

A publication of the Seneca Park Zoo Society

ZOO NOOZ

SEPTEMBER 2023

Seneca Park Zoo
*supporters enabling
progress in Uganda's
Murchison Falls
National Park*

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

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General info: 585.336.7200	Nov. 1 – March 31: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. last entry at 3 p.m.
Membership: 585.336.7212	April 1 – Oct. 31: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. last entry at 4 p.m.
Development: 585.336.7205	
Private events: 585.295.7399	MEMBERS MAY ALWAYS ENTER AT 9:30 A.M.

LETTER FROM

Pamela Reed Sanchez
President and CEO
Seneca Park Zoo Society

On My Mind:
What Inspires You?

Some days, inspiration seems far away. As autumn settles in, we return to routines that often leave little time for seeking inspiration, or even noticing the inspiration around us every day. School schedules, meal planning, dance lessons, soccer practice, football Sundays, bills to pay, chores to do; summer vacations are memories rather than plans.

May I suggest a trip to the Zoo? Yes, I know, you're a member. You know.

I am lucky enough to work at a place we all can find inspiration daily. This is essential, as our mission statement reads, "Seneca Park Zoo inspires our community to connect with, care for, and conserve wildlife and wild places." We spend a lot of time talking about the second half of our mission statement – in fact, it's shortened on our name tags and shirts to "Connect. Care. Conserve."

But the inspiration part is critical. Webster's Dictionary tells us that when we inspire someone, they are spurred on, impelled, and motivated. Inspiration creates a feeling – a positive one – in a person, and it stimulates them to DO something. For our guests and our community to be moved to connect, care and conserve, our job is to inspire them to do exactly that.

How do we know we're inspiring our guests? For years, we've been asking guests to complete a post-Zoo visit survey, which includes questions on whether they learned something on their Zoo visit they can do to live more sustainably, or a way they can help save animals from extinction. And the responses are overwhelmingly "yes." Over the next year, Seneca Park Zoo will be one of six AZA-accredited zoos taking part in a deeper study of what makes a zoo visit inspiring, and what inspired guests do with their inspiration. We will likely be reaching out to members for your thoughts, and we hope you'll help us out with that research.



Meanwhile, come be inspired.

Be inspired by the Borneo eared frogs in Creatures from the River's Edge, and know that the animal care team here is one of a handful in the nation that have successfully hatched and reared Borneo eared frogs. Be inspired by the lake sturgeon, a prehistoric species whose existence in the Genesee River today is directly related to actions taken by Seneca Park Zoo staff and volunteers.

Be inspired by Luna, the snowy owl chick now fully grown, hand-reared by staff and successfully returned to her habitat. Be inspired by Canada lynx Stanley, nearly full grown, our first successful lynx cub birth, and watch how he interacts with both mother and father – one of the few felines in the Zoo that need not be separated.

Be inspired by Gunni, a California sea lion visiting from the Denver Zoo while his home habitat is rebuilt, and begin to understand the power of the network of accredited zoos. Be inspired by our olive baboons, one of the few troops in any zoo in North America, and which regularly participate in research studies, helping advance understanding of primate cognition.

Be inspired by our tower of giraffes, including Kipenzi, whose medical needs brought together an experienced and skillful team of experts to the Zoo in August, another testament to the power of AZA-accredited zoos. And Iggy, whom we recently announced is pregnant. Together with Olmy, these giraffes inspire us all every day to give our best for them, and for their counterparts in nature.

Inspiration comes in many shapes and sizes, and in scales, feathers, or fur. But you'll always find it at your Zoo.

See you at the Zoo,

Pamela Reed Sanchez

inspire

A large pile of confiscated snares and leg-hold traps, with three armed Scouts standing in front of it. The background is a dense green forest.

