

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



**ACTION  
FOR THE  
WILD**

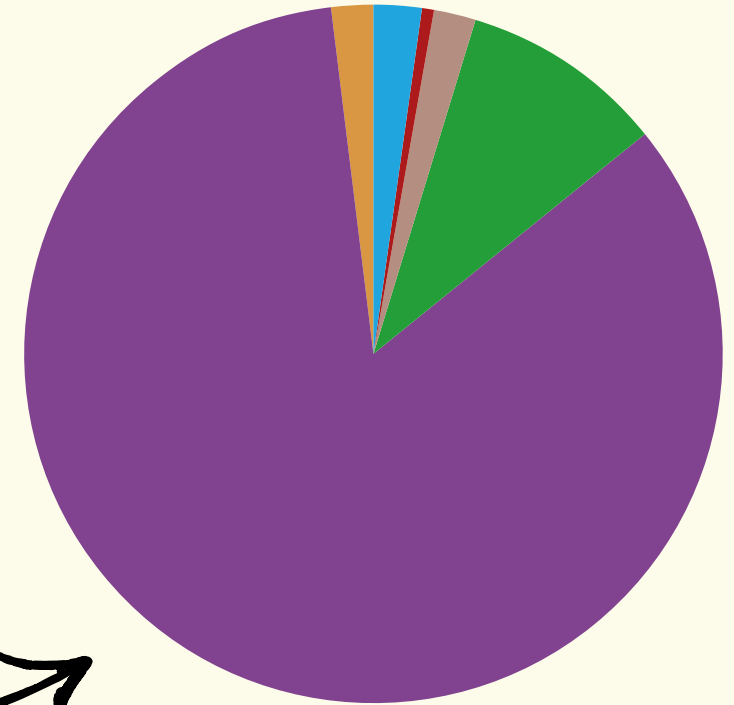
Charity No. 1105621







# FUNDING TO COLCHESTER ZOO'S ACTION FOR THE WILD PROJECTS

**£126,321.05**  
donated to



Plus **£80,603.89**  
to other in-situ projects



-  AEECL - £1,802.45
-  Australian Bushfire Fund - £1,439.78
-  Colchester Zoo Emergency Fund - £67,723.79
-  Gelada Baboon Project - £1,695.35
-  Free the Bears - £7,500.00
-  Red Panda Network - £442.52

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# UMPHAFA PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE



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Colchester Zoo and Action for the Wild purchased land to form the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve in 2005. We have since been working to rehabilitate the land and recreate the historical animal populations on the reserve.

In 2020, Action for the Wild donated £126,321.05 to ensure the continued running of the Reserve, from employing field rangers and reserve management staff, to ensuring continued protection of our wildlife species.

## **KEY EVENTS ON THE RESERVE**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our activities on the Reserve were somewhat reduced in 2020.

We did not release any further species onto the Reserve in 2020, however, we ensured salt licks and molasses were provided for our wildlife species to help them maintain condition throughout winter and increase our breeding rates.

Our species have continued to breed, such as our impala, kudu and nyala populations.

In February, a game capture company came to take 28 kudu off UmPhafa and translocate them to a new reserve; this ensures we keep their numbers in check to prevent over-population of certain species on the Reserve.

UmPhafa has maintained bee hives on the Reserve for a number of years. In 2020, we purchased the hives and have successfully harvested a small first crop of honey.



## KEY EVENTS ON THE RESERVE

Nine interns still managed to visit between January and March, before sadly the internship was put on hold for the rest of the year. Despite a lack of interns, the Reserve's management team have been busy renovating one of the reserve houses so that, from 2021, the interns will have a new base on the Reserve.

The boma, where we keep groups of wild dogs for bonding, received a restoration in 2020, with new fence lines constructed in preparation for the arrival of new dogs in 2021.

The Reserve's leopards have been sighted more and more in 2020, such that reserve staff have had to purchase new energisers and fencing to ensure they don't come too close to accommodation buildings.

In 2021, we will continue with our work to promote and protect the wildlife populations on UmPhafa and also look forward to interns returning to the reserve once again to help us with our management activities.

## 2020 GAME COUNT OF VISIBLE SPECIES

70	Blesbok	10	Mountain reedbuck
133	Blue Wildebeest	45	Nyala
10	Common Reedbuck	10	Ostrich
48	Eland	42	Red Hartebeest
40	Giraffe	130	Warthog
25	Grey Duiker	60	Waterbuck
272	Impala	251	Zebra
250	Kudu		

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# AUSTRALIA BUSHFIRE CRISIS

All funds donated to the appeal went towards projects allocated by the Zoo & Aquarium Association Australia (ZAA) Wildlife Conservation Committee, to aid rescue, rehabilitation and long-term recovery activities and their associated operating costs.

