

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**ACTION
FOR THE
WILD**

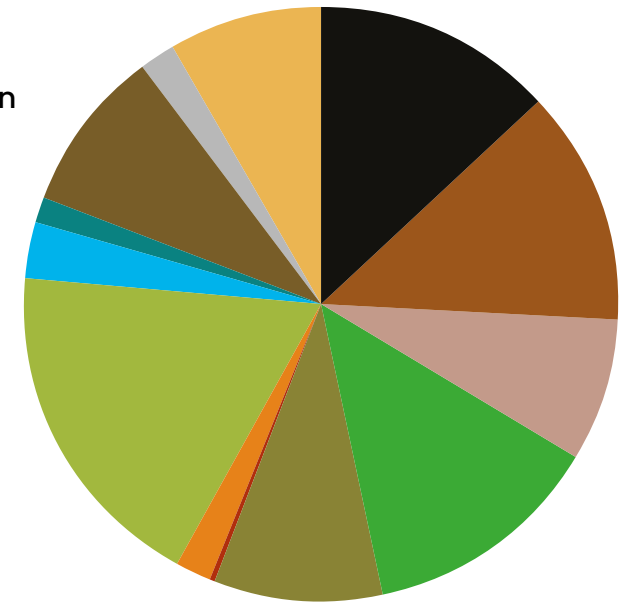
Charity No. 1105621

FUNDING TO COLCHESTER ZOO'S ACTION FOR THE WILD PROJECTS

Action for the Wild provides both financial and technical assistance to global conservation projects, aims to raise awareness among local people in community conservation programmes and supports conservation research. The money Action for the Wild receives is split every year between the numerous projects our charity supports.

In 2022, £322,070.53 was given to the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve

and the remaining funds were distributed as follows:



- Save the Rhino - £7,125
- Orangutan Foundation - £7,000
- VulPro - £4,287.92
- Free the Bears - £7,000
- The Centre de Rehabilitation des Primates de Lwiro - £5,000
- Red Panda Network - £214.06
- Komodo Survival Programme - £885.98
- Elephant Orphanage Project - £10,000
- AEECL Lemur Conservation - £1,712.48
- E.A.Z.A. Leopard Project - £629.63
- International Otter Survival Fund - £4,910
- HelpSimus - £1,035
- Yellow-breasted Capuchin Monkey Conservation Programme - £4,486.65

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UMPHAFA PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE



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 2022, Action for the Wild donated £322,070.53 to ensure the continued running of the reserve; from employing field rangers, maintenance and intern staff to ensuring continued protection of our wildlife species, as well as giving the opportunity for interns to be educated about life on a reserve.

2022 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		

KEY EVENTS ON THE RESERVE

January

- A new workshop was installed to protect the vehicles on the northern side of the Reserve, as well as a small workshop to store equipment and tools.
- Improvements were made to the rondavel at the Sully intern accommodation, making it liveable, and a new bathroom was installed.

March

- 2 female Wild Dogs arrived, which eventually left in May, going to Lapalala Reserve, near Limpopo, to start a new pack.
- A rogue Leopard was captured in the community with UmPhafa's help and moved to Phinda, a reserve in Zululand.
- 2 new drones were purchased to help combat poaching incursions.

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 **UMPHAFA**
Private Nature Reserve



KEY EVENTS ON THE RESERVE

April

- Female Rhino, Ambalo, gave birth to a healthy male calf.
- The Reserve joined the Game Ranger Association to provide insurance in case our field rangers are injured in the line of duty.

May

- 80 Blesbok were released.
- The management team received training on the new C'more App, which focuses on the security of the Reserve.
- We employed 5 ladies from the community who collected over 800kgs in pecan nuts, which were sold.

June

- 11 Bushbuck were released.
- Bees were removed from the lodge and old tennis courts at Elworthy as they were becoming a danger to the team. They were relocated with the help of Bushveld Bees.
- We won a BIAZA Conservation Award for 'work in conservation in the field' for the Wild Dogs we looked after in 2021. We bonded these Wild Dogs and they eventually went to Malawi. Unfortunately, in November, they were killed by poachers when their waterhole was poisoned.
- Jim Green Shoes sponsored 12 pairs of field ranger boots for our rangers.

July

- Fire breaks were completed and block burns started.

August

- The research work continued on the study of the African Mottled Eel lifestyle and dispersal in the Tugela River, with studies finishing in October.
- A new solar pump was installed at the energiser field to feed water from the Tugela River to one of the main dams, saving on daily electricity costs.