**20 Scouts Making
Tons of Progress in**

Uganda's Murchison Falls National Park

Sarah Conley,
International Elephant Foundation

This incredible photo is the work of esteemed photojournalist Paul Hilton who created this powerful visual representation of the battle against poaching. Titled "Snare Mountain" this photo shows over 12 tons of confiscated snares and leg-hold traps—only a fraction of what Uganda Wildlife Authority Rangers and Scouts find, remove and ultimately destroy every year.

Moving arm-in-arm as a line, stepping methodically, unarmed Scouts traverse through the heart of poaching country in Uganda identifying, dismantling, and removing snares. Their boots protect from briars and bites, but are no match for wheel traps which can close with enough force to crush a human leg. These Scouts do important work helping protect endangered and threatened species in Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) and building Uganda Wildlife Authority's (UWA) capacity to protect wildlife by providing extra manpower to the ranger force. Together the UWA Rangers and Scouts collected over 12 tons of snares and leg-hold traps in 2022 alone making a noticeable positive impact in the recovery of wildlife.

How did these 20 Scouts get there? Each from a poaching family, they are a part of a vital program to reclaim Murchison Falls National Park from poachers and wildlife criminals. Once a thriving habitat known as Uganda's Jewel of the Nile, Murchison Falls was decimated during decades of war starting in the 1970s followed by the Lord's Resistance Army's reign of terror in the 1990s. As the people suffered so did wildlife, and the natural heritage of a beautiful land was in peril. Once political stability returned, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, with support of conservation organizations like the Uganda Conservation Foundation (UCF) and the International Elephant Foundation (IEF), has been able to begin to take back the land from poachers. Over the past 10 years IEF has supported the construction of 15 ranger stations, a veterinary facility, and the Joint Operating Command Center (JOCC) which coordinates all of Murchison's ranger and security operations. Recovered snares are used in the construction to fortify the foundations of these ranger posts, but more importantly

eliminating the possibility they can ever be used again. As a result, the population of highly endangered Rothschild giraffe is up from 400 to 2,000, the elephant population has increased from 500 to 16,000, and the park's lion population is also recovering. These efforts and more are helping Uganda return to its pre-war glory of being one of the very best places for wildlife tourism in all of Africa.

Securing habitat with new ranger stations is not enough. Changing the hearts and minds of the people and breaking decades-long practices of illegal harvesting and other wildlife crime to make ends meet is the ultimate goal. This is where the Scouts Program comes in; it is the next step in building a sustainable conservation ethic for communities surrounding Murchison Falls National Park. Poaching is often a family business, with techniques, preferred spots, and networks passed down from generation to generation. But the dangers and risks are real. As Uganda as a nation recovers, families want



Recovered snares are used in the construction to fortify the foundations of these ranger posts, but more importantly eliminating the possibility they can ever be used again.

- Sarah Conley



LEARN MORE

better for their sons and daughters. The Scout Program was developed by UCF to stop the cycle of poaching within families. In exchange for a family commitment to stop illegal activities, one of their children is provided an education and taught employable skills like construction, painting, arboriculture, and wildlife protection.

A major component of their apprenticeship is working on the construction of ranger stations. This gives the youths opportunities for one-on-one time with rangers and helps develop relationships and respect for authority and the environment. After completing the program, the young men and women are aided in securing employment, and not surprisingly many express interest in becoming rangers and enter training through the Scouts Program.

Scouts are trained in low-risk ranger activities such as snare removal and boat operation and accompany rangers on regular patrols, helping to increase the capacity and effectiveness of security operations. They work as a team, helping to overcome the critical shortage of rangers and making the recovery of wildlife populations a reality. Their work brings new hope and a brighter future to the habitat, the scouts themselves, and their families. They become leaders in their communities and trusted Park ambassadors. Not surprisingly, there are many young adults and families eager to join this program.

