

A publication of the Seneca Park Zoo Society

ZooNooz

Internationally, and in our own backyard,
we play a key role in species survival.

June 2021

Spotlight: Learn how YOU
support the mission of the
Seneca Park Zoo

Seneca Park Zoo inspires our community to **connect**, **care** for, and **conserve** wildlife and wild places.

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Hours:

November 1 – March 31:

- 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- last entry at 3 p.m.

April 1 – October 31:

- 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- last entry at 4 p.m.

Members may always enter at 9:30 a.m.

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General information:

- 585.336.7200

Membership:

- 585.336.7212

Development:

- 585.336.7205

Birthday parties and private events:

- 585.295.7399

LETTER FROM PAMELA REED SANCHEZ
PRESIDENT AND CEO | SENECA PARK ZOO SOCIETY

On My Mind: Something Adjacent to “Normal,” and Finding Joy Again

And so, summer “season” begins. As the world continues to emerge from the pandemic, the Zoo, as of May 1, is operating with expanded capacity. The Tram is back up and running, and giraffe feedings are once again being offered Wednesdays through Sundays. Eagle’s Landing Café, Crater Canteen and the Savanna Outpost are open seven days a week.

If you’d never been to the Zoo prior to 2020, you might think things are “back to normal.” And in many respects, things are as they were in 2019.

Majestic giraffes await your arrival. Bamboo-nibbling red pandas don’t mind if you watch them eat. Zuri the African lion is spending some of her rest time on the hood of the bus, while Chester might eye you from the top of his rock. The gentle vocal rumblings of African elephants Moki, Lilac, and Genny C will calm and charm you.

Seneca Park Zoo remains THE place in our region to encounter wildlife where you know you are making a difference for species survival simply by enjoying your visit.

Seneca Park Zoo also remains a place that prioritizes the safety and health of our guests, staff, and animals. And that means we’re not quite back to “normal,” but something adjacent to normal.

We will continue to follow the guidelines set by public health officials. It was just a couple months ago that Asian small-clawed otters at the Georgia Aquarium were diagnosed with COVID-19, and vaccinations for young children may be months away.

Long-standing fundraiser Zoobilation will be held virtually on June 5 and our upcoming Jungle Jog (July 18 - 26) will once again be held virtually. See page 5 for more details on Jungle Jog.

ZooCamps will have fewer campers again this year, though ZooTeens will be back on-site next month. We will still be monitoring traffic into the buildings that are open, and asking you to keep distances and be respectful of the personal



space of other guests. We hope to be able to resume scheduled animal experiences, such as keeper chats, and if we are able to, we’ll announce it through Member Connection e-news, on our website, and through social media.

But through all these accommodations and precautions, your reason for visiting, and our reason for existing, remain the same.

We find joy in connecting with wildlife. Such joy, that we are moved to action to conserve it for generations to come. To ensure that our children’s grandchildren will be able to delight in monarchs every summer, that lake sturgeon thrive in the Genesee River while snow leopards rebound from declining numbers and tigers once again populate their native habitat.

Come spend some time at your Zoo. Treat yourself to slowing down, watching the sea lions soar back and forth, or the baboons groom one another. Meet juvenile rhino Jiwe, and listen to the sweet songs of the Buffalo weavers in the Animals of the Savanna.

Allow yourself the escape, and the joy, that only time with nature brings.

See you here!

A handwritten signature of Pamela Reed Sanchez in black ink.



How **YOU** Support the Mission of the Seneca Park Zoo

One of the silver linings of the pandemic has been the wealth of knowledge we have gained from the responses to our daily guest surveys. When we first reopened, we learned members and guests felt safe being at Seneca Park Zoo, and appreciated all the efforts we took to make that so. Then we learned that members and guests were overwhelmingly aware of the Zoo's work as a conservation organization to save animals from extinction and restore native habitat. Guests also told us they had learned something during their visit they could use to live more sustainably, or help save wildlife and wild places. It was gratifying to know our guests understand our mission and are taking useful tips with them.

