

A publication of the Seneca Park Zoo Society

ZOO NOOZ

OCTOBER 2022

HOME GROWN CONSERVATION



Red Fox in Turning Point Park, "caught" by one of the Zoo's motion-activated cameras as part of its participation in the Urban Wildlife Information Network.

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

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Nov. 1 – March 31:
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
last entry at 3 p.m.

April 1 – Oct. 31:
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
last entry at 4 p.m.

**MEMBERS MAY
ALWAYS ENTER
AT 9:30 A.M.**

LETTER FROM

Pamela Reed Sanchez
President and CEO
Seneca Park Zoo Society

**On My Mind:
Gratitude**

I don't know about you, but my newsfeed keeps alerting me to articles on mindfulness and stress reduction, with a recurring suggestion of keeping a gratitude journal. The benefits, these articles tell me, include improving mental and physical well-being, reducing stress, increasing my optimism level, and – and this one really resonates with me – helping me sleep better.

While I'm an avid writer of prose and poetry, I'm not a journal keeper. But I thought – with benefits like this – why not give it a try? (and I can't help noticing the benefits of keeping a gratitude journal are exactly the same benefits as spending time in nature!)

For the past month, I've been writing down just one item a day for which I'm grateful, and, not surprisingly, it's a list replete with gratitude for being able to do the work I do, with passionate, skillful partners. Below are a few highlights:

I am grateful:

I work at a place beloved by our community that gives people joy every day. What a gift.

The Zoo has emerged from difficult years with a strong, growing membership base, including more than 1,200 "Head of the Herd" households – meaning they have been members for ten consecutive years or more.

I work with and for people passionate about our mission and vision, with extensive knowledge in their respective areas. Zoo keepers, our animal health staff, our membership team, marketing experts, education and outreach specialists, County administration, events team, and so on – each person adds to the sum of what we are.

We were able to bring back summer programs for the public, holding nearly 600 programs between Memorial Day and Labor Day, and that of the roughly 200,000 people visiting during that time, nearly 20% chose to attend a feeding, keeper chat, conservation talk, or enrichment experience. ZooBrew was back in full force, with a diverse



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What a gift.

line-up of music that more than 10,000 people enjoyed and danced to.

For partners and collaborators, individuals, corporations, and foundations, that recognize, celebrate, and support the work of Seneca Park Zoo.

To see a lynx kitten playing with his mother, and watch her indulge him and then let him know when she's had enough.

To connect with colleagues at Polar Bears International, and have them reiterate their gratitude for the support of Seneca Park Zoo and the innovative ways we raise awareness for polar bear conservation. External validation from experts working in the field feels good.

To have read this quote by Benjamin Franklin, "What good have I done this day?" and been able to nod affirmatively without hesitation. It is good to wake up every day knowing that what I do matters.

To work in an industry increasingly focused on ensuring every person in our society has equitable access to nature, and at innovative ways to remove barriers to participation for marginalized communities.

As habits go, this is a pretty good one. I don't know that I'm sleeping any better, yet, but I do know that centering my days in nature and gratitude lifts my spirits, and I hope yours as well.

In gratitude for each of you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela Reed Sanchez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

HOME GROWN CONSERVATION: SENECA PARK ZOO AS NATIONAL LEADER IN ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



Chris Widmaier

The vast majority of Seneca Park Zoo guests visit the Zoo for the chance to come nose-to-nose with an African lion or a snow leopard, watch polar bear Anoki dive into her pool, or catch a glimpse of otters at play. The Zoo's role as a center for wildlife engagement is paramount, transporting guests to Tanzania, Tibet, and the Arctic through immersive experiences. But your Zoo also plays a growing role in wildlife engagement outside of the gates of the Zoo, fostering environmental stewardship through programs centered in appreciating the extraordinary biodiversity in our own region.

In recent years, outreach programs have expanded to include the Urban Ecology Workforce Development Program, participation in the Urban Wildlife Information Network (UWIN), and community activation events including park and beach clean-ups, invasive species removals, and nature hikes.

