

SAFE: Safeguarding Species, Shaping Futures

Dear Colleagues,

As we step into 2024, I look forward to celebrating not just the New Year, but the strides we've collectively made as the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. At the heart of our success lies the commitment of our members—this is the backbone of our community and the driving force behind the achievements that define us.

One of these achievements is the success of AZA's flagship conservation program for animals in the wild, SAFE: Saving Animals From Extinction. AZA now has a record number of 39 SAFE programs, including the recently launched SAFE African elephant, and this number can continue to grow. Whether your facility is large or small, working with sharks and rays, songbirds, or butterflies, there's an opportunity to meaningfully engage with this impactful initiative. In this issue of *Connect*, we celebrate the success of SAFE, including highlighting the inaugural SAFE Granting Program and the progress and impact of avian SAFE programs.

Looking ahead in the year, I invite you all to mark your calendars for our AZA meetings including:

Mid-Year Meeting, 15-21 March, hosted by Memphis Zoo in Memphis, Tenn.

2024 Annual Conference, 14-19 September, hosted by Calgary Zoo in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

I look forward to hearing from you this year as we continue our shared goal of maintaining high standards of wellbeing for staff, guests, and the animals in our care.

Wishing you a wild and wonderful new year!



LISA NEW
AZA Board Chair
Chief Executive Officer, Dallas Zoo



Correction

The photo of two African lions on page 35 of the December issue of *Connect* should have been credited to Cassandra Kutilek of the Lincoln Park Zoo. We apologize for the error.

Connect

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