But as we shifted the questions slightly to probe a bit deeper, we discovered that respondents weren't at all clear how their visit, or their membership, were directly tied to the mission of the Zoo. Again and again we read variations of:

"I don't know how visiting the Zoo or being a member helps save animals." The connection between a Zoo visit -- or investing in a Zoo membership -- and species survival may not appear to be a direct one. For those of us who spend each of our working days at the Zoo, we see the connection more easily than those whose primary reason for being here is an encounter with extraordinary animals.

Without our members and guests, we wouldn't be able to have nearly the impact on conservation that we do. This ZooNooz article dips just a toe into how YOU support the mission of the Seneca Park Zoo.

Admissions and Membership Revenue: Critical Dollars for Conservation Science, Education, and Outreach

It's undeniably true: Admissions and membership revenue provide essential support for critical operations of the Zoo and the Zoo Society, beyond feeding and caring for the animals here.

Conservation Science. As a zoo accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), Seneca Park Zoo's animal care and animal health staff devote time to advancing conservation science. Some of this is in the form of sharing data with sister institutions and conservation organizations. This allows a network of scientists and zoologists to have access to data that adds to their own understanding of a



Elesa Kim

particular species. And while much of this information is used to inform the care of our animals, all of it is aimed at long-term species survival.

Seneca Park Zoo participates in 97 SSPs (Species Survival Plans) and five SAFE (Saving Animals from Extinction) programs through AZA. SSPs and SAFE programs are managed voluntarily by staff at accredited zoos across the country. The goal of SSPs is to manage cooperative breeding programs to ensure enough genetic diversity for the survival of the species in conservation care for the next 100 years. There are "stud books" that hold information on the lineage of all SSP animals held by all zoos accredited by AZA. The Zoo's General Curator David Hamilton is the stud book manager for North American river otters, and many animal care staff are actively involved in SSPs. When there is a

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By supporting the Zoo's education programs through your membership, you are increasing the number of people who are inspired to help save animals from extinction.

breeding recommendation made for a particular animal, it is based on whether the genetics of that animal are over or underrepresented in the zoo population.

At Seneca Park Zoo, we are fortunate to have a number of species recommended for breeding due to the need for more of their genetics in the population. Our giraffe tower (while not yet mature enough to breed), our lynx pair, and our red panda pair are among the species here that all eyes of their respective SSPs are watching.

SAFE programs focus the collective knowledge of staff at AZA accredited zoos and aquariums to work alongside conservation partners in the field to make a measurable impact on the conservation of species in natural range. For example, at Seneca Park Zoo, Veterinarian Dr. Louis DiVincenti is Vice Program Leader for the Orangutan SAFE, while Vet Tech Robin English has led initiatives for African penguins, and numerous staff are a part of the monarch

SAFE program. Our other SAFE species are African lions and giraffe. [aza.org/aza-safe for more info]

Without you and your friends and colleagues being members, or even paying for admission, we would not be able to have staff that can commit time to essential conservation work aimed at saving animals from extinction.

Education Programs. Revenue from memberships and admissions also supports the salaries of professional educators whose sole focus is on inspiring each person they encounter to act on behalf of wildlife. From KinderZoo for toddlers, to Scout programs, ZooCamps, and school-based programs that meet NextGen and NYS Science Standards, each of our formal education programs is designed to connect people with wildlife and spark a life-long love for nature.

Programs for teens such as ZooTeens and Wildlife Action Crew connect tweens and teens with endangered species,





“Over the last five years, fundraising for conservation at admissions has neared **\$130,000**”

BJ Kirschhoffer and Joanna Suilch focus the Mini Den Cam on a polar bear den nearby. Photographer: KT Miller/polarbearsinternational.org

explore the reasons a particular animal is endangered, and discuss potential solutions that can help reverse extinction. They use their knowledge and communication skills to convey those solutions to our guests, and provide reasons for hope that together, we can all be conservationists making a difference for the future of wildlife.

By supporting the Zoo’s education programs through your membership, you are increasing the number of people who are inspired to help save animals from extinction. While not every teen involved in our programs will choose a nature-based or animal-based career, they are all equipped with transformational knowledge of the importance of protecting our planet, and they share that knowledge with every person they encounter.