"The programs we operate for our own community, connecting them with urban ecology and inspiring environmental stewardship, are truly industry-leading programs," said Steve Lacy, Zoo Superintendent. "There

Continued on next page

“The programs we operate for our own community, **connecting them with urban ecology and inspiring environmental stewardship**, are truly industry-leading programs.”

- Steve Lacy, Zoo Superintendent

are a handful of zoos, including ours, that understand involving the local population in issues of regional conservation is key to all species survival in the long-term.”

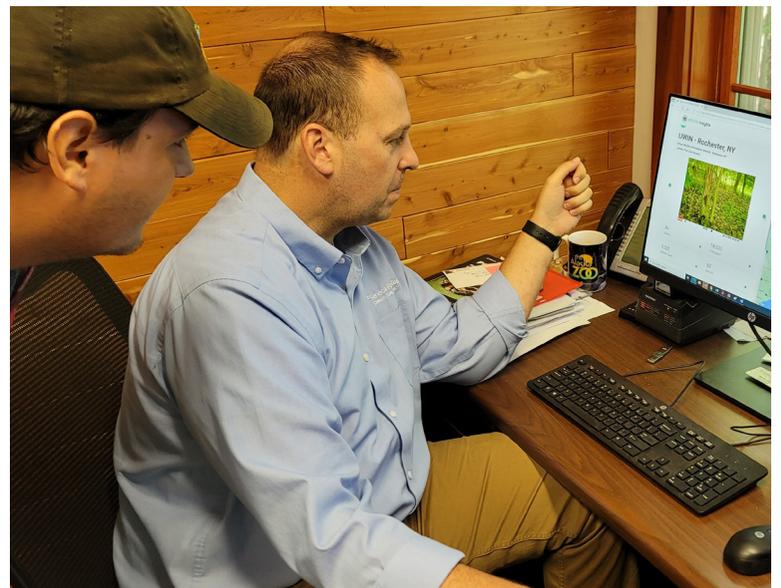
“I’ve been amazed at the turnout for Community Cleanups,” said Community Science Coordinator Dave Will. “No matter what day of the week or time of day, we are consistently seeing at least a dozen more people show up than the 25 or 30 registrants. People want to help, and they feel empowered by participating with us.”

The emphasis on programs highlighting regional conservation really began with the Zoo’s One Cubic Foot project in 2015, which brought in nationally renowned photographer David Liittschwager and scientists from the Smithsonian’s Museum of Natural History to document what was using the Genesee River as a habitat. “One Cubic Foot laid the groundwork for us in many ways,” recalls Tom Snyder, Director of Programming and Conservation Action. “We saw not only a healthy river, but a community that wanted to be connected to it, and wanted to learn more about it. That set the stage for many of our conservation action programs moving forward.”

The Zoo became a partner in the Urban Wildlife Information Network in 2018, and four times each year places motion-activated cameras in urban public spaces to visually document the wildlife sharing habitat with us. The next phase of the project will be to install audio mics alongside the cameras, to capture sound. “Rochesterians are always surprised to learn the most active spot is Mt. Hope Cemetery,” said Will, who, working with the Education team, has helped create school and outreach programs using the camera trap images to teach about wildlife ecology and citizen science.

“Zoos have learned we can’t save wildlife without involving local communities,” said Dr. Jeff Wyatt, immediate past Chair of the Accreditation Commission of the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. “Where there is great biodiversity loss, the most sustainable way to reverse that loss is to work directly with the people whose choices for their own survival impact biodiversity.”

Wyatt, who worked for more than thirty years as veterinarian of Seneca Park Zoo, and bears the title “Environmental Justice Advocate” for Seneca Park Zoo Society, also serves on the board of directors for Health In Harmony, one of the Zoo’s long-standing international conservation partners. He has spent considerable time in both Borneo and Madagascar working directly with local residents, helping to implement programs affecting economic stability. “There is growing realization of the interconnectedness among people, wildlife, and the environment, and this approach is called One Health,” said Wyatt.



