

# Animal Tracks

## 50 Years of Zoological Service

Join us as we look back on all of the wonderful initiatives made through the years by Dr. Foster in celebration of his retirement.

**+ WE ARE AZA**

White Storks Find New Home  
in the Zoo's Predator Building





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**PHOTO CREDITS:** Scott Kayser, Clark Maxwell, Kiki Nolen-Schmidt and Brittany Sturdivant

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**Editor In Chief:** Clark Maxwell  
**Contributing Editor:** Kiki Nolen-Schmidt  
**Contributing Writers:** Karen Carroll, Alonia Diaz, Kelli Grigg, Lindsey Herron, Celeste Hicks, Kristin Martin, Kiki Nolen-Schmidt, Dan Self, Dr. Stephanie Braccini Slade and Roger Torbert

#### Birmingham Zoo Mission: Inspiring Passion to Conserve the Natural World.

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We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send to:  
[marketing@birminghamzoo.com](mailto:marketing@birminghamzoo.com).

**Phone:** 205.879.0409

**Fax:** 205.879.9426

2630 Cahaba Road,  
Birmingham, Alabama 35223  
[www.birminghamzoo.com](http://www.birminghamzoo.com)

The Birmingham Zoo is an independent, not for profit, 501 (c) (3) organization and is the only AZA accredited zoo in the state of Alabama.

**ZOO SUMMER HOURS  
(THROUGH LABOR DAY)**  
9am to 5pm Monday – Friday  
9am to 7pm Saturday – Sunday



## LETTER FROM

# THE DIRECTOR

Dear Members,

Summer is in full-swing at the Birmingham Zoo, and we have a variety of exciting updates and events planned for you.

Each trip to the Zoo is sure to be different as our new front entrance and arrival experience is coming to life. We hope you are enjoying watching this new facility take shape, and are as excited for its debut in early 2019 as we are. Thank you for pardoning our progress as we work to Renew Your Zoo.

We had a busy and successful spring at the Zoo, welcoming nearly 50,000 school students on field trips, hosting a variety of fun events for the community and welcoming new animals and staff.

In April, the Birmingham Zoo's Junior Board held the 8th annual Tails in the Trails, an event that raised funds for a new Flamingo Habitat. Guests enjoyed live music, food from a variety of Birmingham staples, beverages and animal encounters in the Trails of Africa.

The days are currently full of exciting activities at the Zoo - from daily goat walks, cooling off in the free splash pads, giraffe and lorikeet feedings, to Predator Zone - there's something for everyone to enjoy.

I also announced this spring that after 14 years at the Birmingham Zoo, and 50 years in the Zoo industry, I will be retiring this summer. It has been a pleasure serving the animals, staff and community at the Birmingham Zoo. I know the Zoo is in good hands with my successor Chris Pfefferkorn.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Zoo staff and the hundreds of animals that enrich the lives of our guests every day, thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing you soon and often.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wm. R. Foster".

William R. Foster, D.V.M.  
President & CEO

You can support Dr. Foster's Zoo legacy with a gift to the William R. Foster Conservation and Education Fund. For details, visit [birminghamzoo.com](http://birminghamzoo.com)



# SHOW YOUR STRIPES FOR WILDLIFE!

Help celebrate Sam the zebra's July birthday with an adoption today. When you adopt an animal, you are directly benefiting the Zoo's animals while supporting education and conservation programs at the Birmingham Zoo.

[birminghamzoo.com/get-involved/adopt-an-animal/](http://birminghamzoo.com/get-involved/adopt-an-animal/)





# EDUCATION INITIATIVES AT THE ZOO

BY: ROGER TORBERT, VICE PRESIDENT OF EDUCATION

## University Partnership Takes Students to Zimbabwe

This summer, the Birmingham Zoo is once again partnering with the University of North Alabama to coordinate a study abroad trip to the Chipangali Wildlife Refuge in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The program was developed to offer education majors an opportunity to have real-world experience on the front lines of wildlife conservation. While on the three week trip, these pre-service teachers will work with orphaned and rescued animals, perform field research, and lead conservation focused lessons with children in Bulawayo schools.

In preparation for the tour abroad, the students visit the Birmingham Zoo for an orientation at the Chipangali Research Station to learn about the Zoo's partnership with the wildlife researchers in Zimbabwe. A Zoo Staff member and UNA faculty travel with the group and work with each student to create an individual project focused on an aspect of their experiences. The Birmingham Zoo is working to establish similar programs with other universities as well.



