

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



WCN

Wildlife Conservation Network



**OUR MISSION
IS TO PROTECT
ENDANGERED
WILDLIFE BY
SUPPORTING
CONSERVATIONISTS
WHO ENSURE
WILDLIFE AND
PEOPLE COEXIST
AND THRIVE.**

REASONS TO BE HOPEFUL

In 2023, we embraced an inspiring new chapter in our journey to promote coexistence between wildlife and people in a world continuously affected by shrinking habitats, wildlife crime, and climate change. One of WCN's core beliefs is that there is always hope for wildlife and wild places when we work with each other. With that in mind, we are thrilled to highlight some of the greatest achievements we made together in our 2023 Annual Report.

This year, our Conservation Partners reached new milestones for wildlife recovery, reporting record population numbers for saiga antelope, grey crowned cranes, sharks, and painted dogs in some of their core areas of operation. Conservationists collectively planted hundreds of thousands of trees, helping restore forests in Africa and Central and South America that okapi, macaws, and cotton-top tamarins call home. They also continued their work establishing new protected areas in key habitats for spectacled bears and penguins. Our Wildlife Funds supported significant projects like the creation of the first map of wildlife crossings across California, efforts to stop wildlife criminals who target elephants and pangolins, and strategic planning for the reintroduction of 2,000 white rhinos to protected areas across Africa. And through our Scholarship and Career Programs, WCN supported the education and careers of 27 rising wildlife leaders in local communities across four continents.

This incredible impact for wildlife and support for the conservationists and local people working tirelessly to protect so many species couldn't have happened without our remarkable donor community. We're so grateful to them for contributing a tremendous \$50.9 million to conservation this year, and their immense generosity truly makes us hopeful about the future of wildlife.



Jean-Gaël Collomb, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer



Charles Knowles
President and Co-founder

OUR PARTNER NETWORK

WCN identifies the best entrepreneurial conservation organizations and invites them to receive in-depth, ongoing support by joining our Network of Conservation Partners. We provide our Partners with the financial resources, tools, and services they need to effectively protect endangered wildlife. All organizations in our Partner Network go through a rigorous vetting process, so donors can invest in them with confidence.

Below is our full list of WCN Conservation Partners, as of December 31, 2023.

AFRICA

-  **CHEETAH CONSERVATION BOTSWANA**
LED BY REBECCA KLEIN
Botswana
-  **CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND**
LED BY DR. LAURIE MARKER
Namibia
-  **CONSERVATION THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH**
LED BY DR. GLADYS KALEMA-ZIKUSOKA
Uganda
-  **ETHIOPIAN WOLF CONSERVATION PROGRAM**
LED BY DR. CLAUDIO SILLERO
Ethiopia
-  **EWASO LIONS**
LED BY DR. SHIVANI BHALLA & JENERIA LEKILELEI
Kenya
-  **GREVY'S ZEBRA TRUST**
LED BY BELINDA LOW MACKEY & PETER LALAMPAA
Kenya
-  **NIASSA LION PROJECT**
LED BY AGOSTINHO JORGE, DR. COLLEEN BEGG, & KEITH BEGG
Mozambique
-  **OKAPI CONSERVATION PROJECT**
LED BY JOHN LUKAS & ROSMARIE RUF
Democratic Republic of Congo
-  **PAINTED DOG CONSERVATION**
LED BY DAVID KUVAWOGA & PETER BLINSTON
Zimbabwe
-  **RWANDA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION**
LED BY DR. OLIVIER NSENGIMANA
Rwanda
-  **SAVE THE ELEPHANTS**
LED BY FRANK POPE & DR. IAIN DOUGLAS-HAMILTON
Kenya

ASIA

-  **HUTAN**
LED BY DR. MARC ANCRENAZ & DR. ISABELLE LACKMAN
Malaysia
-  **MARECET**
LED BY DR. LOUISA PONNAMPALAM
Malaysia
-  **SAIGA CONSERVATION ALLIANCE**
LED BY DR. E.J. MILNER-GULLAND & ELENA BYKOVA
Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russia, Uzbekistan
-  **SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVANCY**
LED BY ASHLEIGH LUTZ-NELSON
Bhutan, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia

LATIN AMERICA

-  **ANDEAN CAT ALLIANCE**
LED BY DR. ROCÍO PALACIOS
Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Peru
-  **MACAW RECOVERY NETWORK**
LED BY DR. SAM WILLIAMS
Costa Rica
-  **PROYECTO TITÍ**
LED BY ROSAMIRA GUILLEN
Colombia
-  **SPECTACLED BEAR CONSERVATION**
LED BY ALEX MORE & ROBYN APPLETON
Peru

GLOBAL

-  **GLOBAL PENGUIN SOCIETY**
LED BY DR. PABLO BORBOROGLU
Worldwide (based in Argentina)
-  **MARALLIANCE**
LED BY DR. RACHEL GRAHAM
Worldwide (based in Belize)
-  **SMALL WILD CAT CONSERVATION FOUNDATION**
LED BY DR. JIM SANDERSON
Worldwide

OUR MISSION IN ACTION



WILDLIFE FUNDS

Granting to impactful projects protecting a species across its entire range.

PARTNER NETWORK

Providing effective conservation organizations with the resources they need to succeed.

RISING WILDLIFE LEADERS

Supporting local conservationists during the formative stages of their careers.