As important as this program is to the individual youth and their families, it is equally critical to Uganda Wildlife Authority's mandate to secure and protect the wildlife of Murchison Falls National Park. The global shutdown in response to COVID-19 changed everything. Travel stopped and with it so did tourism which is the primary source of income for the government as well as a large percentage of the population. Park entrance fees fund rangers and patrols, many businesses from the travel to food and beverage industries to hospitality to city and country markets are reliant on tourist spending, and these businesses employ thousands of people in the cities as well as surrounding national parks. Out of work and looking for a way to feed their families, many people returned to family farms and hunting for bushmeat. Bushmeat is a generic term for meat from wildlife species hunted for human consumption which is illegal in national parks and designated areas throughout Africa and Asia. Unfortunately, bushmeat is an important source of protein and a cash-earning product in poor, rural communities.

As the economic effects of the pandemic put more pressure on habitats, it also put pressure on wildlife protection teams. Due to COVID-19, rangers were not hired to replace those who retired or otherwise left the force. That coupled with a ranger force already too small to fulfill the increased need to staff ranger stations as they were built throughout the park left large areas without surveillance simply due to a lack of manpower. Therefore, the scouts were a blessing as they were trained in critical routine roles which allowed rangers to move into the field for security patrols.

Continued on next page



It is due to our conservation partners like Seneca Park Zoo that we continue to fund the construction of rangers stations while supporting the brave men and women who are on the frontlines of protecting Murchison Falls National Park.

- Sarah Conley

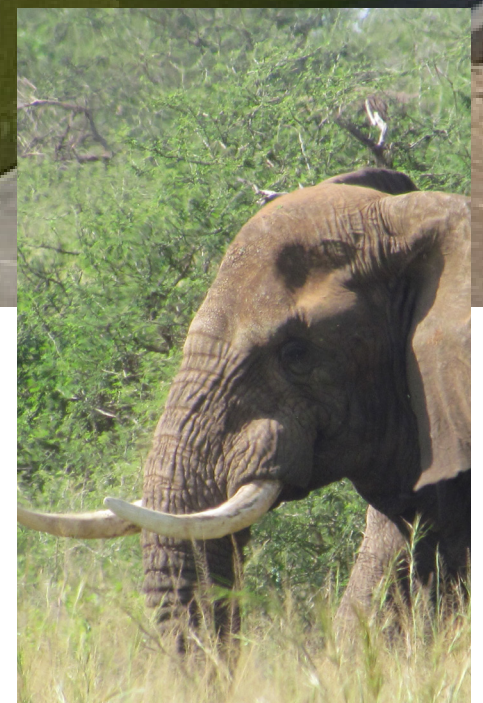


Learn more at elephantconservation.org

IEF's commitment to the recovery of elephants, lions, giraffe, and more continues today. We are supporting the expansion of the Scouts Program to continue to bolster and increase the capacity of the existing rangers. We are proud to report that just when conservation work was needed most during the pandemic and nearly all of the avenues for support for rangers dried up, IEF not only fulfilled our commitment but in fact provided additional funds. It is due to our conservation partners like Seneca Park Zoo that we continue to fund the construction of rangers stations while supporting

the brave men and women who are on the frontlines of protecting Murchison Falls National Park. **The support of partners like the Seneca Park Zoo is what makes the difference between maintaining the conservation gains of the past decade and backsliding resulting in losing control to poachers and countless animals and habitat.** Each ranger station constructed, each patrol, each snare the Rangers and Scouts remove holds Uganda's past and signals her future where wildlife and people thrive together.

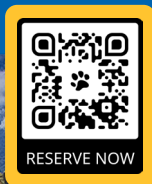
Thank you to our ZooBrew attendees who have helped us raise nearly **\$75,000** for International Elephant Foundation, and we've raised an additional **\$5,000** this year we will grant to IEF.



INTRODUCING THE SENECA PARK ZOO TRAVEL PROGRAM

Embark on an adventure of a lifetime!