## Talking to Our Guests about Conservation

Have you met an Information Ambassador or ZooGuide yet? If you haven't, make sure to look for someone wearing an **Ask Me** vest or stop by one of our interpretative stations located throughout the Zoo! These team members are your subject matter experts on all things Birmingham Zoo.

The Volunteer and Onsite Interpretation sections of the Education Department have collaborated to develop these roles to expand the impact of our messages on our Zoo guests. With the introduction of these new opportunities and ways for Education, Conservation, and Animal Departments to work together, our volunteers are getting a better-rounded on-boarding and entry level training. We are striving to provide an excellent guest experience and opportunities to connect with the work the Birmingham Zoo is doing both here and around the world.

We are just scratching the surface of expanding our on-grounds presence and look forward to more additions as we get closer to completion of the Renew the Zoo Campaign.

## Linking Teachers with Scientists

This summer, the Education Department staff from the Birmingham Zoo conducted **Conservation in the Classroom**, a workshop to challenge, engage and inspire area teachers in the science of conservation. This week-long workshop for 20 middle and high school teachers was funded by a grant from the Joseph S. Bruno Charitable Foundation. Sessions featured local scientists sharing their current and ongoing research, allowing teachers to learn directly from experts working on solutions to many environmental challenges facing Alabama today. Partnering with scientists, faculty and staff from University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham-Southern College, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Samford University provides authenticity and a unique perspective for these classroom educators. In addition to that direct experience with research scientists, participants gained access to powerful research tools and were involved in lessons that connected them to the science of conservation in new and exciting ways.

The teachers were very excited for this unique experience and can't wait to share what they had learned with their students when they return to school in the fall.



# WE ARE AZA

BY: STEPHANIE BRACCINI SLADE, PHD, VICE PRESIDENT OF LIVING COLLECTIONS

As members and supporters of the Birmingham Zoo, you too are playing a role in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). As a non-profit organization, AZA is dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, education, science and recreation. Participation in the AZA is voluntary, but carries a prestigious standing. To be considered for accreditation, an organization must first complete a detailed and lengthy accreditation application, followed by a multiple day on-site inspection by a team of trained experts from around the country. The Accreditation Commission evaluates every aspect of Zoo operation to ensure each institution meets, and exceeds, the standards for animal management care, including habitat, social needs, health and nutrition. They also inspect enrichment items and records, guaranteeing that animals are being stimulated to exhibit natural behavior and that variety is provided as part of the daily routine. In addition, the commission also evaluates veterinary programs, conservation, research, educational programming, safety policies, security, physical facilities, guest services and staff quality. Since every zoo and aquarium also needs to have secure finances in order to continue to meet these high standards, the committee evaluates financial records and practices.

It doesn't stop at accreditation though, and it shouldn't. As a welfare and conservation minded organization, we are constantly evolving and as standards are being challenged, the bar is raised. The Birmingham Zoo is always monitoring our practices to ensure we are exceeding the minimum standards. And to prove it, we continue to go through the entire accreditation process every five years.

The Birmingham Zoo is in good company with more than 230 fellow AZA accredited institutions in the United States and abroad. Collectively, these zoos and aquariums draw more than 183 million visitors annually, allowing for millions of opportunities to share our collective mission, inspire

conservation action and reach our guests. That has also led to more than \$10 million spent on field conservation, supporting close to 3,000 projects in 130 countries worldwide. With money going directly to field projects, each person visiting an AZA accredited facility is playing a role in conservation.

## YOU, AS A MEMBER OR GUEST, ARE ACTIVELY SUPPORTING CONSERVATION.

There are perks to being an AZA member that most people don't realize, such as being a part of the AZA Species Survival Plan (SSP) Program. This program is a cooperative approach to animal management, breeding and conservation by working to ensure genetically diverse and self-sustaining populations in human care. Currently, more than 500 species are being managed in SSPs, where recommendations to move animals based on genetically ideal breeding plans, personality, space needs and social needs of the animals are necessary.

In order to ensure the next generation of zoo leaders are being trained and mentored, AZA is also dedicated to providing members with vast resources to excel. AZA facilitates numerous cooperative animal care and conservation programs, hosts two annual conferences, offers networking and professional development opportunities and provides scholarship opportunities for the over 20 professional development courses offered.