What Sets Us Apart

-  **CONSERVATION IS ABOUT HELPING PEOPLE AS WELL AS HELPING WILDLIFE.** We support work that invests in the well-being of local communities and includes local people, as the future of conservation is in their hands.
-  **NO ONE CAN SAVE WILDLIFE ALONE, SO WE EMPHASIZE COLLABORATION.** We've supported hundreds of organizations, and through opportunities like our Wildlife Conservation Expos, WCN creates a community of conservationists and supporters working together for wildlife.
-  **OUR DONORS DESERVE TO KNOW THE IMPACT OF THEIR INVESTMENT.** Through transparency and efficiency, 100% of our donors' designated contributions goes directly to the work they care about.

Support Along Every Step of the Journey



TAKING ACTION

How conservationists safeguard wildlife

Five painted dog packs

PAINTED DOG CONSERVATION (PDC) recorded five painted dog packs in the buffer zone outside Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park, the most packs seen in this area in over 25 years. PDC has spent many years securing this area for painted dogs and their efforts are helping populations there thrive.



Relocating 2,000 rhinos

THE RHINO RECOVERY FUND (RRF) helped African Parks develop a rewilding strategy for their Platinum Rhino project, which will relocate 2,000 white rhinos to protected areas across Africa over the next decade. This will significantly bolster rhino recovery and reintroduce them to new segments of their historic range.

Safer habitat for pangolins



THE PANGOLIN CRISIS FUND (PCF) supported The Pangolin Project to safeguard Kenya's last giant pangolins from extinction. With their PCF grant, The Pangolin Project is collaborating with local landowners to make their electric fencing safer for pangolins and securing key habitat from deforestation.

323 rangers trained

CONSERVATION THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH (CTPH) analyzed nearly 2,200 mountain gorilla fecal samples, finding human and livestock-related parasites present among gorilla populations. To address this health issue, CTPH trained 323 rangers in handling emerging infectious diseases and expanded their efforts to reduce disease transmission between local people, tourists, and gorillas.



New cheetah cubs

This year, **CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND (CCF)** recorded the birth of two litters of cubs among the population of cheetahs that they helped reintroduce to India from Namibia in 2022. This suggests that this key cheetah population will continue to grow and demonstrates the significance of international conservation collaborations.

96 anti-poaching scouts

NIASSA LION PROJECT (NLP) supported 96 anti-poaching scouts to reduce the illegal killing of lions within Niassa Special Reserve's largest lion population. These scout patrols covered nearly 3,500 sq. miles and protected 16 collared prides that include over 85 lions and 26 cubs.

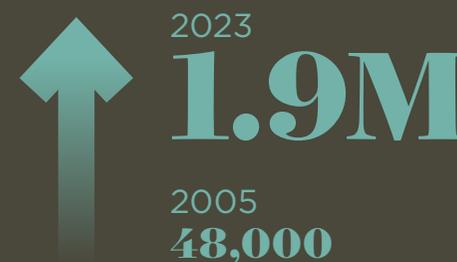


112 acoustic pingers

MARECET deployed 112 acoustic pingers on the nets of 15 local fishers, which emit high frequency sounds to ward marine mammals away from fishing nets. Preliminary results indicate that the pingers are effective at reducing bycatch and preventing accidental marine mammal deaths.

Remarkable saiga recovery

Years of collaboration between **SAIGA CONSERVATION ALLIANCE (SCA)** and their partners led to saiga antelope experiencing an extraordinary rebound in Kazakhstan—from only 48,000 individuals in 2005 to current estimates surpassing 1.9 million. Saiga were also reclassified from Critically Endangered to Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List this year, signifying substantial recovery for the species.



One Wolf's Lasting Legacy

AMONG THE RUGGED LANDSCAPE OF ETHIOPIA'S BALE MOUNTAINS, the old wolf emerged from the den, six fuzzy pups weaving between her paws. Despite the threads of gray woven into her fur, her vivid red-orange frame still burned brightly against the blue sky. This wolf, known as “Tarura 2,” is one of approximately 500 Ethiopian wolves left in the wild. As Africa’s most endangered carnivores, the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Program’s (EWCP) efforts to protect their fragile populations are critical to their survival.

Tarura 2 was one of the only survivors after her original pack was devastated by rabies. When EWCP found her in 2011, she became part of their first oral vaccination trial. The spread of diseases like rabies from local domestic dogs to wolves is a serious threat, so each year, EWCP vaccinates over 3,000 domestic dogs and as many wolves as possible. Their intervention helped Tarura 2 survive four more rabies outbreaks and rebuild her pack. Data collected from the Tarura pack taught EWCP more about wolf behavior, improving the effectiveness of their oral vaccination program. Tarura 2 produced 51 pups over the next decade, her pack growing so large that three new packs eventually split from it. This year, EWCP recorded 10 litters of pups born among these offshoot packs.

In her old age, Tarura 2 now looks after her grandchildren while their parents hunt. She carries a remarkable legacy and has contributed more to the survival of the Bale Mountain wolves—the most critical population of the species—than any other wolf. Tarura 2 is a walking example of the monumental difference that EWCP’s vaccination program has made for Ethiopian wolves. ■