Travel with the Seneca Park Zoo to some of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet. Our all-inclusive expeditions are once-in-a-lifetime experiences, with fascinating itineraries, incredible food, and deluxe lodging.



TRAVEL WITH THE
Seneca Park Zoo

SENECA PARK ZOO SOCIETY'S YEAR-END APPEAL

Your contribution to the Seneca Park Zoo Society's Year-End Appeal provides direct support for programs like KinderZoo, ZooMobiles, Nature Hikes, Community Cleanups, ZooTeens and the new Nature Cart.

Without donors like you, we would not be able to provide the quality onsite and offsite conservation education programs our guests and community rely on. These programs allow people to engage with wildlife and have once-in-a-lifetime interactions that can influence their lives for years to come.

And in gratitude for your gift of \$100 or more, we will invite you to join us for a special appreciation event in January where you can learn more about the impact your gift makes.

Donating today is easy! We have included an envelope for you to mail in your gift or you can donate online at senecaparkzoo.org/give.

Thank you for supporting us, and for being an advocate for wildlife and wild places.



Wayne Smith



David Jorgensen

senecaparkzoo.org/donate



Amanda Lindley
Polar Bear



Walter Brooks
Snow Leopard

GIVE THE GIFT OF THE ZOO THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Memberships are a great sustainable gift that gives all year round.

Gift memberships purchased this November and December will be active for all of 2024 and include a **FREE Seneca Park Zoo Bucket Hat.**

Offer valid November 1 – December 31, 2023.

Shopping for someone who is already a member?

You might consider a personalized ZooParent Package.

Choose from over a dozen species and receive a custom certificate, photo, fact sheet, and more!

ZooParent proceeds provide enrichment for the animals here at the Zoo.

senecaparkzoo.org/zooparent



Bucket Hat



HEAD OF THE HERD RECOGNITION FOR LONGTIME MEMBERS.

On August 9 we welcomed over 400 members for Head of the Herd evening, recognizing Zoo members of 10 consecutive years or longer.

This small and growing group of dedicated supporters represents 10% of members and includes some super-members that joined more than 30 years ago!

Those who could join us for the celebration enjoyed a lovely evening at the Zoo including a welcome from Seneca Park Zoo Society CEO Pamela Reed Sanchez, a snow leopard feeding, engaging ZooTeen stations, ice cream, and great conversations sharing Zoo memories.



Marie Kraus

Members were encouraged to wear their favorite Member T-shirt – see how many you can spot in our group photo!

► SCOUT BSA MAMMAL STUDY MERIT BADGE

NOVEMBER 11

During this workshop scouts will investigate what makes mammals unique as they observe the many mammals that live in Seneca Park Zoo. We will classify mammals, study the history of a local mammal, and trace mammals through food chains. Scouts will also develop a plan for a project that affects mammals in their backyard. *This workshop is taught by a certified merit badge counselor.*

Date: Saturday, November 11 from 1 - 4 p.m.

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/scouts



► TREK IN THE TWILIGHT

OCT. 7, 14/NOV. 3, 17, 18/DEC. 15

Trek in the Twilight gives you and your group a special evening exploring the Zoo! We provide dinner, a guided tour of the Zoo, and an animal presentation.

Dates:

October 7, 14

November 3, 17, 18

December 15

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



► WILDLIFE ACTION CREW

SEPT. 20, 27/OCT. 4, 11, 19, 25
NOV. 1, 8, 15, 29/ DEC. 6, 13

Wildlife Action Crew is one of our most fun, informative, and productive programs designed especially for teenagers interested in animals and conservation. This six-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 - 18

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

When: Wednesdays 6 – 8 p.m. (6 weeks)

Dates:

Fall Session I: Tigers & Human Conflict -
September 20, 27 and October 4, 11, 19, 25

Fall Session II: Tortoises & the Pet Trade -
November 1, 8, 15, 29 and December 6, 13

