional finance options. We have helped set up 52 such initiatives around the three national parks, which then fund wildlife-friendly income-generating activities, such as livestock rearing, sustainable farming and small-scale enterprises. Alongside financial support, we also offer training to the communities we work with; this year we delivered sessions in vegetable farming, pest management, livestock rearing and ecotourism for almost 3,000 community members.





Caring for conflict tigers

We're working with national parks to boost the capacity for wildlife rescue and care facilities across Nepal – this year we trained 28 frontline staff on topics such as how to prepare and use dart guns, and the use of specialist animal rescue equipment. Occasionally, the only option for tigers who come into conflict with humans is to remove them from the protected area; we helped in the rescue and re-release of two tigers and four leopards this year and we're supporting the construction of a big cat rescue facility at Shuklaphanta. Animal care experts at our Zoos have fed into the centre's design and, in late 2026, a team of veterinary, animal behaviour and care experts from our Zoos will travel to Nepal to lead the training of Nepali wildlife care and management professionals on the care and rehabilitation of conflict tigers.



Pictured: We're working with Nepali communities to support sustainable farming practices that reduce conflict with large predators and megafauna, such as tigers and rhinos.

4

IDENTIFYING GLOBAL ECOSYSTEM RISK

Developing a new ecosystem health measure to drive global policy change

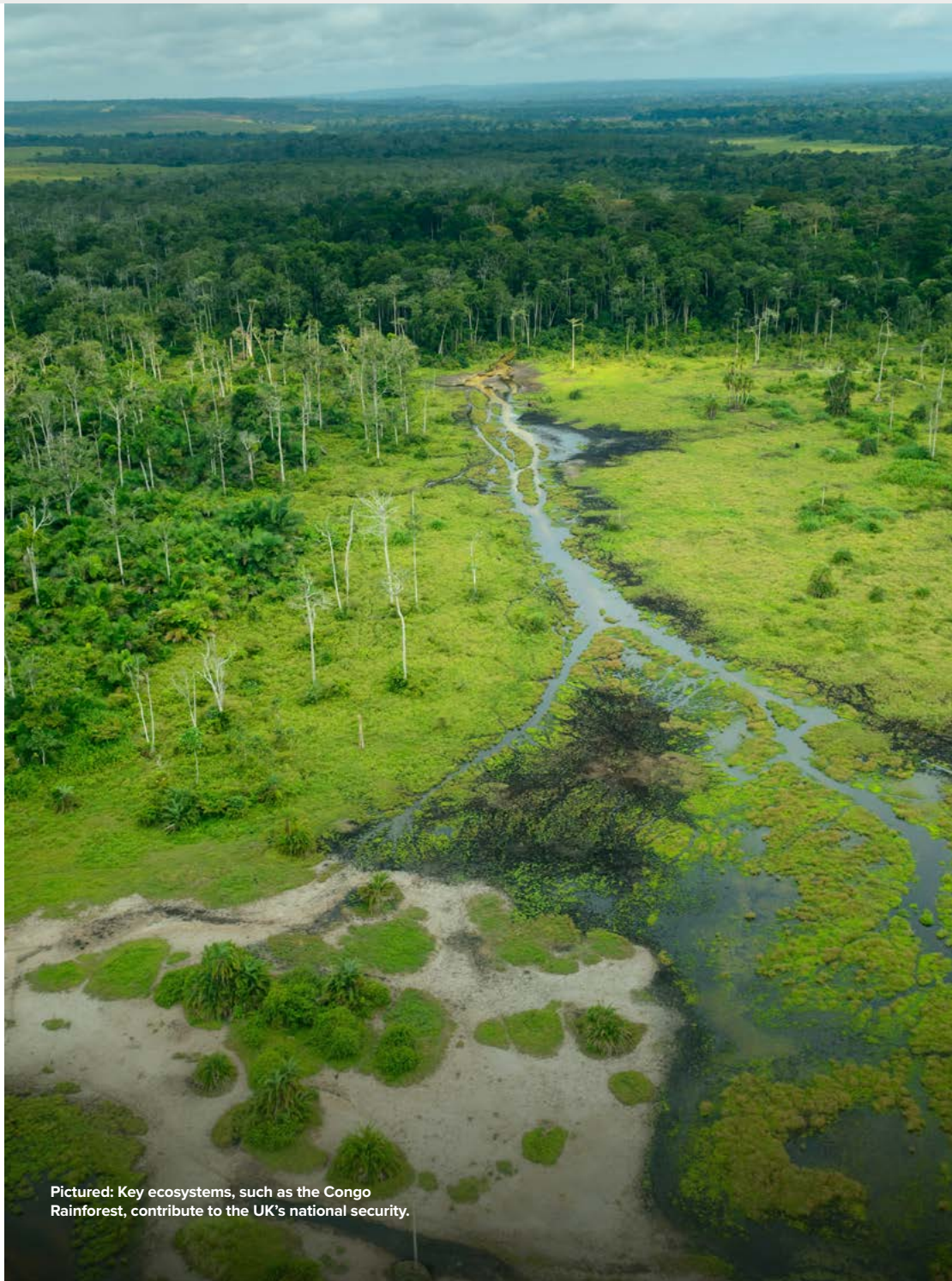
Overview

Ecosystem collapse and the resulting change to Earth's systems are considered among the most severe global risks in the coming years. In January 2026, the UK Government published its national security assessment on how global biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse could affect UK national security. It recognised the impacts the country is already experiencing from related crop failures, natural disasters and infectious disease outbreaks – and the high threat that ecosystem degradation poses to the country's security and prosperity as it intensifies. Importantly, it highlighted the UK's reliance on not just the ecosystems within its borders, but those around the world.

Therefore, using the best available science to develop strategies for managing ecosystem resilience, ecosystem services and cascading risks has become a UK priority. This year, the UK Government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) commissioned ZSL's Institute of Zoology to develop a new tool for understanding ecosystem health and the risk of their collapse. Once developed, it will help the UK Government and policymakers around the world to clearly understand and take steps to protect ecosystem services essential to human life – driving change around the world.

"Ecosystems that support global food production areas and impact global climate, water and weather cycles are the most important for UK national security... [including] the Amazon rainforest, Congo rainforest, boreal forests, the Himalayas and South East Asia's coral reefs and mangroves."

National security assessment on global ecosystems, Defra, 2026



Pictured: Key ecosystems, such as the Congo Rainforest, contribute to the UK's national security.

2025-26:
Developing a new, ‘ecosystem-first’ metric

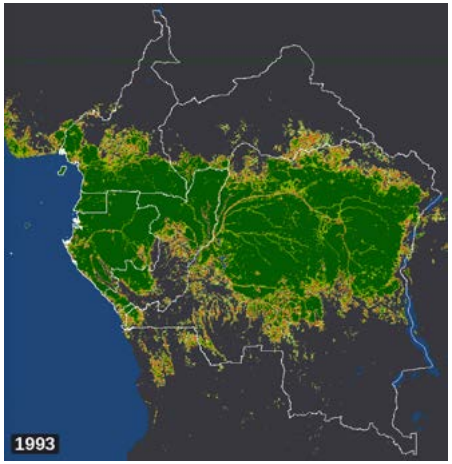
Healthy ecosystems perform diverse and complicated functions. Many of these – such as the production of oxygen and fresh water, the pollination of plants, the sequestration of carbon – are fundamental to human life on Earth. Understanding the resilience of these functions, and the impacts of both destructive and restorative human activities, is crucial not just to the future of wildlife but to our own species.

However, there remains a crucial challenge: how to measure the ‘work’ that an entire ecosystem performs, and how close an ecosystem is to collapse. The metrics and indicators currently used by governments and international bodies to understand ecosystem health tend to take a species-first approach, measuring extinction risks, species richness and a variety of related concepts. These metrics can provide powerful insights into species conservation, but don’t offer an overall picture about the health of an ecosystem.

In early 2026, we began a major new project alongside several partners, funded by Defra, to develop the LIFE-Process metric. The new metric will take an ‘ecosystem-first’ approach, measuring the resiliency of the processes and interactions that underpin ecosystems itself (such as the exchanges of matter and energy), rather than the abundance and health of animals and plants within the ecosystem.

The project has focussed on the Congo Basin as its pilot ecosystem; the world’s second-largest rainforest, it is a globally important biodiversity hotspot, carbon sink and climate regulator. It is also highly threatened by deforestation and mining, and an area where ZSL has been working for decades – developing important national and regional ties. Led by ZSL’s Professor Nathalie Pettorelli, the team of scientists will be using data from satellite imagery to determine the health of the Basin’s core functions – from photosynthesis efficiency and water usage to carbon capture – and build a model that will allow policymakers to examine the impacts of future human activity on the rainforest.







Pictured: Our scientists are using satelitte imagery (bottom right) to determine the health of the Congo Basin, a vital habitat for forest elephants (above) and gorillas (left).

Success stories from ZSL's history

LEADING THE DISCOVERY OF CHYTRID FUNGUS

Professor Andrew Cunningham led the discovery of chytrid fungus and its role in global amphibian declines. He reflects on the landmark event, the fundamental role of collaboration and our understanding of chytrid today

In 1989, herpetologists gathered in the UK for the first World Congress of Herpetology. The landmark event was the world's largest international gathering of herpetologists.

"During the conference, it became apparent that many researchers from around the world were seeing the same phenomenon: frogs disappearing or declining from their study sites, with no indication as to why," says Andrew Cunningham, Professor of Wildlife Epidemiology and Deputy Director of Science at ZSL's Institute of Zoology.

In fact, these declines had been happening since the mid-20th century, but had been attributed to other causes. We now know, thanks to the research of Andrew and his collaborators, that these declines were being caused by a type of chytrid fungus called *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* – Bd for short.

Bd is responsible for the extinction of an estimated 90 amphibian species and the decline of over 500. Chytrid funguses have existed for hundreds of thousands of years, but the Bd strain only emerged around a century ago, as mass transportation became more readily available, explains Andrew. "It looks like Bd emerged through chytrid hybridisation between strains, brought together by international trade."

On the trail of a killer

The 1989 Congress led to the creation of the Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force (DAPTF), charged with understanding the phenomenon. In 1992, Andrew became chair of its Disease and Pathology Working Group while working as ZSL's veterinary pathologist.

One of the challenges of identifying Bd is that it leaves very few fingerprints, says Andrew. "It infects the skin but causes no damage that can be seen by the naked eye, and it doesn't elicit much of an inflammatory response – so it was initially overlooked. Instead, it disrupts the host frog's ability to regulate sodium and potassium ions through its skin. These are important for healthy muscle function, and the disease normally ends in the failure of the frog's most important muscle – a heart attack."

It wasn't until 1994, when Andrew examined the pathology reports from froglets rescued from the last population of the sharp-snouted day frog (*Taudactylus acutirostris*), collected as tadpoles by Melbourne Zoo, that the fungus theory began to develop. "The pathology reports identified unknown organisms in the skin, but the lack of inflammation had led to the conclusion that invasion had happened after the frogs' deaths," says Andrew.



Pictured: In 2024, ZSL led the rescue of over 50 Darwin's frogs – in the face of chytrid fungus' spread.



Image © Martin Cohen

On returning to Australia in 1996, Andrew identified the same organism he had seen in Melbourne in dead frogs in Queensland, which had been submitted by veterinary student Lee Berger as part of her Masters project. Around the same time, Andrew was contacted by Karen Lips, a researcher in Panama, alerting the DAPTF to yet another decline of frogs.

With the help of US-based pathologist David Green, fungal specialist Gordon Beakes and Peter Daszak, an expert in protozoa (single-celled organisms), Andrew identified the organism found in the skin of both the Panamanian and Australian frogs as a chytrid fungus. The results would go on to be written up by Lee as a PhD thesis.

Pictured: Samples from the sharp-snouted day frog (above), now extinct, led to the discovery of Bd; we're trialling several wild mitigation methods in Chile, designed to protect populations of Darwin's frogs (right).

"The discovery of chytrid changed our understanding of conservation. It had a huge impact on how we understood healthy ecosystems."

Prof Andrew Cunningham, ZSL



The search for a solution

"The discovery of chytrid changed our understanding of conservation," says Andrew. "It had a huge impact on how we understood healthy ecosystems. That a disease could have caused all these declines and extinctions was a real shock."

Today, wildlife disease is considered an important conservation threat. However, it would take around 10 years for chytrid to become accepted within the scientific community.

The race is now on to mitigate the disease and help amphibians live alongside it successfully. ZSL's scientists are working to understand how the microbiome on amphibian skin might play a role in protecting some frogs from Bd, and whether this can be replicated.

Others are looking at amphibian DNA for answers. "Some frog species thought extinct, such as the yellow-spotted bell frog (*Litoria castanea*), have started to reappear in very low numbers. It's possible that genetic adaptations have allowed these individuals to survive while the majority of the species died out," says Andrew.

The deadly potential of fungi

There is still so much to learn about the fungus. The important thing for the future is that we take fungi seriously, says Andrew. "While Bd is wiping out thousands of frogs, we also have a white-nose fungal epidemic killing hundreds of thousands of bats in the Americas, and some fungi are a huge problem for our crops and food supply.

"As a species, we're very well equipped to deal with virus pandemics – we were able to develop a vaccine for Covid-19 within a year – and we have a good understanding of bacteria," says Andrew. "If there was a fungal pandemic we would be completely at sea.

"We must focus more resources on understanding how we stop the fungal extinction of frogs and bats, not just for their survival, but for ours."



LOOKING AHEAD

Restoring Habitats in 2026-27



Securing the future of wildlife hotspots

We're working in wildlife-rich regions around the world to help governments and local communities safeguard habitats. We provide the science, wildlife-monitoring expertise, techniques in collaborating with indigenous communities and the financial support that can help governments create lasting change for habitat protection. In the coming year, we'll be supporting several major efforts to protect and restore important habitats.

Zambia and Angola unite to form transboundary protected area

Alongside our work to reintroduce cheetahs to Zambia's Luangwa Valley (read more on page 17), we celebrated another major milestone for our cheetah conservation: formal agreement between Zambia and Angola to develop a new, trans-frontier conservation area that will connect Angola's Mussoma region with Zambia's Liuwa Plains. The agreement has been underpinned by almost a decade of ZSL research in the region, undertaken by scientists from our Cheetah Conservation Initiative, and it's a significant step to protecting this important ecosystem. The establishment of this protected area, which we will be working to make a reality in the coming years, will help the recovery of wildlife populations in eastern Angola and secure the long-term viability of Liuwa's cheetah populations, by allowing them to expand across a substantially larger landscape. This vast seasonal floodplain supports a wildebeest migration that will, with conservation, rival that of the Serengeti.

Securing Terai Arc tiger corridors

Building on our success in Nepal, we're expanding our work in the Terai Arc – a belt of hills, forests and grasslands that stretches between India and Nepal – to include the Kamdi Wildlife Corridor, which connects Banke National Park in Nepal and Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary in India. Suhelwa has been identified as a high-potential tiger recovery site within the Terai Arc, while the Kamdi Corridor is becoming an increasingly important conservation site, as growing wildlife populations from Banke and the adjoining Bardia National Park use the corridor to disperse to new habitats. This has increased interactions between humans and wildlife, and over the coming years we'll be working with local communities in the region to reduce conflict with big cats and other wildlife. We're also going to be working with local communities to offer training and financial support in sustainable livelihoods that reduce reliance on natural resources for income and decrease the likelihood of interactions between wildlife and people. We're also going to be working inside Suhelwa, and throughout the Kamdi Corridor, to improve habitats for tigers and their prey species by removing invasive plant species and restoring grasslands and forest habitats – allowing them safer passage to new habitats.

Launch of Philippine Rise protected area

We are working at pace towards the launch of the Philippine Rise Ocean Conservation Area in 2027. This underwater plateau is rich in biodiversity and marine resources, and a vital stage in the journey of migratory fish – like bluefin tuna – across the country's eastern seaboard. Once launched, the 150,000km^2 area will boost protection for biodiversity – which is increasingly under pressure from illegal and industrial fishing – and safeguard healthy fish stocks for the thousands of people who rely on the region for its economic and nutritional value. We are training a new team within the Philippine Government's Bureau of Fisheries to oversee the management of the protected area and we will be working with this new team to develop monitoring and surveillance protocols to ensure the long-term success of the protected area.

Identifying the UK's ecosystem engineers

Alongside our work on ecosystem resilience modelling (see page 35) we have also been appointed by the UK Government to develop a new model for prioritising conservation around how species influence ecosystems and the ecological functions we rely on (such as pollination and seed dispersal). Using existing evidence about the functional traits of the UK's animal and plant groups – from mammals and birds to insects and fish – we'll be working alongside Imperial College London to develop metrics that quantify the importance of different species to our way of life, the resilience of those species groups to external pressures, and the risks to the ecological functions that they support. The metrics will highlight the most functionally unique species – those that perform ecological functions that are fundamental to our way of life and not performed by other species – and help the UK Government direct resources towards the most functionally irreplaceable species at risk of extinction.

Pictured: The Philippine Rise protected area will safeguard sustainable marine fisheries for local fishers (above).

TRAINING CONSERVATIONISTS

We share skills and knowledge to build a movement of conservationists equipped with the expertise, tools and networks to protect and restore wildlife

This impact area contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:

4 QUALITY EDUCATION
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Pictured: Through our newly launched ZooTown, and the educational sessions we run with school children and teachers, we are training the next generation of conservationists.

TRAINING CONSERVATIONISTS

STRATEGIC GOAL FOR 2030

To increase global conservation capability by supporting more than three million young people and 5,000 career professionals in their development

Progress towards our target

Progress falls within a range

MILESTONE 1: BY 2026

Deliver conservation education to more than **500,000 students** each year, inspiring them to act for wildlife



MILESTONE 2: BY 2026

Expand our postgraduate course programme to teach more than **150 Master's students** and **85 PhD students** each year





MILESTONE 3: BY 2028

Train more than **2,000 professionals** each year through an extensive programme of continuing professional development courses



MILESTONE 4: BY 2030

Work in partnership with universities to enable the delivery of nature-focussed education in at least **five new disciplines** from business to art



MILESTONE 5: BY 2030

Support **2,000 young people from under-represented backgrounds** to gain employment in conservation through mapped career pathways



OVERVIEW

ZSL is working to inspire, train and support the next generation of conservationists: from fostering a deeper connection to the natural world for the youngest, to training tomorrow's professors and conservation leaders. We are building equitable pathways that empower young people from diverse backgrounds – because solving the biodiversity crisis demands the full strength of our collective potential.

Our approach begins with nurturing empathy for nature in early childhood and empowering young people to take action as they grow. By recognising the different stages of learning – from curious pre-schoolers discovering a love for wildlife to professionals leading conservation efforts – we tailor educational experiences that are age-appropriate, engaging and impactful.

At pre-school level, we focus on helping children form an emotional connection to the natural world. Activities like storytelling, nature walks and caring for plants or animals build empathy and a sense of responsibility towards living things, laying the foundation for future conservation values. As children grow, empathy is complemented by structured knowledge about ecosystems, biodiversity and the interdependence of species. Through hands-on, immersive experiences – in our conservation Zoos, in their own schools and in other learning environments – we help students actively engage with real-world conservation issues.

At higher education level, we provide the environment and expert tuition for students to advance their specialist knowledge in conservation science through undergraduate, Masters, PhD and postdoctoral training. Veterinary hospitals at London and Whipsnade Zoo are hubs for furthering animal healthcare knowledge and teaching aspiring conservationists. For professionals already working in the world's biodiversity hotspots, our experts in veterinary care, animal monitoring and illegal wildlife trade mitigation share expertise with local vets, law enforcement and wildlife rangers through workshops and field courses.





Central to our approach is our EDGE of Existence Fellowship programme, which identifies and supports emerging conservation leaders dedicated to protecting the world's most Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered (EDGE) species. The collective knowledge of the EDGE network contributes not only to today's conservation challenges but also to mentoring and inspiring the next generation. With a robust alumni network and a Fellowship that attracts the best young conservationists from across developing countries, we are building capacity to effect positive change worldwide.

Pictured: The EDGE Fellowship programme is supporting the conservation of rare and unique species, such as the lemon shark (above); our learning team deliver workshops for school students (right).

CASE STUDIES

1 Inspiring wildlife champions
2 Training postgraduates
3 Empowering EDGE leaders
4 Training nature's first responders

1

INSPIRING A GENERATION OF WILDLIFE CHAMPIONS

Connecting young people to nature through conservation education

Overview

Young people need to be empowered to work on solutions to the biodiversity and climate crises, but access to and learning about nature remains low on the agenda for UK schools in both their approach to delivering the curriculum, and their way of teaching – especially for older students. Moreover, the lack of biodiversity and climate issues in teacher training leads to a lack of teacher confidence in how to engage students with these subjects and in teaching outside the classroom.

Our dedicated education teams provide conservation learning to thousands of students every year to support development of skills and knowledge, and bring them closer to nature and our conservation work. We also run a programme of professional development for teachers and trainee teachers, to give them the skills to deliver out-of-classroom learning with confidence.

One of our flagship education programmes, the Education Access Scheme, gives participating schools, colleges and universities unlimited visits and access to educational experiences for an annual subscription. The scheme enables the schools to use our Zoos as an extension of their classrooms and helps us build stronger relationships with young people and teachers in our local communities.

786
trainee and qualified teachers took part in ZSL training, with an estimated impact on **15,000 students**

134,581
students and young people took part in conservation education through our Zoos

128
schools joined our Education Access Scheme



Pictured: Understanding species anatomy is an important part of our student workshops.

2025-26:

New platform helps teachers deliver nature-connected learning

Research and anecdotal evidence from teachers, from primary to higher education, tells us that teachers lack the confidence, skills and specific knowledge to embed nature into their lessons. During their teacher-training year, it is rare for teachers to be taught about the benefits of outdoor learning or why nature should be woven through their teaching, and the education sector lacks a trusted voice in conservation teaching and nature education.

This April, we built on decades of teaching school students in our Zoos to launch our first online teacher-training course, Transforming Teaching with Nature. Launched in partnership with Future Learn, the four-week course is aimed to help primary school teachers in the UK and overseas embed biodiversity and outdoor learning in their teaching. The online course was written and filmed with our education experts (pictured top right), who deliver curriculum-linked activities every day with schools, and is packed with case studies from our Zoos and wider conservation science. Having undertaken the course, teachers will have the tools to build nature and outdoor learning into not just science lessons but maths, English, art and other subjects across the curriculum.

This new online learning resource complements the existing workshops we run with teachers and trainee teachers through our Zoos, and will feed into the comprehensive, year-long training programme for teachers that we hope to launch nationally in the coming year. This year we held focus groups with 22 teachers, to better understand their needs, and their feedback will help to guide the development of the course and our teacher workshops.







229
people joined our Transforming Teaching online course, launched in April 2026, equating to supporting 6,870 students.

7,254
participants took part in our Career and Skills programme, with 15% from an underrepresented audience

"Having an educator that is so experienced was incredibly valuable. Her enthusiasm and passion for both teaching and conservation shone through. It made linking the benefits and practicalities of outdoor learning very straightforward and compelling."

Teacher feedback, 2026

26,676
Zoo tickets were provided through our Community Access Scheme, which offers heavily discounted tickets to low-income households, people with additional needs, refugees and elderly people at risk of isolation.

Pictured: Our conservation education team deliver teaching to students across age ranges, from primary school through to adult professionals.