In total, Action for the Wild sent £1,439.78 across to the ZAA Drought and Bushfire Crisis Fund.

Reports estimate 800 million native animals were affected by Australia's bushfire crisis in New South Wales, and more than one billion throughout Australia, with many more injured or displaced and facing a tough time ahead while food resources are low and predators have greater opportunities to prey on native species whose habitats have been destroyed.

The fund's approach aims to execute three key phases:

## PHASE ONE

Placing rescued native animals with appropriate facilities and expert care for treatment, ongoing rehabilitation and preparation to return to the wild.

## PHASE TWO

Assessing the impacts on wildlife and habitat to understand where rehabilitation efforts are most needed.

## PHASE THREE

Medium and long-term recovery efforts to return healthy animals to regenerated habitats and revive and sustain populations of wildlife in affected areas.

At the start of January 2020, Colchester Zoo supporters and staff fundraised to help support Australian zoos in their efforts to run wildlife hospitals and rescue and rehabilitation facilities; to provide both short and long-term support. Zoos have significant expertise, resources, equipment and facilities throughout Australia to help native animals in the crisis affected areas.



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AECL aims to advance the understanding and conservation of Madagascar's lemurs through scientific research, captive propagation and protection of their natural habitat.

In 2020, ACTION FOR THE WILD contributed to this lemur consortium by donating our £1,802.45 membership fee.

**A.E.E.C.L.** (Association Européenne pour l'Étude et la Conservation des Lémuriens)

The Sahamalaza region in Madagascar has been the AECL's focus of scientific and conservation interest since 1988. The AECL aims to protect the habitat and ecosystems within the Sahamalaza peninsula, monitor and increase lemur populations and be a strong conservation ambassador for the area.

Unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic halted many of the 2020 plans AECL had put in place for the year.

The work on the Field Research Station was halted when restrictions across Madagascar were put in place and so it is expected that this project will be 1 – 1½ years behind schedule. When work commences, AECL will be hiring a Field Station Manager to oversee activities.

In March, the AECL distributed the subsidy funding for community teachers and the scholarship for students at the high school in Maromandia in order to stabilise the education system.

The field team in Ankarafa continue to patrol and to monitor the forest every day. Any illegal forest activity is reported.

The reforestation launch for the Sofia region took place in January. The goal of the reforestation programme is to make the Sofia region green again and to stop the bush fires. A total of 11,000 trees were reforested over an area of 8ha.

By investing in local communities through education, resource management and communication, this helps ensure the communities of today can forge a safe haven for wildlife tomorrow.

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# COLCHESTER ZOO EMERGENCY FUND

Following the unprecedented closure of Colchester Zoo due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the trustees of Action for the Wild agreed to initiate a fundraising call for donations to the zoo's emergency fund to help provide support for animal care related costs, including keeper wages.

In total, due to kind donations from Action for the Wild donors, £67,723.79 was transferred to the emergency fund, with £25,000 of this being made possible via a restricted donation from The Hobson Charity for use over the six month period of October 2020 to March 2021 to primarily feed the big cat species, but also to assist with feeding costs of other carnivorous species at Colchester Zoo. A total of £29,853.19 was spent in this period on meat-related animal feed products.



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# FREE THE BEARS

Free the Bears are working to protect, preserve and enrich the lives of bears throughout the world by offering a safe sanctuary for bears rescued from the illegal wildlife trade.

In 2020, Action for the Wild donated £7,500.00 to further support development of the bear sanctuary in Laos; to address housing needs for a small group of three rescued sun bears, as well as create rainwater storage tanks in order to improve management of natural resources across the site.

Since 2003, more than 80 bears have been confiscated in Laos from poachers and wildlife traders, or have been donated by people who had previously kept them as trophy pets. In 2020, 6 bears were rescued from the illegal wildlife trade.

The new species-specific environment for the trio of sun bears offers multiple aerial walkways, climbing towers and other furniture installed to cater to the different behavioural needs of sun bears. With almost five times the outdoor space, it is expected that this area will serve as long-term accommodation for the sun bear group, with capacity to add to the group should any further sun bears be rescued in coming years.