© Adrien Lessafre



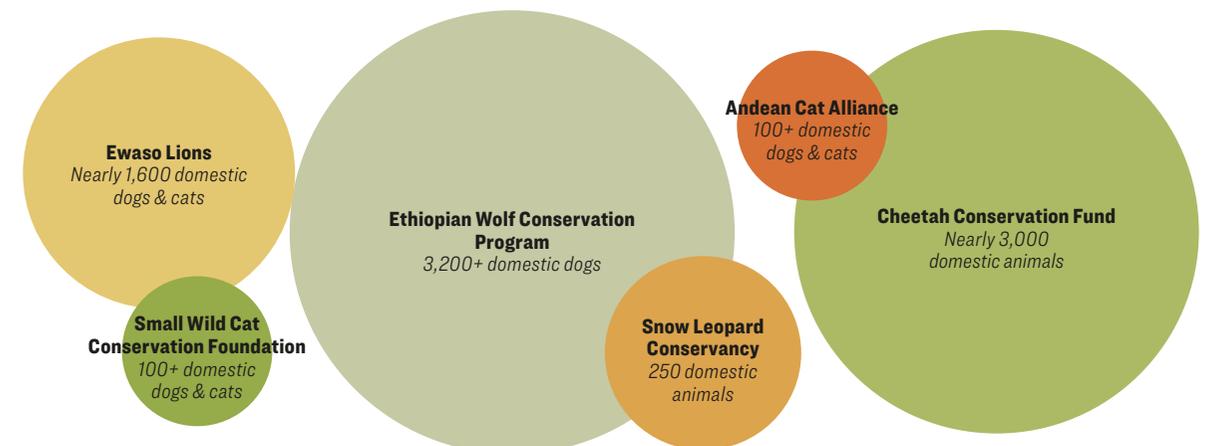
Tarura 2 looking after her pack's pups.

WCN PARTNERS' VACCINATION PROGRAMS

By vaccinating domestic animals against diseases like rabies or distemper, WCN Partners are preventing the transmission of these diseases to wildlife. Some Partners have vaccinated domestic animals for years, while others are just beginning this type of work. Below are the number of vaccines administered by Partners in 2023.

WCN IMPACT

WCN recently awarded EWCP with a grant to fund training on how to encourage local communities to adopt sustainable, conservation-minded behaviors, such as participating in their vaccination program.



Protecting Elephants in Harm's Way

Upemba National Park is home to the DRC's last remaining savanna elephants. Opposite page: Forgotten Parks Foundation rangers on patrol in Upemba.

© Helle & Uri Levenfeld-Golman



© Aydin Matdabi

WCN IMPACT

The ECF was co-founded by WCN and Save the Elephants and celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2023. In the last decade, ECF-supported projects have helped eliminate ivory poaching as the primary threat to African elephants.

BEYOND GRASSLANDS AND DENSE FORESTS TEEMING WITH WILDLIFE,

verdant wetlands are found in the north of Upemba National Park. These wetlands are inaccessible on foot and take days to reach, yet they are home to the last remaining 200 savanna elephants in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since 2017, Forgotten Parks Foundation (FPF), an Elephant Crisis Fund (ECF) grantee, has managed Upemba, which contains over 1,800 wildlife species, including lions, cheetahs, zebras, and buffalo. But Upemba's wildlife isn't alone in this paradise—roughly 100 armed rebels responsible for ivory poaching and illegal mining inhabit pockets of the park, standing between the remote elephant population and FPF's rangers, who operate under difficult conditions at considerable risk. To increase staff safety and their ability to protect the elephants, FPF turned to the ECF.

Over the years, the ECF has helped with FPF's operational costs and secured a range of vehicles for rangers to monitor elephants and respond to human-elephant conflict among Upemba's communities. Without this support, FPF wouldn't be able to patrol the park. But the rebels are a persistent, dangerous obstacle, killing nearly 20 Upemba staff in the last two decades and at least several elephants recently. This year, the ECF funded the purchase of an ultralight aircraft so FPF can conduct aerial patrols, support ground patrols, and monitor the remote elephant population more quickly and safely. Fuel, technical support, and a new hangar have also been funded. This aircraft will be game changing for FPF, who are committed to transforming Upemba into one of Africa's greatest parks. With the ECF behind them, FPF is better equipped to protect Upemba's last elephants on the ground and above. ■

Under Crane 039's Wing



Above: Crane 039 and Crane 211 in Akagera National Park.
 Opposite page: Crane 211 with one of the couple's chicks.

CRANE POPULATION RECOVERY

Population size per year



RWCA has recorded an increase in Rwanda's grey crowned crane population each year since 2018, a testament to the positive impact their work has had on crane recovery.

WHEN DR. OLIVIER NSENGIMANA FIRST ENCOUNTERED CRANE 039, he was a decoration in a private garden. He repeatedly jumped, flapping his clipped wings and trying to fly. Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association (RWCA) has rescued many grey crowned cranes from captivity, but none as animated as 039. Olivier believed 039 was trying to tell him something. His attempts to reclaim freedom with tattered wings continued even after Olivier took him to RWCA's rehabilitation facility in Akagera National Park. But 039 needed more than sanctuary; he yearned for the sky, eventually taking flight again even without fully regrown flight feathers. Olivier soon learned that 039's motivation wasn't just freedom—he had fallen in love. Her name was 211.

The pair bonded in Akagera, but 039's desire to fly often pulled him away from 211. RWCA tracked 039 traveling as far as Tanzania, teaching Olivier that RWCA must collaborate with groups in neighboring countries to ensure cranes are protected across borders. Watching 039 blossom from former prisoner to international explorer stirred Olivier and helped improve RWCA's monitoring across crane range. Eventually, 211 joined 039 on these journeys.

But the couple had more to teach Olivier. They often returned to Akagera, most recently to give birth to three downy chicks who chase them throughout Akagera's wetlands, confirming that cranes prefer breeding in the safety of protected areas. RWCA now protects many of Rwanda's wetlands, giving cranes safe places to thrive, with impressive results—this year, RWCA recorded over 1,200 cranes in Rwanda, their highest count ever and more than double their original 2017 count. By learning from cranes like 039, RWCA continues to improve their programs and promote crane recovery. ■

WCN IMPACT

WCN funded RWCA's Annual Staff Retreat, where hundreds of team members from across Rwanda gathered to review RWCA's strategic plan, evaluate data collection methodologies, and brainstorm solutions to challenges they face in the field.