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“Zoos have learned we can’t save wildlife without **involving local communities.**”

- Dr. Jeff Wyatt, immediate past Chair of the Accreditation Commission of the Association of Zoos & Aquariums



Wayne Smith

There is also a growing emphasis in the zoo industry for zoos to recognize their role in engaging issues of environmental justice, and the recent AZA Annual Conference had several sessions addressing the topic. “Environmental justice aims to address inequities and health risks local communities face in degrading areas, from rainforests to urban areas, where impoverished, marginalized, and at-risk people end up living,” said Wyatt. “Climate change and extreme weather events are further damaging vulnerable communities, and what we’ve learned is the best approach to helping is to listen to the communities and help them with resources.”

The One Health approach has tangible, proven results in Borneo and Madagascar with international conservation, where in Borneo, for example, camera trap images show orangutans using reforested corridors while maternal health indicators have improved vastly and illegal logging has decreased 90% as a result of instituting programs meeting the self-identified needs of local residents.

“It’s time to bring these lessons home to the United States,” says Wyatt. His latest project does just that, and with grants from the



Dave Zimmerman
Lake Sturgeon

United States Environmental Protection Agency and New York’s Department of Environmental Conservation, he is working with Mary’s Place, Rochester Refugee Resettlement, and Seneca Park Zoo to raise awareness among refugee populations of the health risks to women and children of subsistence fishing.

Wyatt, who led the Zoo’s work in sturgeon repatriation and conservation for more than twenty years, says the project has two goals: to save the sturgeon we worked to bring back, and to work with at-risk communities that may be catching and consuming a variety of fish. Over the next year, curriculum specialist Gretchen Spencer, School and Groups Coordinator for the Zoo, will work with Dave Will, Jeff Wyatt and the refugee community to create culturally relevant outreach materials regarding fish consumption, and will help train people in the refugee community to deliver the curriculum.

“I think we can be proud of being ahead of most zoos in this area,” said Lacy. “And I hope others rapidly follow our lead, as the conservation of animals of all kinds depend on it.”



Alyssa Wisniewski

Kaba's Eye Surgery



Adult male snow leopard Kaba, whose right eye was surgically removed several years ago due to an injury, recently received surgery to remove what appeared to be an accumulation of scar tissue. The surgery occurred in the Zoo's animal hospital, and Zoo Veterinarian Dr. Chris McKinney was joined by a team of surgeons from Veterinary Specialists and Emergency Services: Daniel Hoffman, DVM, MS Diplomate ACVS; Lindsay St. Germaine, DVM, Diplomate ACVS, and Jed Sung, DVM, Diplomate ACVS. The removed tissue was biopsied and determined to be a dermoid cyst, which, according to McKinney, is "an uncommon, benign cyst that can form in the deep layer of the skin at the site of a deep wound or surgical incision." Kaba recovered well from the surgery, and the biopsy sampled showed the entire cyst was removed. "I am very happy that we have these local experts to assist us in the care of the unique animals here," said Steve Lacy, Zoo Superintendent.

Coming Soon: Digital Membership Cards

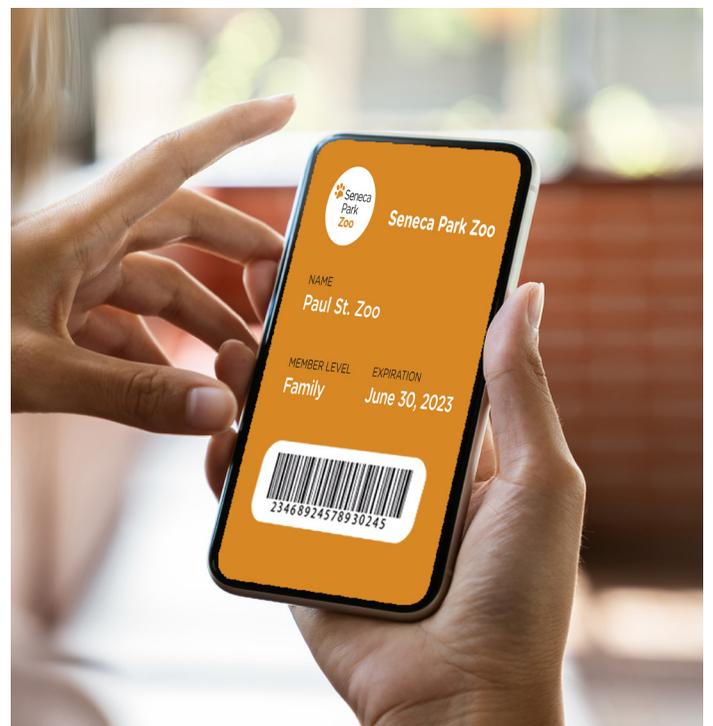
This fall, we're introducing a more convenient and eco-friendly way to access your zoo membership: digital membership cards!