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 **UMPHAFA**
Private Nature Reserve

KEY EVENTS ON THE RESERVE

August *continued...*

- We employed 5 ladies from the community to collect thatch for us for use on the bushcamp roof, which was completed in December.

September

- A new diesel tank was installed on the north section of the Reserve to avoid using excessive diesel at Elworthy.
- With the threat of foot & mouth reaching the Reserve, 4-wheel washes were built at the main gates.

October

- Contact was made with the Giraffe Conservation Foundation who carry out research all over Africa and are the only NGO that concentrates solely on the conservation and management of Giraffe in Africa. In 2023 they will be coming to perform an assessment of Giraffe on UmPhafa, and those in the local area, to establish numbers and species.
- Archaeologists visited the Reserve to study Iron Age ruins on part of UmPhafa; Vertrek.

November

- Improvements made to the ranger cottage were completed on the northern side of the Reserve.

December

- 2 male Wild Dogs joined us from Somkhanda Reserve; they will eventually be moving on in 2023.
- Blue Crane chicks have been spotted on UmPhafa, which we believe is a first for us.

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Private Nature Reserve



We hosted 67 interns this year, including Writtle University College and East Coast College, and also hosted 39 students from KZN University who came to do their practical soil studies. Howick Children's Home sent 11 children with their tutor to study tracks and signs to give them an idea of a different career path in the future. We gave waste management lessons to a local school and the top 17 learners visited the reserve for game drives.

2022 saw a record amount of rain (1,212mm) on UmPhafa since the recording of rain statistics began in 1959.

Poaching continues to be an issue, with a total of 419m of fence stolen, 49 animals taken, 153 incursion attempts, 13 snares removed and 97 instances of trespassing by poachers, with or without dogs. Despite this, there has been an increase of 490 animals present on the reserve throughout the year, with Impala, Wildebeest and Zebra all doing well. The babies came later in 2022 with some only just arriving in late December, which is unusual.

We recorded 9 new species on the reserve, ranging from dragonflies and birds to insects and plants.

In 2023, the team shall again be hosting interns to help with the Reserve management tasks and focusing their efforts on protecting species, bringing in new animal genes and hopefully maximising bulk grazing animals. Following on from the rains of 2022, energy will be aimed at repairing fences and roads, carrying out more bush clearing sessions and reducing the number of alien plants on the Reserve.

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Private Nature Reserve

FISHER'S ESTUARINE MOTH BREEDING PROGRAMME

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.

Colchester Zoo and Action for the Wild donate technical assistance to support this programme via an off-show area to promote the captive breeding of this species. We also assist with surveying newly created habitats looking for signs of caterpillar feeding and condition of Hog's Fennel plants; this moth species is completely reliant on this plant as its sole larval food, a plant species which itself is also threatened.

In 2022, poor batches of eggs meant that no larvae hatched over the usual period, therefore our keepers put all eggs out into the breeding cages in case of late larval hatching. Some limited evidence of feeding signs were seen and 5 Moths emerged. 7 Moths were collected from Copt Hall to pair with unpaired captive individuals, with 10/11 decent sets of eggs produced.

Some of these eggs will serve to continue the breeding programme in 2023, whilst surplus will be released into newly-created habitat sites around Essex to ensure the long-term survival of this species.

As the majority of the newly-created habitat sites have now been colonised, the captive breeding programme is reaching its final stages as its initial aims and objectives to provide moths for release into new habitats have been achieved.



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SAVE THE RHINO INTERNATIONAL

Sadly, national parks in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal Province (KZN) were hit hard by Rhino poaching gangs in 2022.

The majority of these devastating poaching incidents have been recorded in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi National Park (HiP), an important stronghold for Black and White Rhinoceroses.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £7,125 towards the purchase of vital equipment for extended camping kits. Extended patrol kit items include tents, backpacks, sleeping bags and cooking equipment.

This equipment allows rangers to camp for extended times at short notice in areas frequented by poaching syndicates; to assist early detection of poachers and increase the chance of saving the life of Rhino in the field.

The extended patrols help to maximise anti-poaching effectiveness, enabling rangers to remain within detection zones/hot spots for longer periods. The equipment is carried in patrol members' backpacks and the team remains totally self-sufficient.

The superior quality of the kit will result in more effective patrols for the rangers who will be working under extremely tough conditions. This will enable them to remain alert and will also increase the amount of time for which they will be able to be deployed.