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/wildlife



► SCOUT WORKSHOPS

SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

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



► KINDERZOO

SEPTEMBER - 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, biofacts, 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: September – December

See website to check date availability

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/kinderzoo



► DISCOVERY ZOOCCLASS

OCT. 1/OCT. 22/NOV. 4/NOV. 12

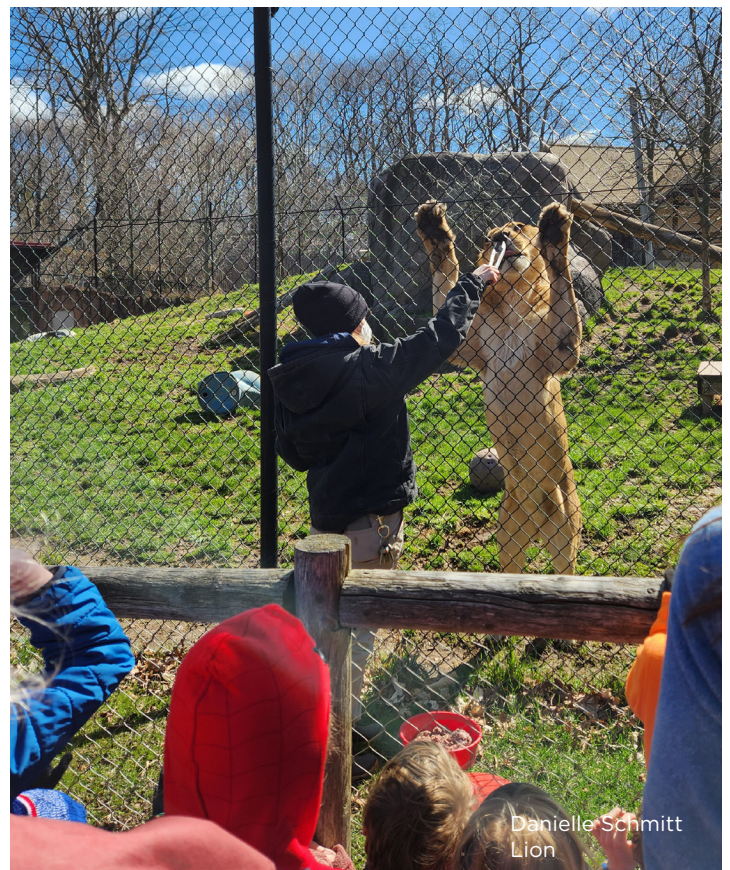
Discovery ZooClass is an opportunity for kids to learn about animals through the wonders of the Zoo! Every month has a new theme to keep kids coming back to the Zoo for more fun and animal knowledge. These monthly after-school classes will include Zoo tours, activities, games, and an ambassador animal 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 1 (ages 6-8), October 22 (ages 9-12), November 4 (ages 6-8), November 12 (ages 9-12) - See website to check date availability

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

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/zooclass



▶ AFTERHOURS SPOOKTACULAR

OCTOBER 19/OCTOBER 20/OCTOBER 21

Join us after-hours for three nights of costume and trick-or-treating fun! Including an optional costume contest, pumpkin carving demonstration, crafts, and more.

Date: Thursday, October 19, Friday, October 20, and Saturday, October 21 5:30 - 8 p.m.

Tickets:

\$8 per person – Member households

\$10 per person – General public



EDUCATION

▶ DAY OFF & HOLIDAY ZOOCAMPS

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

Camp at Seneca Park Zoo 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. Register for camp while spots are still available!

Ages: 5 to 9

Dates: Oct. 9; Nov. 10; Dec. 27-29

Price: Varies (see website for details)

Register: senecaparkzoo.org/zoocamp



Amanda Lindley
Southern 3-Banded Armadillo

EVENTS

► COMMUNITY CLEANUPS

OCT. 7/NOV.4/NOV. 18/DEC. 2/DEC. 23

Join like-minded neighbors to help clean up our local green spaces. You'll be amazed at the impact a focused group can make in just three hours. Help us make Rochester a cleaner, greener city! Please dress for the weather and bring water to stay hydrated. Tools, bags, and gloves will be provided and all ages are welcome to attend.