Nature communications course launches

This year, we piloted a five-day course for 16-25-year-olds, designed to inspire and equip the next generation of nature communicators. Coinciding with our bicentenary, the course celebrates ZSL's role in nurturing influential nature communicators such as Sir David Attenborough, Liz Bonnin and Gerald Durrell. The course works to develop students' media literacy and highlight the powerful role that storytelling plays within conservation; from podcasting to video production, students learn how conservation stories are crafted at organisations like ZSL, then work collaboratively to produce their own. The week concludes with a special premiere, where finished pieces are showcased to communications experts from across ZSL, giving students a real-world platform for their work. A pilot was run with five students in February 2026, and the course will run in early spring and summer each year. The course is designed for 12 students, with half of the places allocated free of charge to students from backgrounds underrepresented in conservation.



2

TRAINING POSTGRADUATE SCIENTISTS

Shaping the future of conservation science

Overview

We contribute to the future of life sciences by supporting the training and development of postgraduate scientists. ZSL is formally partnered with the Royal Veterinary College, University College London and Imperial College London, and we work with a range of universities to host students from around the world.

Our Master's programmes provide a stepping stone from higher education to professional specialisms in ecology, conservation and animal care, while our PhD programmes act as a gateway to influential careers in science, academia and applied conservation, unlocking high-level opportunities in the conservation sector. Many of our graduates will go on to secure government roles in the UK and overseas that shape national and international conservation policies.

40 papers were authored or co-authored by ZSL's PhD students

12 new PhD students joined ZSL

73 PhD students and 111 Master's students studying at ZSL

66 international students hosted



Pictured: Researcher Henry Grub interviewing cattle farmers as part of his PhD. Image by John Cairns / Imperial College.

2025-26:
Supporting postgraduate research

This year, ZSL taught 73 PhD and 111 Master's students. In addition to UK students, we hosted 66 international students, many from some of the world's most biodiverse countries.

Conservation problems are typically complex, driven by multiple processes, and therefore demand evidence from multiple scientific disciplines to diagnose causes and identify solutions. Recognising this, our training in conservation science employs a variety of approaches – from field-based monitoring and technological development to genomics and social sciences. Our research students used this flexible, multi-disciplinary approach to tackle a broad range of currently important research questions, from quantifying the impact and benefits of rewilding, to investigating the effects of air pollution on the brain health of urban wildlife.



Pictured: Veterinary students conducting a post-mortem (above); PhD researcher Eleanor Collinson is working with Kenyan communities to study conflict with snakes (right).

Supporting a snakebite prevention strategy for rural communities

Eleanor Collinson, PhD researcher at ZSL, is investigating the causes and potential solutions to snakebites in rural Kenya.

"Bites from venomous snakes are a major but neglected public health issue that, each year, affects an estimated 1.8 million people and kills around 100,000. The problem disproportionately affects rural communities in developing countries, where limited healthcare means that bites often go unrecorded and have a greater likelihood of resulting in death or serious injury.

"Communities living on the edges of Kenya's Tsavo National Park, where my research is focussed, often encounter snakes. It's estimated that 4,000 people a year die of snakebites in Kenya alone, and post-bite amputations are common. This has led to many communities adopting a blanket approach of killing all snakes that they encounter – including non-venomous species (like the brown house snake, pictured right) that are beneficial for controlling pests.

"I'm working with local communities, alongside ZSL's Kenya team and partners like the Wild Snake Project, to try to understand their relationships with snakes and their experience of human-snake conflict. Making sure community voices are heard and incorporated is integral to developing appropriate solutions to the problem. Paired with ecological modelling data from across Kenya, my aim is to identify likely snakebite hotspots and the environmental and social factors that drive those risks.

"From my initial research, drought appears to be a major factor in driving snakebites. Like many animals, snakes often enter human communities in search of water, and the behaviour has implications for climate change scenarios. Rurality and poverty are another massive risk factor – due to a combination of people living in unsealed homes and working outdoors. Overall, the savannah appears to be the highest-risk landscape and pastoralists are a particularly vulnerable group of people in Kenya."





"Being able to draw on ZSL's international network of conservationists has been enormously helpful, and my PhD has shown me how important collaboration with partners is to global research"

Eleanor Collinson,
PhD Researcher at ZSL



3

TRAINING FUTURE CONSERVATION LEADERS

Empowering tomorrow's conservation leaders through the EDGE Fellowship

Overview

Around the world, some of the most unique and extraordinary species are on the brink of extinction. These Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered (EDGE) species have few or no close relatives on the tree of life and are often overlooked in mainstream conservation. Moreover, regions with the highest concentrations of EDGE species often lack the necessary infrastructure and investment to support local conservation efforts.

There is no shortage of aspiring conservationists, but they are frequently held back by a lack of resources, training opportunities and career pathways. Our EDGE Fellowship programme is designed to champion these local conservation leaders, equipping them with the training, mentorship and funding to launch their careers and safeguard EDGE species.

167

in-country conservationists supported through the EDGE Fellowship programme and alumni network



Pictured: The EDGE Fellowship champions local leadership and supports the conservation of evolutionarily distinct and globally endangered species, such as the Serendib scops owl (right) and the leatherback turtle (inset right).

2025-26: Growing local conservation leadership

This year, EDGE supported 30 Fellows conserving some of the world's most unique and threatened species, from the Serendib scops owl in Sri Lanka to the leatherback sea turtle in Venezuela.

In early 2026, a new cohort of seven EDGE Fellows joined the programme and took part in a month-long conservation tools training course in Ghana, delivered in partnership with Herp Conservation Ghana and CSIR-Forestry Research Institute of Ghana. The course covered project planning and management, social and ecological research methods, conservation leadership, fundraising and the human dimensions of conservation. Graduating Fellows from the 2024 cohort attended a final conservation impact training course in London, marking the culmination of their 28-month fellowships and celebrating the conservation impact they have delivered in their home countries.

"The EDGE Fellowship has given me the confidence to conduct the research I always dreamed of. I've been able to connect with government researchers, with amazing results, and it feels like the start of something big."

Ilse Alejandra Martínez Candelas, EDGE Fellow





Conserving the Tree of Life

In 2024, ZSL's Dr Rikki Gumbs published research indicating that Earth could lose up to 19% of its evolutionary history across jawed vertebrates (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish), equating to 150 billion years of evolution, in as little as 50 years. Working through the IUCN's Phylogenetic Diversity Specialist Group (which Gumbs co-chairs) and our EDGE programme, we are urging governments and international bodies to conserve the planet's evolutionary heritage. Our EDGE index and Phylogenetic Diversity indicator, which track the extinction risk of the planet's most unique plants and animals, have been adopted by the United Nations.

The search for an ancient marine inhabitant

Ilse Alejandra Martínez Candelas, a PhD researcher in Mexico, was selected for an EDGE Fellowship to support her work with the lemon shark.



"Female sharks have returned to the waters of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula to give birth for millennia – in fact, they were the first shark species recorded returning to their birthplace to give birth. The pups remain in nursery areas for years, forming small groups that learn to hunt and survive together until they're large enough to transition to seagrass meadows and coral reefs.

"That is until around 40 years ago, when lemon sharks started to disappear from the region. Now, the species is extremely rare and is only remembered by the oldest fishers and community members. Their near disappearance has coincided with great change on the Peninsula; it has become a major tourist destination, mangroves have been cleared to make space for hotels and to expand the cities, and fishing pressure has increased.

"Local people have been connected to sharks since Mayan times – archaeologists have found shark remains inside the pyramids – and fishers have been some of my biggest supporters. Sharks are admired for their beauty and strength; they are also a source of income and part of local cuisine. Working alongside communities across the Peninsula, who have eagerly shared their knowledge, and using baited underwater cameras at 64 likely locations, we have identified two nursery areas where we believe lemon sharks might still be returning. The next crucial step is to secure their protection."



Pictured: EDGE Fellow Ilse Alejandra Martínez Candelas is working to conserve Mexico's lemon sharks (above); EDGE supports the conservation of rare and unique species like the Sunda gharial (left).

4

COMBATTING THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Training first responders in the world's wildlife hotspots

Overview

The illegal wildlife trade is the world's fourth largest illegal trade, behind arms, drugs and human trafficking. It leaves a trail of destruction – wiping out species, exploiting local people and destroying lives. We combat it, in part, by providing training to law enforcement and rangers working in illegal wildlife trade hotspots around the world.

Our focus is on developing ethical policing skills designed to help rangers and other law enforcement agents to operate effectively – with transparency, integrity and accountability – within the landscapes and communities they engage with. These skills range from training in human rights, conflict deescalation techniques and first aid, through to more technical aspects like intelligence gathering, crime scene investigation skills and forensics. Key to this training is building trust and respect between community members and those entrusted with policing those communities.

ZSL is a founding partner of the Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA), a global coalition launched in 2020 to support, represent and provide resources for conservation rangers on the frontlines. We lead the mental health and wellbeing component of URSA, and we work with partners to deliver a suite of tools for rangers in the field who are faced with traumatic events, poor conditions and job insecurity. We also collaborate with several UK law enforcement agencies, such as the Metropolitan Police, to share their expertise with overseas law enforcement officials.



ZSL research immortalised in *Time*

A ZSL research project working on innovative forensics techniques for tackling wildlife crime made it onto the illustrious cover of US magazine *Time* this year and their Top 100 Photographs of 2025. The image, taken by photographer Britta Jackinski, depicts the trial of ultraviolet fingerprint powder on the shell of a stuffed sea turtle.

2025-26:

Embedding skills for wildlife crime first responders

This year we have provided training to rangers and law enforcement in Nepal, the Philippines, Benin, Kenya and Cameroon. We also held 10 community workshops (attended by approximately 370 delegates) designed to build trust and respect between law enforcement and the communities living around national parks. Our training has contributed to multiple seizures of bushmeat, firearms, ammunition and trafficked animals, and several communities proactively offered information to tackle the illegal wildlife trade as a result of our outreach.

A key concept that we've been working to embed with wildlife agencies around the world is the ranger's role as 'first responder' at a wildlife crime scene. In the UK we typically focus on police, fire and paramedics as first responders, but in rural landscapes – particularly on the edges of protected areas – rangers are often the first on scene. We train rangers how to stabilise situations, engage with potential victims and suspects, identify hazards, offer life-saving care and secure evidence during the first critical moments of these dynamic scenarios.





Warriors of hope

This year we celebrated five years of partnership with SAVSIM, an organisation that merges wildlife conservation with veteran support – using the skills of military veterans to train rangers and support protected areas. A cornerstone of our partnership is Warriors of Hope, a programme for veterans struggling with PTSD and mental health challenges that runs annually at both ZSL Zoos. Participants spend seven days immersed in nature, exploring trauma coping strategies and taking part in hands-on activities around our Zoos like creating enrichment for animals, all with the guidance of healthcare professionals. Through the power of nature, the programme aims to help heal our country's veterans and support their transition to civilian life.

Pictured: Rangers in Nepal (left) take part in training to help combat the illegal wildlife trade.

Tackling tamaraw poaching

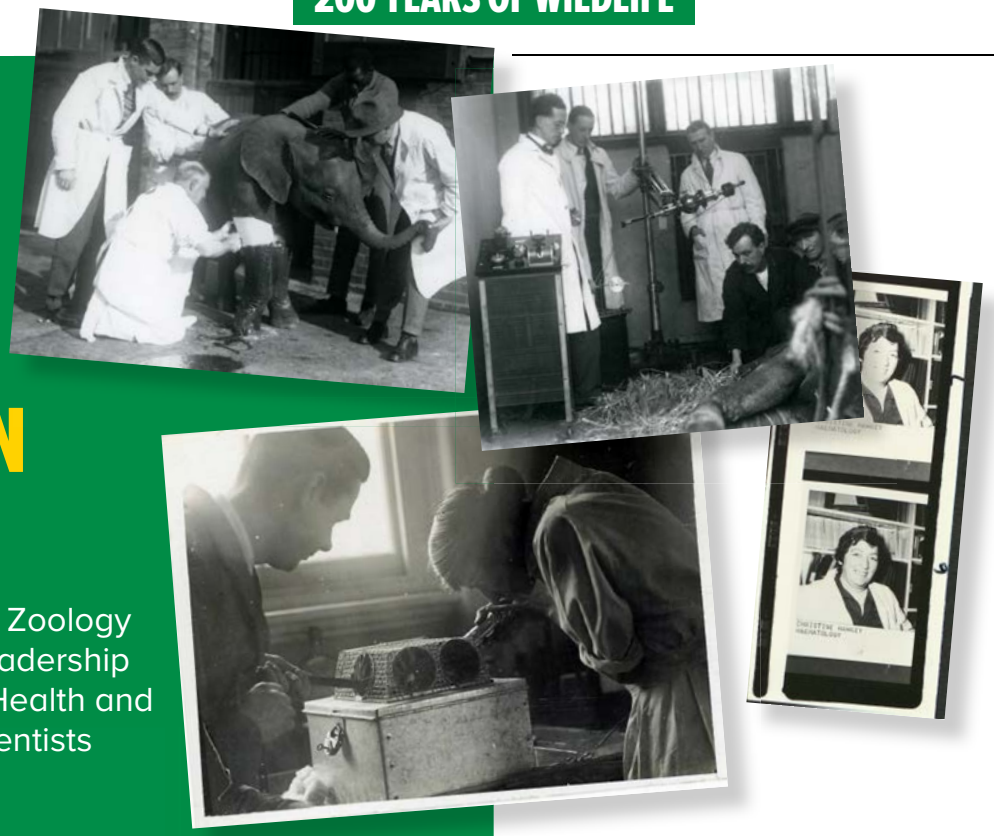
The tamaraw is a Critically Endangered species of dwarf buffalo only found on the island of Mindoro in the Philippines. The species underwent rapid population decline in the last century and now approximately 300 animals remain in at least three isolated populations. We are working with a local partner and the Philippine Government to boost frontline tamaraw protection; following a crime prevention study, we've identified poaching for 'sport' by non-Indigenous groups coming into the protected area as a key problem. We're now developing a competency-based training framework for rangers working in the region to tackle the issue.



Success stories from ZSL's history

PIONEERS IN CONSERVATION SCIENCE

The launch of ZSL's Institute of Zoology 50 years ago cemented our leadership in conservation science, One Health and the nurturing of researcher scientists





Pictured (clockwise from top left): vets prepare for and then conduct an x-ray of African elephant Oojah in 1926; ZSL scientist Christine Hawkey; ZSL's first female Curator of Reptiles, Joan Proctor, examining a snake using her patented device; ZSL's Biobank Manager Louise Gibson.

Forerunners of the Institute

In the 1960s, during Prince Philip's early tenure as President of ZSL, we created two scientific bodies to drive our research: the Nuffield Institute of Comparative Medicine, and the Wellcome Institute of Comparative Physiology.

Both were made possible by private funding, supporting the creation of two research buildings at Regent's Park and the furnishing of cutting-edge laboratories. Their creation made ZSL the first centre of research in the UK working at the intersection of animal and human health.

The Nuffield concentrated on the study of diseases in animals, while the Wellcome focussed on the mechanisms of reproduction and related subjects in animals. There was growing appreciation of how human and wild animal health were interlinked, and the research conducted by scientists at ZSL led the way in developing what is now known as One Health: an approach, since adopted by the United Nations, which treats the health of humans, domestic animals and wild animals as interlinked.

Famously, Dr Christine Hawkey – leader of ZSL's Haematology department – identified anticoagulants in the saliva of vampire bats and their ability to slow the aggregation of platelets, causing bitten animals to bleed freely for longer. This breakthrough inspired the development of blood-thinning medications for humans to treat or prevent strokes and heart attacks. Hawkey's research is a classic example of One Health, decades before the term became popular.

Improving scientific understanding of animal health and reproduction wasn't just important to veterinary medicine and conservation – there was a pressing need to understand these mechanisms better for the future of zoos. During the Victorian era and early 20th century, European zoos had often relied upon collecting animals from the wild. However, as understanding of wildlife improved, it became clear that these activities could inadvertently contribute to population declines. In 1958, ZSL became one of the first zoological organisations to restrict collecting from the wild, sharpening its focus on protecting threatened species through breeding programmes, and encouraged other zoos to do so.

Shift towards applied conservation science

As awareness of global wildlife declines grew, ZSL sought to reposition its science to focus chiefly on challenges facing wildlife. "[We have] been exploring ways… to make the most effective contribution towards solving current problems. [ZSL] is ideally placed to become an international centre for the scientific study of problems of conservation," reads ZSL's 1976 Annual Report, in which the formation of the Institute of Zoology was formally announced.

Leonard Goodwin, a tropical disease expert who joined ZSL as director of the Nuffield in 1963, wrote in 1976 that "skilful management and husbandry have already put us in the forefront of the movement to breed endangered species." As he saw it, ZSL was "ideally placed to become an international centre for the scientific study of problems of conservation."

Just what these problems were would become clear. In the 1980s, the concept of the sixth mass extinction – driven by human activities – was introduced, and concern grew about the rate of extinctions. ZSL was well placed to investigate and Professor Georgina Mace, an ecologist who would go on to become ZSL's Director of Science, led an overhaul of the IUCN's Red List, the world's most widely used system for assessing extinction risk. This work fundamentally changed how species are monitored and prioritised for conservation worldwide, and Mace was later recognised with a Damehood.

Support from the UK Government

Importantly, bringing ZSL's science under the single banner of the Institute of Zoology enabled researchers to seek a more sustainable source of long-term funding. Summarising the perennial challenge of conservation organisations around the world, Goodwin ended his 1976 piece: "We have the animals, the scientists, the facilities and the experience. But we should like the money." The same year, ZSL successfully secured £100k of seed funding to get new research projects off the ground.

Today the Institute is supported by UK Research and Innovation – the government body dedicated to funding UK research and innovation. Thanks to the foundations laid in the 1960s and 70s, ZSL has trained hundreds of scientists – many of whom have gone on to influence scientific research, conservation action and government policy around the world.

We partner with universities across the UK and overseas, and support the training of almost 200 PhD and Master's students per year. They work alongside a permanent research staff of approximately 100 professors, research fellows and postdoctoral research associates – supporting our investigations into the most pressing issues facing wildlife today.







Pictured (clockwise from top right): CSIP Project Manager Rob Deaville; Research Fellow Patricia Brekke; Senior Research Fellow Chris Yesson.

LOOKING AHEAD

Training Conservationists in 2026-27

Meeting demand for conservation expertise



Tackling the biodiversity crisis requires a workforce of skilled professionals. We're working with a range of schools, universities, businesses and other institutions to improve education standards around nature, inspire more people to seek nature-based careers and meet the growing demand for conservation expertise. These are some of our focusses in the coming year.

Expanding our postgraduate programme

We have agreed a new partnership with Imperial College London to support the training of Master's students on their Environmental Technology and Living Planet Masters programmes. ZSL's Institute of Zoology has a long history of training students from Imperial and, as well as an opportunity to shape the development of early-career researchers, the arrival of students from one of the UK's leading universities will help to expand our existing research programmes, undertake new studies and tackle new research questions set by our research staff, in areas like environmental policy.

Increasing biodiversity in schools

In September 2025, thanks to funding from the Steel Charitable Trust, we started a three-year pilot project with three schools in Luton, designed to embed nature into their school culture. We are working with teachers at a primary school and two secondary schools (one for students with Special Educational Needs), with the goal of developing resources, data and case studies, ahead of a roll-out across UK schools. The programme involves student and teacher nature training, as well as empowering students to monitor biodiversity on their own school sites, engage with efforts to increase biodiversity and learn about green careers. With a collective land area twice the size of Birmingham, UK schools represent an opportunity to increase local biodiversity while improving students' and teachers' connection to wildlife.



Establishing a flagship partnership with Great Ormond Street Hospital

Over the coming year, we will be working with clinical teams, hospital staff and young people at Great Ormond Street Hospital to expand access to nature-based activities that support recovery across the hospital. This will involve co-developing a programme that supports children and young people across a wider range of wards and services, shaped by patients' needs and experiences. We will create pathways into nature-based experiences at our Zoos to support recovery, enabling more children and families to benefit from time spent in natural environments. Alongside this, we will develop digital approaches to connect patients with nature where access to outdoor spaces is limited, and expand opportunities for staff to engage with nature as part of their working day, supporting wellbeing across the hospital.

Pictured: We will be expanding our programmes for postgraduate researchers (left) and working with schools to better integrate nature training (above).

CREATING CHANGE

We create positive change for wildlife and people by inspiring and empowering everyone, from children to politicians, to notice, care, and act for nature

This impact area contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:



Pictured: ZooTown is designed to inspire the next generation of wildlife conservation scientists.

CREATING CHANGE

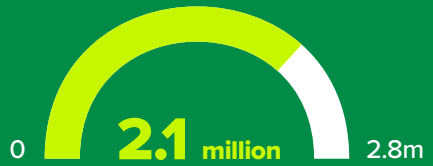
STRATEGIC GOAL FOR 2030

To strengthen the safeguards for nature by inspiring 20 million people to advocate for wildlife and influencing more than 20 key policies to be nature positive

◆ Progress towards our target ■ Progress falls within a range

MILESTONE 1: BY 2030

Create 'wow moments' with wildlife for **2.8 million people** each year through immersive Zoo experiences, guided by our masterplan



MILESTONE 2: BY 2026

Extend our reach beyond the boundaries of our two conservation Zoos to an additional **1 million people** each year, enabling them to engage with nature and advocate for wildlife



MILESTONE 3: BY 2030

Work with policymakers, businesses, innovators and communities to influence and strengthen **20 domestic and inter-governmental policy processes** that impact nature



MILESTONE 4: BY 2030

Influence more than **£100 million** of finance for nature and work with **500 companies** to increase transparency on environmental impact and implement nature-positive commitments





MILESTONE 5: BY 2030

Provide technical and scientific advice to more than **10 organisations** to empower them to integrate community-engaged nature recovery into their business and investment models



OVERVIEW



Addressing environmental challenges requires coordinated action across multiple sectors, and nature is best protected when people are invested in its success.

At ZSL, we drive collective action by deepening connections with wildlife, raising awareness about the benefits of nature and promoting stewardship of natural resources. Our interdisciplinary approach to effecting change engages with different areas of society – from the millions of visitors to our conservation Zoos, to businesses, governments and intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations.

We advocate for stronger measures to protect biodiversity both in the UK and globally, and for connected climate and nature policy solutions. We provide critical science and indicators to help governments implement global agreements and monitor progress. We work with our partners to tackle key challenges, like the illegal wildlife trade.

The private sector plays a critical role in driving environmental change. We work with business and the financial sector to implement sustainable practices that protect nature, reduce environmental damage and support conservation. Transforming supply chains by eliminating harmful practices will be a key part of building a wildlife-friendly economy. Through partnerships, we promote policies around sustainable resources – such as palm oil, rubber and wood – while developing innovative financial mechanisms to invest in biodiversity restoration.

Our Zoos provide a platform to inspire, educate and engage people of all ages – from the UK and international visitors – through close encounters with animals and interactive, informative content. By turning passive visitors into active wildlife champions, we create long-lasting connections with nature. Our public engagement in the UK and around the world builds on the messaging in our Zoos, encouraging behaviours that directly or indirectly benefit wildlife – whether it's reducing single-use plastics, choosing sustainable products or reducing waste.