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ORANGUTAN FOUNDATION

The Orangutan Foundation is working to save Orangutans by protecting their tropical forest habitat, working with local communities, and promoting research and education.

The Orangutan Foundation operates five Orangutan post-release monitoring camps within the Lamandau Wildlife Reserve, a reserve spanning almost 160,000 acres in Indonesian Borneo. At these camps, field teams care for orphaned Orangutans in a soft release programme and continuously monitor Orangutans in surrounding forest.

The young Orangutans in the soft-release programme learn forest skills necessary for life in the wild, and once fully prepared are ready for release.

From time to time, situations arise where the team help with the rescue and translocation of Orangutans stranded in threatened areas, such as community land and fragmented sections of forest. Veterinary assistance ensures the highest welfare standards are available to expertly treat these orangutans straight away before release into the Lamandau Wildlife Reserve.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £7,000 for the vet's annual salary to provide critical veterinary aid, contributing towards the cost of Orangutan monitoring in the forest and providing equipment for a new veterinary clinic in Pangkalan Bun, essential for wildlife rescues and translocations.



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VULPRO

African Vultures are some of the most threatened species on the planet with some populations having declined by over 80% in the last three decades. VulPro is working to halt this decline of vultures throughout Africa.

Part of the work that VulPro has been partaking in for many years is in-situ, breeding population monitoring, including African White-backed Vulture (*Gyps africanus*) breeding surveys. These surveys include walked transects of nesting sites, gathering data to aid the understanding of breeding success and what factors might be driving this success, as well as nest site selection. These data are important to understand which sites to protect in order to conserve these birds.

Nest sites are repeatedly surveyed at the beginning of every breeding season (between May and June 2023) and again at the end of the breeding season (between September and October 2023). This allows for a record of how many nests are active at the beginning of the season and how many at the end, providing a measure of breeding success. During each of these surveys, new nests and their variables are also recorded.

During 2022, VulPro monitored six Cape Vulture colonies across the northern parts of South Africa. A total of 2,036 active nests were observed during the initial survey. Furthermore, the African White-backed Vulture tree nesting survey efforts covered a total of three areas, comprising 23 properties and 187 active nests.

VulPro's cliff monitoring, which focuses on the northern parts of the Cape Vulture population, is home to approximately 50 to 60% of the entire breeding population. Each of the six colonies monitored have shown a slight increase in the number of breeding pairs. Between the three African White-backed Vulture sites, the breeding success rate ranged between 69 and 74%.

Comparison of annual monitoring results is critical as all African Vulture species continue to rapidly decline across their ranges.

Action for the Wild donated £4,287.92 in 2022 to enable the researchers to stay near the field sites to conduct the monitoring and to purchase the necessary equipment for the survey work.



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FREE THE BEARS

Free the Bears (FTB) 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 2022, Action for the Wild donated £7,000 to install solar powered lights and improve water sustainability at the Luang Prabang Wildlife Sanctuary. This helps to alleviate concerns over security and water supply provision, through the purchase of solar-powered water pumps to recycle Bear pool water and reduce consumption during the dry season.

With 21 Bears rescued across Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam in 2022 (many of them young cubs), work has continued on the development of new Bear houses, with Bear House 7 opening for a pair of Moon Bears, and building work commencing for Bear House 8 in order to house the rapidly-growing cubs in the nursery.

In 2022, more than 50 Bear health checks took place and FTB's animal care teams benefited from further training in animal welfare thanks to a joint programme with Wild Welfare. Programme managers from each sanctuary got together for a series of meetings on construction design, staff training and general strategy for the coming years, typically coinciding with the rescue of Bears in all three sanctuary countries; only the second time in FTB's history that they've had rescues in all three countries in the same week.

2022 saw a number of milestones in the fight to end the practice of Bear bile farming, with South Korea formally announcing a commitment to ending the practice by the end of 2025, and the number of rescued Bears in sanctuaries across Laos and Vietnam outnumbering the number of Bears remaining in bile farms for the first time in almost two decades.



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CENTRE DE RÉHABILITATION DES PRIMATES DE LWIRO

The Centre de Rehabilitation des Primates de Lwiro (CRPL) works to care for and rehabilitate orphaned primates.

Since 2002, the centre has rescued 128 Chimpanzees, most confiscated from poachers as a by-catch of bushmeat hunting.