This year, the city of Rochester's Roc the RiverWay Weekend (October 7-8) will feature activities up and down the Genesee River from Lake Ontario to Genesee Valley Park, including our Community Cleanup at Seth Green Park October 7! As we get closer, check www.cityofrochester.gov/Roctheriverway for complete schedule and details.

Dates:

October 7; November 4, 18; December 2, 23

Learn More:

senecaparkzoo.org/cleanup

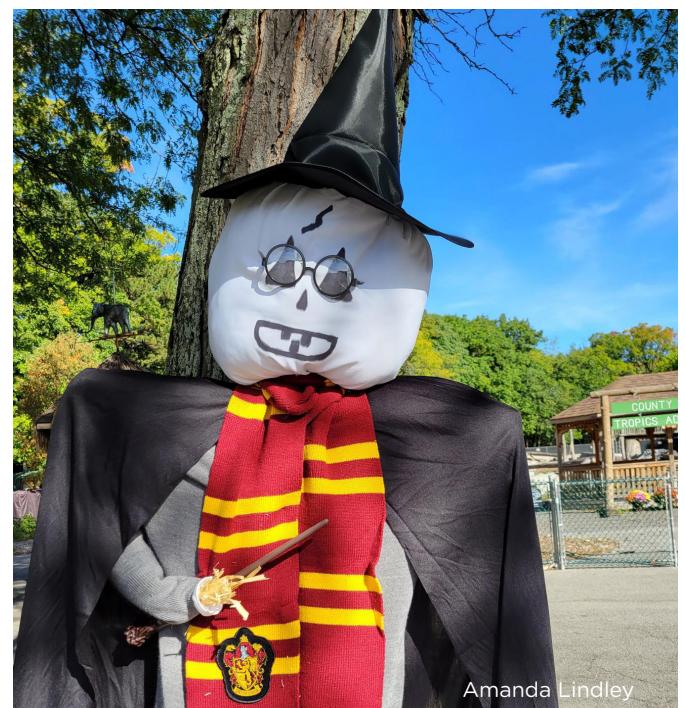


► SENECA PARK ZOO FALL FEST!

SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

The last three weekends of October we will be celebrating Seneca Park Zoo Fall Fest! Enjoy fun Fall décor, special seasonal treats, and more. If the smell and sight of apples, pumpkins, scarecrows, and hay bales is something you're into then this will be the perfect time to visit the Zoo!

Stay tuned for more information to come for this exciting seasonal event happening at your Zoo!



CALENDAR

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

► CATERED EVENTS AT SENECA PARK ZOO

SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

Did you know that we offer private, catered events at the Zoo year-round? Give your friends, family, and co-workers the unique and exclusive experience of exploring Seneca Park Zoo after hours, visiting habitats and enjoying delicious food and drink provided by our in-house catering team. Whether you're interested in an employee or client appreciation night, a landmark birthday celebration, or holiday party, we can do it all here at your Zoo!

Now introducing private events in the Trailside Café, available throughout the fall and winter months. This beautiful, modern space situated closest to the closest to the Zoo's entrance can accommodate up to 100 guests for a reception or 56 guests seated for dinner.

Please inquire with our Custom Events & Experiences Manager, Lexi Wilkas, at lwilkas@senecazoo.org or visit senecaparkzoo.org/catered-celebrations to learn more!



Seneca Park Zoo Society
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senecaparkzoo.org



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AQUARIUMS**



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When you're finished, please share it with a friend.

Designer: Amanda Lindley
Contributing writers:
Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO, Seneca Park Zoo Society
Donato DiRenzo, Communications Coordinator
Sarah Conley, International Elephant Foundation

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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