Tailoring our work to address local issues – such as linking conservation to livelihoods, health and wellbeing – helps improve engagement and participation with underrepresented communities. Our community partnerships, both in the UK and around the world, allow us to engage different groups in ways that are inclusive and meaningful.

Pictured: By inspiring young minds to support conservation through initiatives like ZooTown (above), influencing policy and working with business, we aim to reverse habitat and biodiversity loss (right).

CASE STUDIES

1. Celebrating our bicentenary
2. Launching ZooTown
3. Unlocking conservation investment
4. Driving mangrove policy

1

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF WILDLIFE

A national icon at the heart of Britain's wildlife obsession

Overview

This year, we celebrated an extraordinary milestone: 200 years of ZSL. That's two centuries of pioneering science, global conservation and inspiring connections between people and wildlife.

ZSL was founded on 29 April 1826 by Sir Stamford Raffles, at a time when exotic animals were most often confined to menageries – places designed for spectacle rather than scientific understanding. From the outset, ZSL set out a different vision: to create a zoological space dedicated to the advancement of wildlife science, where animals would be studied with purpose and care to deepen knowledge of the natural world.

With the opening of London Zoo in 1828, the world's first scientific zoo, this vision became a reality. For the first time, scientists were able to observe living animals closely and systematically – studying behaviour, understanding diets, diagnosing illness and developing new approaches to veterinary care. The Zoo's opening was a turning point in zoology; not only would it capture the imagination of the British public with animals from around the world, but it also helped to turn zoology from an amateur interest for wealthy hobbyists into a professional science alongside fields like medicine and chemistry.

Today, we have not one but two Zoos; we're home to over 500 species; we welcome over two million visitors a year to be inspired by wildlife; and we employ hundreds of scientists and conservationists working to understand and protect wildlife.



Pictured: ZSL staff celebrate our 200th birthday on 29 April 2026.

1,637

articles, blogs and news items this year covered our bicentenary celebrations, across 482 publications and news outlets – including *The Guardian* and BBC

2025-26: Celebrating ZSL, change-maker and conservation leader

ZSL is many things to many people: culturally iconic, a scientific institution, a conservation leader and a great day out. To reflect that breadth and to maximise impact across the year, we shaped 2026 around six narrative themes in which we could celebrate our impact: **Leaps and Bounds**, our firsts, biggests and bests; **Women and Wildlife**, the women who shaped ZSL; **Zoo and You**, the relationship between ZSL and people; **Pop Culture**, our cultural impact; **Grand Designs**, our design influence; and **The Future**, what's next for ZSL and nature.

We began our anniversary year by joining forces with London institutions Transport for London and the Royal Mint to launch heritage posters across the London Underground network and release a new commemorative £2 coin. British Poet Laureate Simon Armitage penned a new poem celebrating ZSL, and exploring our role as ever-watchful custodians of nature, and Ben Fogle hosted ZSL's new podcast – Wildest Moments, a series of interviews with wildlife experts and celebrities about their incredible animal encounters – with sponsorship from Mountain Warehouse.

Later in 2026, with the help of visitors at both Zoos, we set a new Guinness World Record for the most contributions to a painting-by-numbers, and unveiled a mosaic celebrating our first female Curator of Reptiles, Dr Joan Procter, by artist Linder (see page 2). This autumn, Harper Collins will be releasing a new Winnie the Pooh story set at London Zoo (celebrating the original Winnipeg the bear, a resident at the Zoo). Each moment is designed to raise the profile of ZSL's work with new audiences and celebrate our role at the heart of British culture.





ZSL's future: Protecting planetary health

On ZSL's 200th anniversary we announced major plans that will help to shape our future – the development of a wildlife health centre, thanks to the most significant donation in ZSL's history. The centre will dramatically upscale ZSL's ability to monitor, diagnose and tackle the wildlife health challenges facing our planet – contributing to the conservation of not just wildlife, but the interlinked health of humans too. The centre will also become a major part of London Zoo, where visitors will be able to learn about our research and the exceptional veterinary care we provide for our animals. Read more on page 19.



Pictured (clockwise from bottom left): We launched a new podcast, hosted by Ben Fogle; opened a heritage exhibition at our Zoos; and announced plans for a wildlife health centre.

2

SPARKING YOUNG MINDS IN LONDON'S ZOOTOWN

Launching London Zoo's new interactive space for children

Overview

In the UK, families living in urban environments face a clear and growing challenge: how to engage young children (particularly under-eights) in wildlife conservation at an early stage. Families make up half of all London Zoo visitors, and the majority of these come with primary-school-age children. Insights from visitor research highlighted that families wanted more immersive play opportunities that connected children with wildlife in an age-appropriate way.

In 2024, we launched plans to transform our former Reptile House into a space for children to engage with conservation in a playful and meaningful way. Over two years, we held multiple focus groups with children and families to understand their needs, and developed plans alongside learning, conservation and wildlife experts across ZSL.

ZooTown is a zoo within a zoo, designed to inspire our younger visitors by letting them role-play the jobs that keep ZSL's conservation Zoos running – such as scientists, conservationists, keepers and vets. It fosters creativity, problem-solving, social skills and cognitive development. Crucially, it offers a fun weather-proof experience throughout the year, encourages new visitors to the Zoo and is expected to boost member retention.



31,000
children experienced ZooTown between October 2025 and April 2026



Pictured: ZooTown is designed to inspire youngsters through role-playing the roles that support the running of our conservation Zoos.

2025-26:

Inspiring children to act for nature

In October 2025, ZooTown opened to the public. The space has welcomed over 30,000 children this year and played a role in increasing family visitors' dwell time at the Zoo. It has also encouraged members to visit more often, and garnered excellent feedback – ZooTown is the fifth most-mentioned experience in positive comments from families. ZooTown is designed to complement the Key Stage 1 and 2 national curriculums and has become a foundation for new early years programming – including dedicated education sessions – helping thousands of children connect with conservation themes in a playful, accessible way.

Informed by research on play-based learning, ZooTown helps children explore different planet-protecting careers; from zookeeper and veterinarian to field conservationist and horticulturist, as well as seeing how different zoo roles – like ice cream vendors and hot drink baristas – all help to achieve ZSL's mission.

Each of ZooTown's 13 interactive stations were designed in line with the Royal Foundation's Shaping Us Framework, which aims to enhance social and emotional skills at all stages of life and the UK national curriculum. Importantly, each stage was also informed by our specialists in their respective fields; from the life-sized African wild dog model in ZooTown's veterinary department, complete with real ultrasound footage, to our 'whack-a-germ' game representing real pathogens, every element of ZooTown is based on real-world work by ZSL's people.

"Over half of families visiting ZSL Zoos list their top reasons for visiting as wanting to encourage their children's interest in wildlife conservation and stimulate their children's imaginations. ZooTown meets those needs in spades."

Lee Duffy,
Head of Visitor Operations, London Zoo

842
education sessions were held in ZooTown this year



Pictured: ZooTown has several zones where youngsters can design their own zoo habitat (above) and deliver veterinary care for animals (right).



A pathway into wildlife science

At ZooTown's heart is the veterinary hospital, where children have the opportunity to diagnose health issues using life-sized animal models, examine real-life x-rays and get hands on with a range of species represented in our Zoos. At ZSL, we are committed to developing pathways for young people to explore careers in wildlife science and veterinary medicine, and ZooTown is one part of our mission to inspire the next generation of wildlife health professionals – crucial for meeting our planet's conservation needs (read more on page 19). **Vets in Action**, our annual February half-term event, celebrated its tenth year this year, giving visiting families hands-on experience of ZSL's wide-ranging veterinary work. Meanwhile, one of our latest projects, **Inside Nature**, has been designed to meet a gap in the education of older children: many students studying biology will never see a real organ or postmortem examination in an animal. This first-of-its-kind project is transforming post-mortem examinations at ZSL's Zoos into free educational resources for GCSE and A-level students, with dissection videos, animations, microscopic imagery and exam-style worksheets.



3

UNLOCKING INVESTMENT FOR CONSERVATION

Developing sustainable business and innovative investment for nature

Overview

It is estimated that protecting and restoring biodiversity globally will cost $1 trillion a year.* Governments and philanthropists – the traditional sources of funding for conservation – will, at best, provide just a fifth of this. The remaining 80% needs to come from the private sector, where there is growing recognition of the need to act – $44 trillion of global GDP is dependent on nature, and nature loss is forecast to cost the world economy $2.7 trillion by 2030.

To address these intertwined challenges, our Sustainable Business and Finance team supports companies, investors, governments, communities, NGOs, universities and donors to take meaningful action for nature. We combine world-leading conservation science and on-the-ground insight with practical business solutions to reduce nature-related risk within supply chains and financial systems and other areas of business. We have a wide range of private-sector partners that we engage, advise and train, including Google, HSBC and Aviva Investors.

Our focus is on designing and developing high-integrity nature finance projects that are scientifically robust, socially empowering and nature positive, aiming to catalyse £100 million in investment into nature by 2030. This work is integrated with our field programmes around the world, and examples include: in Thailand we supported local communities with the creation of two elephant-friendly coffee brands alongside local cafés and roasteries; in Kenya we have been working with the government to develop a human-wildlife coexistence bond (see page 62); and in the Philippines we advise frontline organisations on the development of new, community-led nature-based solutions as part of our role in the SCeNe Coalition.

* Financing Nature: Closing the global biodiversity financing gap, The Paulson Institute, The Nature Conservancy and the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability, 2020.



Pictured: Coffee offers a sustainable and nature-friendly agroforestry model; we've worked with small holder farmers in Thailand's Kanchanaburi province to establish a coffee cooperative (inset right).





"Working with ZSL's team of technical experts on the ground has helped further the SCeNe Coalition's ability to bridge conservation science and scalable investment."

Tamara Singh, Chair, Southeast Asia Climate and Nature-based Solutions (SCeNe) Coalition

Pictured: In Kenya, we're working with the government to develop a human-wildlife conflict bond (top left); through SCeNe, we support frontline organisations implementing nature-based solutions, such as mangrove restoration (inset centre).

2025-26: Leveraging finance for human-wildlife coexistence

Human-wildlife conflict is a major and growing challenge in landscapes where people and wildlife coexist. Crop damage, livestock predation and safety risks increasingly threaten livelihoods and undermine conservation – and to tackle the challenge, we urgently need financial support.

ZSL is leading the design of an outcomes-based financing mechanism – the Human Wildlife Conflict (HWCx) Bond – to attract private investment to human-wildlife coexistence projects. We are working closely with Kenya-based insurance firm AB Entheos, and the project has received the support of the Government of Kenya; their endorsement, the active involvement of the Kenya Wildlife Service and data sharing will be crucial to developing the bond.

The HWCx Bond is in its early stages, but it builds on the success of the Wildlife Conservation Bond, developed by ZSL alongside Credit Suisse and launched in South Africa in 2022 by the World Bank. That bond attracted $150 million in private investment and, using interest from that investment, the World Bank will oversee grant payments of an estimated $7 million over five years to rhino conservation efforts in Addo and Great Fish River National Parks. When the bond matures in 2027, and if the project successfully meets its targets, the Global Environment Facility will release funds to cover the conservation projects and investors will receive a return on their investment. The bond was designed to shift the risk of investing in conservation from institutional funders (where funds are limited) to capital market investors, ensuring institutional funders can confidently invest in successful conservation.

Improving nature finance impact

Biodiversity credits, like carbon credits, offer businesses the opportunity to invest in conservation and contribute to improved environmental security. For example, the conservation of herbivores in southern Africa's savannah ecosystems could have wider benefits for wildfire prevention and carbon sequestration. However, like carbon credits, biodiversity credits are an emerging model for nature finance that have yet to be standardised, and research is needed to understand how effectively credits can offset habitat and biodiversity loss. ZSL is part of SPIN (Science for Private Investment in Nature), funded by Defra and delivered in collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Stantec and Imperative Global, exploring how science could inform and standardise high-impact nature finance. We held several workshops this year with scientists, investors and conservation funders, and we have developed several case studies (including ZSL's work successfully growing the tiger populations in Nepal and restoring scimitar-horned oryx to Chad) to assess their suitability for biodiversity credits-type financing approaches. This has informed standard-setting across the sector, such as contributing to the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPBC).



4

DRIVING POLICY CHANGE FOR MANGROVES

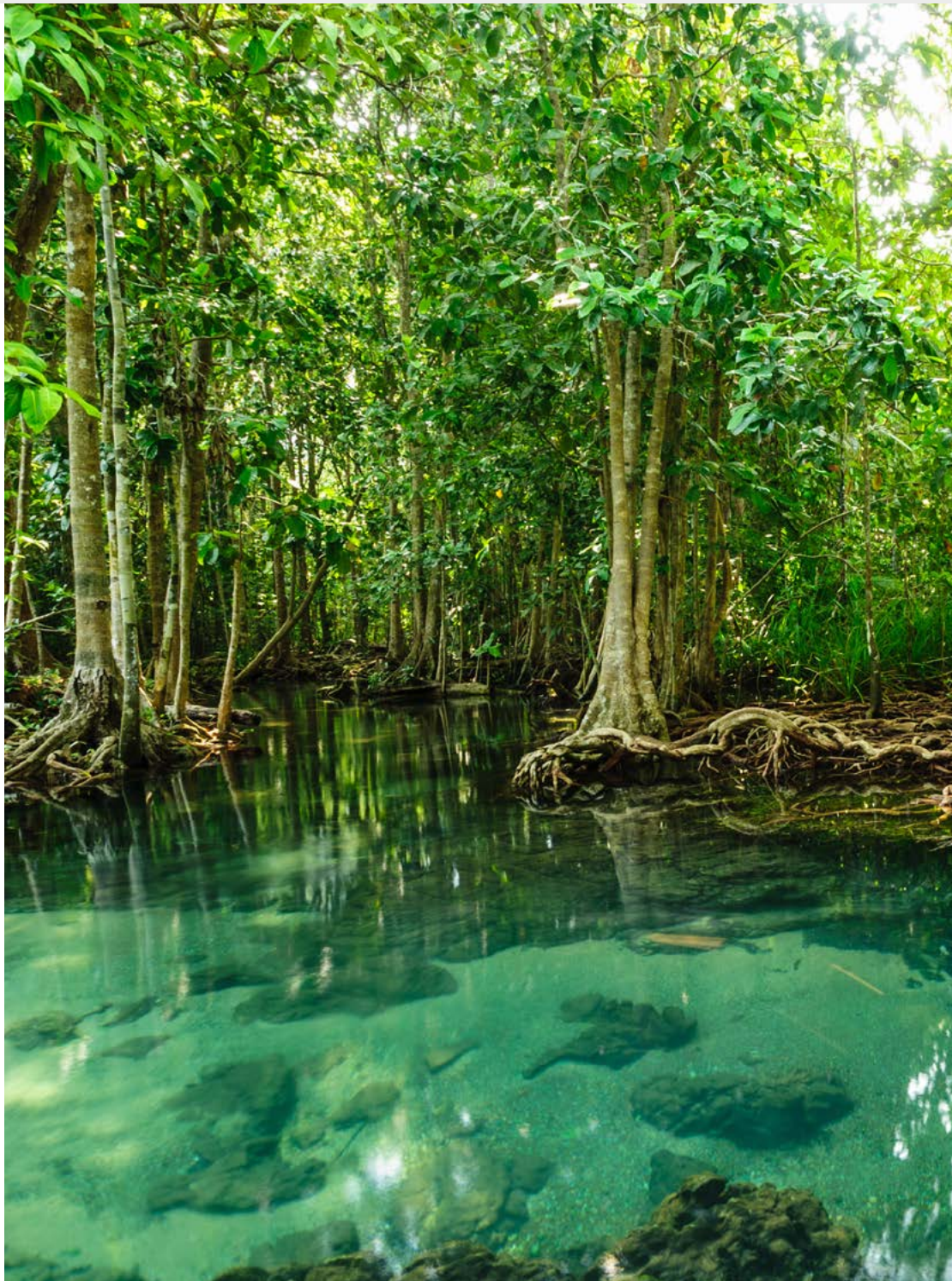
Supporting the Philippine Government with the protection and restoration of its blue carbon ecosystems

Overview

Mangrove forests are miraculous not just because of their ability to withstand saltwater – they are able to capture and sequester 'blue carbon' (carbon found in aquatic environments) up to 40 times faster than carbon captured by terrestrial forests. This makes them a highly effective tool in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Moreover, their root systems provide a defence from storm surges, and act as a nursery system for young fish, protecting and supporting coastal communities around the planet.

The Philippines has lost around half of its mangrove forests, and much of the remaining forests are fragmented and depleted. In a country that is affected by around 20 typhoons per year, and where fish is a significant portion of diets, the protection and restoration of this vital ecosystem could affect the lives of millions of Filipinos. However, mangrove management suffers from a lack of central coordination. While mangroves are affected by a huge number of policy decisions – transport, housing, tourism, fisheries – no single government body exists to oversee their management, and restoration projects are therefore limited in scale.

ZSL has joined forces with the Philippine Government and the World Economic Forum to develop a governing body to drive the restoration and protection of mangroves, as well as seagrasses and tidal marshes, at a national level.



Pictured: The Philippines has lost around half of its mangrove forests; we've joined forces with the government to help drive their restoration.



2025-26: A national blue carbon roadmap

This year, ZSL coordinated the Philippines' National Blue Carbon Action Partnership (NBCAP) and the completion of a blue carbon roadmap. The five-year plan is designed to unite stakeholders across the country and guide the Philippines' management of its blue carbon ecosystems. The roadmap was developed with policymakers from across government, along with scientists, financiers and members of coastal communities. It was officially approved by the Philippine Government in May 2026.

A number of bills are now in the process of being presented to the Philippine Congress, including a bill to adopt a national coastal greenbelt – which will help to consolidate mangrove laws under one umbrella – and a bill approving the rehabilitation of abandoned coastal fish farms (known as fish ponds) into mangrove forest. We are also encouraging the Philippine Government to adopt the Blue Carbon Data Explorer, which uses satellite data to monitor coastline habitats, as its standard decision-making tool for mangrove restoration and protection.

A major aspect of the roadmap will involve the exploration of blue carbon financing, and how it can be used to boost restoration projects. Investing in habitat restoration through the purchase of 'carbon credits' is one way that governments and private businesses around the world can offset their carbon emissions and meet compulsory emissions targets (such as the Paris Agreement). As a highly effective carbon-capture ecosystem, mangroves represent an attractive prospect to investors; we'll be working with experts to develop a robust, evidence-based investment system that delivers real emissions reductions and benefits both biodiversity and coastal communities.



Leaders in mangrove restoration

ZSL's appointment as secretariat of the NBCAP is recognition of our expertise in mangrove restoration. We are part of the Global Mangrove Alliance – an international alliance of NGOs and governments set up to shape mangrove policy – and have been working in the Philippines for more than 15 years, where we have honed the science of mangrove restoration and developed best practice for community-led mangrove restoration. Local communities are at the heart of our approach – we work with them to identify areas for restoration, to set up mangrove nurseries, to develop seed germination techniques and give community members training. We regularly involve local universities and colleges, giving them hand-on opportunities to train in mangrove restoration, and have also set up several 'centres of learning' – small educational hubs for training, research and tourism – where villages can show off their successes to other communities considering embarking on mangrove restoration. This approach helps to build long-term, local capacity and empowers communities to continue restoring and protecting mangroves long after projects are completed.

Find out more about our FAIRER conservation approach on page 31.

Pictured: The roadmap builds on our experience of restoring mangroves (left); community-run nurseries are crucial to mangrove recovery (above).

Success stories from ZSL's history

CELEBRATING A PIONEER IN REPTILE CARE

London Zoo's first female Curator of Reptiles, Dr Joan Procter, was a game changer, for both female zoologists and the animals she cared for



In 1923, at just 26 years old, ZSL Fellow Dr Joan Procter was appointed as London Zoo's first female Curator of Reptiles. Joan joined ZSL from the British Museum's department of Reptiles and Fishes, but her appointment still caused a national stir – up to this point, the field of zoology had been dominated by men.

Joan was a fierce advocate for reptiles as intelligent and complex creatures, pushing back on common stereotypes at the time that depicted them as dangerous and stupid. Famously, she befriended two Komodo dragons, Sumba and Sumbawa, who arrived at London Zoo in 1927. Sumbawa and Joan developed a particularly strong bond, and the lizard joined Joan on walks around the Zoo, to the delight of visitors at the time.

During the creation of Whipsnade, Joan was instrumental in designing areas of the new Zoo, but tragically her incredible career was cut short. Having suffered throughout her life with chronic illness, Joan passed away aged 34 years old – just four months after the Zoo opened to the public in 1931. At ZSL, we're determined that Joan's legacy lives on.



Revolutionising reptile care

In her role at ZSL, Joan led the creation of a new Reptile House – hailed at the time as the most sophisticated building of its type in the world. She introduced several revolutionary techniques into the design, including the use of heated pipes to generate heat for warmth-loving species, and the installation of 'Vita-glass', a special type of glass developed in the 1920s that allowed UV light from the sun to pass through it, into the animal's habitats.

She described the new Komodo dragon habitat in her 1928 paper *On a living Komodo Dragon*: "a large enclosure of natural shingle and soil, planted with living palm-trees... a cave, rocks and a swimming pool. A great deal of care has been exercised to provide proper climatic conditions [and] the roof is of Vita-glass, transparent to ultraviolet (UV) light."

"This was revolutionary in reptile care," says Ben Tapley, ZSL's Curator of Reptiles and Amphibians. "UV radiation is essential for reptile health. Without it, many reptiles are unable to synthesise sufficient amounts of vitamin D3 and develop metabolic bone disease."



Image © Luke Capeling



Her changes would revolutionise reptile care around the world. The reptiles in the new house were more active, healthier, had greater appetites and lived longer. The importance of Joan's innovations are clear when compared with the poor health of other Komodo dragons in zoos at the time: "the broken-spirited beasts barely had strength to drag themselves from one end to the other," reported a dismayed zoologist, W Burden, after visiting a New York zoo to see their animals. Joan's methods were quickly adopted in other zoos around the world.

Pictured: Joan Procter, ZSL's first female Curator of Reptiles (far left and above), championed a new approach to reptiles (left); some of Joan's own amphibian illustrations (centre left).

Success stories from ZSL's history



Changing attitudes towards reptiles

The giant monitor lizards from the near-mythical Komodo Islands were considered ferocious by the public, and Joan quickly set out to address this misconception – highlighting their intelligence, ability to be trained and calmness around people. She went as far as taking her favourite dragon, Sumbawa, for walks and letting him be photographed with young children.

While this would never happen today, as there is now far greater emphasis on safety in zoos, Joan's bold approach got to the heart of a misconception about reptiles, says Ben. "Their cognitive abilities had been massively underestimated – Joan was a real pioneer in recognising their intelligence.

"Nowadays, enrichment is a big part of caring for our reptiles and amphibians, because it promotes their natural behaviours. For our Komodo dragons, this might be burying smelly foods for them to find and dig up, like they might with a carcass in the wild, or something as simple as turning on the sprinkler system to simulate a forest downpour."

Importantly, says Ben, zookeepers at London Zoo utilise the Komodo dragon's intelligence for the benefit of their care. "We have trained Komodo dragons to sit on weighing scales, to walk into a box so they can be x-rayed and to let our vets take blood samples by hand. This takes away the stress for the dragon and reduces the risk for us as their carers."