Your digital card can be added directly to your Apple or Android wallet and scanned off your phone. When you renew or update your membership, your card will automatically update as well.

Watch your email for your activation message and link.

Not certain we have your current email? Contact us at members@senecazoo.org to make sure you don't miss out.

Visit senecaparkzoo.org/membership/digital-faq for more details.





Celebrating **10 years** of the **Forever Wild Society**

In 2012, 24 households became founding members of the Seneca Park Zoo Society's Forever Wild Society. These visionary members joined together to do one thing: create an endowment fund to ensure the continuation of education and conservation programs for future generations at our Zoo. As of today, there are now 78 households who have opted to invest in the Zoo's future. As a result of the efforts of the Forever Wild Society, the Zoo Society's endowment fund has grown substantially allowing it to fully support the salary of one full-time Education employee.

We hope you will consider becoming a member of the Forever Wild Society today. You can do so by including the Seneca Park Zoo Society in your estate plans. Membership in the Forever Wild Society is a deferred gift of \$2,000 or more in your estate planning to the Seneca Park Zoo Society's Endowment Fund.

Forever Wild Society members enjoy the company of others who have made the Zoo a part of their legacy while strengthening the Zoo's financial foundation. Forever Wild Society members receive special recognition on grounds and additional benefits, including an invitation to an annual recognition event. This year's event is scheduled to take place on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at the Zoo.

We would be glad to collaborate with you and your legal and financial advisor(s) to make a planned gift that best meets your needs. To learn more, or to join the **Forever Wild Society**, please contact **Director of Development Chuck Levengood** at 585.336.7205 or clevengood@senecazoo.org.

Thank you to the many corporate and foundation supporters who make our Education and Conservation Programming and our special events possible.
Thank you for believing in us and the important work we do.

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CONSERVATION AWARENESS WEEKENDS

▶ AFRICAN PENGUIN AWARENESS WEEKEND

OCTOBER 15 & 16

Celebrate International African Penguin Awareness Day with your friends here at the Zoo! Make a trip out to visit with the African penguins that make up the colony in our care. Enjoy special experiences throughout the day to learn about the Zoo's colony and hear directly from keeper staff about what it's like to care for them. Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor Five Star Bank for supporting all our Conservation Awareness Days!

Date: October 15 & 16

Price: Free with entry

Learn More: senecaparkzoo.org/penguin22

▶ SENECA PARK ZOO FALL FEST!

OCTOBER

For the month of October we will be celebrating our first-ever Seneca Park Zoo Fall Fest! Enjoy fun Fall décor, special seasonal treats, and themed weekends.

Tentative Schedule:

October 1 & 2 – Kickoff the month with Scarecrow Weekend! Vote on your favorite scarecrow by visiting the Zoo!

Oct 15 & 16 – Apple Weekend – celebrate all things apple including cider slushies!

Oct 22 & 23 – Pump up for Pumpkins!

Seneca Park Zoo Evening SPOOKtacular – Join us for an evening Halloween-themed event between 5:30 – 8:30 pm on October 20, 21, and 22.

Oct 29 & 30 – Get excited for costume parades and more Halloween fun!