Programming and Conservation Action Programs.

Revenue from membership and admissions also supports the outreach programs aimed at taking the Zoo’s mission out into the community to inspire all to take a role in saving wildlife and wild places, including nature in our own region. In addition to the ZooMobile and pollinator habitat restoration projects of the Butterfly Beltway program, our Conservation Action programs now include regularly scheduled nature hikes, community clean-ups, and invasive species removals.

All these programs invite the public out to participate, for free. The Urban Ecologist Workforce Development program employs under-served youth, training them to become mentors and program leaders for younger youth at after school recreation centers, or leading nature hikes and community clean-ups.

Your membership support allows our team of trained professionals to share their love of nature and wildlife with people throughout our region, inspiring them to understand the connection between our behavior and the health of our waterways and landscapes. We all want to live in a region where North American river otters, lake sturgeon, and monarch butterflies are once again abundant.

Asks at Admissions and the ZooShop Generate Conservation Grants. Several years back, we initiated additional ways our guests and members could directly help raise funds for international conservation efforts related to protecting the counterparts of the species represented on a Zoo visit. We had already been asking our members to consider an additional gift to conservation when they renewed their membership, but we began asking every person who walked into the Zoo to consider making a gift to support conservation related to a specific species. And we



Snow Leopard Trust

also began asking our patrons in the ZooShop to round up their purchase to support conservation of a specific species.

Our members and guests have been and continue to be generous. Over the last five years, fundraising for conservation at admissions has neared \$130,000, while rounding up in the ZooShop has resulted in more than \$57,000 in contributions. It's amazing how rounding up 27 cents or giving a dollar adds up to our ability to make meaningful grants to our conservation partners.

In recent years, we've used these funds to support impactful conservation programs that reduce poaching, mitigate human-wildlife conflict, create healthy forests, reduce illegal logging, and provide meaningful information for scientists studying snow leopards or polar bears.

For example, grants have been made to Red Panda Network to assist their efforts to establish the world's first protected area dedicated to red pandas, the Panchthar-Ilam-Taplejung Red Panda Forest in eastern Nepal.

Grants made to Polar Bears International in recent years support the installation and monitoring of solar-powered cameras to record the behavior of newly emerged families at den sites, first in Alaska, and more recently in Svalbard, Norway. As the sea ice polar bears depend upon for denning becomes increasingly scarce, additional knowledge is crucial to creating a plan for assisting this species that faces a high risk of extinction.

Thanks to the continued generosity of guests even during the pandemic, we were able to add a new grant recipient,

African Parks, to our list of international conservation partners. African Parks manages 19 national parks and protected areas in 11 African countries. Their strong focus on economic development and poverty alleviation ensures that each park is ecologically, socially, and financially sustainable in the long-term. Support from our guests is directed toward anti-poaching efforts for elephants, as well as lion conservation.

Long-time conservation partners Snow Leopard Trust and SANCCOB were also beneficiaries of support provided from our guests and patrons. For Snow Leopard Trust, Seneca Park Zoo grants are invaluable in their collaring and camera trap programs, as well as providing continued assistance in mitigating human-wildlife conflict. SANCCOB (the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds) grants are directed toward their penguin chick bolstering program.

Members and guests make SO much happen at the Seneca Park Zoo. But perhaps most importantly, you help us fulfill our mission by being a part of our mission, and empowering our mission through your support.

Over the last five years, grants totaling more than \$300,000 have been made to international conservation partners. The following are excerpts from thank you letters received earlier this year from a handful of those organizations. Our ability to make these grants would not be possible without the generosity of our guests, members, and donors.

"I'd like to share a story with you about one rhino you've

helped – a young female black rhino in Zimbabwe, nicknamed “Pumpkin.” Pumpkin was orphaned when her mother was shot and killed by poachers, who also shot the young calf in the leg with a heavy caliber rifle. A local rhino monitoring team, funded by International Rhino Foundation, found the injured calf during a routine patrol and quickly called for veterinary assistance. Our team treated Pumpkin’s injuries...and after six weeks of care, Pumpkin was released back in to the wild, where she, and thousands of other black and white rhinos, are regularly monitored and protected, thanks to your support.”