Reflecting on his predecessor, one of the most inspiring things about Joan was that she challenged stereotypes of both reptiles and women, says Ben. Today, ZSL champions the importance of human diversity in the conservation of a biodiverse world, and the Zoos' animal care teams reflect that ethos. "With many female herpetology experts now following in Joan's footsteps, caring for reptiles is no longer considered a macho pursuit," says Ben. "We're also working to break down gender barriers around the world through initiatives like the EDGE Fellowship programme, which champions many early-stage, female conservationists working to protect overlooked species of reptiles and amphibians."





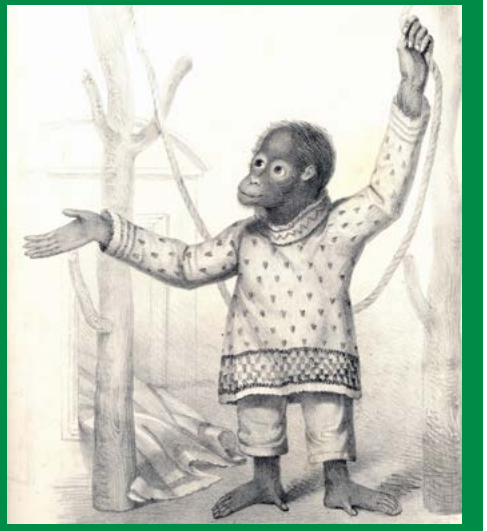
Inspiring Darwin

In 1831, a 21-year-old zoologist named Charles Darwin became a Corresponding Fellow of ZSL. In 1837 he returned to England, fresh from a five-year journey around the world that would change the course of zoology forever.

He brought with him hundreds of specimens and records of plants and animals, and sought the help of leading naturalists to help him unpick them, including experts at ZSL. One of the most eminent ornithologists of the time was John Gould, ZSL's Curator of Birds, who drew Darwin's attention to the Galapagos finches and the variations of their beaks.

With Gould's support, Darwin started to form his theory of natural selection and evolution: that species evolve over time to suit their environments. This was a major challenge to religious thinking, which held that all animals were created by God.

Darwin went on to become a full ZSL Fellow in 1839 and served on ZSL's Council. He took regular trips to London Zoo and was enthralled by one creature in particular – Jenny the orangutan. Sensing that Jenny might hold the key to understanding humans, Darwin spent many months with her – observing how she could recognise herself in a mirror, make use of tools and even feel complex emotions. Inspired by Jenny the orangutan, Darwin would go on to declare another once-daring, now commonly accepted theory: that humans evolved from apes.



Pictured: Komodo dragons (left and top left) were a favourite of Joan Procter; Darwin's theories of human evolution were inspired by Jenny the orangutan (right).

LOOKING AHEAD

Creating Change in 2026-27



Supporting society-wide change for nature

Driving long-lasting change for wildlife requires national and international policies that recognise and support the value of nature, financial mechanisms that encourage businesses to operate sustainably, and a global public that feels connected to and motivated by conservation. These are some of the ways that we'll be working to drive change in the coming months, in the UK and overseas.

Drawing attention to the global biodiversity crisis

In autumn 2026 we will work with WWF to publish the next *Living Planet Report*. At the heart of the report is the Living Planet Index (LPI) – the world's most comprehensive indicator of wildlife population trends, produced by our Institute of Zoology. The LPI comprises over 35,000 populations of almost 5,800 species. It allows us to analyse population trends for vertebrate populations from monitoring sites around the world, and it is used to assess progress towards national and international conservation targets. The LPI has been cited by scientists and policymakers over 2,000 times since its inception in 1997 – an indicator of its wide reach and value – and we've worked with several countries (including Canada and Australia) to develop national versions of the LPI to help them better understand their biodiversity trends.

Uniting climate and nature policies

In June 2026, we collaborated on the publication of a major policy report calling on governments and international bodies to unite climate and nature policies. Led by ZSL's Professor Nathalie Pettorelli and co-authored by a team of the UK's leading environmental scientists, *The Risks of Climate-Nature Silos* cautioned that fragmented environmental policies are creating costly failures, missed opportunities and unintended damage – at a time when planetary boundaries are rapidly being crossed. Published following a record-breaking heatwave across Europe, accelerating biodiversity decline and worsening land degradation, the audit arrives at a critical moment. The year 2026 is expected to be pivotal for environmental diplomacy as the three Rio Conventions – on climate change, biodiversity and desertification – convene to shape future global action; we will be advocating for joined-up action at the global and national level across these conventions.

Using AI to inform conservation action

We recently secured funding for a new project developing foundational AI models for climate and environmental projections across both marine and terrestrial ecosystems. In a partnership with Exeter University, a team led by ZSL's Dr Robin Freeman – Senior Research Fellow and head of the Conservation AI Lab – will be using global environmental datasets and over four million seabird tracking records to train predictive tools for forecasting how species distributions and habitat suitability may change throughout this century. The technology will help us and other organisations around the world identify where conservation interventions – from on-the-ground action to policy change – can most effectively improve ecosystem resilience, and drive change where it is most needed. While the initial focus is UK seabirds, the longer-term goal will be to develop globally scalable tools for predictive conservation and ecosystem engineering.



Pictured: ZSL is calling on governments and international bodies to form a united approach to climate change and nature conservation.

STRENGTHENING ZSL

We underpin our success by growing our income, championing innovation and investing in our people



Pictured: Over 1,000 volunteers supported our work this year.

STRENGTHENING ZSL

Overview

We operate in a fast-changing world, shaped by economic uncertainty and evolving societal pressures. Yet the need for ZSL to deliver science-led conservation has never been greater. To create meaningful impact for wildlife, we must remain resilient, financially strong and able to inspire support from a wide range of partners and audiences.

That support comes from many sources – including visitors to our Zoos, members, philanthropists, corporate partners, trusts, foundations, statutory funders, Fellows and Patrons. Together, these funds enable us to protect species, restore habitats, advance conservation science and engage people more deeply with the natural world.

To sustain and grow that impact, we continue to invest in the foundations that make our work possible: our people, our operations, our Zoos and our long-term sustainability. At the heart of this is our commitment to creating an inclusive, diverse and high-performing culture that values wellbeing and leadership development. By investing in the growth and recognition of our staff and volunteers, we will build a workforce equipped to meet future challenges while continuing to drive forward our vision.

Our supporters play a critical role in this, as do our two conservation Zoos. They connect millions of people with wildlife each year, generate essential income and create powerful opportunities to inspire action for nature. By continually improving animal care, visitor experience and operational efficiency, we are strengthening the platform from which we can invest in our wider mission.

We continue investing in the future of our Zoos to improve habitats for animals, enhance visitor experiences and reduce our environmental footprint. Sustainability is embedded across our plans, including our ambition to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2035. Together, these investments help ensure that the income we raise is used effectively, that our organisation remains fit for the future and that we can continue delivering lasting conservation impact.



Pictured: London Zoo's entrance; Trolls visited Whipsnade Zoo this summer (right).

LIVING ZSL'S VALUES

Aim Live our organisational values, creating a work environment where diverse perspectives thrive and wellbeing is prioritised in a safe and productive environment

Diversity and inclusion

Just as diversity is important for the health of any ecosystem, diversity and inclusion is key to the strength of our organisation. At ZSL we foster an inclusive environment through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group, which oversees a network of working groups – all striving to embed inclusive practices across our culture and operations, and each sponsored by a member of our executive leadership team.

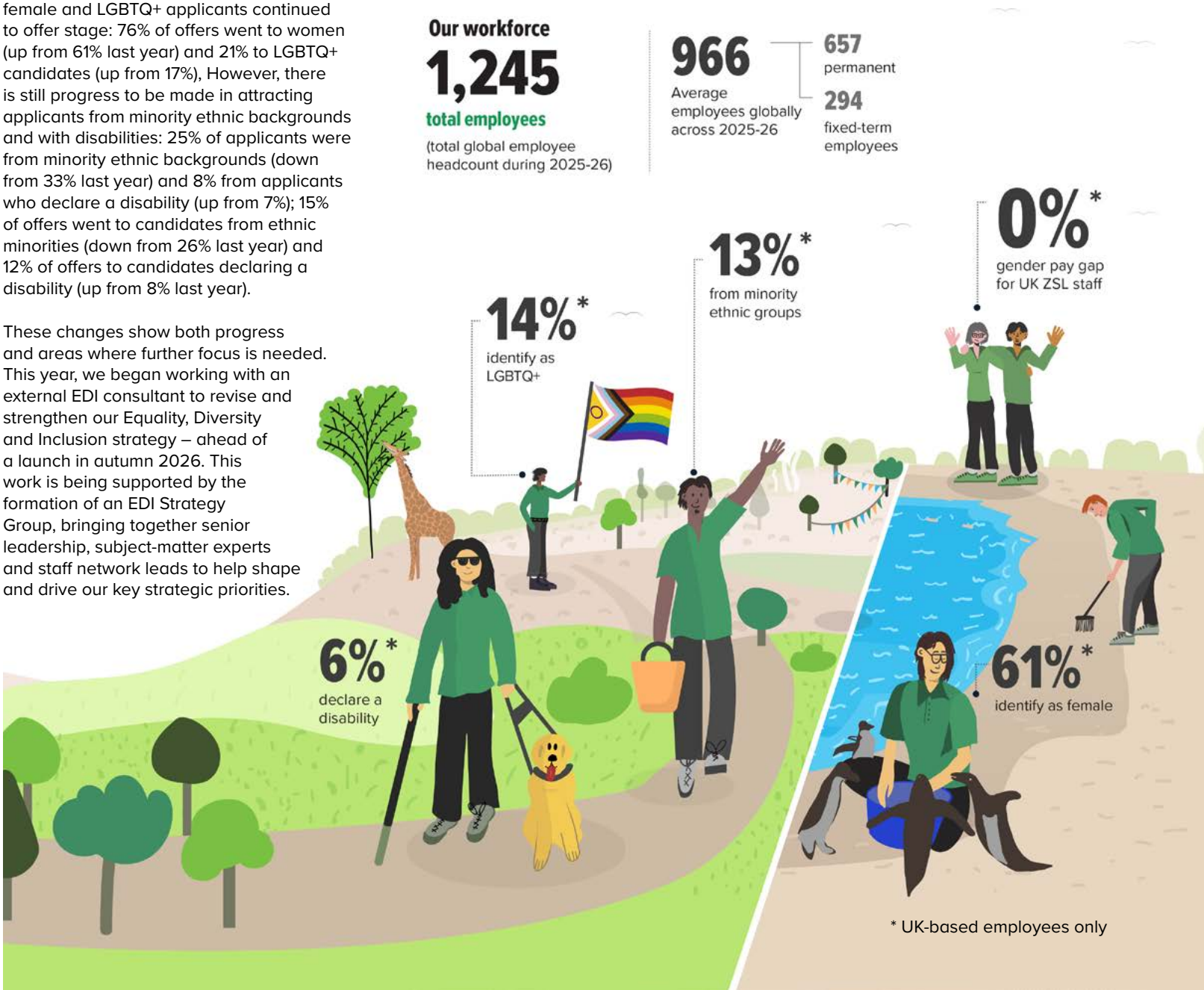
This year, our work received recognition from several sources: we achieved Visibly Better Employer Accreditation in November 2025, reflecting our commitment to creating an inclusive and accessible recruitment experience for people who are blind or partially sighted; we were invited to join the Better Hiring Institute Fairer Hiring Committee, enabling us to contribute to wider sector best practice; and we were awarded bronze accreditation with the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI).

Recruitment

We are working so that ZSL better reflects the UK's broader diversity. Currently, 14% of staff identify as LGBTQ+ (up from 13% last year, compared to 3.2% in the wider population); 13% of staff identify as ethnic minorities (down from 14% last year, compared to 18% in the wider population); and 6% declare a disability (unchanged from last year, compared to 17% in the wider population).

We attract a diverse pool of applicants for paid roles, including 46% women (up from 43% last year) and 16% who identify as LGBTQ+ (up from 13%). This growth in female and LGBTQ+ applicants continued to offer stage: 76% of offers went to women (up from 61% last year) and 21% to LGBTQ+ candidates (up from 17%), However, there is still progress to be made in attracting applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds and with disabilities: 25% of applicants were from minority ethnic backgrounds (down from 33% last year) and 8% from applicants who declare a disability (up from 7%); 15% of offers went to candidates from ethnic minorities (down from 26% last year) and 12% of offers to candidates declaring a disability (up from 8% last year).

These changes show both progress and areas where further focus is needed. This year, we began working with an external EDI consultant to revise and strengthen our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy – ahead of a launch in autumn 2026. This work is being supported by the formation of an EDI Strategy Group, bringing together senior leadership, subject-matter experts and staff network leads to help shape and drive our key strategic priorities.





Pictured: Zookeeper Kim Carter (left); Veterinarian Stefan Saverimuttu (right).

Training and development

This year we piloted a First Line Managers programme, designed to equip supervisors and frontline managers with the core operational and interpersonal skills needed to be an effective leader. The training incorporated an Inclusive Leadership module, which is also an essential part in the induction of new management staff, designed to equip our managers with the skills and tools to foster equality, diversity and inclusion within their teams.

We also ran Culture of Respect and Building Everyday Inclusion workshops for new and existing staff, which promote awareness of unconscious bias, and the use of inclusive behaviours and allyship, and ground our staff in the interpersonal skills crucial to a supportive a healthy workplace culture.

Youth advisory board

One of the ways we're working to encourage a diverse range of people to engage with ZSL and undertake conservation careers is through our Youth Advisory Board. Comprising 12 members aged 16-25, who sit for a maximum of four years, the board advises ZSL on incorporating the needs and perspectives of young people in our work. This year the board published a report on Barriers to Conservation Careers, based on research from surveys and focus groups with young people from different backgrounds – the report is now being used to inform our career programming and recruitment practices. The board also undertook a youth audit of ZSL's work, identifying areas for development in our youth participation work, and launched the ZSL Young Wildlife Conservationist of the Year Award.

Wellbeing

We nurture a supportive and inclusive workplace environment that promotes wellbeing and fosters employee engagement and productivity. We work to do this by providing our staff with a robust range of wellbeing support – including access to free counselling and support, a network of trained Mental Health First Aiders and Wellbeing Champions across the organisation, and a calendar of wellbeing events throughout the year.

This year we held a 'Time to Talk' day, with drop-in sessions where staff and volunteers could chat to trained staff about their mental health, and other events included meditation sessions, yoga, mindfulness, financial wellbeing talks, wellbeing walks and various craft activities. As well as providing formal and informal support, these events help to break down the stigma around talking about mental health and raise awareness of the wellbeing support available to staff. More than 200 staff and volunteers attended wellbeing events this year, and we'll be expanding our events for next year based on staff feedback.



Volunteering

Volunteers are vital to our organisation and are involved in almost all areas of the charity, from supporting the smooth running of our conservation Zoos and enhancing the visitor experience to supporting UK-based and overseas fieldwork and science. In total, 1,085 volunteers supported us this year at London and Whipsnade Zoos, donating 112,500 hours, and many more have volunteered as citizen scientists for our fieldwork projects.

Volunteering is also one of the ways we engage with and support local communities in our regions, giving people the opportunity to gain new experience, skills and connections, and empower them to make change in their local areas. This year we joined a research study being conducted by the University of York into inclusive volunteering. The two-and-a-half-year study, that includes five other heritage and nature-based sites, will help us to improve how inclusive volunteering is developed and embedded across ZSL – ensuring more volunteers feel the benefits of supporting us.

We also entered the second year of our Supported Volunteering Scheme, funded by a grant from the John Lyon's Charity. The scheme offers practical volunteering opportunities and educational accreditation for young people and adults in London who face significant barriers to inclusion and employment. The scheme currently supports our London Zoo grounds and logistics, horticulture and animal departments, and aims to give supported volunteers the opportunity to gain confidence and workplace skills that they can transfer to independent volunteering roles or paid employment.

112,500
hours donated by
1,085
Zoo volunteers



Pictured: Volunteers like those pictured support the running of our Zoo, our visitor experience and our conservation work.

SPREADING THE WORD

Aim Reach wider audiences and cement strong, credible brand reputations by driving growth and loyalty, leveraging our bicentenary in 2026 to generate wider support

Reaching new audiences

We reach national and international audiences through our PR and digital teams, who manage our media presence and develop communication campaigns that support our wider goals. Across the year, we drove coverage through a steady flow of conservation and animal care stories. Early momentum came from the release of hazel dormice back into the wild, showcasing ZSL's role in national species recovery, followed by coverage of specialist vets travelling more than 4,000 miles to work with our veterinary team to treat Bashu the giraffe. Coverage included a double-page spread in *The Guardian*.

ZooTown's autumn launch (read more on page 59) was a pivotal moment for our brand; the launch combined traditional media, influencers and high-profile talent to show off London Zoo as an innovative, family-focussed destination. This energy carried into major environmental storytelling, including the large-scale oyster reef restoration project, which dominated our October coverage and underscored our leadership in habitat recovery.





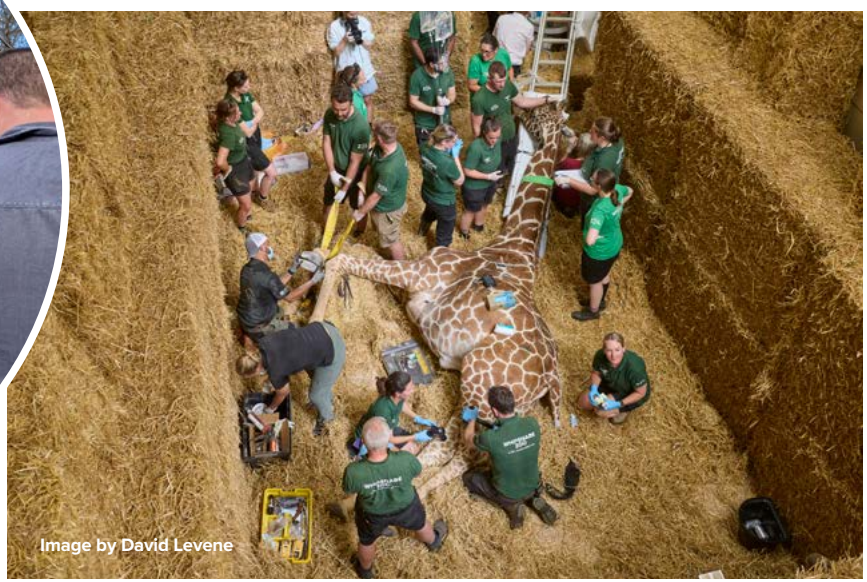
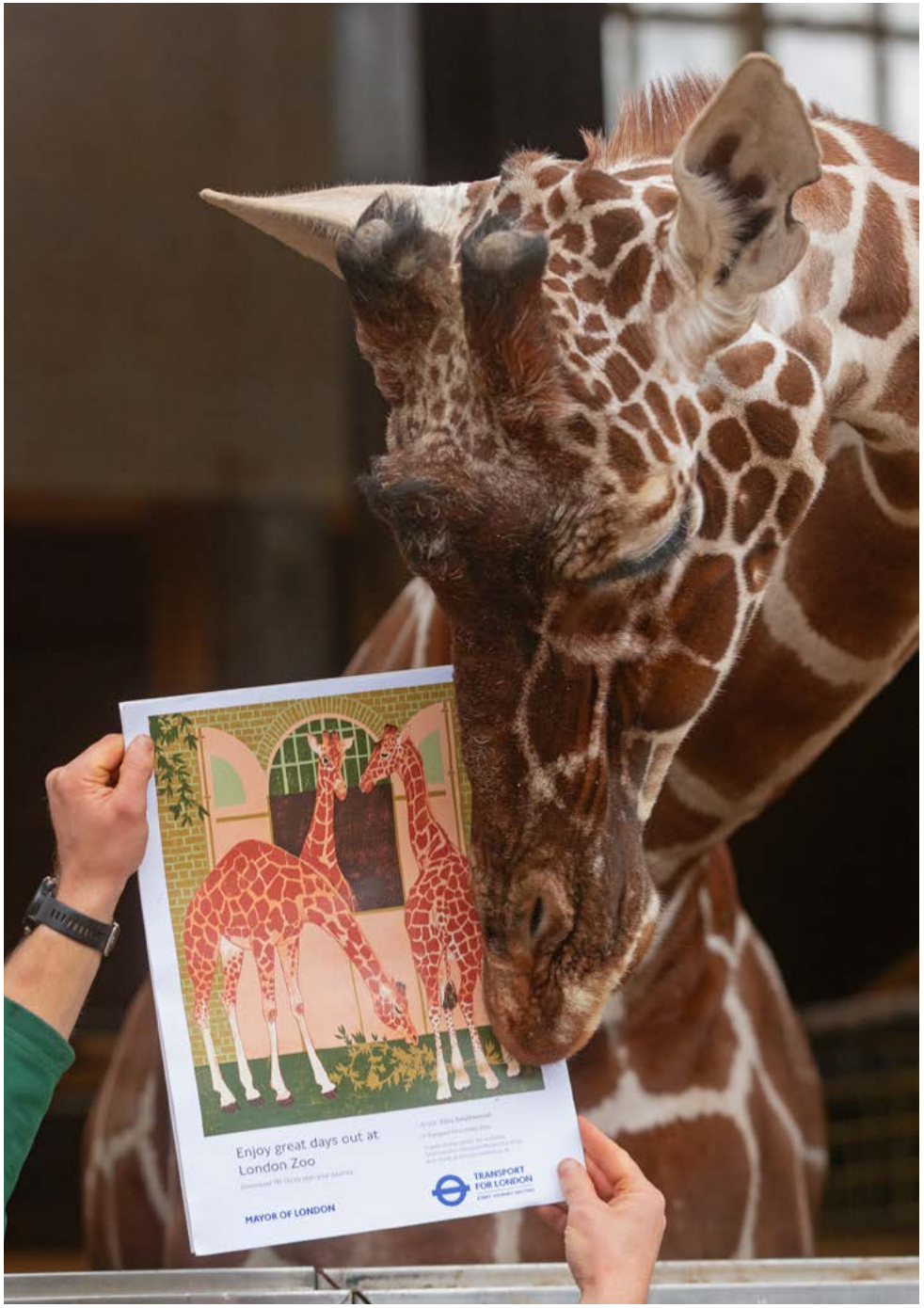


Image by David Levene

Pictured: *Blue Peter* aired a special 'Zoo Peter' episode from London Zoo (centre and top right); and *The Guardian* followed our veterinarians behind-the-scenes for a year (far right).



Kicking off 2026, our bicentenary year, was the reveal of the Royal Mint's commemorative £2 coin, which generated extensive national attention, followed by the media launch of a Transport for London poster campaign that brought London Zoo into the daily journeys of millions across the capital. At the same time, we expanded our storytelling into new formats, notably ZSL's short film *Guardians of the Small*, and the Wildest Moments podcast. *Guardians of the Small*, a film showcasing ZSL's longest-running conservation project to restore Partula snails to French Polynesia (read more on page 15), was premiered at the Curzon in Camden, and promoted in a broadcast segment on ITV London. The year culminated in a landmark media moment with the unveiling of plans for a major new wildlife health centre (read more on page 19), securing more than 500 pieces of coverage, on our 200th anniversary.