SECURING WILD PLACES

Conservation through protecting, restoring, and linking habitat



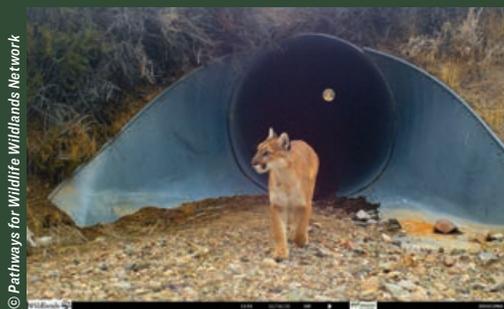
100,000 trees

OKAPI CONSERVATION PROJECT'S Agroforestry team planted over 100,000 trees—a record for the program—in and around Okapi Wildlife Reserve in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These trees will produce fruit and nuts for local farmers, eliminating their need to encroach into okapi habitat in search of food.



12-month biodiversity survey

CHEETAH CONSERVATION BOTSWANA (CCB) completed a 12-month biodiversity survey of the Western Kalahari wildlife corridor. This corridor provides critical connectivity between the highest cheetah concentration areas in Botswana—Central Kalahari Game Reserve and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. Survey data will help CCB secure this corridor as a future community-led wildlife management area.



© Pathways for Wildlife Wildlands Network

Wildlife crossing map

WCN's **CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE PROGRAM** supported Wildlands Network's development of the first-ever online database of wildlife crossings throughout California. This comprehensive map will guide research about puma connectivity, determine the impact of roads on wildlife habitat, and inform more puma conservation projects across the state.



© Park Guards - Machu Picchu

Bear data for Machu Picchu

SPECTACLED BEAR CONSERVATION (SBC) analyzed camera trap data to detect spectacled bears around Peru's Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu. SBC will use this data to strengthen bear conservation efforts and collaborate with Peru's government and Indigenous communities to create a 1.5 million-acre UNESCO Biosphere Reserve surrounding Machu Picchu.



500 acres

MACAW RECOVERY NETWORK (MRN) purchased over 500 acres of land to create the Sarapiquí Rainforest Reserve, located in the heart of Costa Rica's great green macaw breeding ground, where MRN has monitored macaws since 2019. MRN will provide ongoing protection for this vital macaw habitat and restore parts of the land previously used for cattle ranching.



© Angela Rodriguez

101 acres & 45,000 saplings

PROYECTO TITÍ (PT) purchased 101 acres of land to expand Los Titíes de San Juan Forest Reserve, which permanently secures over 2,140 acres of forest for cotton-top tamarins. PT also created more forest corridors linking fragmented cotton-top habitat and propagated over 45,000 tree saplings, 16,000 of which were planted to restore forests.



610,000 acres

GLOBAL PENGUIN SOCIETY (GPS) tracked 53 Magellanic penguins across several colonies this year, identifying important feeding routes and food locations. This knowledge enables GPS to improve designs for the Punta Ninfas Protected Area, which will safeguard 610,000 acres—nearly twice the size of Los Angeles—of Patagonian marine and coastal habitat for over 8,100 penguins.

The Groundbreaking Adaptability of Orangutans

THE BED OF DRY LEAVES AND FERNS WERE CAREFULLY ARRANGED on a framework of broken branches, clear hallmarks of an orangutan nest. It resembled any other nest found in the canopies of Malaysian Borneo's Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary, with one crucial difference—this nest was on the forest floor. Ground-nesting behavior has never been recorded among wild orangutans before, and this unprecedented discovery has led Hutan to take measures to protect these remarkable great apes and their novel nests from any disturbances.

Mosaic landscapes—wild forest mixed with agricultural land—are common in Malaysian Borneo. Hutan has identified 34 ground nests within a 25-acre forest fragment surrounded by a palm oil plantation. While this area lacks enough mature trees to support orangutans full time, it has high conservation value because orangutans use it as a pitstop while traveling across the plantation to larger forests. After years of Hutan monitoring these commuting orangutans—convincing palm oil companies to preserve small islands of forest so their fragmented populations can maintain connectivity—orangutans are adapting to live in these mosaic landscapes. Ground-nesting is the latest example of their ingenuity and resilience. The nests likely provide them with temporary shelter as they forage and even stay overnight in the forest patch. They would only build ground nests near agricultural zones if they recognized it as a safe place; safety derived from Hutan's ongoing conservation efforts. To ensure it stays that way, Hutan is working with palm oil manufacturers to keep workers away from this important forest patch. As orangutans increasingly identify mosaic landscapes as suitable habitat, Hutan will continue promoting coexistence between orangutans and people. ■



Top: A top-down view of an orangutan in a nest, which are most commonly found high in trees.
Bottom: An orangutan nest on the ground, which has never been recorded by conservationists until now.

WCN IMPACT

2023 was Hutan's first full year as a WCN Conservation Partner. Joining WCN has significantly increased Hutan's capacity to fund their orangutan conservation efforts and research.

Counting Sharks, Rebuilding Ecosystems



Above: Clara Sabal (center) and her team utilize a variety of monitoring methods to determine how many sharks return to Turneffe Atoll over time. Opposite page: Nurse sharks in the waters around Turneffe Atoll.

AS THE SUN BEGAN CRAWLING OVER THE HORIZON, Clara Sabal and an eager group of local fishers left the shoreline, each headed to a different site around Turneffe Atoll. Located 20 miles off the coast of Belize, this area was declared a marine reserve a decade ago. Since 2014, with help from these fishers, MarAlliance has been carefully monitoring how many sharks are returning to these protected waters. Stepping off the dock into her vessel, Clara sped toward the dawn and the atoll, the sputtering engine drowning out the waves.