Six 3,000 litre polyethylene tanks were also installed using Action for the Wild funds in key locations across the sanctuary and five larger rainwater storage tanks were put in place at the Cub Nursery and Bear Houses 1, 4, 5 and 6. This water storage ensures sufficient supply and reduces demand on the sanctuary dams.

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# GELADA BABOON PROJECT

The Gelada Research Project aims to contribute to the improvement of the conservation of wild gelada baboons in Ethiopia.

In 2020, Action for the Wild donated £1,695.35 to support this research.

The current status of wild gelada baboon populations isn't known; hence the conservation status of this species needs to be properly assessed. Nothing is known with respect to population structure, welfare condition and behaviour of geladas that live outside of protected areas and that are affected by severe human pressure.

This project aims to:

- increase understanding of how human presence and activities impact on ecology and behaviour of gelada baboons in two unprotected sites
- increase awareness of environmental issues, capacity building and ownership of the local community managing the areas
- increase the scientific and technical knowledge of the species to be used for management purposes.

The main research areas of this project will be to assess the historical background of how the gelada population has changed over the years, to assess the home range and spatial behaviour of the geladas in the different areas and to look at the impact of human pressure on the population distribution.

In addition, social behaviour analysis will be conducted, looking at aggression and conflict behaviour, competition over food, and play activities between juveniles, as these “play units” represent the social bridge connecting subjects belonging to different one-male units.



**GELADAS**  
TO UNDERSTAND HUMANS,  
HERPS TO UNDERSTAND  
THEIR ENVIRONMENT

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# RED PANDA NETWORK

## Forest Guardian Sponsorship Scheme

The Red Panda Network is committed to the conservation of wild red pandas and their habitat through the education and empowerment of local communities.

Action for the Wild teams up annually with other European Zoos to support a forest guardian scheme and donated £442.52 in 2020.

A forest guardian monitors and protects red panda habitats, as well as educates communities on the importance of the species.

European zoos helped fund 15 of the Red Panda Network-supported forest guardians in 2020.

This support benefits not only the red pandas, but provides employment and development within the local community, giving them a sense of pride in protecting this endangered species, with income generated from sustainable means.

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**RED PANDA  
NETWORK**

# FISHER'S ESTUARINE MOTH BREEDING PROGRAMME

In total **26 CATERPILLARS** were placed on their feeding plant, Hogs fennel.

**11 HOGS FENNEL PLANTS** were used to feed the caterpillars in 2020.

Our keepers **CHECKED FOR MOTHS** from 8th September until 14th October every other night.

In total, **4 MOTHS** emerged; **2 MALES** and **2 FEMALES**

We had **1 PAIR**, which produced **1 BATCH OF EGGS**

The other male and female moth did not emerge at the same time to pair.

The Fisher's Estuarine Moth is a rare and highly threatened species. The main stronghold for the species is the Walton Backwaters area of the North Essex coast, where the majority of the population is found at Skipper's Island. This key site for the moth is severely threatened by flooding, as a consequence of sea level rise and deteriorating sea walls.

ACTION FOR THE WILD donates technical assistance to support this programme via an offshow area to promote the captive breeding of this species.



In Spring 2020, 8 egg batches from our 2019 breeding programme were put out at the National Trust's Copt Hall. These eggs are released into newly-created habitat sites around Essex to ensure the long-term survival of this species.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Batches of eggs	5	10	5	10	6	4
Number of caterpillars emerged	48	60	33	60	62	26
Number of caterpillars put on each net / new sites	1 to 2	1 to 3	2	up to 4	1- 4	2-3
Number of moths emerged	11 (6.5)	15 (9.6)	5 (3.2)	14 (6.8)	12 (7.5)	4
Number of pairs formed	8	5	2	6	6	1
Number of pairs laid	7	5	1	5	6	1
Number of egg batches laid	14	27	3	23	11	3

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THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

## MORE INFORMATION

If you would like further details on the charities supported through Action for the Wild, please visit:

[www.actionforthewild.org](http://www.actionforthewild.org)

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If you would like to know more about becoming an intern on our UmPhafa Nature Reserve in South Africa, please visit:

[www.umphafa.org](http://www.umphafa.org)

  
**UMPHAFa**  
*Private Nature Reserve*

To find out more about adopting an animal or our animal experiences, please visit:

[www.colchesterzoo.org](http://www.colchesterzoo.org)

**COLCHESTER  
ZOO**  
*Action for the Wild*