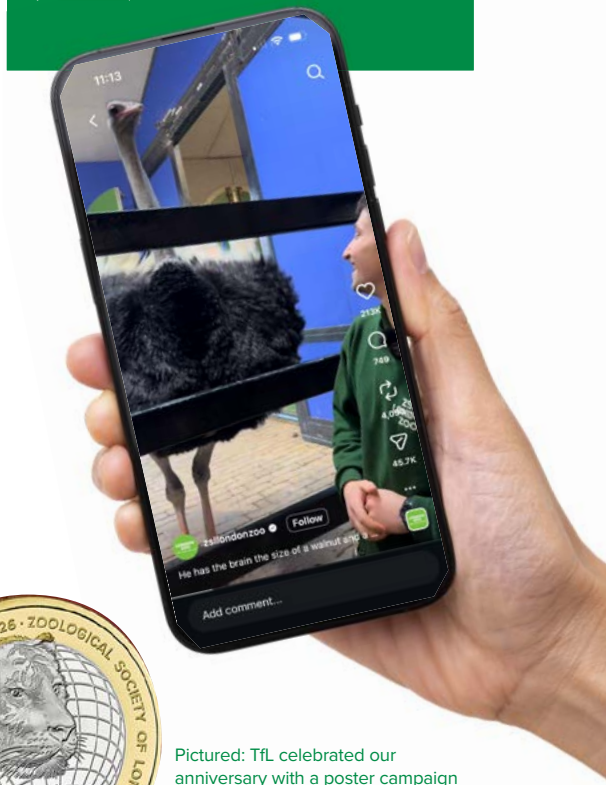
We continue to grow our social media presence, driving passion for our animals, our conservation mission and our on-site Zoo events. This year our total social media following reached 1.4 million fans and followers, a 27% year-on-year increase. Across 3,101 posts published in the year, our Instagram content averaged 3,999 interactions per post – a figure that reflects both the quality of our storytelling and the strength of the audience we have built. On TikTok, the average reach per post was 125,895, underlining the platform's unmatched ability to put our content in front of new audiences at scale. Our highest-performing post of the year was a London Zoo Instagram video of Rocky the ostrich, published on 30 December 2025, which generated 229,442 interactions and 3.3 million impressions. It was our most popular video ever, demonstrating the extraordinary reach that animal-led storytelling can generate.

Increasing ZSL's social media following

1.4 MILLION
fans and followers (+27%)

6,084,919
Total likes (+13%)

312,000
Total shares
(+254.5%)





Pictured: TfL celebrated our anniversary with a poster campaign (left); the Royal Mint launched a commemorative £2 coin (centre); and Rocky the ostrich became a social media star (above).

Members

Our membership programme encourages visitors to join us and, importantly, to stay with us as members for several years. The membership base grew by 1% this year to 147,000 members. While new memberships were 2% down this year, renewals were up by 7% – suggesting that existing members are feeling the benefits of staying with us. Membership represents great value for money, with unlimited year-round free entry to London Zoo and Whipsnade Zoo. Gold Members also access a range of extras: early booking opportunities, discounts, our member magazine *Wild About* and on-site events programmes. Our most recent initiative to engage Gold Members offers exclusive early-opening hours at both Zoos. Each event is focussed on an animal species, with a special talk, zookeeper Q&As and a sneak-peek into the Zoos ahead of the official opening time.

Fellows

Fellows are a community of scientists, conservationists and zoology enthusiasts at the heart of ZSL. Since founding ZSL in 1826, they have included celebrated names like Charles Darwin, Dr Joan Procter, Sir David Attenborough and Kate Humble; and they remain central to our identity as a learned society and conservation charity. Our 3,605 Fellows are ZSL's governing body – electing Council members to oversee ZSL's CEO and senior leadership team. In 2025 we held the first Fellows Conference, with a keynote address from Professor Anjali Goswami, Chief Science Officer at Defra. The conference created valuable opportunities for networking, knowledge exchange and interactive engagement sessions, and provided a platform for Fellows to share their work and gain a deeper insight into ZSL's work. We continue to focus on engaging early-career and student conservationists, recruiting more than 150 into the ZSL Fellowship last year. We held our second Student Day, delivering workshops and skills training designed to prepare our student Fellows for a career in conservation.

Patrons

Patronage is our philanthropic membership programme: a passionate and committed community of supporters whose generosity strengthens ZSL's long-term impact and resilience by providing vital unrestricted funding for our science, conservation and wildlife protection work around the world. Patronage offers opportunities to forge a deeper connection with ZSL's mission and to experience the impact of that support first-hand. Through a programme of exclusive events, bespoke experiences, and special engagements, Patrons and their families can meet our zookeepers, scientists and conservationists, encounter extraordinary animals, and become part of a community united by a shared commitment to restoring wildlife. This year, our Patron programme grew to more than 1,000 members, while participation and engagement at Patron events continued to increase, reflecting a community that is increasingly connected to our work, invested in our mission and inspired to help drive lasting impact for wildlife.



147,000
Members
▲ 1%

1,025
Patrons
▲ 4.6%

3,605
Fellows
▼ 2.8%



To find out how you can become a Member, Fellow or Patron visit zsl.org/support-us

Pictured: Student Fellows (left) and Patrons and their families (above) joined us on special events for our supporters.

RAISING AND MAKING MONEY

Aim Increase fundraising income and optimise commercial opportunities in our Zoos to increase annual income for sustained investment in our conservation Zoos and our science and conservation activities

Fundraising

Like many charities across the UK, we are operating in a challenging fundraising environment. Our costs have increased, while many people are finding it harder to give donations as household budgets come under pressure, meaning it is more difficult than ever to recruit new supporters. At the same time, some of our largest institutional donors are facing budget reductions, intensifying competition for the funding that remains. In response, we are diversifying how we engage new supporters and continuing to invest in the stewardship of our existing donors, whose generosity is vital to delivering our conservation impact.

Over the past year, we have invested in strengthening our Philanthropy and Legacy programmes, while continuing to build long-term corporate partnerships and deepen relationships with charitable foundations.

To read more about how supporters have made our work possible, turn to page 85.



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new and recurring grants from charitable trusts, foundations, lotteries and grant programmes supported our work

12

London Marathon runners raised over £22,000

Pictured: Michele D'Agnano was one of 12 London Marathon runners for ZSL, helping to raise £22,000.

Responsible fundraising and monitoring of activities

ZSL raises funds through philanthropy, trusts, foundations and statutory grantmakers, corporate partnerships, individual giving, challenge events and legacies. ZSL is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and observes recommendations of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising. We adhere to the Fundraising Code of Practice and use the Fundraising Regulator logo appropriately on all our fundraising material. Our fundraising is conducted with all relevant schemes and standards and with full compliance of UK data-protection legislation.

We are committed to ensuring we treat the public with respect at all times, taking special care to protect those who may find themselves in vulnerable circumstances. We work with a limited number of fundraising suppliers, ensuring their adherence to the Code is met, from initial due diligence and clear contractual obligation through to regular meetings and monitoring of their practices throughout their tenure.

We continue to monitor, review and update our fundraising compliance policies, procedures and staff training to create a culture that consistently aligns with our ethical standards and regulator commitments.

Complaints

We understand the importance of listening to our supporters and view complaints as an opportunity to learn and understand our supporters better. This financial year we have received one complaint from a member of the public about our fundraising activities and no complaints in respect of failures and/or breaches of the Code.

Fundraising feedback is pro-actively collected, collated and regularly discussed at a senior level to enhance and improve our fundraising activities and approach. We remain committed to transparency and continue to review ways to provide clearer and more accessible routes for the public to raise any concerns with us.

Events

Our events programme plays a pivotal role in driving commercial income to fund our conservation, encouraging new visitors to our Zoos and deepening our visitors' connection with our work.

Summer 2025 saw the world premiere of *Trolls: A Field Study* at Whipsnade Zoo, featuring 12 large-scale sculptures by renowned Danish recycle artist Thomas Dambo. The installation blended art, storytelling and environmental messaging, taking visitors on a thought-provoking trail while encouraging reflection on human behaviour and our relationship with nature. The exhibition contributed to over 387,000 summer visits to Whipsnade Zoo, with 11% of visitors citing the Trolls experience as their primary motivation for attending. Importantly, the trail also delivered measurable impact on our visitors' connection to nature, with 81% of participants agreeing with the statement "I felt closer to nature after my visit," compared to 75% of non-participants.

In anticipation of ZooTown's launch (see page 59), London Zoo's summer event – Zoo Crew – was designed to engage younger audiences through immersive role-play and hands-on activities. Children were invited to step into the role of zookeepers, exploring animal care, feeding, veterinary work and conservation. Feedback on the event was overwhelmingly positive from visitors, and 84% of participants reported an increased appreciation for wildlife and a commitment to taking conservation action after taking part.

Our flagship adult-only evening series – Zoo Nights – returned with exceptional demand, reinforcing its position as a key highlight of the events calendar. Across eight nights, attendance reached up to 5,000 guests per evening, with multiple dates selling out. Visitors experienced the Zoo in a unique, after-hours setting, enhanced by a special collaboration with Disney. Performances from West End alumni of The Lion King brought a distinctive cultural offering to the programme, creating a memorable, high-quality experience that broadened our audience appeal.







Pictured: Summer Zoo events like the Trolls trail at Whipsnade (left) and Zoo Nights at London (above) generated income for our work and attracted new audiences to learn about wildlife conservation.

Zoo operations

Our site operation teams help to shape the experiences of visitors to our two conservation Zoos, delivering experiences and products that drive revenue for our conservation work and creating impactful moments that inspire visitors.

We launched several new animal experiences, such as our Meet the Capybara experience, giving visitors extra opportunities to get up close and learn about our species. At both Zoos, we launched a new and immersive virtual reality experience, in partnership with Immotion VR. It gives visitors the chance to experience habitats and wildlife encounters around the world, via a headset, and learn about some of the species and biodiversity hotspots we're working to protect. Whipsnade Zoo also launched its new Mini-Rangers driving experience, with budding young drivers taking an offroad course to spot some of the key species we work with across the Zoo.

Both Zoos also delivered some incredible results through our catering partners. At Whipsnade, we delivered a record annual income, setting a new benchmark for performance. At London our events partner, Events by Benugo, also had an excellent year, winning a Bronze award for Best Historical Venue at the London Event Christmas Party Awards and gaining membership to Unique Venues of London, further highlighting the unique quality and appeal of our events spaces.

KEY London Zoo · Whipsnade Zoo · +xx% Percentage improvement on 2025-26 · – No change · ✓ On target



LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND (NPS)

London Zoo	43%	-1%	Target: 45%
Whipsnade Zoo	60%	+1%	✓Target: 55%



ENJOYMENT

London Zoo	61%	+2%	✓Target: 60%
Whipsnade Zoo	65%	+3%	✓Target: 60%



VISIT DELIVERED AGAINST REASON FOR VISITING

London Zoo	85%	+1%
Whipsnade Zoo	87%	–



VALUE FOR MONEY

London Zoo	74%	+1%	Target: 85%
Whipsnade Zoo	83%	+2%	Target: 85%

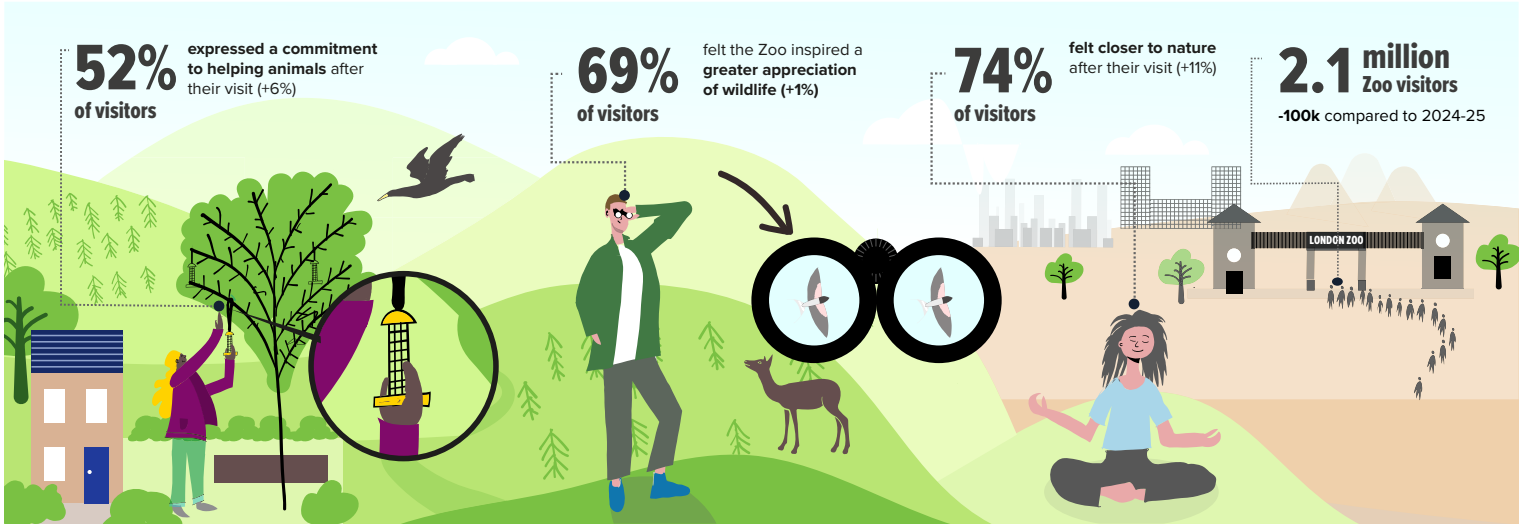
ONLINE REVIEWS

GOOGLE

London Zoo	★★★★½ 4.4	+0.1	Target: 4.5
Whipsnade Zoo	★★★★½ 4.6	–	✓Target: 4.5

TRIP ADVISOR

London Zoo	★★★★☆ 4.0	+0.2	✓Target: 4
Whipsnade Zoo	★★★★½ 4.9	+0.7	✓Target: 4



Brand licensing and retail

Our brand licensing programme serves two purposes: raising valuable funds to support our conservation work and building awareness of ZSL as a conservation organisation. Through everyday interactions in shops, homes, clothing, education and play, licensing helps make ZSL's impact more visible and accessible, and allows us to make meaningful partnerships with other, well-known brands.

This year we took on 10 new licensees across homeware, publishing, toys, stationery, apparel, luggage and accessories. We collaborated with sustainable homeware brand Liga to launch a 24-piece wildlife collection, crafted using environmentally responsible materials such as organic cotton, ethically sourced cork, and compostable cloth. The collection received strong industry recognition, earning two nominations at the Brand & Lifestyle Licensing Awards, including Best Sustainable Homeware Range.

We have recently partnered with publishing company Bonnier to produce a series of children's books, aimed at a range of ages. Each book is informed by the animals we care for at our Zoos and the conservation projects we undertake in the wild, and each book has been written with the support and input of our many animal experts – offering readers unique insights into animals, zookeeping and the life of conservationists.

For our own shops, we launched a new collection of zookeeper-inspired children's clothing with Frugi, and we also launched our own Anniversary Collection – a series of products inspired by our bicentenary, using incredible artworks from our Library and Archives.



9,120
visitors booked a Zoo experience or overnight stay



190,000
ice creams sold in our shops and kiosks

165,000
train tickets sold at Whipsnade Zoo

85,000
large soft toys sold, made with recycled inner stuffing





Pictured (clockwise from top left): Partnerships with Bonnier Books, Teemill, Liga and Woodmansterne helped to drive revenue and awareness for our work.

ENSURING OUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

Aim Refine our business model and increase our surplus for investment in our impact and operations

To ensure we can continue working for a world where wildlife thrives, we are striving to continuously improve our resilience, efficiency and operating model. An important element of this is making sure we are spending money effectively, and we are currently reviewing our operational processes to identify inefficiencies and potential savings.

In April 2026, ZSL's Trustees approved a three-year plan to increase operating cashflow to allow greater investment in our strategic delivery, people, systems and infrastructure. The strategy to improve our financial results is based on four focus areas described in the table on the right. We aim to improve underlying cash generation to cover the annual expenditure on capital projects and system upgrades, driving the sustainable long-term performance of our charity.

A new aspect of our financial plan is to launch commercial capital projects to improve visitor engagement, generate incremental revenues and manage operational costs. Examples are investments in the car park at Whipsnade Zoo, a new children's play area at London Zoo and energy infrastructure projects.

ZSL's three-year business plan: Four focus areas

Focus areas to boost financial health	Categories	Examples of activities this year
1. Commercial and fundraising income	Drive visitor and secondary income	• New ZooTown indoor educational play facility at London • Virtual reality experiences at both Zoos • Redesigned family tickets, offering value pricing
	Prioritise key capital expenditure projects	• Gorilla Kingdom expansion at London Zoo • Elephant habitat upgrades at Whipsnade Zoo • Commercial projects in preparation at both Zoos
	Grow fundraising income	Investment in legacy fundraising programme (Gifts in Wills) Major growth in fundraising income in FY2025/26, including large donations for: • New wildlife health centre • EDGE Fellowships • Marine conservation in Wales and River Thames
	Uplifts in sustainable finance and education income	• Projects with HSBC, Google and Network Rail
2. Programme commercial returns	Increase the overheads allowance and other recoveries to a more sustainable level	• Overall improvement in overhead recovery of 5% points for science projects to cover quality management, oversight and support costs
	Select new opportunities that directly align with strategic milestones	• Successfully tendered to join the Open Framework Agreement for the supply of Environmental Science Research, Development and Evidence Services on behalf of Defra Group
3. Control operational costs	Manage cost base to compensate for national insurance rise and inflationary supplier price increases	• Voluntary redundancy programme and other cost savings in 2025 saved over £3m pa • Energy costs hedged to compensate for volatile markets
4. Strategic investments	Allocate significant funding across the four ZSL impact areas	• Conservation and science programmes each receive funding from ZSL • Infrastructure investments at Regent's Park and Whipsnade to increase visitor engagement with ZSL's conservation work

IMPROVING OUR SPACES

Aim Transform our estates at London and Whipsnade to create progressive, engaging experiences for our supporters and innovative, enriching environments for our colleagues and animals

We are in the process of developing transformational, long-term plans for both of our sites which will help to shape ZSL and our impact for wildlife in the coming century. In the meantime, we completed or worked on several specific projects this year to enhance our ability to care for species and the experience of our visitors.

This year, at London Zoo, we transformed our former Galapagos tortoise home into a wetland habitat for our capybara pair, complete with indoor and outdoor swimming area for these semi-aquatic South American rodents. Attention has now turned to upgrading the Casson Pavilion, a Grade II* listed building at the heart of the Zoo, beginning with a refurbishment of our babirusa habitat.

Also under way are major redevelopments of Gorilla Kingdom at London Zoo and our Centre for Elephant Care at Whipsnade Zoo to boost facilities for the animals. At London, the expanded Gorilla Kingdom (expected to open later this year) will provide our growing family of Critically Endangered western lowland gorillas with more indoor and outdoor areas. At Whipsnade, the initial phase of development (finished in May 2026) focussed on enhancing both indoor and outdoor spaces for our bull elephant Ming Jung. The next stage, beginning this year, is to develop a more complex, enriching space for the whole herd. Key features will include a large, deep pool, capable of accommodating our entire herd, and access to woodland intended to evoke the natural forest environments found in Asia.

At Whipsnade, we are also designing a new mixed-species habitat to home capybara and saki monkeys, giving our visitors an exciting glimpse into these Amazonian species, and we are also working on plans to expand our on-site accommodation for visitor overnight stays. Other plans in development include upgrades to the Whipsnade Zoo car park, redevelopment of both Zoo entrances, improving sustainable transport links to Whipsnade, and reimagining London Zoo's Grade II listed Mappin Terraces.



Image © Amber Rainsford



Image © Amber Rainsford

Pictured: We undertook major developments of London Zoo's Gorilla Kingdom (centre) and are designing a new capybara habitat at Whipsnade Zoo (right).

SUSTAINABILITY

Aim Be a great example of efficient, nature-friendly operations, able to scale our impact with ease

Energy and sustainability play a foundational role at ZSL, underpinning both our daily operations and long-term conservation ambitions. Our strategic objective is to lead by example, demonstrating efficient, nature-positive practices across our sites while supporting the broader mission to restore wildlife and support healthy ecosystems.

We continue to advance the sustainability goals set out in our Environmental Sustainability Plan in May 2021, and we track our impacts with precision, through a robust environmental management system certified to ISO 14001. Our goals align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and commit to ambitious targets, such as reducing our carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2035; cutting our use of mains water by 30% by the same year; and elevating our recycling rates for front-of-house waste to 70% by 2026.



Energy and carbon

A key milestone this year has been the commencement of our solar programme, delivered with support from the Westminster City Council Climate Fund, which is providing 50% match funding. Installation is now complete on our education building, with further installations planned for the staff offices and Tiny Giants as part of a phased, three-year rollout. This marks a significant step in reducing our reliance on grid electricity and increasing on-site renewable generation.

In terms of performance, we have observed an increase in electricity consumption, likely driven by the expansion of operational areas, including ZooTown, and ongoing site developments. Encouragingly, gas consumption has decreased significantly, supported by the successful implementation of site-wide heating guidelines, delivering both carbon and cost savings.

Efficiency and sustainable improvements have continued across our estates. We have installed electric vehicle charging infrastructure within commercial areas to support the transition to low-emission transport. We are also trialling innovative energy-saving technologies and have begun a programme of building-fabric improvements, including secondary glazing to improve insulation within older office buildings.



Pictured: We began a solar programme at London Zoo (left); London Zoo's horticulturalist Ben Camps (above).

Supply chain and procurement

A key area of progress has been the advancement of our Plastic Reduction Working Group, which is leading efforts to better understand and reduce plastic use across ZSL. This includes targeted audits to identify high-impact areas of plastic consumption, and the development of initial KPIs and reduction targets. While data availability remains a challenge due to historic gaps in recording, this working group is an important step towards establishing a robust baseline and reducing reliance on single-use plastics.

We have also undertaken a review and are updating several core procurement policies to ensure alignment with best practice and evolving sustainability standards. This includes our FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) policy, sustainable palm oil policy, and sustainable seafood policy, alongside refreshed sustainable design guidance. Collectively, these frameworks will strengthen our commitment to ethical sourcing, biodiversity protection, and responsible material use across our operations and projects.

Additionally, we have initiated the groundwork for our Scope 3 emissions assessment, with a defined project plan spanning 2026-27. This will enable us to gain greater visibility of emissions across our supply chain and procurement activities, informing targeted interventions to reduce our indirect carbon footprint over time. Looking ahead, we plan to introduce clearer supplier-engagement mechanisms and minimum sustainability expectations, supporting a more consistent and accountable approach across our supply chain.