Nina Fascione, International Rhino Foundation
“Conserving species at a time of unprecedented

change to the earth’s climate is an incredible challenge. With your continued generosity, you are supporting valuable maternal den research in Svalbard, Norway that helps us understand denning behaviors of both moms and cubs and tracks potential disturbances due to current or proposed human activity nearby. Thank you for making our work possible and for your help in building a better world for polar bears through science.”

Krista Wright, Polar Bears International

“Garamba National Park, one of Africa’s oldest national parks, is the last stronghold for the largest population of elephants and the last remaining Kordofan giraffe in the DRC. Over the past 50 years, this landscape has suffered immensely amid the plundering of armed rebels. In 2016, African Parks initiated a comprehensive law enforcement strategy to halt the deadly surge in illegal activity for people and wildlife. Since then, elephant poaching has been reduced by 95% and, in further hopeful signs of recovery, an increasing number of elephants under the age of one have been recorded. The park also provides refuge to predator species, most notably spotted hyena, leopard and lion, that are roaming Garamba’s vast landscape. With your support, we can continue to scale and amplify our impact and ensure iconic species, and many others, continue to thrive.”

Toni Condon, African Parks

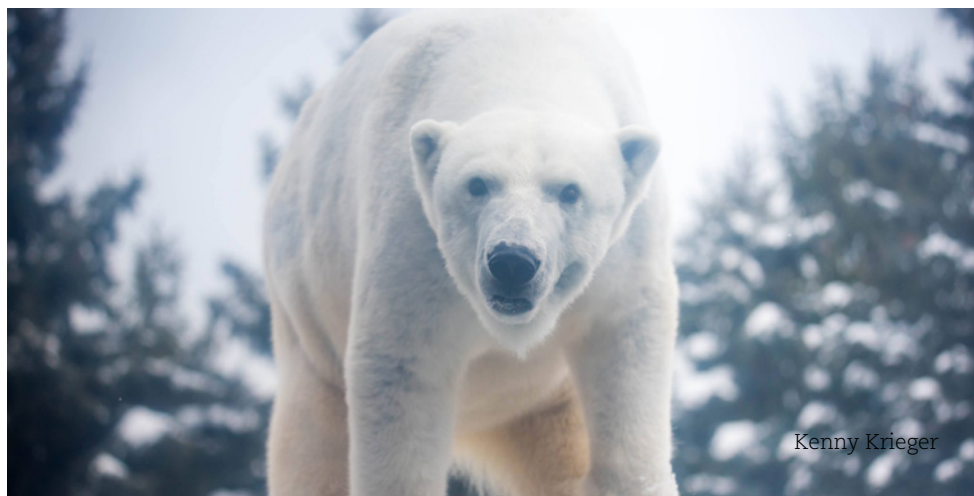


Kenneth Tryon

“With your support, we can continue to scale and amplify our impact...”



Erick Machajewski



Kenny Krieger



Wayne Smith

“Thank you for the generous gift...in support of the Amur Tiger Conservation AntiPoaching efforts and Logging Road Closure programs of the Tiger Conservation Campaign...Once roaming across much of Asia, fewer than 4,000 are thought to remain in just a fraction of their original habitat...Four of nine subspecies have all disappeared from the wild just in the past hundred years. Amur, Sumatran, and Malayan tigers are all thought to number 500 or fewer individuals in the wild. You are helping to save these endangered species. With your help, the Tiger Conservation Campaign continues to support efforts to curb poaching and habitat loss, reduce tiger-human conflict and investigate illegal wildlife traders.”

Michele Tyburg, Tiger Conservation Campaign

.....
“You are part of the solution. Your donation to Health in Harmony will save rainforest and save lives around the world. Thank you....Your gift will make affordable health care, alternative livelihood training and responsible tree planting a reality. Thank you for making an impact for our planet.”