Unsustainable fishing practices once devastated shark populations at Turneffe Atoll. MarAlliance spent years advocating for countrywide regulations against unchecked and illegal fishing, including an eventual ban on destructive gillnet fishing. The passing of these policies transformed Turneffe back into safe habitat, and the government gave management of the reserve to the Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA). To determine if the sharks were coming back, TASA turned to MarAlliance; without MarAlliance's shark survey statistics, they had no way of measuring the effectiveness of their management plan. Clara led these efforts as MarAlliance's Research Officer, coordinating annual surveys with fisher volunteers to collect data about shark abundance, distribution, and diversity.

This year, Clara's team confirmed the reserve's management has been working well over time—around Turneffe Atoll and nearby Lighthouse Reef Atoll, MarAlliance recorded more sharks than anywhere else they've monitored in the last decade. Caribbean reef sharks and nurse sharks were the most numerous, but rare species like lemon sharks and great hammerheads were also seen. MarAlliance and their partners hope to replicate Turneffe Atoll's successful conservation strategies elsewhere in Belize to help more shark populations recover. ■

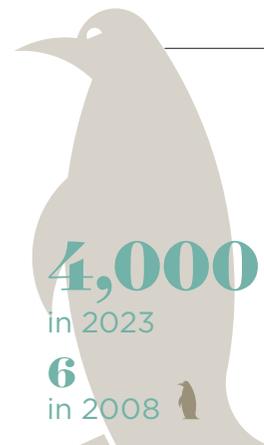
WCN IMPACT

WCN provided MarAlliance with funding to hire research interns, some of whom, like Clara, have gone on to become important full-time leaders on their team.

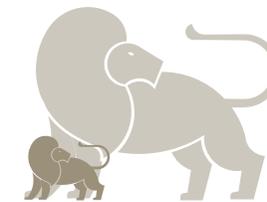


WILDLIFE RETURNING TO PROTECTED AREAS

With effective protections and management, wildlife can return to and thrive in areas where they have long been absent or struggling. Below are two examples of wildlife populations that have bounced back thanks to the work of our Partners.



For over 15 years, **GLOBAL PENGUIN SOCIETY** has protected the El Pedral penguin colony in Argentina. In 2008, only six breeding pairs of Magellanic penguins were found in this coastal habitat. Over 4,000 pairs are found there today.



300%
increase
since 2007

This year, **EWASO LIONS** recorded a stable population of 50 lions within their conservation landscape in northern Kenya—three times the number of lions present there when they began their work in 2007.

SHARED SPACES

Promoting coexistence between people and wildlife

FLOURISHING WILDLIFE POPULATIONS PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS to humanity, but people living close to wildlife can sometimes pay a heavy price. Conflict can arise if livelihoods are threatened by wildlife attacking people's livestock or damaging crops. The conservationists in our Network go to great lengths to ensure that wildlife cannot inadvertently harm local livelihoods so that coexistence and collaboration with the communities living alongside wildlife are possible.

PROTECTING LIVELIHOODS, REDUCING CONFLICT

By protecting local people's livestock and crops from wildlife, human-wildlife conflict is reduced. Some successful conflict mitigation methods that promote coexistence include:

Building Safer Livestock Enclosures

- Snow Leopard Conservancy
- Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation
- Lion Recovery Fund grantees



Livestock Guarding Dog Programs

- Andean Cat Alliance
- Cheetah Conservation Botswana
- Cheetah Conservation Fund
- Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation grantees



Preventing Elephant Crop Raids

Save the Elephants utilizes techniques like constructing beehive fences around crops, which deters elephants, prevents conflict with farmers and elephants, and provides farmers with additional livelihoods selling honey.



CONNECTING HABITATS

While it's important for wildlife and people to share their landscapes, wildlife still need access to connected habitats to maintain migratory paths and keep safe distances from communities. Our Partners and Funds work to establish and maintain wildlife corridors and crossings, ensuring that connectivity remains intact so wildlife won't have to venture into human settlements and potentially spark conflict. These protected routes help keep wildlife and people safe and allow coexistence to continue.



An elephant crosses paths with a group of children. Close interactions due to lack of habitat connectivity can be dangerous for both people and wildlife.

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Many WCN Partners invest heavily in outreach and education activities that inspire young local people to coexist with wildlife. These activities include visiting schools, providing educational materials, hosting children's camps, taking students to the field, and organizing festivals focused on celebrating wildlife.



© Molly Feltner

40,660

Number of young people who participated in the following WCN Partners' outreach and education activities in 2023:

- ▶ Conservation Through Public Health
- ▶ Ewaso Lions
- ▶ Global Penguin Society
- ▶ MarAlliance
- ▶ MareCet
- ▶ Niassa Lion Project
- ▶ Okapi Conservation Project
- ▶ Painted Dog Conservation
- ▶ Proyecto Tití
- ▶ Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association
- ▶ Snow Leopard Conservancy

The Andean Cats Next Door



Opposite page: Bernardo Segura climbing the Andes Mountains to place camera traps. Above: Camera trap photo of the Andean cat and her kitten with Santiago in the background.

FROM HIS APARTMENT WINDOW, BERNARDO SEGURA CAN SEE the high slopes of the Andes Mountains just outside of Santiago, Chile. He routinely ventures up their steep cliffs to diligently place camera traps for his collaboration with Andean Cat Alliance (AGA). AGA studies and protects some of the world's rarest small wild cats coexisting alongside Santiago's bustling seven million residents. It's from these cameras that Bernardo unearthed valuable footage—an Andean cat and her kitten padding along a narrow, rocky ledge beneath the sun and above the clouds.