Being a member of AZA is about more than just accreditation, it's about being part of a community focused on best practices, both on Zoo grounds and off, providing excellent guest experience and extending our conservation reach to the entire globe. It means that we act our accreditation daily; we walk our walk from education to animal welfare and beyond.





# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A REPTILE ANIMAL CARE PROFESSIONAL

BY: DAN SELF, ZOOLOGICAL MANAGER OF REPTILES

With over 120 individual animals representing almost 50 different species of reptiles, amphibians, and fish in the "Reptile" Department, there is never a lack of things to do. Each morning we check every animal, from the tiniest dart frog to the giant anaconda, which is easier said than done as sometimes the animals are hard for us to find in their habitats! Many of our snakes like to burrow into the dirt in their habitat, and I can't count the number of times I didn't "see" our copperhead or giant gecko even though I was looking right at it.

After morning checks are done, we begin cleaning and feeding. Since reptiles and amphibians do not produce their own body heat, they need far fewer calories than birds and mammals. Most of the lizards, turtles and tortoises are only fed three days a week and snakes are fed on a weekly basis. All of our tortoises are herbivores, meaning they eat vegetables exclusively. Most of our lizards are too, although some also like to eat insects and a little bit of meat. The Komodo dragon and beaded lizard are exceptions; they are carnivorous and eat a variety of prey items. Our turtles eat a little bit of veggies, but mostly fish, our snakes eat mice or rats and our frogs eat insects, such as fruit flies and crickets.

Since our animals don't eat all that often, they also don't produce that much waste. However we still have to clean habitats daily. We provide fresh water and sanitize water bowls and pools, remove uneaten food and waste, and clean the inside and outside of the glass. We also use that time to check the habitat heaters and lights—this is especially important since reptiles are dependent on external heat sources and many

reptile species require special lights to stay healthy.

It takes two trained Animal Care Professionals to work with our dangerous and venomous animals. We have five species of venomous reptiles: two species of rattlesnakes, cottonmouths, copperheads and a beaded lizard. We also have other species that are considered dangerous: the anaconda, Komodo dragon and alligators.

The Komodo dragon is trained to shift into his behind-the-scenes area. Yes, reptiles can be trained just like mammals! We have trained Komodo dragons and alligators to move to their behind-the-scenes areas and to position in certain ways so they can be moved and/or examined.

Once the basic cleaning and feeding is done, we generally move on to projects in the afternoon. Our biggest projects are generally habitat renovations. This usually includes removing and replacing substrate, re-doing the props and perching, plant care and making repairs to the habitats. We also use the afternoons to do training with the animals and give talks to the public. These talks help educate Zoo guests on reptiles and how important they are to various ecosystems. We hope you will come visit us in the Reptile Building and see all of our amazing animals!



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in the sky to the  
ones on the ground,  
we're there.



At Alabama Power, we believe in supporting the things that make our great state a better place to live. The Birmingham Zoo exemplifies this idea by helping to protect animals and unite our community through wildlife education.

**We proudly support the Birmingham Zoo.**



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## BIRMINGHAM ZOO ARTIFICIALLY INSEMINATES PALLAS'S CAT

Mischa, a young Pallas's cat, joined the Birmingham Zoo family this spring and can be seen in her new habitat in the Zoo's Predator Building. We are hopeful that through the process of artificially inseminating Mischa, a baby Pallas's cat could join the Zoo family in the future. Mischa was artificially inseminated in March in an attempt to grow the Pallas's cat population. There are currently only 17 facilities in North America that house Pallas's cats, with only 45 individual cats. The population of Pallas's cats in the wild is estimated to be roughly 15,000 individuals, and those numbers are declining. The Birmingham Zoo is excited to participate in this conservation initiative in partnership with other Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) facilities.

Mischa is herself a product of artificial insemination (AI) and was the second successful offspring produced through artificial insemination in Pallas's cats. That procedure was performed after natural breeding between her parents was unsuccessful. Dr. Bill Swanson with the Cincinnati Zoo's Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife (CREW) team performed both inseminations.

"These Pallas's cat AI procedures are one component of our Collection Stewardship grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services to help improve the sustainability of our small felid populations," said Dr. Swanson. "Over the past five years, we have produced three pregnancies with AI in Pallas's cats, including one with frozen semen."