Trina Noonan, Health in Harmony

The following is a list of conservation grant recipients from 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. These grants – totaling \$139,115 -- were made possible by the generosity of guests, members, donors, and participants in special events. In a difficult year without on-site special events and reduced capacity, **we are humbled and proud to have been able to make these grants, thanks to you.**

- African Parks Foundation of America
- Association of Zoos & Aquariums – Sea Turtle Relief
- CPALI (Conservation Through Poverty Alleviation, International) - Madagascar
- Duke Lemur Center
- Giraffe Conservation Foundation
- Health in Harmony
- International Elephant Foundation
- International Rhino Foundation
- Lemur Conservation Foundation
- Lion Landscapes
- Madagascar Fauna & Flora Group
- Minnesota Zoo – Tiger Conservation
- Polar Bears International
- Red Panda Network
- SANCCOB
- Snow Leopard Trust
- Tides Foundation – Project Zahana
- Turtle Survival Alliance
- WISE Tropics – Madagascar reforestation
- Zoos Victoria – Australian bush fire emergency relief



Elesa Kim

Lion Weekend

JULY 31 & AUGUST 1

Join us in celebrating and supporting lion conservation! We will have some great lion keeper content, activities, and more!

Dates July 31 and August 1
Price Free

Time Virtual content, lion enrichment throughout the weekend

More information senecaparkzoo.org/event/lions21

Arctic Sea Ice/Polar Bear Week

JULY 15 - JULY 21

Join us in celebrating and supporting Arctic sea ice and polar bear conservation! We will have some great content and activities featuring polar bear Anoki and the Arctic.

