

CALGARY ZOO STORY IDEAS

1. What is community conservation?

Community conservation is the practice of recovering endangered species in developing countries by creating value for wildlife and ecosystems and improving their lives– nature and humans benefit! The Calgary Zoo has had significant success with community conservation in countries where the people are learning how to preserve their native species, at the same time creating an economy for their residents. Examples of the successes include the award winning Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary in Ghana Africa and the establishment of the Shea Butter Factory for the women of the community. Recently the relationship with the University of Calgary, the Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership and Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium has helped to protect lemurs in the rainforests of Kianjavato Madagascar. Future projects include the establishment of community initiatives in Kenya, Africa to protect the endangered antelope, the bongo. The mountain bongo is a critically endangered species only found in Kenya with fewer than 100 individuals believed to survive in the wild. Community Conservation – empowering local communities to benefit from, and protect, wild species.

2. Conservation organization first, zoo second.

The Calgary Zoo has been around since 1929 and has seen the role of accredited zoos change dramatically over the years to conservation organizations. Understanding that the zoos of today may be the last refuge for many of the planets' species, the Calgary Zoo is involved in field conservation where teams of professionals work in natural ecosystems and habitats to conduct research and species reintroductions. With over 1.3 million people visiting the zoo yearly, conservation education is a huge role be it onsite or within the school curriculum with young students.

3. Conservation research - who's in the field?

Using science to save species-at-risk is what the zoo's Centre for Conservation Research is all about. This team of scientists and biologists work with Western Canadian species that need our help. The zoo has an offsite conservation facility south of the city where critical species are cared for in a peaceful and managed environment. The Calgary Zoo works with a network of partners and stakeholders to ensure maximum

conservation impact, the inclusion of local communities and the application of sound science. We work to recover species by doing cutting edge research that is used to inform responsible, effective reintroduction and to affect policy at regional, national and international levels.

- 1. Burrowing Owls** – An innovative head starting program where young birds are reared in captivity over a critical time period to increase their survival. This successful program is in year three.
- 2. Whooping crane** – With only 21 birds left in the wild in 1941, this critically endangered bird has made a comeback due to conservation efforts by organizations such as the Calgary Zoo who has been involved in reintroduction breeding since 1992 – the only facility of its kind in Canada. This year's results were one of the best years ever for hatching and release.
- 3. Vancouver Island marmot** – Found only on Vancouver Island and designated as Canada's most endangered animal, the zoo has successfully bred marmots for eventual release on Vancouver Island, now going into our 21st year.
- 4. Greater sage-grouse** – The country's only reintroduction conservation program for one of Canada's most endangered birds. With our expertise we have started a reintroduction breeding program.
- 5. Leopard frogs** – This reintroduction conservation program was initiated in 2017 and as part of the B.C. northern leopard Frog Recovery Team the zoo assists with head-starting and wild-to-wild translocations to re-establish these frogs in British Columbia.
- 6. Black-tailed prairie dogs** – As the primary food source for the endangered black-footed ferret, the zoo works with Parks Canada to manage and research the issues with this species in Grasslands National Park, Saskatchewan.



4. All about being Canadian

The Canadian Wilds is a picturesque hike through Canada's wilderness. You will cross paths with black and grizzly bears, cougar, wolf, Rocky Mountain goat and whooping crane and learn about the importance of saving Canada's species-at-risk without a trip to the mountains. Guaranteed sightings!

5. The up-close experience – Land of Lemurs and Penguin Plunge

Immersive habitats are unique ways to bring visitors closer to the experience of being in the environment of the species. Two examples at the Calgary Zoo include our Penguin Plunge building where five species of penguin live – Humboldt, king, gentoo and north and south rockhopper. In the Land of Lemurs, visitors are invited into the walk-through where ring-tailed, black and white ruffed and red-fronted lemur invite you respectfully into their home. The experience is exciting for the human and socially enriching for the lemur, who enjoys the interaction as much or as little as they want.

6. ZOOLIGHTS – Calgary's Favourite Holiday Tradition

In its 25th year, the zoo presents over two million lights all throughout the park, many of them in shapes of animals, moving or set to music. Along with the lights many activities are available to entertain the whole family from outdoor games to visits with Santa. Event runs from November, 2021 – January, 2022.

7. Penguin Walk

Ever seen a long lineup of king penguins march? Well they do starting every January and walk daily for exercise and enrichment until the weather warms up in March/April. A parade you don't want to miss!

8. Being Green Inside and Out

The Calgary Zoo continues to break ground in food sustainability practices with the recent recognition of two significant designations. In 2017, the zoo was awarded the first tourist attraction in Canada to be certified as Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice (LEAF), as well as 100% Ocean Wise. We received Petal Certification for our Panda Passage building, as part of the Living Building Challenge – a first in Calgary.

9. How does your garden grow?

The Calgary Zoo boasts the Dorothy Harvie Gardens as the most beautiful and diverse in the city – outside as well as the indoor gardens in the ENMAX Conservatory. We consciously harvest ingredients from the zoo gardens and source products through other sustainable organizations. Many of the ingredients featured in our catering menus, like edible flowers and microgreens, came directly from our garden beds and many of what we grow also goes to animals for their diets. Small actions can lead to big changes to protect wild places.