Fewer than 1,400 Andean cats remain, and their elusive nature has left wide knowledge gaps about their distribution, behavior, and ecology. This is the only population AGA has found so close to a massive city, and currently the only Andean cats that can be reliably observed in the

wild. After several years monitoring this small population, AGA has posited that Andean cats only reproduce once per year—unusual for cats, which typically have larger litters. This year's footage of a mother and kitten further solidified this theory, exposing why Andean cat populations are so fragile. Cat species that produce many kittens are resilient and can readily disperse into new areas, but Andean cats are too few and reproduce too slowly to do this, leaving them vulnerable and making AGA's efforts to protect them especially important. Long-term conservation actions—including AGA's collaboration with civilian groups to protect the cats' water supply from nearby mining operations—and monitoring will help AGA prove that delicate Andean cat populations can thrive next to urban areas when undisturbed, and allow Bernardo to continue marveling at the wild cats—and kittens—traversing the peaks just outside his window. ■

WCN IMPACT

WCN gave AGA a grant to support their financial and environmental leadership training this year, enabling them to strengthen their organization and expand their programs.

Wildlife Funds

WCN'S WILDLIFE FUNDS OFFER FLEXIBLE GRANTS to projects in order to protect a threatened species across its entire habitat. Our Funds invest in projects from a wide range of organizations, kickstarting new approaches and bolstering proven conservation efforts. Each Fund amplifies donor support by combining contributions, allowing for the biggest possible impact.

Elephant Crisis Fund



Since 2013, the ECF has supported:

463 projects
from
111 grantees
across
44 countries
and granted
\$35.1 million

Established by WCN and Save the Elephants, the Elephant Crisis Fund invests in the best initiatives to safeguard the future of elephants by supporting projects that promote human-elephant coexistence, end the ivory crisis, and secure elephant landscapes.

Lion Recovery Fund



Since 2017, the LRF has supported:

272 projects
from
87 grantees
across
25 countries
and granted
\$37 million

WCN's Lion Recovery Fund was created with the vision to double the number of lions in Africa by investing in effective projects that protect lions from threats like poaching and conflict with humans, and restore the health of their landscapes.

Pangolin Crisis Fund



Since 2019, the PCF has supported:

75 projects
from
33 grantees
across
28 countries
and granted
\$5.4 million

Established by WCN and Save Pangolins, the Pangolin Crisis Fund was created to save all eight pangolin species from extinction by investing in projects that protect pangolins and their habitats, disrupt illegal wildlife trade networks, and reduce the demand for pangolin scales and meat.

Rhino Recovery Fund



Since 2020, the RRF has supported:

67 projects
from
40 grantees
across
13 countries
and granted
\$5.1 million

WCN's Rhino Recovery Fund invests in projects designed to stop the poaching of all five rhino species, disrupt the trafficking of and demand for rhino horn, and help rhino populations recover by restoring their habitat and reintroducing them to their natural range.

California Wildlife Program



Since 2021, the CWP has supported:

34 projects
from
22 grantees
and granted
\$15.2 million

WCN's California Wildlife Program invests in impactful projects that prevent habitat loss and fragmentation, establish safe wildlife crossing areas, and effectively create and manage protected areas for pumas and other California wildlife.

Rising Wildlife Leaders

WCN HELPS LOCAL CONSERVATIONISTS AT EACH STAGE OF THEIR CAREERS, setting them up for long-term success and keeping conservation in their hands. We invest in these exceptional people to strengthen their skills, build their organizations, and advance their careers in conservation. Through our scholarships and grants, we provide support to the local people who are shaping conservation in their home countries, ensuring we have a greater, more sustainable impact for wildlife.



“ My WCN Scholarship enriched my understanding and expertise in conservation. Insights gained from sharing knowledge with classmates from 22 different countries enhanced my perspective as a conservation leader. Scholarship support also allowed me to have my children with me during my studies, underscoring the genuine inclusivity of this opportunity. As an Indigenous woman, access to quality education and career growth is limited, making this scholarship a transformative opportunity for both my career and family’s development. I remain deeply thankful for this invaluable experience.”

PATITA NKAMUNU | WCN SCHOLAR



Top: Jamal Galves, a WCN Scholar protecting Antillean manatees in Belize.
Bottom: Juan Carlos Huaranca, a WCN Scholar reducing conflict between herders and wild cats in Bolivia.

TODAY’S STUDENTS, TOMORROW’S LEADERS

WCN’s Scholarship Program is empowering a new generation of local conservationists to take charge of protecting wildlife in their home countries. Offering conservation, veterinary, and Indigenous scholarships, the Scholarship Program allows WCN to safeguard a more diverse range of wildlife while also supporting the emerging leaders who are shaping conservation’s future.

Since 2006, the WCN Scholarship Program has supported:

199 conservationists
protecting over
102 threatened species
across
48 countries

LONG-TERM CAREER SUPPORT

WCN’s Career Program enables local conservationists to thrive and take their careers to the next level. Focused primarily on those who are early or mid-career, the Career Program offers multi-year financial support, tailored access to training opportunities, facilitated peer learning, and mentorship opportunities that give talented conservationists the tools and resources to succeed.