Mischa was anesthetized by the Zoo's veterinary team and was inseminated with a frozen sample by the CREW team, with the goal to produce additional

offspring from new genetic sources. The frozen sample used for the procedure was obtained from a male Pallas's cat housed at a zoo in the United Kingdom and imported into the US two years ago. Improving success with frozen samples opens the door to using semen collected from wild males in their native habitat to help increase genetic diversity of the Species Survival Plan program population. These programs are a cooperative breeding and conservation program through the AZA.

Through the Birmingham Zoo's Passion into Conservation Action (PiCA) grants, the Birmingham Zoo supports conservation of these endangered cats both in human care and in the wild. Through a PiCA grant trip, Birmingham Zoo Animal Care Professional Scott Kayser traveled to Mongolia to work with Pallas's cat researchers for three weeks. For the project, Kayser worked with Dr. Bariushaa Munkhtsog, one of the leading Pallas's cat researchers, assisting him and his team as they monitored the Pallas's cat population and conducted a study on kitten mortality. Kayser said, "I am able to take the knowledge I gained working with this species in the wild and share my experiences here every day at the Birmingham Zoo with our visitors." Kayser also serves as the Studbook Keeper for the Pallas's cat Species Survival Plan, where he manages the Pallas's cat population for all of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in North America, helping to make breeding and transfer recommendations so that a healthy, genetically viable population is maintained.

We are excited to monitor Mischa for pregnancy to see if this insemination was a success!

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"When you realize the value of all life, you dwell less on what is past and concentrate on the preservation of the future."  
Dian Fossey, American Primatologist and Conservationist

## 50 YEARS OF ZOOLOGICAL SERVICE

If you have ever watched the movie "We Bought a Zoo", you may think that running a Zoo is a pretty easy job. But Birmingham Zoo President and CEO, Dr. William Foster, D.V.M., says that is certainly no easy task.

"A lot of people grow up wanting to work in a Zoo, but many people might not realize how complex a modern Zoo is."

Foster has served for the past 14 years at the 122-acre Birmingham Zoo, which is home to more than 700 animals from six continents.

"When I started my career, I wanted to provide quality care to animals, which is why I went to veterinary school," said Foster. "As I grew in my profession, I became involved in Zoos because I care about the mission. You don't do it for the money, or for the glory. Doing something good for animals that have no voice has been my motivation throughout my career."

After nearly 50 years working in Zoos across the southeast, Foster announced this spring that he plans to retire this summer. Foster earned a bachelor's degree in Zoology from the University of South Florida and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Bachelor of Animal Science degrees from Tuskegee University, saying he was fortunate to turn his academic training into a lifelong career.

"I found my calling early in life, and was able to make a career from it. I started with a dream to pursue a career with animals and have been so fortunate to have had the opportunities that I've had," he said.

Throughout his time, Foster has seen a shift in the focus of accredited Zoos across the nation. "The goal of Zoos has changed throughout my time serving in them. In the earlier days, the goal was to have as many animals as you could house, but now Zoos are striving to have the right animals for the size of the Zoo, for the climate you're in, and giving more focus to conservation efforts."

Under his leadership, the Birmingham Zoo completed the Junior League of Birmingham Hugh-Kaul Children's Zoo (2005), Trails of Africa (2011), Kiwanis Giraffe Encounter (2012), and the Barbara Ingalls Shook Black Bear Trail (2015). Today, with the generous support of public, private and foundation funding, the Zoo has completed the Henley Park event lawn, is currently constructing a new Arrival Experience, and will soon begin on the Asian Passage, an innovative and exciting addition to the Zoo's legacy.

"Zoos have a responsibility to serve the animals that they house, and to work as a catalyst for engaging the community in conservation and saving endangered species," says Foster. "This is essential, as we are losing species in the wild at an alarming rate, and the only ones who can stop that are us, humans. Through the new habitats and areas of the Zoo, we are able to educate the public about the struggles many species face, and inspire them to take action."

Foster led the Birmingham Zoo to record attendance when the Zoo was named the #1 tourist attraction in the state of Alabama by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel and to record numbers with over 650,000 guests in attendance in 2016.

"I am grateful to have spent the past 14 years in Birmingham with this outstanding organization, and deeply honored to have had the opportunity to lead it to be the great establishment and community asset

that it is today. I am very proud of what my Birmingham Zoo colleagues have been able to achieve here at the Zoo and around the world as we work toward our mission of inspiring passion to conserve the natural world," said Foster. "I would like to thank the 'Zoo Family' including the Board, volunteers, staff, donors and community for all of their support and hard work over these 14 years."