The CRPL offers a permanent solution for the increasing number of orphaned great apes confiscated around Kahuzi-Biega National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £5,000 to provide the 288 animals in the care of the CRPL with a high standard of nutrition.

Action for the Wild's 2022 donation was used to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for CRPL's primates and parrots for 7 weeks in the period June 2022 to July 2022.

This funding helps local communities, as the sanctuary buys all the food from local markets, helping them to see the benefits of having the sanctuary in their village and increasing their acceptance of conservation. By assisting with the running costs, CRPL can continue to receive confiscated animals and contribute to Congolese law in protecting these primates from poaching and the pet trade.

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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.

After a decade of developing a community-based Red Panda conservation approach in three districts in eastern Nepal and 7 districts in western Nepal, the Red Panda Network expanded to three new districts in eastern Nepal in 2022. The project works in 75 community forests (CFs) of these 13 Red Panda range districts (out of 25) in Nepal.

Action for the Wild teams up annually with other European Zoos to support the Forest Guardianship Scheme and donated £214.06 in 2022. A forest guardian monitors and protects Red Panda habitats, as well as educates communities on the importance of the species.

The forest guardian team has grown to over 100 members and will continue to increase with recruitments in the 3 new districts of eastern Nepal. Since 2014, Action for the Wild has worked with other European zoos to sponsor up to 15 forest guardians.

The funds are used for capacity and skill-building training, supporting children and siblings with education scholarships, distributing improved cooking stoves, and providing guardians with field gear and monitoring equipment. All forest guardians receive training on community-based red panda monitoring and anti-poaching patrolling which includes training on camera trap handling, installation, and data management to enable them to monitor their Red Panda monitoring blocks on a quarterly basis, conduct bi-annual anti-poaching patrolling, install camera traps and establish new monitoring blocks.

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.



The logo for Action for the Wild, consisting of the words "ACTION FOR THE WILD" in a white, stylized, hand-drawn font, arranged in four lines, set against a red circular background.

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KOMODO SURVIVAL PROGRAM

The Komodo Survival Program aims to protect and monitor Komodo Dragons and their habitat with the involvement of the local community.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £885.98 to support this project.

In 2022, a new five year cooperation agreement was signed focusing on strengthening monitoring and conservation in Komodo Dragon distribution areas beyond protected areas on Flores Island. Capacity building of staff, stakeholder engagement, community awareness and education programmes for local communities are the priority agenda for the next five years.

In 2022, a Komodo Dragon population monitoring programme was conducted on Longos Island on western Flores and Ontoloe Island on northern Flores. Camera trapping was carried out to monitor the long-term population trends and live trapping to observe the Komodo Dragon demographics and body size on the small island populations. Twenty and thirteen camera trapping locations were used on Longos Island and Ontoloe Island, respectively.

Morphological measurements, such as head length, head width, total body length, snout to vent length (SVL), weight etc., were taken from each Dragon caught and newly captured Dragons were fitted with a transponder to mark and identify each individual. Four Dragons were caught on each island.

The monitoring results were disseminated to heads of villages and local community members to increase local community awareness and encourage their involvement in Komodo Dragon conservation efforts beyond protected areas.

Throughout the rest of 2022, Komodo Dragon population monitoring was conducted at Wae Wuul Nature Reserve, training was conducted for local community patrol members on the SMART Patrol application for better patrolling activities and planning, and the SMART Patrol application was implemented in the local community patrol activities at Torong Padang.



ELEPHANT ORPHANAGE PROJECT

The Elephant Orphanage Project (EOP) is working to rescue, rehabilitate and release orphaned Elephants as a direct result of poaching.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £10,000 to help provide food and medical treatment for the orphans and to support the wage of one of the Elephant caregivers, Aaron, who has worked at the project since 2012.

At the end of 2022, a total of 25 orphans were under the Elephant Orphanage Project's care or monitoring spanning the six stages of release, with 2 new rescues over the year. The youngest, Chikumbi, was rescued from Rufunsa, which has always been a hotspot for orphans, and has now seen 16 orphan rescues since the EOP's inception.

The project has two camps; Lilayi Elephant Nursery where keepers provide constant care and feeding for 5 young orphans, and the Kafue Release Facility, where 13 orphans that need less time with humans are prepared for release back into the wild, but come back to the protective boma overnight.

A further 7 orphans move freely within Kafue National Park; 5 of these spend nights outside the boma, but do return on occasions to join the orphan herd, and 2 live in the wild full time.