ZSL's Sustainability Targets

OBJECTIVES	TARGETS	PROGRESS
Carbon and Energy **Reduce absolute greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in line with limiting global average temperature increase to 1.5°C, and aim to achieve net zero for all residual GHG emissions by 2035**	Reduce electricity emissions by 50% by end of FY2030/31, based on FY2019/20 baseline	**93% reduction**
	Reduce gas by 50% by end of FY2030/31, based on FY2019/20 baseline	**31% reduction of gas mains emissions**
	Reduce fossil fuel emissions by 50% by end of FY2030/31, based on FY2019/20 baseline	**15% reduction in LPG and oil emissions**
	Reduce business travel emissions from air, road and rail by 50% by end of FY2030/31, based on FY2019/20 baseline	**30% decrease in travel emissions**
	Install solar photo-voltaic array at Whipsnade Zoo by Dec 2027[1]	**In feasibility phase**
	Set a science-based Scope 3 target for significant value chain emissions by Dec 2026[2]	**In progress**
Waste and Materials Efficiency **Promote responsible consumption, minimise the amount of waste produced, and assess all remaining significant waste streams for alternatives that support a circular economy**	Recycle 70% of office and visitor (front-of-house) waste by end of FY2025/26	**Achieved** **73% office and visitor waste recycled**
	Maintain zero non-hazardous waste to landfill	**Achieved** **0 tonnes to landfill (non-hazardous)**
	Treat 30% of waste on-site by 2030 via composting or biomass boiler	**In feasibility phase**
Water Management **Reduce total water consumption through design and maintenance of the estate, and implementation of water efficiency measures**	Reduce total mains water consumption by 30% by end of FY2030/31, based on FY2018/19 baseline	**Achieved** **32% reduction**

1 This target has been extended to December 2027. Following funding limitations, we are now exploring smaller-scale solar projects to implement in Whipsnade.
2 Target extended.

ZSL's Sustainability Targets

OBJECTIVES	TARGETS	PROGRESS
Responsible Procurement **Integrate sustainability within all procurement activities and throughout our supply chain, in line with the guidelines of ISO 20400:2017 standard**	100% of food products sold by ZSL that contain palm oil to be RSPO-certified sustainable by Dec 2022	**Achieved**
	100% of timber and paper-based products to be certified as sustainable (FSC or other approved certification) by Dec 2026	**Achieved**
On-site Biodiversity **Optimise the biodiversity value and function of land managed by ZSL in the UK, to complement national biodiversity strategies**	Implement the principles of ZSL's UK Site Biodiversity Policy in all relevant operational and capital development activities at Whipsnade and Regent's Park	**On track**
	Review and update ZSL's Site Biodiversity Management Plan framework by Dec 2026	**In progress**
Sustainable Buildings and Exhibits **Manage the design and construction of new exhibits, and refurbishment of our existing estate, to minimise environmental impact and embed sustainability principles from the outset**	All new-build exhibits to consider lifecycle value, include initiatives to reduce energy and water consumption, reduce construction waste, and to source materials responsibly in line with ZSL policies	**Updated policy in development**
	All projects to include sustainability targets in the project brief and confirm a sustainability assessment method with ZSL Sustainability Manager at earliest design stage	**In progress**
Food and Catering **Provide nutritious, sustainable food options for our staff, visitors and animals with as little environmental impact as possible**	Out-sourced caterers Benugo (London Zoo) and RA Venues (Whipsnade) to reduce energy and water consumption, increase recycling, and source produce sustainably in line with ZSL targets	**In progress**
	By Dec 2026[3] agree additional sustainable catering targets to address food waste; promotion of plant-based meals; visitor engagement campaigns related to food	**In progress**

3 Target extended.

MAKING OUR WORK POSSIBLE

ZSL's achievements would not be possible without the generosity of its supporters.

To our dedicated supporters: we couldn't do this without you. Your unwavering belief and generous donations fuel our mission, turning vision into reality. Thank you for being such essential partners in our work.

To find out how you can help make our work possible, visit zsl.org/support-us



Image © Nuno Vasco Rodrigues

GRANT-FUNDED CONSERVATION

Catalysing coastal recoveries in the UK and Mozambique

We were awarded a strategic partnership grant from King Charles III Charitable Fund towards ongoing marine restoration work in the Thames Estuary and in Mozambique. Both projects bring together a core area of ZSL's expertise: working with local communities to restore important coastal habitats.



Image © Nuno Vasco Rodrigues

In Mozambique, our goal is the restoration of critical coastal mangrove forests, which provide a breeding and nursery habitat for key marine species and coastal protection from extreme weather events as well as supporting healthy fisheries for local communities. The funding is contributing to the protection of 200 hectares of existing mangrove forest from habitat loss, and regenerate 75 hectares of damaged mangroves. We've also partnered with 15 community members to support them in the cultivation of oysters. This helps to generate a sustainable income while encouraging habitat protection, as bivalves depend on the health of nearby mangroves.

In the Thames Estuary, we're working to restore habitats and reconnect local communities in Greater London, Kent and Essex to this incredible (but often undervalued) natural ecosystem. This year we've focussed on the trial restoration of two hectares of intertidal seagrass meadow, at different points of the Thames Estuary, giving us vital data on how to effectively restore seagrasses at scale. Improving the Thames will have a major role in the lives of eight million people; it will improve coastal defences against storms and flooding, boost food security, enhance water quality and benefit wellbeing.

GIFTS IN WILLS



Connecting fathers and children through nature

We received an exceptional legacy gift from the Estate of Martin Green. Martin was particularly passionate about British wildlife and helping fathers connect with their children through shared experiences of nature.

The generosity of the Estate of Martin Green enabled a special Father's Day programme at London Zoo in June 2026 – including curated talks and hands-on activities designed to bring fathers and children together through shared learning, play and discovery at the Zoo.

We also hosted a community-focussed Father's Day experience in partnership with a Camden-based fathers' group, which saw 600 dads, children, mums and carers enjoy dedicated talks and activities about nature.

Long-term, Martin's gift will also support our conservation programmes with British species and the wider community programme at London Zoo, helping more people benefit from wildlife encounters, learning and time in nature. We will be working to expand our father-focussed programming, as well as connecting local schools with our conservation work in the Thames.

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP



Sony Interactive Entertainment supporting climate education

Over the past year, we have worked closely with Sony Interactive Entertainment to bring technology and conservation together. Our partnership began with Climate Station, an immersive PlayStation 5 experience that transforms 120 years of climate data into an interactive journey. After debuting the experience at London Zoo, we are now collaborating with Sony Interactive Entertainment to explore how Climate Station can be used in climate education within our Zoos. By collaborating with students, teachers, support staff and researchers, we aim to understand how Climate Station can enhance learning, inspire action and align with the National Curriculum.

Alongside this, Sony Interactive Entertainment has been helping to strengthen data-driven conservation in protected areas worldwide through the expansion of SMART (Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool) technology. As a founding member of SMART, ZSL supports rangers in over 1,500 national parks with the collection and analysis of protected-area data, which can be then used to combat threats such as poaching and deforestation. With support from Sony Interactive Entertainment, we are enhancing the capacity of SMART users through tailored training, and integrating SMART with other critical conservation tools to enable more effective decision-making by frontline staff.

Together, these projects demonstrate how cutting-edge technology can drive meaningful impact for wildlife, people and the planet.

OUR SUPPORTERS

ZSL's achievements would not be possible without the generosity of its supporters. We would like to thank all the individuals and agencies mentioned in these pages, as well as those who wish to remain anonymous.



Image © Amber Rainsford

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Legacies from the Estates of

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Reverse the Red Accelerator Award
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Rewilding Europe
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Shark Conservation Fund
Species 360
Species Reintroduction Fund
Steel Charitable Trust
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Thames Water
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Joan Digby

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

This year was a solid one financially for ZSL, despite a difficult economic environment. Total income rose to £94.2m, an increase of £1.5m compared to the previous year. Income from ZSL's two conservation Zoos (London and Whipsnade) – including trading and membership income – dropped slightly to £61m compared to £62.6m in 2024/25, a creditable performance achieved in a tough competitive environment for all visitor attractions. But this was offset by a strong performance by Fundraising, with donation and legacy income rising to £9m compared to £7.1m in 2024/25, a rise of £1.9m. ZSL also received a one-off insurance claim receipt of £2.2m (before fees) in the year.



Image © Luke Capeling

To read our full Financial Report 2025-26, visit zsl.org/zsl-annual-reports

We continue to invest in the delivery of our strategic conservation goals. Total conservation, policy and science income dropped slightly to £21m compared to £21.7m in 2024/25, while conservation, policy and science funds disbursed rose to £26.8m compared to £25.2m in 2024/25.

We undertake conservation work in the UK and overseas, including the Philippines, Nepal, Mozambique and Cameroon, amongst other countries. Conservation and policy income rose to £11.9m, compared to £11m in 2024/25. Total conservation and policy expenditure also rose to £15.4m, compared to £14.8m in 2024/25. Key contracts included Nepal's Living in Harmony with Wildlife project; the Ocean Corals & Community empowerment project in Mozambique; and the Congo Biodiverse Landscapes Fund project, all funded by Defra.

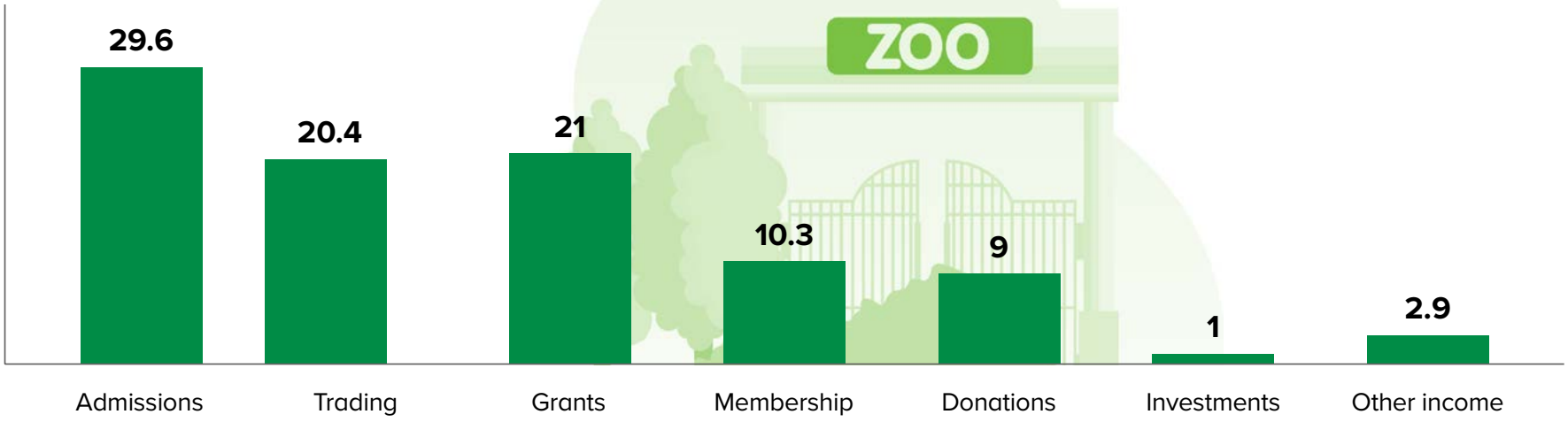
Total Institute of Zoology income came to £9.1m in 2025/26, compared to £10.6m in 2024/25, but charitable expenditure rose to £11.5m, compared to £10.4m in 2024/25. Key grants included: Research England's ongoing annual grant; The Howard G Buffett Foundation's multiple grants supporting the reintroduction of cheetahs in Africa; and ZSL's cetacean stranding investigation work for Defra.

In addition, ZSL received notification of its most significant donation in 2025/26, having been pledged a £20.8m donation by an anonymous donor to create a wildlife health centre (in line with SORP guidance, most of this income has been deferred into future periods). The new centre at our UK headquarters at Regent's Park will champion the One Health approach, supporting our global science and conservation efforts to investigate and tackle wildlife disease and zoonotic spillover, while providing the facilities to deliver world-class care for the animals at London and Whipsnade Zoos. It will bring veterinary science to everyone – with visitors to the centre being able to watch live procedures – and expand ZSL's veterinary teaching capabilities. In addition, ZSL received another pledged donation for £4.4m to support our innovative EDGE Fellowship programme over five years, supporting research into the most evolutionarily distinct species facing extinction in the wild.

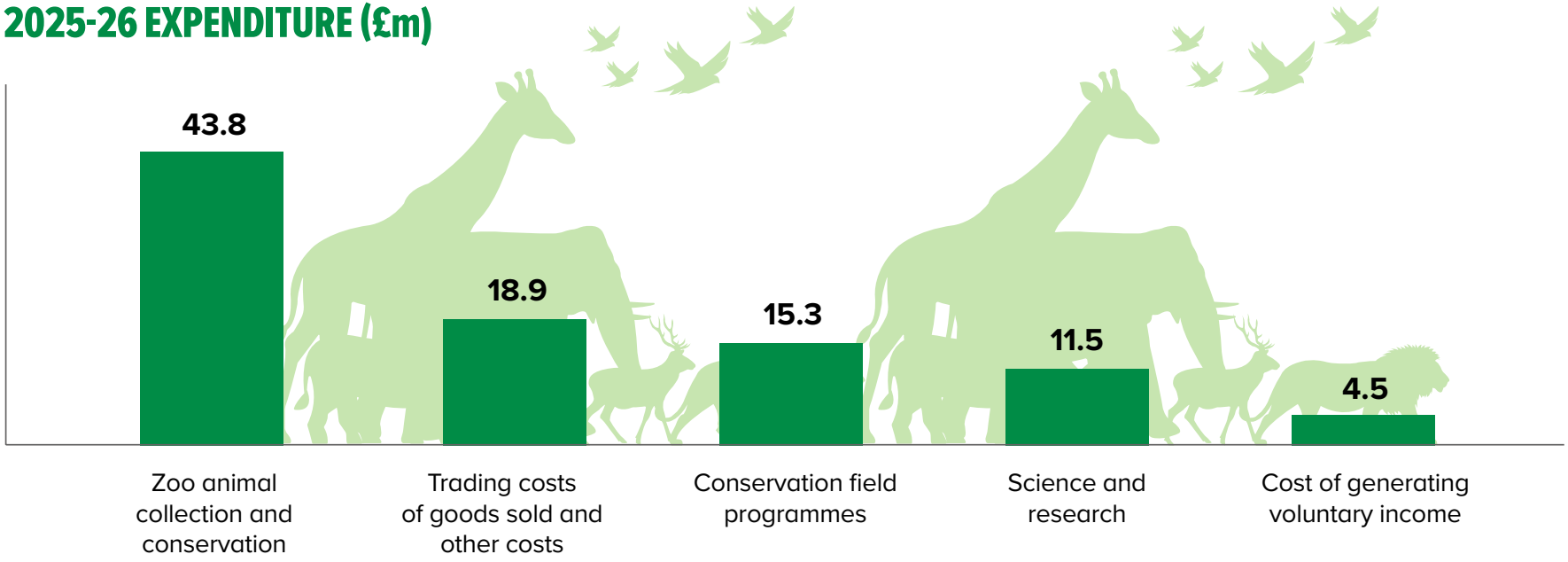
Total funds (net assets) dropped to £90.9m, compared to £94.6m at 30 April 2025, mainly due to the £4.6m revaluation of the now closed Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. Total cash on 30 April 2026 was £31m, compared to £25.5m at 30 April 2025.

Financial KPIs Total funds	2025/26 £m	2024/25 £m	*Variance*	*%*
Total income	94.2	92.7	*1.5*	*2%*
Net income / (expenditure)	0.7	1.7	*-1.0*	*-59%*
Group total funds	90.9	94.6	*-3.7*	*-4%*
Total cash	31.0	25.5	*5.5*	*21%*

2025-26 INCOME (£m)



2025-26 EXPENDITURE (£m)



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 30 April 2026

	2025/26 £m	2024/25 £m
Income		
Donations and legacies	9.0	7.1
Charitable activities		
Zoo animal care & conservation	40.5	42.3
Science & research	9.1	10.6
Conservation and policy	11.9	11.0
Trading activities	20.4	20.2
Other income	3.2	1.4
Total income	**94.2**	**92.7**
Expenditure		
Raising funds		
Costs of generating voluntary income	4.5	2.7
Trading		
Costs of goods sold and other costs	18.9	18.3
Charitable activities		
Zoo animal care & conservation	43.8	44.7
Science & research	11.5	10.4
Conservation & policy	15.4	14.8
Total expenditure	**94.0**	**90.9**
Net gains on investments	0.5	-
Net income	**0.7**	**1.7**
Other recognised gains/(losses)		
Remeasurement of defined benefit pension obligation	(4.8)	1.1
Remeasurement of heritage assets	0.3	0.0
Net movement in funds	**(3.7)**	**2.8**
Reconciliation of funds		
Total funds brought forward	94.6	91.7
Total funds carried forward	**90.9**	**94.6**

BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 April 2026

	2025/26 £m	2024/25 £m
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	61.4	57.7
Heritage assets	2.5	2.2
Investments	5.8	8.5
	69.6	**68.4**
Current assets		
Stock	1.1	1.0
Debtors	9.1	10.9
Cash at bank and in hand	10.5	25.5
Short Term Investments	20.5	-
	41.2	**37.4**
Liabilities		
Creditors < 1 year	(25.2)	(20.8)
Net current assets	**16.0**	**16.7**
Creditors < 1 year	-	-
Net assets excluding pension scheme	**85.6**	**85.1**
Defined benefit pension scheme assets	5.3	9.5
Net assets	**90.9**	**94.6**
Funds		
Unrestricted		
General	12.4	14.6
Holiday pay accrual	(0.6)	(0.5)
	11.8	**14.1**
Designated	63.9	60.1
Unrestricted pension reserve	5.3	9.3
	81.0	**83.4**
Restricted	**9.9**	**11.2**
Total funds	**90.9**	**94.6**

GOVERNANCE

Overseeing our work as a charity



Corporate status

ZSL (Zoological Society of London) is a charity incorporated under Royal Charter, registered in England and Wales with the Charity Commission (No. 208728). Certain of the commercial operations of the two Zoos, principally catering and shops, are carried out through its wholly owned subsidiary company, Zoo Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England and Wales with company number 01178687 (together referred to below as 'the group').

Our work as a charity is overseen by our Council of Trustees.

Council

We are governed by the Charter and Byelaws, Standing Orders, and Regulations. Our Byelaws set out requirements concerning membership of the Society (the Fellowship), the membership and the proceedings of Council, and meetings of the Society such as the annual general meeting.

Council is the governing body of our Society and is responsible for establishing and monitoring our strategy and key policies. Council formally meets five times a year as standard, but informally meets more frequently, as and when required. Council is currently comprised of 11 Trustees, as we move towards the new composition of six elected and six selected Trustees.

Under the Byelaws, six members of Council will be elected from and by the Fellows of the Society. Every year, the Fellows are informed of the number of vacancies on Council and the skills and experience that Council considers would best support ZSL, inviting Fellows to stand. The election is by ballot of the complete Fellowship of the Society, with electronic voting offering flexibility as well as being more environmentally friendly and cost-effective. Postal ballots are available for those Fellows who require them. Newly elected Trustees are formally appointed at the Annual General Meeting in November.

The remaining six members of Council will be directly selected by Council based on their skills and experience in a process managed by the Nominations Committee. All Trustees serve for a term of office of four years.

We provide various forms of training to Council, including mandatory training (part of the induction process) for new Trustees and those half-way through their terms of office, covering Trustee legal duties and responsibilities, safeguarding, and ZSL's governing documents. Additional training is provided as needs arise.

Members of Council/Trustees

The Council members listed served as Trustees during the period 1 May 2025 to the date of this report, unless otherwise indicated. See pages 93-94 for short biographies of each Council member. All Trustees, whether with a named role or not, have an equal vote at meetings. This is part of ZSL learning what we can from governance best practice elsewhere and seeking to apply it to our own charity.

Following over five years' service as trustee (including time as Secretary, President, and then Chair), Professor Sir Jim Smith will be standing down as Trustee and Chair following the 2026 Annual General Meeting. We thank Jim for everything he has done while at ZSL and he leaves with our best wishes for the future. The process has begun to look for his successor.

Chair: Professor Sir Jim Smith FRS
Senior Trustee: Richard Sykes
Shruti Ajitsaria
May Chiao
Jonathan Cracknell
Nik Engineer (*elected November 2025*)
David Jones
Richard Kimblin KC
Alex Large
Karen Lawrence
Athena Markides (*retired November 2025*)
Loraine Woodhouse

Day-to-day management

Chief Executive Officer

The day-to-day management of our Society is delegated by Council to the Chief Executive Officer and other members of the Executive Committee. All significant matters of policy are determined by Council.

Executive Committee

Our Executive Committee comprises:
Chief Executive Officer: Kathryn England *(was the COO until 12 November 2025; appointed to interim CEO 13 November 2025; made permanent CEO from 6 March 2026. Matthew Gould was CEO until his resignation on 7 November 2025.)*
Chief Financial Officer: Timon Drakesmith
Director of Conservation and Policy: Andrew Terry
Director of Science: Johan Du Toit
Director of Zoo Operations: Owen Craft
Director of Development: Pippa Carte *(left post 30 April 2026)*
People Director: Helen Downton *(left post 2 January 2026)*
Director of Estates and Transformation: Claire McKeown *(left post 30 January 2026)*

Council Members/Trustees



Chair:
Professor Sir Jim Smith FRS
Appointed to Council as Secretary in 2021, appointed as President in October 2022, appointed as Chair of Trustees in March 2025

Jim Smith is a developmental biologist who served as Director of the Medical Research Council (MRC) National Institute for Medical Research, where he helped establish the Francis Crick Institute. More recently he was Director of Research Programmes at Wellcome and is currently the Interim Director of the Babraham Institute. Jim was elected to the Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1993 and of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 1998, and was knighted in 2017.



Senior Trustee:
Richard Sykes
Originally appointed to Council 2019 (to fill a casual vacancy), elected to Council November 2021

Richard, a chartered accountant and a former senior client partner at PwC brings his accounting, risk, governance and wider business and charity expertise to his role as Chair of the Audit Finance and Risk Committee (AFRC). Richard was appointed as Senior Trustee effective from March 2025.



Shruti Ajitsaria
Elected to Council November 2019, re-elected for a second term November 2023

Shruti is a partner at law firm A&O Shearman, where she created and launched an initiative to build digital skills. She brings this spirit of innovation and adoption of technology in addition to her governance and fundraising experience from serving as a school governor and sitting on a fundraising development group for a hospice. She has also completed the *Financial Times*' Non-Executive Director Diploma.



Dr May Chiao
Elected to Council November 2022

May has been an editor within the Nature Portfolio for more than 20 years, where she handles physics and astronomy content; she is especially interested in crossovers between traditional subject areas, as well as in science policy and social justice. She is currently enrolled in the Executive Master of Public Administration programme at LSE. Her active engagement with public policy, combined with broad experience in scientific outreach, help to support ZSL's mission in an increasingly complex and fast-changing sector.



Jonathan Cracknell
Elected to Council November 2023

Jonathan became a Fellow in 2008 after completing a RCVS Residency in Zoo and Wildlife Medicine at ZSL. Jonathan is a zoo and wildlife veterinarian, has been the zoological director at a number of zoos and safari parks and is a zoo inspector with over 30 years of experience working with animal collections, welfare programmes and in the field. As a member of Defra's Zoos Expert Committee, Jonathan was closely involved with recent legislative changes, including the Standards of Modern Zoo Practice for Great Britain and the Irish Standards of Modern Zoo Practice.



Image © Luke Capeling



Nik Engineer
Elected to Council November 2025

Nik is a Senior Director at Ownership Works, a US-based international nonprofit focussed on economic justice. He has spent the last decade leading nonprofit organisations that work to transform the economy and deliver better outcomes for people and the planet, including eight years with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. Before switching to the nonprofit sector, he was a Management Consultant for 10 years, specialising in strategy and culture transformation.