Since 2021, WCN’s Career Program has supported:

18 conservationists
protecting over
16 threatened species
across
12 countries

NATURE'S WEB

How conservation connects to climate change and global health

IN TODAY'S RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD, PROTECTING WILDLIFE TRANSCENDS ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS and has become intrinsically linked to broader issues that shape the well-being of our planet. WCN recognizes the profound implications of wildlife conservation, particularly concerning global health and climate change, and supports integrated approaches to these complex challenges. Just as the web of life intersects in surprising ways, so do solutions to unprecedented threats to our planet's health.

THE VITAL ROLE OF LARGE MAMMALS

Earth's largest animals, including elephants, whales, and rhinos, play a crucial role in mitigating climate change and bolstering ecosystem resilience. Through their regular activities, large terrestrial mammals:

- ▶ Disperse seeds and aid the growth of new vegetation through nutrients in their dung
- ▶ Clear dry brush that fuels wildfires and trample vegetation to create natural firebreaks
- ▶ Graze and clear vegetation along the ground, exposing more of Earth's surface to reflect solar radiation and reducing global warming

AFRICAN FOREST ELEPHANTS EMBODY ALL OF THE ABOVE. These elephants are capable of increasing forest plant mass enough to absorb billions of tons of carbon dioxide. They also eat foliage from low carbon density trees, allowing more high carbon density trees to grow and absorb more carbon. But in the last three decades, forest elephant populations in Central and West Africa have plummeted by more than 86% due to habitat loss, poaching, and conflict with people.

THE ELEPHANT CRISIS FUND supports projects addressing threats to forest elephants to help safeguard their role and future as the architects of Africa's forests.

PRESERVING CARBON SINKS

By securing large swathes of land as protected areas for wildlife, conservationists are protecting and often restoring dense forests which not only act as habitat for countless species, but also store and prevent large amounts of carbon from being released into the atmosphere.

Safe and healthy marine protected areas promote the population increase of large marine mammals, such as whales, whose excrement is a vital fertilizer for phytoplankton blooms. Phytoplankton captures more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year than any other lifeform on Earth.



GLOBAL PENGUIN SOCIETY secures hundreds of thousands of acres of coastal and marine habitats in Argentina.



THE LION RECOVERY FUND supports the creation of a 9,500 sq. mile safe zone for lions and large terrestrial mammals in the Central African Republic.



MARECET protects and studies Bryde's whales in Malaysia, helping shape policy that allows them to thrive. This contributes to increased phytoplankton fertilization and carbon capture.

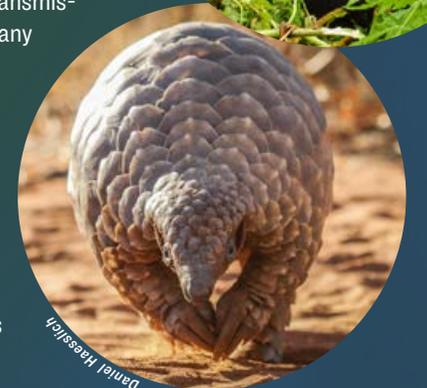


PROMOTING GLOBAL HEALTH

Healthy ecosystems and diverse wildlife populations act as natural buffers against the spread of zoonotic diseases—diseases transmitted from animals to people. A UN study indicates that approximately three quarters of all emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic. By preserving intact habitats and minimizing human-wildlife interactions, we can reduce the risk of pathogens jumping from wildlife to humans.

CONSERVATION THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH prevents disease transmission between people and mountain gorillas. They successfully prevented any mountain gorillas in Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park from contracting COVID-19 by providing health information and vaccinations to park staff and nearby communities.

THE PANGOLIN CRISIS FUND supports projects across Africa and Asia aimed at combating the illegal trafficking and demand for pangolins and other wildlife. By addressing the illegal wildlife trade, this work helps mitigate situations where wild animals are subjected to unsafe and unsanitary conditions, which can serve as breeding grounds for disease transmission.



Our Donors' Impact

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION WOULDN'T BE POSSIBLE

without the contributions of our generous donors. Every impact we've made—every animal saved, every landscape protected, every person whose life is improved by conservation—is owed to the hardworking conservationists in the field, the communities they work with, and the passionate donors who fund their efforts.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are so many ways to make a difference for wildlife, and each of us, no matter how much we give, can be an important supporter of conservation.

WHERE NEEDED MOST

When you give to WCN's "Where Needed Most" option, you are providing critical unrestricted funding that WCN can allocate to a variety of conservation efforts that are most in need.

Risa G.

While searching Charity Navigator for organizations that shared her values, Risa G. discovered WCN. Intrigued, she attended her first Wildlife Conservation Expo, where she connected with WCN Co-founder Charles Knowles, conservationists, and a passionate community dedicated to saving wildlife. At Expo, Risa found camaraderie and a socially conscious mission to amplify conservation impact through collaboration, confirming her hopes about WCN. She was compelled to join our community, generously



making monthly contributions to WCN's "Where Needed Most" option. While she makes additional donations to specific programs of interest, she knows that her monthly commitment is contributing to the conservation efforts most in need. Monthly donors like Risa consistently help advance conservation. We're humbled by and thankful for her trust in us to help her make the greatest possible difference for wildlife and the communities living alongside them.

PLANNED GIVING

Bequests and other planned gifts can significantly advance WCN's mission and offer you the chance to leave a legacy, helping wildlife and people coexist and thrive for generations.

Maggie Kaplan

Maggie Kaplan has four core philanthropic goals—protecting the environment, educating the next generation, economically empowering women, and expressing compassion. She believes WCN embodies each of these values and has been a longtime supporter, even traveling to Kenya and forging a lifelong connection with conservationist Dr. Shivani Bhalla and the women of Ewaso Lions' Mama Simba program.