2022 saw orphan matriarch Chamilandu finally leave the security of the release facility to form a wild based herd with her calf, Mutaanzi, and age mates, Tafika, Mosi and Rufunsa. They have been seen moving comfortably amongst wild Kafue herds.

Much of 2022 was absorbed with rebuilding a new home for the Elephant orphans in Lusaka National Park and to create an education and awareness space that really will shape the future of conservation through our future generations.

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LEMUR CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION (AEECL)

The AEECL aims to advance the understanding and conservation of Madagascar's Lemur population through scientific research, captive propagation and protection of their natural habitat.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated its £1,712.48 membership fee to support the work of AEECL

The Sahamalaza region in Madagascar has been the AEECL's focus of scientific and conservation interest since 1988. The AEECL 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.

In 2022, AEECL undertook a range of activities such as forest monitoring; reforestation of 150 bags of mangrove propagules in the village of Antafiatabalaka and 30,000 young plants over an area of 20 ha in Mahialambo Rural Commune Ampandriakilandy Antsohihy; subsidised 78 teachers; met secondary school students who receive an AEECL grant to provide encouragement in advance of their national exams and pledged to give more scholarships for the five best students who want to pursue university studies; and took part in various celebration days, such as World Environment Day, and a workshop to create a Protected Areas Manager Platform for the Sofia Region.

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



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E.A.Z.A. AMUR LEOPARD PROJECT

The Amur Leopard European Ex Situ Programme (EEP) has initiated a lab-based project looking for identifiers of melanism in the Amur Leopard captive population.

The aim is to test a total of about 70 Leopards for now, with samples of whole blood and hair containing the follicle analysed at the EAZA Biobank in Edinburgh.

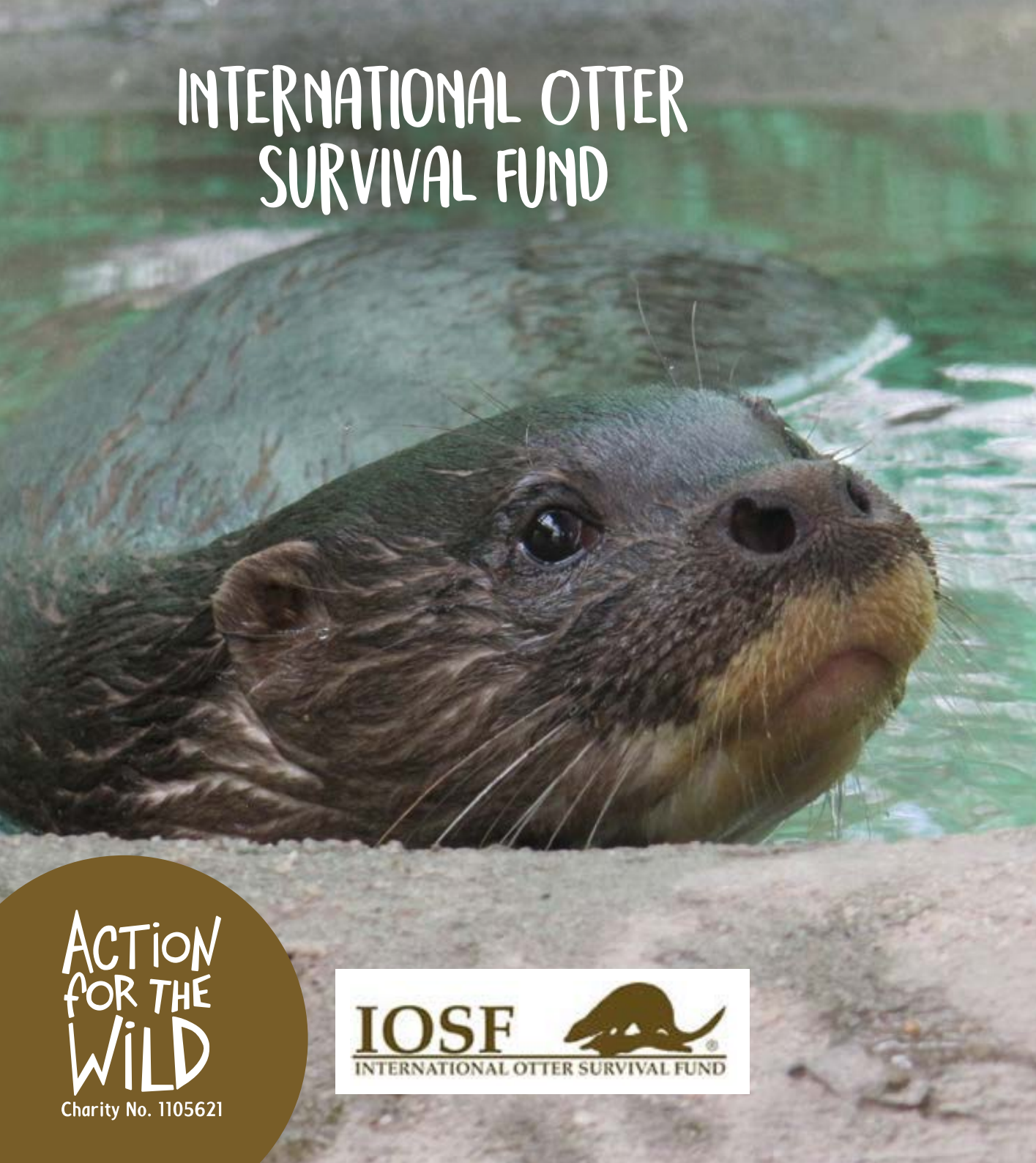
All western EEP holders were asked to donate to get the study started and, in 2022, Action for the Wild donated £629.63 so the lab could buy the consumables.