Dates July 15 - July 21
Time Varies
Price Free

More information senecaparkzoo.org/event/polarbear21



Wayne Smith

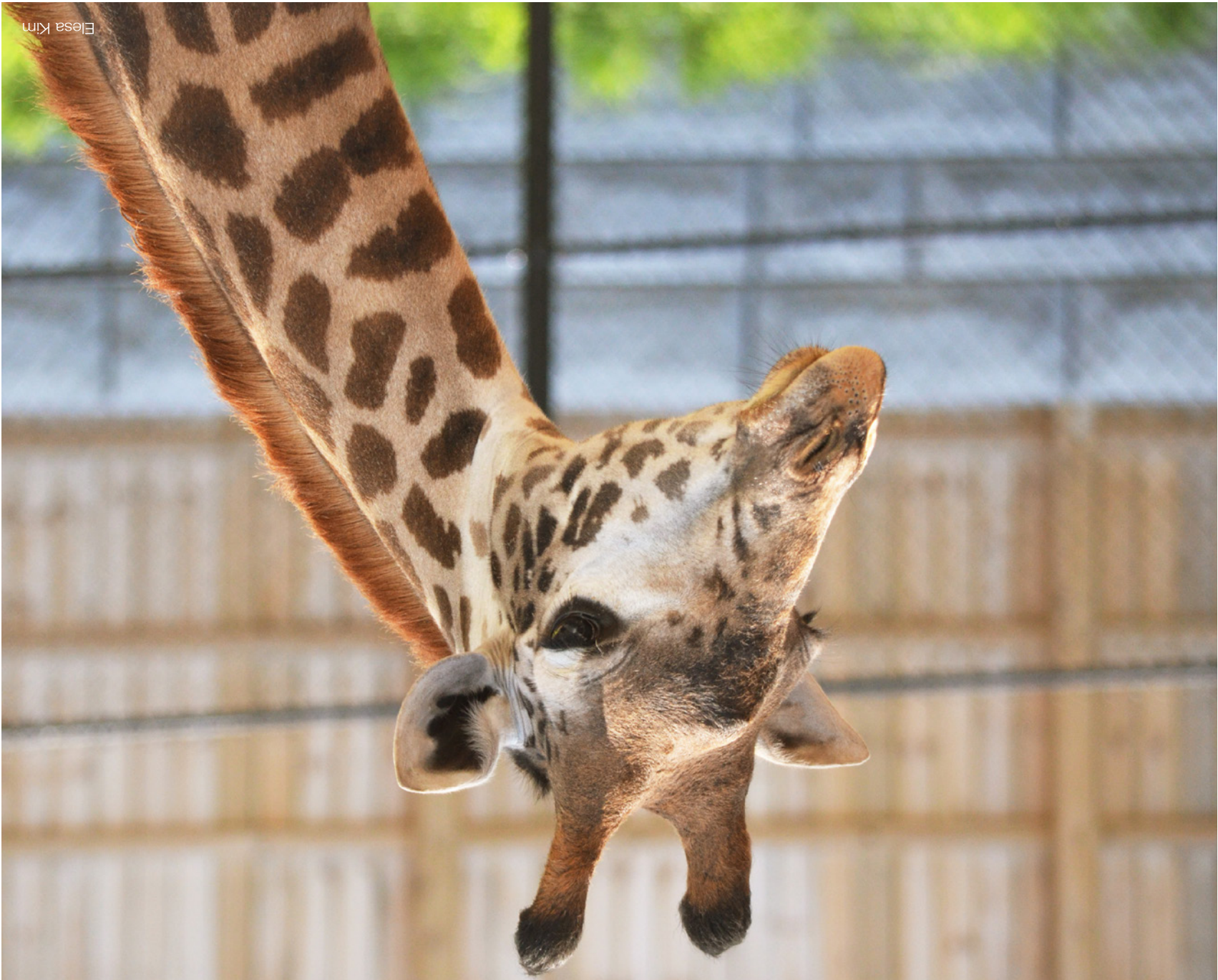
Genesee Watershed Weekend

JULY 10 & 11

Join us in celebrating and supporting the Genesee watershed conservation! We will have some great content and activities featuring sturgeon, hellbenders and more!

Dates July 10 and 11
Time Varies
Price Free

More information senecaparkzoo.org/event/genesee21



Elesa Kim

World Ocean Week

JUNE 8 - JUNE 14

Join us in supporting the implementation of worldwide Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and raise awareness in the protection of the ocean and the sustainable management of its resources.

Dates

June 8 – June 14

Time

Varies

Price

Free

More information

senecaparkzoo.org/event/ocean21

World Giraffe Weekend

JUNE 19 & 20

Join us in celebrating and supporting giraffe conservation! We will have some great giraffe keeper content, activities, and more!

Dates

June 19 and 20

Time

Virtual content, giraffe enrichment throughout the weekend

Price

Free

More information

senecaparkzoo.org/event/giraffes21

► ZOO CAMP: SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!



Register now for ZooCamp, an immersive, week-long Zoo experience. Our summer ZooCamps will sell out, so sign up early! ZooCamp immerses kids in wildlife, the environment, and the need to protect and care for both, all in a unique setting: the Zoo! Campers explore nature and animals, create projects, share ideas, and make new friends. For full descriptions and to register, visit senecaparkzoo.org/summer-camp.

Camps

- Preschool camps weekly June 7 – July 2
- School-age camps weekly June 28 – August 27

Times

- Half-day: 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- Full day: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Cost:

- Full day is \$245 for Zoo members, \$270 for non-members.
- Half day is \$150 for Zoo members, \$170 for non-members.
- Before care or after care for school-age campers, \$25/week.

ZooCamps are available for ages 3-4, 5-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Questions? Email education@senecazoo.org. We look forward to seeing you this summer!

► 2021 JUNGLE JOG 5K RUN AND WALK (VIRTUAL)

JULY 18 - 26



Run or walk with your pride between July 18th – 26th to support the Seneca Park Zoo Society and our lion conservation efforts. You can run or walk individually or put a team together! Based on registration level, each registrant will receive cool a swag bag.

Dates:

July 18 - 26

Time:

Anytime

Price:

- \$45 Registration fee; Official Dri-tech shirt, bandana and bib and 5k survival kit
- \$35 Registration fee; Official Dri-tech shirt and bib; and 5k survival kit
- \$25 Registration fee; Official bandana and bib; and 5k survival kit

Register:

senecaparkzoo.org/junglejog



Are you interested in aquatic education and discovering biodiversity in the area? Join us at our next FrogWatch USA™ virtual training session and become a trained volunteer for free! Our FrogWatch USA™ chapter coordinator will teach you about local frogs and toads and when each can be heard calling. You'll learn how to identify species by call, locate and register a wetland site, and collect observations to be submitted to the nationwide online database.