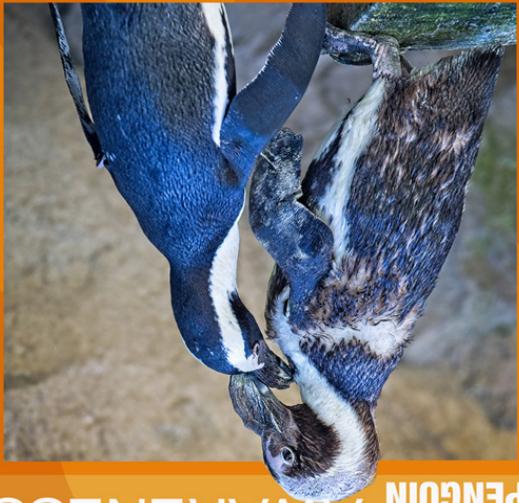
Visit our website for more information to come for this exciting seasonal event happening at your Zoo!

Learn More: senecaparkzoo.org/fallfest

Schedule subject to change without notice.

**Fall
Fest**
at Seneca Park Zoo

**AFRICAN
PENGUIN
AWARENESS**



Seneca Park Zoo  Five Star Bank 

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

▶ NATURE HIKES & COMMUNITY CLEANUPS

**HIKES: OCTOBER 8, 29/NOVEMBER 13, 26
CLEANUPS: OCT. 22/NOV. 12/DEC. 10**

Join Zoo naturalists and members of the community on a hike to learn about and find invasive species in our local area. You can also join the Zoo and like-minded neighbors to help clean-up our local green spaces as part of our community cleanup program.

Dates: Hikes- Oct. 8 & 29, Nov. 13 & 26
Cleanups- Oct 22, Nov 12, Dec 10

Price: FREE

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/hikes
senecaparkzoo.org/cleanup

▶ WILDLIFE ACTION CREW

NOV. 9, 16, 30/DECEMBER 7, 14, 21

Wildlife Action Crew is one of our most fun, informative, and productive programs designed especially for teenagers interested in animals and conservation. This six-a-week, once-a-week program centers around a conservation case study that teens will conduct themselves. Through their case study they will learn about and discuss a conservation issue, the animals that are affected, and what is being done to help. They will select an action that addresses the conservation issue and work in groups to create a campaign to promote their message to the world!

Ages: 13 to 18-year-olds

Price: \$55 for Zoo members, \$60 for non-members

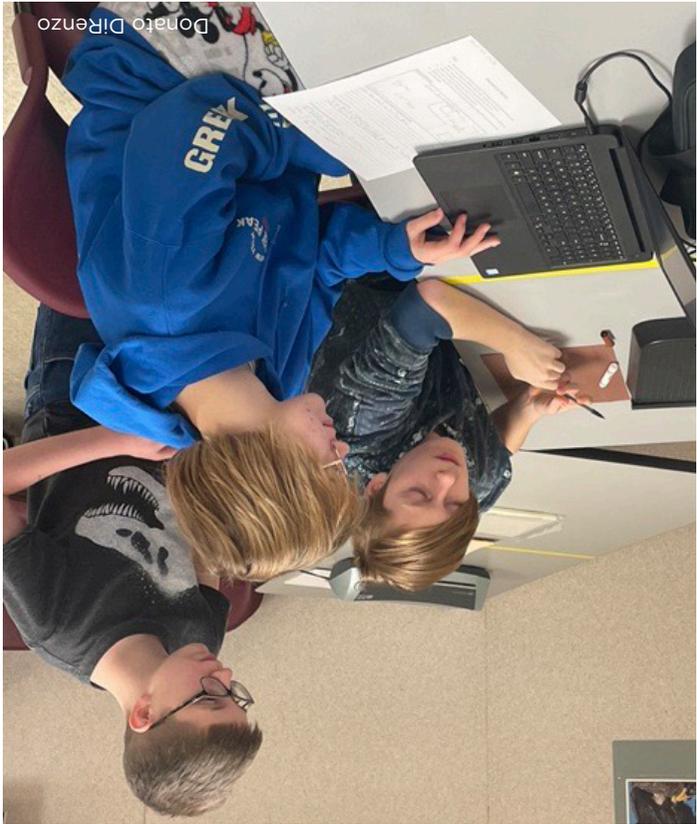
When: Wednesdays 6 – 8 p.m. (6 weeks)

November 9, 16, 30 and December 7, 14, 21

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/wildlife



Wayne Smith



Donato DiRenzo

▶ DAY-OFF ZOOCAMPS

OCTOBER 10 & NOVEMBER 11

School might be on break, but it's the perfect time to come to the Zoo! Register your child for Day-Off ZooCamp for a fun day of learning at the Zoo!