Foster is set to retire on June 30, 2018. After a nationwide search, the Birmingham Zoo's board of directors selected Chris Pfefferkorn, current Birmingham Zoo Senior Vice President, to assume the role of president and chief executive officer as of July 1, 2018.

### The William R. Foster Conservation and Education Fund

To recognize Dr. Foster's achievement in the field and the Zoo, a fund has been created in his honor. Your contribution is an opportunity to recognize and thank Dr. Foster for his vision and leadership while paying tribute to his legacy and supporting the Birmingham Zoo's mission to inspire passion to conserve the natural world.

For more information and to give, visit [www.birminghamzoo.com/get-involved/william-r-foster-conservation-and-education-fund](http://www.birminghamzoo.com/get-involved/william-r-foster-conservation-and-education-fund) or contact Karen Carroll at [kcarroll@birminghamzoo.com](mailto:kcarroll@birminghamzoo.com) or call 205-397-3856



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## ALTEC INC. SUPPORTS ZOO'S EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Since 1929, Altec has been a company committed to excellence. Altec's Chairman and CEO, Lee J. Styslinger III, is a founding Board Member of the Birmingham Zoo, and his wife, Kelly, was one of the first ZooGala Chairs after the Zoo's privatization in 1999. Most recently, Kelly and Lee were recognized as the 2017 ZooGala Honorary Chairs.

Altec is a leading provider of products and services to contractors for tree care, electric utility and telecommunications in over 100 countries throughout the world.

The Altec/Styslinger Foundation supports many organizations in our community including the arts, education, environment, health and human services. The Foundation has supported the Zoo with grants to all four of its capital campaigns and has provided annual operational support since 2001.

Altec most recently awarded a grant for the Altec/Styslinger Learning Center, which will be located in the new front entrance building. The Learning Center will be used for camps, ZooSchool, and other educational programs for school children and adults. It will also serve as a multi-purpose space for events and meetings.

"The Birmingham Zoo has been an important part of this community for over 60 years and it continues to provide wonderful teaching experiences about the natural world to students and families", said Lee J. Styslinger III, Altec's Chairman and CEO. "We are pleased with the Zoo's ongoing commitment to grow educational programs and excited to support new learning opportunities for Alabama's school children."



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### Meet Sofia!

Sofia is a Birmingham Zoo Teen Volunteer who is out in the community "Inspiring Passion to Conserve the Natural World." Two years ago, she started a project called "My Plastic Planet" with the goal of raising awareness and teaching individuals the negative impact plastic straws have on our environment.

### Note from Sofia:

Did you know that it takes over 1,000 years for plastic drinking straws to break down? In the U.S. alone, the daily consumption of straws could wrap around the globe 2.5 times. However, there are plenty of easy ways to help! For starters, refrain from using straws when eating at a restaurant, or use a plastic alternative such as glass, metal, bamboo or even paper straws. Another way to help is to use less single-use plastic and by recycling any materials that you can. With the help of the Zoo and the wonderful Volunteer Program,

I have been able to raise awareness on this pressing matter. If you are interested in helping the Zoo and the environment, you too can become a volunteer! Visit [birminghamzoo.com/get-involved](http://birminghamzoo.com/get-involved) for more information.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

**Now – September 5**  
**Member Mornings (Wednesdays)**

## July

**21-22 and 28-29 Zoo Fun Days**

## August

**11 Rewind at the Zoo – 80s Fest**

**18 Fairytales and Frogs**

**18 Pancakes and Princesses**

**26 Sundaes in the Park**  
**(Member Appreciation Event)**

## September

**1-3 Labor Day Weekend at the Zoo**

**14 IBERIABANK ZooGala**  
**(Night Event. Ages 21 and up.)**

**23 La Celebración (Hispanic Heritage Day)**

# "GO GREEN" IN THE OUTDOORS!

BY: LINDSEY HERRON, REGISTRAR

Looking for more ways to 'go green'? The Birmingham Zoo Green team is here to help!

With summer in full swing, it's time to stop and enjoy the world around us, and maybe even take the time to learn something new. Studies have shown that activity outside is a wonderful way to lower stress and improve health, plus it also offers new and interesting ways to learn about the world around us. It's just as important to enjoy the world as it is to improve it, so let's get started with some ideas!

Why not start a family garden this summer? Gardening is a great way to teach children about where our food comes from, plus it's exciting to watch plants grow and see fruits and vegetables ripen. Pollinator gardens are great ways to create habitats for butterflies and other helpful insects, and everyone can enjoy the flowers and tasty treats your garden grows.