David Jones
Originally appointed to Council 2020 (to fill a casual vacancy), selected to Council November 2022

David had a board-level career at the John Lewis Partnership where he held senior roles in retail, commercial and supply chain. He brings to ZSL experience in non-executive roles spanning retail, sport, local government, community and voluntary, charity, regulatory and trade bodies.



Richard Kimblin KC
Elected to Council November 2021

Richard started out in environmental sciences: PhD, Royal Society post-doc, environmental assessment. He was then called to the bar in 1998, practicing in planning and environmental law. Richard was a Trustee of the United Kingdom Environmental Law Association for 10 years and its Chair for two. Richard was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2016 and advises in and appears in respect of development and environmental issues for government, developers and planning authorities.



Alex Large
Elected to Council November 2018, re-elected for a second term November 2022

Alex worked as an investment banker at JPMorgan for over 25 years, where he held a variety of risk management, capital-raising and corporate finance roles in the UK and Asia Pacific. He now runs an investment business.



Karen Lawrence
Elected to Council November 2024

Independent consultant Karen Lawrence has made significant contributions to conservation science over a 25-year career focussed on the integration of innovative, science-based techniques for forest and marine ecosystem protection. Her leadership roles at ESSC (Environmental Science for Social Change), WWF and Project X Global have shaped innovations in sustainable food, feed and forest supply chains, regenerative agriculture and nature-based solutions.



Loraine Woodhouse
Elected to Council September 2023

Loraine joined ZSL's Audit, Finance and Risk Committee as a non-voting member in October 2017 before being formally selected to Council in 2023. Her background is in finance, with previous executive roles in the retail sector, including as Finance Director of Waitrose and Chief Financial Officer of Halfords. Loraine has extensive experience working at corporate board level, covering all aspects of corporate governance including reporting, regulatory compliance, policy setting and strategic risk management.



Image © Luke Capeling

CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE

Marking the staff who were part of ZSL on our 200th anniversary

Executive Committee

Kathryn England
Chief Executive Officer

Timon Drakesmith
Chief Financial Officer

Andrew Terry
Chief Conservation Officer

Owen Craft
Director of Zoo Operations

Pippa Carte
Director of Development

Johan Du Toit
Director of Science

Conservation Zoos

Freda Abbas
Visitor Services First Aid

Sam Aberdeen
Section Manager

Aayesako Abu
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

Sam Abu
Grounds & Logistics - Site Presentation Operative

Zeynah Abu Warda
Apprentice Keeper

Lauren Acton
Visitor Services Host

Mike Adam
Zoo Horticulturalist

Grant Adams
Visitor Services Host

Unnar Aevarsson
Zookeeper

Sarah Akoni
Warehouse Assistant/ Visitor Services First Aid

Chris Alcock
Railway Platform Assistant

Shah Alom
Visitor Services Team Leader

Montell Amadi
Visitor Services Host

Ian Ament
Horticulturist

Sonya Anson
Engagement Team Leader

Jorge Antolin Tomas
Senior Keeper

Richard Armitt
Visitor Services Host

Paul Atkin
Senior Keeper

Luke Atkins
Grounds Operative

Pauline Atkins
Visitor Services Host

Lois-Grace Atkins
Visitor Services Host

Samantha Austin
Executive Coordinator - Zoo Ops

Julie Ayres
Railway Platform Assistant

Nadine Azizollah
Engagement Officer

Megan Baber
Visitor Services Host

William Badby
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

Amelia Bailey
Zookeeper

Daniel Baker
Visitor Services Host

Simon Baldwin
Logistics Operative

Fliss Ball
Lead Keeper

Brandon Ballard
Senior Keeper

Louix Baptiste
Visitor Services Host

Jennifer Bardot
Visitor Services Host

Sandra Barnett
Visitor Services Host

Danielle Barr
Grounds & Logistics - Site Presentation Operative

Lauren Barrett
Visitor Services Team Leader

Asha Bashir Lopez
Visitor Activities Host

Georgie Bate
Engagement Officer

Tony Bates*
Grounds Operative

Yasmin Bates*
Visitor Services Team Leader

Kay Baxter
WZ Lead Keeper Ectotherms

Alfred Beadman
Visitor Services Officer - First Aid

Buffy Beck
Engagement Officer

Tyrese Beckford
Visitor Services Host

Thomas Beeston
Visitor Services Host

Rugina Begum
Supporter Contact Coordinator

James Bell
Animal Keeper Steward

Paul Bentley
Visitor Services Host

Celine Bentz
Visitor Services Host

John Berezansky
Visitor Experiences Host/ Events Ambassador

Conor Berridge
Visitor Services Host

Rachel Berry
Visitor Services Host

Tessa Bevan
Horticulturist

Ahmed Bhollazayi
Car Park Attendant

Joe Blomfield
Events Team Lead

Marcus Bodle
Zookeeper

Em Bond
Transport and Grounds Operative

Harriet Borrett
Grounds & Logistics Operative

Joe Bostock-Jones
Zookeeper

Colin Bowles
Railway Engine Driver

Nigel Bragger
Transport and Grounds Operative

Duncan Breen
Visitor Services Team Leader

Skyla Brewster
Visitor Services Host

Daniel Brindley
Engagement Officer

Ben Brock
Railway Engine Fireperson

Jamie Brothers
Zookeeper

Elizabeth Brown
Lead Keeper

Zoe Brown
Zookeeper - Hoofstock

Jenny Browne
Whipsnade Zoo Visitor Operations Manager

Zoe Bryant
Lead Keeper

Sonny Buckler
Visitor Services Host

Maisie Burley
Zookeeper

Kim Burton
Senior Keeper

Joseph Burton
Zookeeper

Gabriella Bzezinski
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

Torrie Cammack
Merchandising Admin Assistant

Martyn Campbell
Visitor Services Host

Ben Camps
Horticulture Manager

Joe Capon-Doyle*
Senior Keeper

Laura Carrigan
Lead Keeper

Moana Carson
Visitor Services Host

Kim Carter
Lead Keeper

Thais Castiglioni
Animal Keeper Steward

Victoria Catzeflis
Engagement Officer

Niamh Caulfield
Support Contact Team Leader

Sean Caulfield
Visitor Services Host

Emily Celine
Events Ambassador

Samantha Chalkley
Senior Keeper

Richard Chalkley
Supervisor

Mia Chamouret
Grounds & Logistics Operative

Robyn Chappell-Wood
Visitor Activities Host

Katie Charlesworth
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

Scott Cheatle
Visitor Experiences Keeper

Nel Cherry
Zookeeper

Tony Cholerton*
Team Leader

Kacper Cieszanowski
Visitor Services Host

Asa Clark
Visitor Services Host

Buddy Clark
Visitor Services Host

Dave Clarke
Lead Keeper

Milly Clarke
Zookeeper

Sally Clent
Railway Engine Fireperson

Lauren Clowes
Visitor Experience Host

Ben Cobfeld
Transport Operative

Sarah Cockle
Animal Keeper Steward

Lauryn Cole
Visitor Services Host

Hannah Cole
Visitor Experiences Team Leader

Maisie Collier
Engagement Officer

Denise Collins
Visitor Services Host

Samuel Collins
Supporter Contact Team Leader

Michael Connelly*
Retail Sales Assistant

Lucy Conner
Overnight/Visitor Experiences Host

Bernie Corbett
Senior Keeper

Charlotte Cordrey
Events Manager (London Zoo)

Connor Corrigan
Team Leader

Pilar Costa
ZooTown Play Assistant

Nigel Court
Senior Keeper

Dominic Covington
Visitor Services Host

Abby Crake
Zookeeper

Alex Crandon
Overnight Experiences Host

Kirsty Crow*
Events Coordinator

Rosie Crowther
Visitor Engagement Manager

Mariana Cruz
Visitor Services Host

Mesi Cuenca Cazorla
Lead Grounds & Logistics Operative - Stocks & Assets

Sin Cun
Visitor Services Team Leader

Laura Cuppage Vernon-Dier
Overnight Experiences Host

Phil Curzon
Lead Keeper

Michele D'Agnano
Digital Manager

Ryan Daniels
Fireperson - Steam Locomotive

Abigail Davidson
Visitor Services Host

Susan Davies
Visitor Services Host

Adam Davinson
Lead Keeper

Jodie Davis
Engagement Team Leader

Gemma Dipple
Buying Manager

Cat Dixon
Team Leader

Holly Dorning
Senior Keeper

Matthew Downie
Visitor Services Host

Lee Duffy
Head of LZ Visitor Operations

Rebecca Duke
Event & Visitor Programmes Administrator

Madelaine Dunlop
Zookeeper

Martyna Dymkowska
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

Sarah Edwards
Apprentice Keeper

Kevin Edwins
GWR Senior Engineer

Malachi Egbuchiri
Visitor Services Host

Susan Eksioglu*
Sales Assistant

June Elichaoff
Visitor Services Host

Alison Ellis
Visitor Services Host

Claire Evans
Email Marketing Manager

Rosie Evans
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Corey Evelyn
Merchandising Manager

Faye Everett
Visitor Services Assistant Manager

Leo Fabian
Visitor Activities Host

Assia Faheem
Assistant Visitor Services Manager

Shannon Farrington
Lead Keeper

Rebecca Feenan
Team Leader

Frederico Felix Monteiro
Visitor Services Officer First Aid

Char Fernandez
Events Ambassador

Carl Fiddis
Animal Keeper Steward

Hannah Fisk
Assistant Buyer

Antonia Fitchett
Zookeeper

Robin Fitzgerald
Head of Facilities and Estate

Lucy Fleming
Engagement Officer

James Ford
Lead Keeper

Annabel Forde
Zookeeper

Nick Fountain
Lead Horticulturist (Whipsnade Zoo)

Ronnie Fox
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Hope Foxall
Visitor Services Host

Yvonne Franklin
Stewarding Animal Keeper

Martin Franklin
Senior Keeper

Rebecca Freedman
Zookeeper

Jessica Fryer
Section Manager

Robert Fryer
Zoo Horticulturalist

Victoria Fyson
Senior Keeper

Dave Gardner
Transport Operative

Karamraj Garewal
Zookeeper - Elephants

Nick Garrett
Senior Keeper

Laura Garrett
Lead Keeper

Alice Garwood
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

Elion Gashi
Visitor Services Host

Tom Gavigan
Lead Grounds & Logistics Operative - Conveyance & Allocations

Gboyega Gbadamosi
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Liam Geddes
Events Ambassador

Gracie Gee
Lead Keeper

Amy Gerhard
Visitor Experience Host

Antony Gilbert
Logistics Operative (Part-Time)

Justin Giles
Zookeeper - Predator and Primate (Maternity Cover)

Naomi Gittus
Visitor Experiences Host/ Events Ambassador

Donovan Glyn
Section Manager

Ron Goddard
Station Master

Charlotte Godman
Zookeeper

Trudie Goodwin
Events Ambassador

Milli Gorton
Apprentice Keeper

Ciara Grant
ZooTown Play Assistant

Kierra Grant
Visitor Services Host

Jamie Gray
Lead Keeper

Lauren Gray
Logistics Operative (Postal Services)

Joshua Green
Visitor Services Host

Eden Green
Visitor Services Host

Peter Greenwood
Logistics Operative

Stefan Groeneveld
Section Manager

Charlotte Gurden
Marketing Executive

Margaret Haines
Visitor Services Host

Paige Halligan
Visitor Services Host

Penny Hamilton
Head of Marketing

Adam Hammond
Transport and Grounds Operative

Wim Hance
Visitor Services Host

Terry Hannigan
Railway Platform Assistant

Georgia Hannon*
Sales Assistant

Elisabeth Harbour*
Visitor Services Host

Helen Harris
Visitor Services First Aid

Elizabeth Hartland
Zookeeper - Penguins and Flying Birds

Kara Hartley
Zookeeper

Arran Harvey
Lead Keeper

Philip Haskew
Lead Keeper

John Hawley
Senior Visitor Services Host

Sydney Hayden
Visitor Experience Host

Matthew Hazell
Assistant Zookeeper

Anthony Healey
Railway Platform Assistant

Danielle Hearne
Zookeeper

Veronica Heldt
Team Leader

Neha Hemachandra
Visitor Activities Host

William Henderson
Zookeeper

Jo Henderson-Tchertoff
Visitor Experiences Host/ Event Ambassador

Glynn Hennessy
Lead Keeper

Lucy Herbert
Zookeeper

Kira Hetherington
Apprentice Keeper/ Visitor Experiences Host

Ross Hickles
Senior Keeper

Anna Hickman
Audience Insight Analyst

Daisy Higginbotham
Visitor Services Host

Carrie Hill
Engagement Officer

Ben Hilton-Johnson
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Kurumi Hirayama
Visitor Services Host

Jonathan Ho
Zookeeper

Katie Hodges
Zookeeper

Mark Holden
Section Manager

Samantha Hollier
Visitor Experiences Host/ Visitor Services Host/ Event Ambassador

Ian Holloway
Purchasing & Stores Co-Ordinator

Taryn Hopper
Zookeeper

Penny Hopwood
Visitor Experiences Keeper

Erin Horsfield
Visitor Services Host

Alina Hosu
Visitor Services Host

Emma Hoverd-Millar
Senior Keeper

Kayleigh Howard
Visitor Services Host

Cat Howes
Visitor Experiences Manager

Mark Howes
Team Leader

Madeleine Humfryes
Engagement Officer

Tara Humphrey
Team Leader

Matthew Hutchins
Zookeeper

Suzi Hyde
Senior Keeper

Lyndsey Isaac
Visitor Experiences Host

Jamaal Ishmael
Stewarding Animal Keeper

Clare Jackson
Visitor Experiences Host

Molly Jacobs
Zookeeper

Hayley Jakeman
Animal Operations Manager

Louise Jakobsen
Browse Management Officer

Charlotte James
Lead Keeper

Natalie Jaque
Engagement Team Leader

Elizabeth Jaros
Grounds & Logistics - Site Presentation Operative

Julie Jenkins-Reynolds*
Warehouse Assistant

Poppy Jewell
Team Leader

Lauren Johnson
Team Leader

Alex Johnson
Zookeeper

Heather Jones
Assistant Merchandiser

Ella Jones
Zookeeper

Owen Jones
Visitor Services Host

Jordi Jordan
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Daniel Kane
Team Leader

Oliwia Kasprzyk
Visitor Services Host

Amelia Kasprzyk
Visitor Services Host

Becca Keefe
Lead Keeper

Michael Kennett
Assistant Zookeeper - Predators

John Kenyon
Head of Whipsnade Zoo Site Operations

Betty Key
Project Manager

Agnes Kiss*
Senior Keeper

Lucy Kite
Visitor Services Host

Georgia Knowles
Apprentice Keeper

Tessa Knox
Senior Keeper

Gi-wai Kwok
Visitor Services Host

Paul Kybett
Senior Keeper

Sian Lamb
Visitor Experiences Keeper

Madelin Lane
Visitor Services Host

Ben Langley
Engagement Officer/ Overnight Experiences Host

Jessica Lawrance
Lead Keeper

Thomas Lawrance
Section Manager

Terence Lee
Railway Engine Driver

Tracey Lee
Creative Site Presentations Operative

Olivia Lenis Augustin
Engagement Officer

Amy Lenton
Visitor Services Host

Matthew Leveridge
Engagement Officer

Joe Little
Grounds Operative

Rachel Lloyd
Engagement Officer

Oliver Lloyd
Apprentice Keeper

Keith Long
Transport Operative

Rosanna Loschi
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Mona Lota
Supporter Contact Manager

Alison Lumsden
Visitor Services Manager

Lulu Luxford
Apprentice Keeper

Rod Lynch
Deputy Team Leader

Cara MacLeod
Zookeeper

Caitlin Maggs
Visitor Services Host

Alasdair Maltby
Section Manager

Daniel Mangan*
Transport and Grounds Operative

Harry Maskell
Zookeeper

Nicola Mathers
Visitor Services Manager

Thomas Maunders
Senior Keeper

Benjamin Mawhood
Team Leader - Horticulture

Jonathan Mbu
Visitor Services Host

Joanna McCarthy
Assistant Zookeeper

Jonathan McCarthy
Visitor Services Host

Frazer McDade
Zookeeper (Herpetology)

Kate McDonough
Buying Administrative Assistant

Zoe McGarvie
Zookeeper

Safiyah McGee
Visitor Services Host

Coryn McGovern
Horticulturist

Sarah McGregor
Section Manager

Amy McKillop
Lead Keeper

Marcel McKinley
Team Leader

Tegan McPhail
Senior Keeper

Claire McScrivener
Lead Keeper

Hannah Meadows
Visitor Services Host

Fazlu Meah
Visitor Services Host

Sheila Mella Suarez
Lead Keeper

Karen Mellor
Visitor Services Host

Rachel Melvin
Zookeeper

Emily Merrick-White
Senior Keeper

Steve Merrick-White
Team Leader

Gemma Metcalf
Section Manager

Diana Michalak
Membership Marketing Manager

Claire Michele
Stewarding Animal Keeper

Chloe Milbank
Trade Partnerships Manager

Corrine Millar
Team Leader

Florence Milne
Visitor Services Host

Liz Mitchell
Engagement Team Leader

Jamie Mitchell
Lead Keeper

Luke Moir
Zookeeper

Olivia Monaghan
Zookeeper

Sophie Morrisey
Assistant Zookeeper

Albert Mott
Grounds & Logistics - Site Presentation Operative

Isabella Moynes
Visitor Services Host

Evy Moynes
Visitor Services Host

Camille Munday
Zookeeper

Zack Nevill
Zoo Horticulturalist

Jake Neville
Visitor Services Host

Colin Newberry
Horticulturist

Anthony Newman*
Visitor Operations Manager

Mike Newman
Senior Digital Manager

Victoria Newton
Energy & Sustainability Apprentice

Karen Nolan
Senior Keeper

Tyler Oates-Riddell
Visitor Services Host

Caitlin O'Reilly
Apprentice Keeper

Ella-Jay Osborne
Assistant Zookeeper

Julia Osterberg
ZooTown Play Assistant

Laura Overton
Visitor Experience Host

Emeline Palmer
Visitor Services Host

Miles Palmer
Engagement Officer

Lauren Palmer
Grounds & Logistics Manager

Desmond Paul*
Crafts Person

Daniel Peace
Lead Keeper

Deborah Pearson
Warehouse Assistant

Karl Penman
Commercial Product Manager

Lanna-Rosa Pereira Da Silva
Visitor Services Host

Bethany Peters
Visitor Services Team Leader

Freja Petrie
Visitor Services Host

Luke Pharoah
Team Leader

Caitlin Phipps
Zookeeper

Sian Pierce
Visitor Services Host seasonal

James Pierce
Visitor Services Host

Jon Pilgrim
Logistics Manager (Whipsnade Zoo)

Phoebe Pizer-Lyles
Zookeeper

Kate Playle
Senior Keeper

Carolin Pockrandt
Membership and Retention Manager

Ellis Pollard
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and Zoo Town

Joshua Pope
Overnight Host Team Manager

Gary Porritt
Bus Driver & Site Support

Mia Powell
Visitor Services Host

Martin Price
GWR Driver Engineer

Rhiannon Pritchard-Wood
Zookeeper

Miya Q Quinn
Visitor Services Host

Shannon Quinn
Team Leader

Jane Radford
Assistant Zookeeper

Amber Rainsford
Animal Keeper Steward

Sharm Ramdass
Visitor Services Host

Jamie Randall
Railway Engine Driver

Olivia Ratcliffe*
Visitor Services Host

Helen Rawson
Zookeeper

Jessica Ray
Zookeeper

Neil Read
Driver Engineer - Railway

Kate Redford
Lead Keeper

Chelsea Reid-Johnson
Lead Keeper

Mia Revill
Lead Logistics Operative

Reuben Riley-Webb
Visitor Services Host

Christina Risbridger
Senior Keeper

Jonathan Risbridger
Senior Keeper

Goldie Rischling
Visitor Services Host

Caroline Robb
Visitor Services Host

Matt Robertson
Senior Keeper

Hannah Robinson
Events Officer

Angela Robinson
Zookeeper

Amanda Robinson
Section Manager

Andy Roffe
Senior Keeper

Sadie Rolls
Visitor Services Host

Cathy Rose
Event Ambassadors

Cai Rouch
Visitor Services Host

Kimberlee Rowe
Zookeeper

Kate Rowland
Senior Projects Manager

Patrick Rowntree
Zookeeper

Ilze Runce
E-Commerce Executive

Katie Russell
Development Events Manager

Jack Rutter
Visitor Services Host

Angela Ryan
Head of Animal Operations

Victoria Sage
Head of Events and Programming

Jay Saighal
Overnight Experiences Host

Michael Salas Aira
Visitor Activities Host

Euan Sanders
Zookeeper

Kate Sanders
Section Manager

Tim Savage
Section Manager

Ibrahim Sawal
Engagement Officer

David Sawyer
Engagement Officer

Tom Scott
Lead Grounds & Logistics Operative - Waste Streams

Megan Seltzer
Email Marketing Executive

Oscar Setterfield
Visitor Services Host

Alex Setterfield
Team Leader

Samuel Shafique*
Team Leader

Courtney Shand
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Ally Sharp
Visitor Services Host

Lauren Shears
Supporter Contact Coordinator

Poppy Shelley
Visitor Services Host

Cathy Shiel
Visitor Services Host

Mick Shillingford*
Whipsnade Site Logistics Lead

Owen Shrewsbury
Zookeeper

Sophie Siddiqi
Zookeeper

Gilberto Silva
Visitor Services Host

Daniel Simmonds
Zoological Operations Manager

Hattie Sire
Zookeeper

Samantha Skerratt
Visitor Services Host

Alan Slade*
Grounds Operative

Linden Sloan
Visitor Activities Host

Laurence Smith
Railway Engine Driver

Connor Smith
Visitor Services Host

Alexandra Smith
Membership Executive (Marketing and Operations)