To ensure she'll leave a lasting conservation legacy, Maggie chose to include WCN in her estate plans. Her generosity will support future generations of people and wildlife and promote her core values for years to come. We're so grateful to Maggie for sharing so much of her tremendous heart with us.

To learn more, visit wildnet.org/plannedgiving

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Whether through stocks, monthly online donations, or by creating your own fundraiser, there are so many opportunities to invest in wildlife conservation.

Ariella Ho

Penguins are 9-year-old Ariella Ho's favorite animals. After purchasing a book about penguins at her school's book fair, she learned about Dr. Pablo "Popi" Borboroglu, Founder of Global Penguin Society (GPS). Inspired by Popi's dedication to protecting penguins, she also wanted to make an impact for the wildlife she loves. Ariella told her mom that she didn't want toys for her birthday this year. Instead, she wanted her family and friends to donate to GPS. Her loved ones



raised \$665 for penguin conservation, and at our Wildlife Conservation Expo, Ariella got to meet Popi, which she said was even better than meeting Santa Claus. Ariella is following in her hero's footsteps, and Ariella's mother—who has since become a WCN volunteer—is now following in her daughter's.

To start your fundraiser, contact champions@wildnet.org

\$50.9M

Amount raised for conservation in 2023

92%

Percentage of WCN funds that supported conservation programs

165

Number of focal wildlife species protected by WCN around the world

911

Number of projects to date supported in 77 countries by WCN's Wildlife Funds

22

Number of current Conservation Partners

318,000+

Number of people in local communities around the world provided with education opportunities by WCN's Conservation Partners in 2023

199

Scholarships awarded to date to emerging conservationists across 48 countries

6,700+

Number of staff and members of local communities around the world provided with employment opportunities by WCN's Conservation Partners in 2023



Grade—**ALONG WITH A 100%**

RATING—WCN received from Charity Navigator, America's leading independent charity evaluator—a top ranking amongst wildlife conservation nonprofits

WCN proudly guarantees that **100% of all designated donations** go directly to helping wildlife in the field.



To make a gift, scan with your phone or visit wildnet.org/donate

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSES

CALENDAR YEAR 2023

REVENUE

Contributions – Donor Designated	\$ 38,642,295
Contributions – Undesignated	12,543,558
Income from Investments (net)	2,335,233
Income from Activities (net)	61,320

Total Revenue \$ 53,582,406

EXPENSES

Program Grants and Services	\$ 40,695,154
Management and General	2,927,095
Fundraising	379,489

Total Expenses \$ 44,001,738

Revenue less Expenses \$ 9,580,668

FUND DESIGNATIONS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

Operational Reserves	\$ 3,947,351
Programmatic Reserves	8,705,806
Designated - Wildlife Funds	22,612,047
Designated - Conservation Programs	9,771,214
Designated - Rising Wildlife Leaders	3,569,785

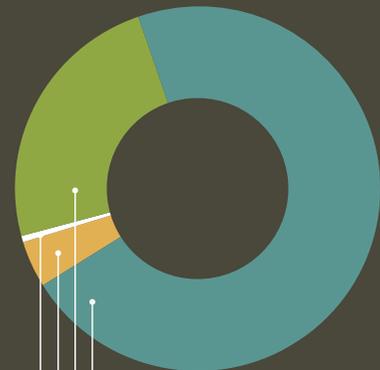
Total Fund Designations \$ 48,606,203

Complete financial reports are available on our website - wildnet.org
Wildlife Conservation Network is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 organization - #30-0108469

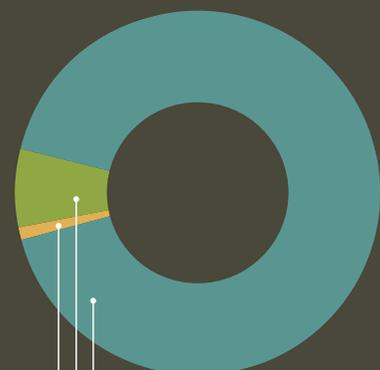


WCN maintains Charity Navigator's highest possible 4-star rating. Charity Navigator is America's leading independent charity evaluator, and rates over 8,000 charities on their Financial Health and Accountability & Transparency.

2023 TOTAL REVENUE



2023 TOTAL EXPENSES



STAFF

Stephanie Carnow - Senior Director of Marketing and Communications
Julie Carrasco - Staff Accountant
Jean-Gaël "JG" Collomb, Ph.D. - Chief Executive Officer
Sophie Croen - Senior Community Engagement Manager
Kellyn Dong - Donor Engagement Specialist
Brooke Edell - Conservation Funds Manager
Melissa Fenton - Head of Corporate Partnerships, Sr. Manager
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Mariya Gist - Senior Accountant
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Cecilia Hayes - Head of Talent Development
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Alice Jones - Chief Financial Officer
Bwalya Kampamba - Career Program Manager
Charles Knowles - President, Co-founder
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Becca Stievater - Senior Grants Manager
Carly Thompson - Programs Manager, Pangolin Crisis Fund
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Rebecca Patton
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Akiko Yamazaki, Emeritus

In early 2024, WCN was pleased to welcome Evan Burkin as Development Writer and Jennifer Lin as Donor Engagement Coordinator.

Thank you to Nichapa "Pat" Manakitivipart for her invaluable work as Revenue Accountant in 2023.

WCN WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

Laura Merkl for her work on the Audit Committee of the Board of Directors.
Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati for ongoing pro-bono legal support.
Monica DuClaud for her invaluable graphic design expertise.
The photographers who allow WCN to use their stunning photos to advance conservation.
Our committed volunteers, without whom we could not do what we do.



WCN

Wildlife Conservation Network

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