Birdwatching is another fun way to combine conservation, education and outdoor fun right in your backyard. Getting to know the birds around you is a great way to get connected to nature, and it's a hobby for any age or skill set. Citizen science groups like the National Audubon Society are always on the lookout for new members, and by monitoring the species you see, you can actively contribute to scientific projects around the world.

Don't forget that you can also combine enjoying nature with improving nature! Plan a walk through the natural areas near your home or work, and take a trash bag and a pair of gloves with you. As you enjoy the sun and scenery, pick up any litter you find for proper disposal. Don't forget to separate out any recyclables you might find, too.

While you're enjoying all the wonders that nature has to offer, don't forget about enjoying the Zoo! The Zoo has a brand-new Medical Properties Trust Nature Play area in the new Henley Park, so kids of all ages can come to the Zoo and enjoy the sun and fresh air while actively exploring the world around them through building, climbing, exploring and using their imagination to transform this natural space into their dream playground. Also, the Birmingham Zoo Education Department offers summer camps for ages 4K through 12th grade, with camps that focus on hands on exploration of nature, the science behind zoo keeping, and the conservation work done around the globe.

Remember: every little bit counts!

# WHITE STORKS FIND NEW HOME IN THE ZOO'S PREDATOR BUILDING

BY: KELLI GRIGG, PREDATOR DEPARTMENT ANIMAL CARE PROFESSIONAL

Have you heard? The Predator Building has more new residents, a beautiful pair of European white storks! If they look familiar to you it's because they previously lived in the Kori Country area of the Zoo.

As you may be aware, the Zoo lost its beloved Malayan tiger, Kumar, earlier this year. His passing left an empty space in the hearts of the Animal Care Professionals, in the community who knew and loved him and also in the lush habitat where he lived for many years. An unoccupied habitat opens up exciting possibilities for what new species can be housed. Many guests have asked if the plan is to receive a new tiger, but the Zoo has to consider many factors first. We look at things like square-footage, land space versus water space, whether a habitat is open-top, closed in or meshed over.

For this habitat, the biggest consideration is the upcoming construction of the new Asian Passage. Any animal that moves into that habitat will potentially need to move during the construction process. With this factor in mind, a great solution is to move an animal that already lives at the Birmingham Zoo. Because the white storks lived in a mixed-species habitat, moving them to the Predator Department filled that empty habitat without creating another empty space in a different part of the Zoo.

So how do the white storks fit in to the Predator Department? Many birds are carnivorous, meaning they eat meat, and the white storks are no exception. These amazing birds live in areas of low vegetation, like grassy fields and shallow wetlands, where they will hunt for a variety of prey including fish, insects, frogs and small mammals. Their new habitat is perfect for the storks as they can hunt for insects in the grassy areas and use the pool for wading and bathing.

The storks' large size and bright white feathers make them a very impressive sight. Over the centuries, people have taken note of these beautiful birds, and white storks have found their way into many legends and folklore. They are in three of Aesop's Fables. They are also the inspiration for the storks that bring babies to new parents, a legend made famous by Hans Christian Anderson's story The Storks.