Date
June 18

Time
6 – 8 p.m.

Price
Free

Registration is required
senecaparkzoo.org/event/frogwatch-june21

SCOUT PROGRAMS



Seneca Park Zoo offers an array of workshops, both in-person and virtual, private and pre-scheduled, for all levels of scout troops. Programs are designed to meet badge requirements and build skills. The Zoo offers both in-person and virtual workshops for both Scouts and BSA Merit Badges. In-person workshops range from two-and-a-half to three hour sessions while virtual workshops range from 30 minutes to 1 hour. For dates, pricing and to register, visit: senecaparkzoo.org/scout-workshops

CALENDAR

Mark your calendars for what's next at your Zoo.

WILD ABOUT TRIVIA



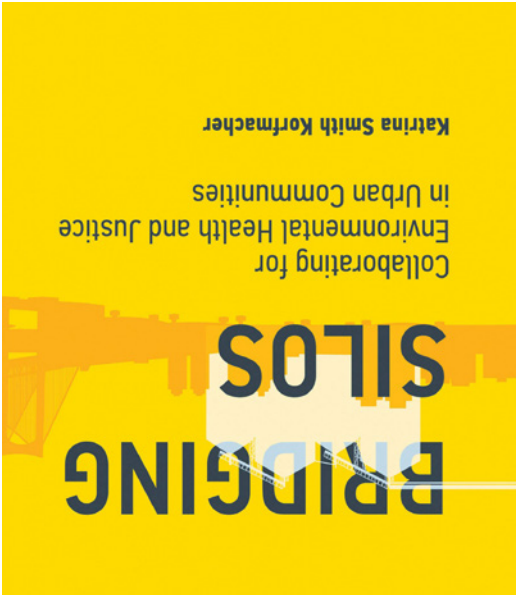
Register for WILD About Trivia, a virtual happy hour trivia event. Team up with some friends and test your knowledge of all things Zoo and wildlife, past and present. Pour a beverage of your choice and tune in to the link that will be provided. Have fun and win prizes, all while supporting your Zoo!

Date June 17
Time 7 p.m.

Price \$10 per person for teams of 2 – 5
Register senecaparkzoo.org/trivia

PAGES WITH PURPOSE: VIRTUAL BOOK GROUP

JULY 8



For our July Pages with Purpose: Virtual Book Group, we'll be discussing *Bridging Silos: Collaborating for Environmental Health and Justice in Urban Communities*, by Katrina Smith Korfmacher, PhD and Professor of Environmental Medicine at University of Rochester Medical Center. The book is free to download – visit our website for the link!

Date and time • July 8 | 7 p.m.

Price Free

Register senecaparkzoo.org/bookgroup

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UPS



Get outside and join like-minded neighbors to help clean-up an area park. You'll be amazed at the impact a focused group can make in just three hours. Help us make Rochester a cleaner, greener city!

Upcoming Dates • June 27
• July 30
• August 28
Location Varies
Price Free

Registration is required senecaparkzoo.org/cleanup

ZOO NATURALISTS THIS SUMMER



Wayne Smith

As the summer of 2021 comes near, we are very much looking forward to seeing you at the Zoo. While we still have some unknowns around what on-site programs will be possible, our programming and conservation action naturalists will be at the Zoo throughout the summer. Our naturalists can be identified by their maroon shirts and nametags and are available to chat (socially-distanced of course!) with you about our animals, the Zoo's conservation initiatives, and offsite events like nature treks and clean-ups. Our naturalists will also be able to answer your questions about our progress to create a world-class facility and increase our collective conservation impact.

The Zoo's volunteers continue to help monitor traffic flow in buildings. As restrictions continue to ease, you will see more zoo keepers on grounds interacting with guests as well. And remember, you can always look for a Seneca Park Zoo shirt and nametag if you need help or have questions.



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Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.

senecaparkzoo.org | 585.336.7200 | The Zoo is open 362 days a year.



Follow us socially. Visit senecaparkzoo.org