Melanie Smith*
Volunteer Administrator

Peter Smith
Technical & Environmental Compliance Manager

Georgina Snoxell
Apprentice Keeper

Jiya Soomal
Visitor Activities Host

Mark Sorenson
Driver Engineer - Railway

Emily Speer
Lead Keeper

Ruth Spiers
Logistics Operative

George Spooner
Lead Keeper

Tia Steadman
Visitor Services Host

Christina Stender
Senior Keeper

Ralph Stickley
Engagement Officer

Rebecca Stone
Zookeeper

Jane Storr
Senior Keeper

Erin Sullivan
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and ZooTown

George Sunter
Habitat Design Team Leader

Simi Supra
Visitor Services Host

Stuart Surridge
Visitor Services Host

Ruth Sutherland
Zookeeper

Rowan Swainson
Animal Keeper Steward

Lou Talbot
Energy & Sustainability Manager

Yiu Tang
Marketing Executive

Mark Tansley
Senior Keeper

Abbie Taylor
Brand Licensing Manager

Charlotte Taylor
Lead Keeper

Eve Taylor-McCoy
Visitor Engagement Manager

Paul Taylor-Nelson
Team Leader

Ariana Theodoro
Junior Merchandiser

Rosie Thompson
Visitor Services Host

Mick Tiley
Specialist Keeper

Dave Toyne
Section Manager (Horticulture) Whipsnade Zoo

Colin Trevillion
Warehouse Assistant

Lisa Trodden
Visitor Experiences Host/ Visitor Services Host

Andrew Truman
Visitor Services Host

Liam Tunmore
Senior Keeper

Jayden Turner
Seasonal Visitor Services Host Returners

Rosie Turner
Senior Keeper

Jamie Turner
Head of Site Operations

Sean Turney
Fireperson - Steam Locomotive

Nicky Twigg
Visitor Services Host

Natasha Tyrer
Zookeeper

Murilo Vieira Xavier
Visitor Services Host

Gordon Voogt
Visitor Services Host - Retail, Admissions and Zoo Town

Kerry Wadman
Visitor Services Host

Claire Wainwright
Team Leader

Madeleine Waite
Visitor Experiences Host

Samantha Walker
Visitor Services Officer First Aid

Raynai Walker
Zookeeper

Craig Walker
Lead Keeper

Luke Wall
Engagement Officer

Katharine Walley
Events Ambassador

Mark Wallington
Visitor Experiences Keeper

Adrian Walls
Lead Keeper

Eliza Ware
Logistics Operative

Isobel Warren
Events and Visitor Programmes Administrator

Rob Way
Grounds Supervisor

Chris Webb
Head of Whipsnade Zoo Visitor Operations

Matthew Webb
Head of Zoological Operations (Whipsnade Zoo)

Veronica Webster
Visitor Services Host

Kelly Wessell
London Zoo Operations Manager

Rob Westerman
Horticulturist

Dave Westerman
Warehouse Assistant

Korben White
Zookeeper Ectotherms

Craig White
Browse Operative

Jasper Whitehead
Car Park Attendant

Felicity Whitehead
Zookeeper

John Whitman
Transport Operative

Alastair Wilkinson
Marketing Manager

Elise Williams
Engagement Officer

Richard Wiltshire
Warehouse Assistant

Megan Winfield
Team Leader

Jacob Winfield
Habitat Design Officer

Anya Wishart
Events Ambassador

Gemma Worboys
Senior Keeper

Jenny Wright
Visitor Services Host

Russell Yates
Railway Platform Assistant

Rhea Yeung
Events Manager

Robert Youdell
Visitor Services Team Leader

Francesca Young
Zookeeper/ Visitor Experiences Host

Lily Young
Zookeeper

Lucy Yule
Visitor Services Team Leader

Zuri Zahiruddin
Visitor Services Host

Fatima Zakia
Visitor Services Host

Conservation and Policy

Bridget Adams
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Cara Agudayao
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Solange Akpo
Finance Officer

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Estuaries and Wetlands Intern

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Lucy Archer
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Emmanuel Arrah
Sustainable Revenues Manager

Hubert ASSOUGA
Weekend Guard

Eve Badowski
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Bhim Bahadur Tharu
Driver - Banke-Bardia

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Veterinary Nurse

PaulBarnes
EDGE of Existence Programme Manager

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Alejandro Belen
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Olwen Belgrove
Transforming the Thames Project Officer

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Holly Bestley
Careers and Youth Co-ordinator

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Marcial Bolen
Senior Community Organizer

Sheryl Bradley
Veterinary Nurse Manager

Charlie Brewer
Learning Content Producer

Tom Bruce
Senior Technical Specialist (Protected and Conserved Areas)

Ram Buddathoki
Driver #2 - Kathmandu

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Technical Officer

Celine Burnham
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Venus Calanda
Conservation Biologist

Azenette Caldeo
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Tobias Capel
Marine Projects Manager

Ella Carbery-Tarrant
Conservation Project Officer

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Disease Risk Analysis Post Doctoral Research Assistant

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Yekini Chabi-N'Diaye
WAP Law Enforcement Coordinator

Georgina Chandler
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Pradeep Chaudhary
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Sandip Chaudhary
Driver - Parsa

Becky Chen
Project Coordinator

Lilly Cherriman
Pathology Technician

Maria Clavaton
Community Organizer

Alex Cliffe
Assistant Curator of Fish

Lisa Clifforde
Animal Welfare Officer

Patrick Conlon
Community Engagement Programme Lead

Esther Conway
WildCats Conservation Alliance Manager

Thea Cox
Project Manager

Aleah Cristobal
Technical Officer

Anna-Christina Cucknell
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Bhagawan Dahal
Country Representative

Kamal Dahal
Office Assistant

Anthony Dancer
Programme Manager

Jake Davies
Technical Specialist

Sarah Davies
Technical Specialist

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Germaine De Runa
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Alison Debney
Programme Lead - UK and Europe

Howard Dela Cruz
Community Organiser

Dax Dequito
ESMS Manager

Ruth Desforges
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Adeline Djoumbissie
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Annabelle Dodson
Sustainable Business Project Manager

Katherine Du Plessis
Head of Operations

Roldan Dugay
Senior Conservation Biologist

Daniel Dzanga
Regional Impact Reporting Officer Africa

Katriona Elbourne
Zoological Professional Development Manager

Bethany Emery
Learning Officer

Joel Erediano
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Danica Eugenio
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Sam Facey
Project Manager

Imogen Fanning
Sustainable Business Advisor

Amanda Ferguson
Nutrition and Research Coordinator

Alice Field
Engagement Coordinator, Finance Sector

Malcolm Fitzpatrick
Chief Zoological Officer

Vicky Fomete
Regional Finance and Administration Manager, West and Central Africa

Sarah Forsyth
Curator of Mammals

Andrew Fowler
Regional Lead, West and Central Africa

Aaron Foy
Conservation and Policy Operations Manager

Georgia Furlong
Senior Learning Officer (Careers and Youth)

Edwina Garchitorena
Country Director, Philippines

Georgina Gerard
Programme Manager

Azra Glover
Project Manager

Rodney Golbeque
Community Engagement Manager

Matthew Gollock
Senior Programme Manager

Sally Gray
Head of Sustainable Business and Finance

Belgin Green
Senior Learning Officer

Sam Guillaume Slatter
Registrar and Curatorial Data Assistant

Trisha Gupta
EDGE of Existence Conservation Scientist (social or interdisciplinary)

Amanda Guthrie
Head of Wildlife Health Services

Ricky Guzman
Project Assistant

Mirjam Hazenbosch
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Joanna Head
Programme Manager

Catherine Head
Project Manager

Joe Heaver
Disease Risk Analysis Research Associate

Simon Hedges
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Cathriona Hickey
Head of Conservation Education

Michael Hoffmann
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Seshi Humphrey-Ackumey
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Gareth Jones
Veterinary Officer

Francis Kamau
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Birendra Karki
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Sushmita Karki
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Lydia Katsis
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Charlotte Kelsall
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Rachael Kemp
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Romeo Kenmengne
Equity, Rights and Social Safeguarding Manager

Caio Kenup
Decision Specialist

Clarine Kigoli
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Heather Koldewey
Head of FAIRER and Ocean

Hannah Kratt
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Maxine Lagman
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Bethan Laughlin
Senior Policy Specialist

Sarah Lavin
Species 360 Member Training Specialist

Hannah Lee-Williams
Community Equity, Rights and Social Safeguards Technical Specialist

Emma Levy
Projects Coordinator

Katy Lewis
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Rona Loma
Mangrove Programme Coordinator

Alain Lushimba
WAP Programme Manager

Shaheed Macgregor
Microbiology Technician

Jim Mackie
Behaviour and Training Officer

Belynda Mackinnon
Finance & HR Manager

Sandeep Mahara
Programme Associate

Sandip Maharjan
Finance and Administrative Associate

Prachanda Maharjan
Field Programme Officer

Cynthia Makin
Administrator

Mary Maputol
Finance and Administrative Assistant

Armstrong Mba
Sustainable Forestry and Landscape Specialist

Peguy Mbah
HR Manager

Annsarah Mburi
Monitoring & Technology Technical Specialist

Hannah McCormick
Project Manager

Thalassa McMurdo Hamilton
Species Recovery Programme Manager

Richardson Medina
Project Officer

Robyn Meehan
Senior Learning Officer

Ana Mendoza
Finance & Administrative Officer

Marcus Merriman
Learning Officer

Grant Miller
Counter Trafficking Advisor

Simon Mirrar
Finance and Administrative Assistant

Jim Missen
Project Officer

Christian Montilijao
Senior Conservation Biologist

Roy Morgado
Stakeholder Engagement Officer

Kate Moses*
Project Manager

Helen Mountford
Learning Officer

Lea Moura
Community Engagement Support Officer

Stephen Musau Itulya
Community Officer

Nelly Musyoka
Community Liaison

Fridah Mutili
Community Technical Manager

Saravanee Namsupak
Project Officer

Jay Navajas
HR & Admin Assistant

Dinesh Neupane
Conservation Biologist

Joanna Noble
Veterinary Nurse

Kakem Nteukam Kakem
Forestry Assessor

Susie Offord-Woolley*
Conservation Networks Manager

Zoe O'Neill
Molecular Biology Technician

Boonyawat Ongart
Project Assistant

Jackie Ossowski-Mackie
Animal Transactions & Compliance Officer

Stephanie Pace
Learning Programme Manager

Amit Pajiyar
Finance Manager

Asmita Pandey
Safeguarding and Communication Officer

Surshti Patel
Programme Manager, Social Equity & Rights

Maria Patino
Learning Officer

Paul Pearce-Kelly
Senior Curator Invertebrates and Fish

Joe Pecorelli
Programme Manager

Jemima Phillips
Project Officer

James Pilkington
Sustainable Finance Programme Manager

Ana Pinto
Outreach Specialist

Samuel Pollard
Transforming the Thames Communications Officer

Rachel Poluan
Sustainable Business & Finance Communications Advisor

Katie Prestwich
Senior Learning Officer

Sunjeep Pun
Senior Programme Officer

Kamal Regmi
Programme Associate

Jacques Rissia
Day Guard

Agnes Roman
Finance Manager

Samuel Ross
Sustainable Business Advisor

Lewis Rowden*
Evidence Based Animal Care Manager

Fiona Sach
Zoo Conservation Impact Manager

Camille Salcedo
HR Manager

Claire Salisbury
Sustainable Business Project Manager

Stefan Saverimuttu
Veterinary Officer

Pradip Sedhain
Field Programme Officer

Sven Seiffert
Curator of Plants

Rebecca Sennett Day
East & Southern Africa Programme Manager

Tammy Shadbolt
Disease Risk Analysis Post Doctoral Research Assistant

Amiee Shaw
Veterinary Nurse

Reshma Shrestha
Finance and Admin Officer

Moses Shu Ngwa
Sustainable Agriculture Manager

Sasha Shute
Project Officer

Aadil Siddiqi
Equity, Rights and Social Safeguards Officer

Fiona Smith
Senior Learning Officer

Beth Smith
Decision Specialist

Supaporn Sorndee
Finance and Admin Assistant

Ellie Spencer
Palm Oil Technical Advisor

Duncan Spencer
Community Engagement Officer/Supported Volunteer Officer

Simon Spiro
Wildlife Veterinary Pathologist

Tai Strike*
Senior Veterinary Officer

Teague Stubbington
Curator of Mammals (London Zoo focus)

Marynoll Susmeña
Conservation Biologist (PH)

Cesar Tabada
Conservation Biologist

Benjamin Tapley
Curator of Reptiles and Amphibians

Abdulhafis Tatorleh
Community Engagement Assistant

Prasert Tepanart
Head of Field

Shyam Thapa
Programme Manager

Bishnu Thapaliya
Policy Coordinator

Jirata Tienphati
CEPF Project Manager

Holly Tofield
Community and Learning Administrative Assistant

Bronwyn Trafford
Spatial Data Advisor

Robert Trappes
Acting Country Manager/ Project Manager

Charlie Trotman
Estuaries and Wetlands Intern

Jean Tsawatala Kawaldey
Night Guard

Jessica Vagg
Marine and Freshwater Project Manager

Amy Van Gelder
WildCats Conservation Alliance Communications Specialist

Jordan Vile
Veterinary Nurse

Sam Viner
Learning Programme Manager

Tim Wacher
Senior Conservation Biologist

May Wah
Thailand Country Manager

Alison Waldock
Community & Learning Assistant

Nkongho Walters
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Officer

Gary Ward
Curator of Birds

Isabelle Wheeler
Schools Learning Officer

Emma Whitbread
Community Engagement Programme Lead

Fiona Wilkinson
Community and Learning Apprentice

Adam Williams
Learning Officer (Community & Careers)

Olivia Wilson-Holt
Human-Wildlife Coexistence Projects Manager

Matthew Woolf
Terai Arc Transboundary Landscape Project Manager

Ethan Wrigglesworth
Pathology Associate

Monica Wrobel
Lead for Strategic Programming

Dylan Yaffy
Wildlife Veterinary Pathologist - UK

Noel Yandjeu
Driver - Yaounde

Shauna Young*
Programme Manager

Science

Alice Armstrong
PhD Researcher

Rodolfo Assis Magalhães
PhD Researcher

Kelly Astley
Badger Vaccination Coordinator

Jennifer Barber
PhD Researcher

Nicholas Barrett
Postdoctoral Research Associate

Olivia Bell
Postdoctoral Research Assistant - Cornwall Badger Project

Harry Berks
PhD Researcher

Isabel Black
PhD Researcher

Sarah Blake
Field Technician - Cornwall Badger Project

Wanda Bodnar
PhD Researcher

Madison Bowden-Parry
PhD Researcher

Patricia Brekke
Research Fellow

Billy Brooks
Reading Room Assistant

Lucy Brown
Public Engagement with Science Manager

Timothy Brown
PhD Researcher

Cheryl Buffonge
Science Operations Manager

Sarah Bull
PhD Researcher

Jason Burk
PhD Researcher

Aidan Byrne
Post Doctoral Research Assistant

Chris Carbone*
Professor

Dylan Carbone
PhD Researcher

Sophia Chrysostomou
Molecular Virology Laboratory Technician

Dominic Clarke
PhD Researcher

Lucy Clarke
PhD Researcher

Eleanor Collinson
PhD Researcher

Mariana Costa Cruz Santos
Wildlife Veterinarian & Research Associate

Catarina Dias Coutinho
PhD Researcher

Guy Cowlishaw
Professor

Alex Cranston
Post Doctoral Research Assistant - Hainan Gibbon Project

Danielle Crowley
PhD Researcher

Rosa Cullen
Science Co-ordinator

Andrew Cunningham
Deputy Director of Science

David Curnick
Research Fellow

Linda Davolls
Head of Science Resources & Scientific Meetings

Rob Deaville
UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme Manager

Amrit Dehal
Senior Administrator

Stefanie Deinet
Research Associate/LPI Project Manager

Clare Duncan
Research Fellow

Sarah Durant
Professor

Isabella Endacott
Postdoctoral Research Associate

Ben Evans
Postdoctoral Research Assistant

John Ewen
Professor

Sarah Ferry
Field Technicians - Cornwall Badger Project

Hollie Folkard-Tapp
Post Doctoral Research Assistant

Wayne Fortune
Archivist and Records Manager

Becky Foskett
Garden Wildlife Health Technician

Sarah Fowkes
GWH Wildlife Veterinarian/ Research Associate

Hayley Free
PhD Researcher

Robin Freeman
Head of the Conservation AI Lab

Nadia Frontier
PhD Researcher

Aisling Gardiner
PhD Researcher

Trent Garner
Professor

Adrien Gelle
PhD Researcher

Louise Gibson
Project Manager

Marianne Glascott
PhD Researcher

Dada Gottelli*
Chief Technician

Henry Grub
PhD Researcher

Rikki Gumbs
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Catherine Head
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Cheryl Heard
PhD Researcher

Kevin Hopkins
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Adrienne Hutchinson
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Thalissa Inch
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Ava Jenkins
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Julee Jerang
PhD Researcher

Shinto John
Micro-biology Technician

AichiMkunde Josephat Mnenge
PhD Researcher

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Junghyuk Keum
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Stephanie Key
PhD Researcher

Oliver Kippax-Chui
PhD Researcher

Nikolet Kostur
PhD Researcher

Damaris Landers
PhD Researcher

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Senior Research Fellow

Sophie Ledger
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Jennifer Linden
PhD Researcher

Sachin Lock
PhD Researcher

Stephen Long
Postdoctoral Researcher

Connor Lovell
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Heidi Ma
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Vance Mak
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Primrose Manning
PhD Researcher

Valentina Marconi
Research Associate/LPI Project Manager

Juliana Martins
PhD Researcher

Harriet McAra
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Louise McRae
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Sophie McSherry
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Acting Librarian

Daniel Montgomery
Post Doctoral Research Assistant

Lucy Morgan
PhD Researcher

Kelvin Munisi
PhD Researcher

Amelia Newman
PhD Researcher

Malcolm Nicoll
Senior Research Fellow

Sahil Nijhawan
Research Fellow

Douglas Njeri Kamaru
PhD Researcher

Rufus Oakleigh
PhD Researcher

Helen O'Neill
Science Officer

Philippa Oppenheimer
Postdoctoral Research Associate

Charlie Outhwaite
Research Fellow

Jennifer Panitz
PhD Researcher

Benjamin Parker
PhD Researcher

Matt Perkins
Senior Technician

Nathalie Pettorelli
Professor

Chiging Pilia
PhD Researcher

Harriet Pinder
Wildlife Health Bridge Coordinator

Sebastian Pipins
PhD Researcher

Adam Piper
Research Fellow

Rosa Pollard Smith
PhD Researcher

Ioana-Simona Popescu
PhD Researcher

Holly Pringle
PhD Researcher

Hannah Puleston
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Elina Rantanen
Journals Manager

Mmadi Reuben
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Sophie Ridgway
PhD Researcher

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Senior Garden Wildlife Health Wildlife Veterinarian

Chris Sergeant
Animal Technician

Emma Shrestha
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Isha Shyam
PhD Researcher

Lucia Snyderman
PhD Researcher

Megan St Roas
PhD Researcher

Ann Sylph*
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Zhengxi Tang
PhD Researcher

Carolyn Thompson
PhD Researcher

Niamh Thorne
PhD Researcher

Eleanor Tinsley
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Jake Williams
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Mike Williamson
Post-Doctoral Research Assistant

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Rosie Woodroffe
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Ethan Wrigglesworth
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Tutku Yatman
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Chris Yesson
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Business Services, HR, Fundraising and Marcomms

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Rosemary Beck
Payroll Manager

Browndon Bokanga
Data Integration and Reporting Analyst

Zuzana Boumrah
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George Brooks
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Zyeraph Bucalan
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Richard Cawthra
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Miranda Cosby
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Ali Coutts
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Alex Fay
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Steven Gallego
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Eleanor Greasley*
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Grzegorz Harmas*
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Carl Jephcote
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Senior Cloud Specialist

Grace Johnston
Accounts Assistant

Tunde Jolaoso
ICT Senior Support Analyst

Oliver Lechley
ICT Support Analyst

Simon Lee
Head of Legal, Governance and Risk Management

Stefan Lozynsky
ICT Operations Manager

Rosie Matharoo
Senior Banking and Accounts Officer

Sonja McDonagh-Schmitt
Operations H&S Advisor (London Zoo)

Hasnain Mohammed
Accounts Payable Administrator

Dean Moore
AV Specialist/ Procurement Specialist

Brynley Moore
Network Engineer

Samuel Nadler
International Accountant

Sameena Nawaz
International Finance Business Partner

Ketan Patel
Applications Support Analyst

Anil Patel
ICT Support Analyst

Jon Pickup
Applications Support Analyst

Adam Rabey
EHS & Compliance Advisor

Lewis Robins-Grace
Estates Development Manager

Luke Robinson
Finance Business Partner, Commercial Analysis

Lorretta Runacre
Finance Manager

Sara Scarlett
Head of Procurement

Ryan Sorenson
ICT Senior Support Analyst

Sarah Stratton
Tessitura Support Coordinator

Alex Tappenden
Solicitor

Craig Thompsett
Global Health, Safety & Security Advisor

Gertie Winning
Financial Accounting Manager

CEO Office

Megan Chamberlain
Executive Assistant to CEO

Abi Cole
Executive Programme Officer

Content and Communication

Alice Adams
Interpretation Developer (Whipsnade Lead)

Jack Bacchus
Social Media Executive

Rebecca Blanchard
Media Manager

Clare Bowers
Internal Communications Manager

Tina Campanella
Bicentenary Project Manager

Emma Edwards
Head of Content and Communications

Vicky Godwin
Senior Public Affairs Officer

Beth Grainger
Interpretation Developer

Melania Hidalgo
Content Producer

Hannah Jolliffe
Website Content Executive

Jonathan Kemeys
Managing Editor, ZSL Consumer Publications

Natalie Latham
Creative Manager

Anna McConachie
Press Officer

Charlotte Miles
Digital Content Creator Apprentice

Freddie Patmore
Digital Content Manager

Abbie Pearce
ZSL Press Officer

Claire Scott
Senior Graphic Designer

Tim Smith
Graphic Technician

Cris Storey
Interpretation Developer

Adrian Taylor
Graphic Coordinator

Sophie Teall
Press Officer

Development

Robyn Bosley
Legacy and Individual Giving Executive

Amy Butcher
Fundraising Executive

Pippa Carte
Development Director

Rachael Cooper
Executive Coordinator

Hannah Eaton
Individual & Legacy Fundraising Manager

Melissa Gemmer-Johnson
Prospect Research Manager

Becky Graham
Institutional Fundraising Manager

Lyndsey Isaac
Fellowship Executive

Clare Jackson
Patron Fundraising Executive

Lauren Jones
Corporate Partnerships Officer

Laura Jowell
Senior Manager Fundraising: Donor Insight, Stewardship and Governance

Nicola Kemp
Corporate Partnerships Engagement Assistant

Louise Krzan
Head of Philanthropy

Evelyn Len
Head of Institutional Fundraising and Individual Giving

Catherine Martin
Senior Institutional Fundraising Manager

Daniel Murray
Head of Corporate Partnerships

Jasmine Pearson
Institutional Fundraising Manager

Amelia Scudamore
Senior Philanthropy Manager

Sandra Sfeir
Institutional Fundraising Manager

Sarah Tobin
Corporate Partnerships Manager

People

Gbonju Akintola
Senior Organisational Development Business Partner

Amber Aries
Recruitment Administrator

Sapna Chotai
Organisational Development & Training Assistant

O'sha Daley
Recruitment Manager

Keith Day
Reward & HR Information Manager

Michelle Ford
Volunteering Advisor (London Sites)

Daniel Fraser
HR Advisor

Rhiannon Green
Volunteer Manager

Stephanie Harris
Head of People

Venus How
Human Resources Coordinator

Taryn Louw
Senior HR Business Partner

Sara Nicholas
Volunteering Advisor

Olly Ohlson
HR Systems & Employee Data Officer

Alice Outhwaite
HR Manager

Natalie Pattinson
HR Administrator

Zora Quadir
Organisational Development & Training Advisor

Juliette Rapinet
HR Advisor

Stella Rogers
Supported Volunteer Officer

Emily Rowntree
Senior HR Business Partner

Becca Stansfield
Volunteer Administrator

Anika Trivedi
HR Administrator

* left ZSL during 2025-26 FY as part of voluntary redundancy scheme



We’re ZSL, a science-driven conservation charity working to restore wildlife in the UK and around the world.

Join us at zsl.org

ZSL is a charity registered in England and Wales no: 208728