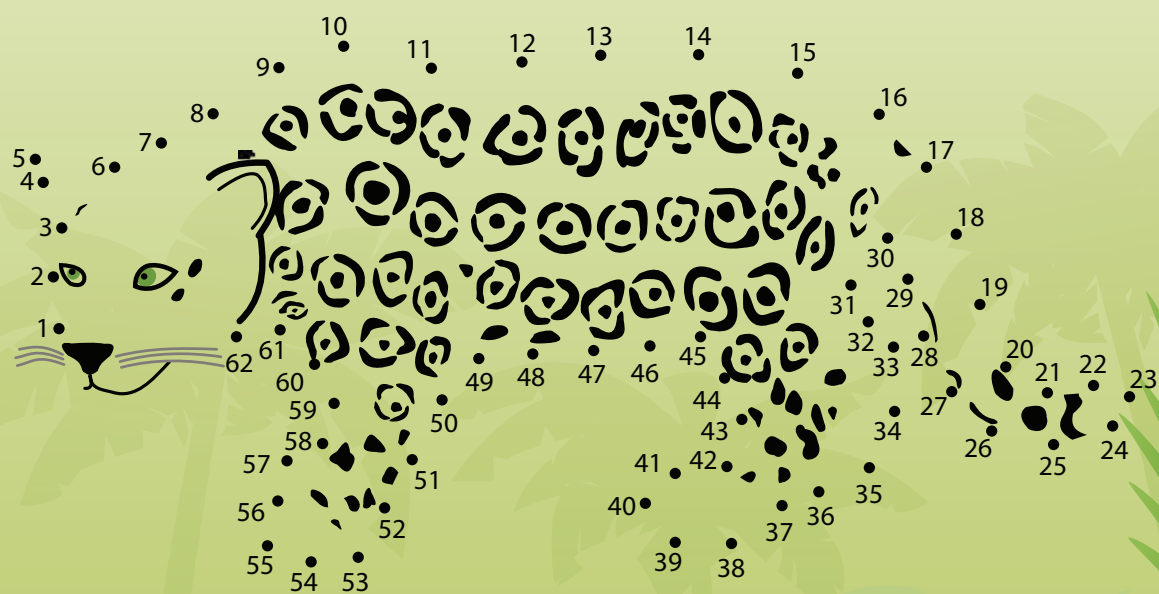
The next time you're at the Zoo, come see these iconic birds in their new home at the Predator Building!





# KIDS KORNER

CONNECT THE DOTS!



## CONSERVATION TIDBIT!

The Birmingham Zoo is working with wildlife ecologist Michael Dobbins, in collaboration with the University of Florida and Panthera, to study how humans affect the habitat selection and movement of large mammals in Southern Belize. By utilizing satellite imagery, sound meters, trail cameras and the knowledge of local Maya people, we will be better able to understand this vital habitat and the relations of people and wildlife.

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starts here.



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# MAKE GOOD FOOD CHOICES WITH THE SEAFOOD WATCH APP

BY: CELESTE HICKS, PREDATOR DEPARTMENT  
ANIMAL CARE PROFESSIONAL

Do you like to eat Seafood? What would you do if the next time you went to get your favorite seafood, they told you it didn't exist anymore? Well that is becoming a real possibility. Right now, 90% of the world's fisheries are being overfished. Without intervention, we could begin to lose some of our favorite seafood species: however, there is something we can do to help!

Seafood Watch is a program based out of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, which empowers consumers and businesses to make better choices for a healthy ocean. Using science-based, peer reviewed methods; Seafood Watch assesses how fisheries and farmed seafood impact the environment and provides recommendations indicating which items are "Best Choices", "Good Alternatives", and which ones to "Avoid". Seafood choices are considered unsustainable when they are either being overfished, or caught in environmentally damaging ways, which includes by-catch (when animals like dolphins, sea lions or sea turtles are unintentionally caught with other seafood).

YOU can make a HUGE difference! By downloading the Seafood Watch app on any smartphone you can start buying sustainable seafood today! The process is simple. When going to the grocery store, or dining at a restaurant, type in the seafood you are interested in purchasing. The Seafood Watch app does a great job of educating on what makes different seafood a "Best Choice," "Good Alternative," or why we want to "Avoid" something.

Our California sea lions, Giovanni and Farley, are doing their part by eating sustainable seafood! Their herring, capelin, sardines, mackerel and squid are all "Best Choice" or "Good Alternatives" according to the Seafood Watch recommendations. If we all make an effort together to purchase sustainable seafood, then we can drive the market to improve our oceans! So come on down to the Red Diamond Sea Lion Show and learn about Seafood Watch and grab your own pocket guide!

Courtesy, Seafood Watch program 2017, Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation



# STICK YOUR NECK OUT FOR OUR NEW HABITAT

You can help the Birmingham Zoo's flamingos spread their wings. The flamingos have outgrown their paradise and need more room for breeding and nesting. Your gift will allow us to redesign their habitat to provide an expanded beach for building nests like those in the wild. Visitors will enjoy an interactive feature that will allow you to hand-feed the flamingos. The Birmingham Zoo is a 501(c) (3) organization, and became a public-private not-for-profit in 1999. Your support is vital to our growth and care for our animals. Your donation to this new habitat is tax-deductible. Please go to: [www.birminghamzoo.com/get-involved/donate](http://www.birminghamzoo.com/get-involved/donate) or contact Karen Carroll at 205.397.3856 to make your gift. All gifts of \$1,000 will be included on a plaque in the new habitat. Thank you for sticking your neck out to help the flamingos.

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*at the Zoo*

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