Ages: 5 through 9

Dates: October 10 & November 11

Full-day: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Price: Members: \$45

Non-members: \$55

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/dayoff

▶ HOLIDAY BREAK ZOO CAMP

DECEMBER 27-30

Holiday break is exciting at the Zoo! Campers will explore different classes of animals from birds to reptiles to mammals and more! Get ready for crafts, games, up-close animal encounters, and of course visiting the animals out in the Zoo.

Ages: 5 through 9

Dates: December 27-30

Full-day: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Half-day: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Price: Members: \$124 for half-day; \$204 for full-day

Non-members: \$140 for half-day; \$224 for full-day

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/holidaycamp



Abby Carner



Derek Palmer

▶ DISCOVERY ZOOCLASS

OCTOBER 18, 20/OCTOBER 25, 27

Discovery ZooClass is an opportunity for kids to learn about animals through the wonders of the Zoo! Every month has a new theme to keep kids coming back to the Zoo for more fun and animal knowledge. These monthly after-school classes will include Zoo tours, activities, games, and an ambassador animal visitor in the classroom. The same class in each age group is offered multiple times per month to allow more students to participate and some flexibility in scheduling.

Ages: 6-8 and 9-12

Dates: October 18, 20 (ages 6-8) October 25, 27 (ages 9-12) - See website to check date availability

Price: \$16 for members, \$20 for non-members

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/zoo/class

▶ KINDERZOO

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

When it comes to conservation and animal education, we say, "start them young and allow the passion to grow with them!" KinderZoo is a program for preschoolers and their grown-ups to play, discover, and learn in a fun, interactive way. Join us as we explore different animals and habitats, using games, biotacts, and engaging, age-appropriate activities. Each class will also include the opportunity to meet an ambassador animal up-close and learn all about them! Limited slots available.

Ages: 18 months – 2 years & 3 - 5 years

Dates: See website to check date availability for KinderZoo throughout October, November & December

Price: \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members (anyone attending with child would also need to pay for a general admission Zoo ticket)

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/kinderzoo



Tina Trimer



Dave Zimmerman

CALENDAR

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

CAMPS, WORKSHOPS, CLASSES

▶ SCOUT WORKSHOPS

Calling all scout leaders and youth groups – plan your next group outing with us! The Zoo offers an array of workshops for all levels of scouts looking to learn and have some fun. Programs are designed to meet badge requirements and build skills. The Zoo offers both in-person and virtual workshops for Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Scouts BSA Merit Badges. Have fun and learn something new at the Zoo!

In-person workshops range from two-and-a-half to three-hour sessions while virtual workshops range from 30 minutes to 1 hour. For more information, including pricing and requesting a date, visit senecaparkzoo.org/scouts

▶ TREK IN THE TWILIGHT

**OCTOBER 14, 21/NOVEMBER 4, 12/
DECEMBER 9/PICK YOUR OWN DATE**

Trek in the Twilight is just like our popular Bank with Beasts program but without the overnight! We provide dinner, a guided tour of the Zoo, and an animal presentation, but participants get to go home and sleep in their own beds at the end of the night.

Dates:

October 14, 28, November 4, 12, December 9 OR

Pick Your Own Date (September - May)

Time: 5:45 - 9:30 p.m.

Price: \$25 per scout, \$20 per chaperone

A \$50 deposit is due two weeks after booking.

Learn More: senecaparkzoo.org/trek



Elesa Kim



Ken Tryon

Seneca Park Zoo Society
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Rochester, NY 14621-1097
senecaparkzoo.org



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Beth LaPierre, Director of Communications & Engagement
Donato DiRenzo, Communications Coordinator
Tyler Cassidy-Heacock, Associate Director of Development

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.



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David Jorgensen
Canada Lynx

OCTOBER 2022

ZOONOOZ

A publication of the Seneca Park Zoo Society