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INTERNATIONAL OTTER SURVIVAL FUND



The International Otter Survival Fund is working to provide a series of capacity building workshops to train conservationists, government officials and other similar stakeholders to engage with Otters, demonstrate techniques in education, research, dealing with threats and other similar conservation issues.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £4,910 to the International Otter Survival Fund to help run their sixth Asian (eighth in total) workshop, this time in Malaysia. Previous workshops have been held in Cambodia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, China, Lao PDR, Tanzania and Guyana.

During the Malaysian workshop, IOSF partnered with the Malaysia Nature Society (MNS) and Malaysian Otter Network (MON). The workshop was held at Kuala Selangor Nature Park, which is a protected area in the Selangor region of Peninsula Malaysia.

In Asia there are very few scientists working on otters and their habitats. Following this series of International Otter Survival Fund workshops, work is now ongoing in communities, through country networks linked together by the Asian Otter Conservation Network.

During the Malaysian workshop, 71 attendees took part, either in person or virtually through Zoom sessions. The workshop covered topics such as global otter conservation, surveying techniques, education and illegal trade issues.

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IOSF

INTERNATIONAL OTTER SURVIVAL FUND



HELPSIMUS

Helpsimus works to protect the Greater Bamboo Lemur in Madagascar through the Bamboo Lemur Programme, which combines scientific monitoring of the species, protecting its habitat, supporting the development of the nearby villages and financing the education of local children.

The Greater Bamboo Lemur is one of the most threatened Lemurs of Madagascar. Helpsimus is based close to the National Park of Ranomafana, but in an unprotected zone, located at the heart of the agricultural land of several villages inhabited by the largest wild population of Greater Bamboo Lemurs (almost 600 specimens).

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £1,035 to Helpsimus to deliver its conservation activities.

Three components make up Helpsimus' strategy: an environmental component to identify the priority conservation areas on the programme site, improving knowledge about the eco-ethology of the species and working on resolving human/lemur conflicts; a socio-economic component to improve the standard of living of the local populations by helping to secure the products of their harvest and improving yields, developing new revenue generating activities, building infrastructure and means of communication, and implementing better hygiene practices to improve the health of the communities, and an educational component to improve awareness among local communities, and facilitate access to education for the children from villages involved in the project.

Over 660 children and their teachers benefit from the school canteens in the programme's 5 schools and the project now follows 23 groups of Lemurs: 14 groups of Greater Bamboo Lemurs, 4 groups of Red-bellied Lemurs, 2 groups of Ranomafana Bamboo Lemurs and 3 groups of Peyrieras' Woolly Lemurs. Almost 640 Lemurs are in this way protected directly by Helpsimus.



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YELLOW-BREADED CAPUCHIN MONKEY CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

The Yellow-breasted Capuchin Monkey is a primate species ranked as critically endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

In 2002–2005, a survey was conducted of the remaining populations of Yellow-breasted Capuchin Monkeys to establish the status of the species and to precisely identify the threats to its survival. To add to this survey, a comparative ecological study was needed in the western part of the Capuchins' distribution, where populations seem to be scarcer and inhabit very different and harsher environments, such as the dry forests and open scrub.

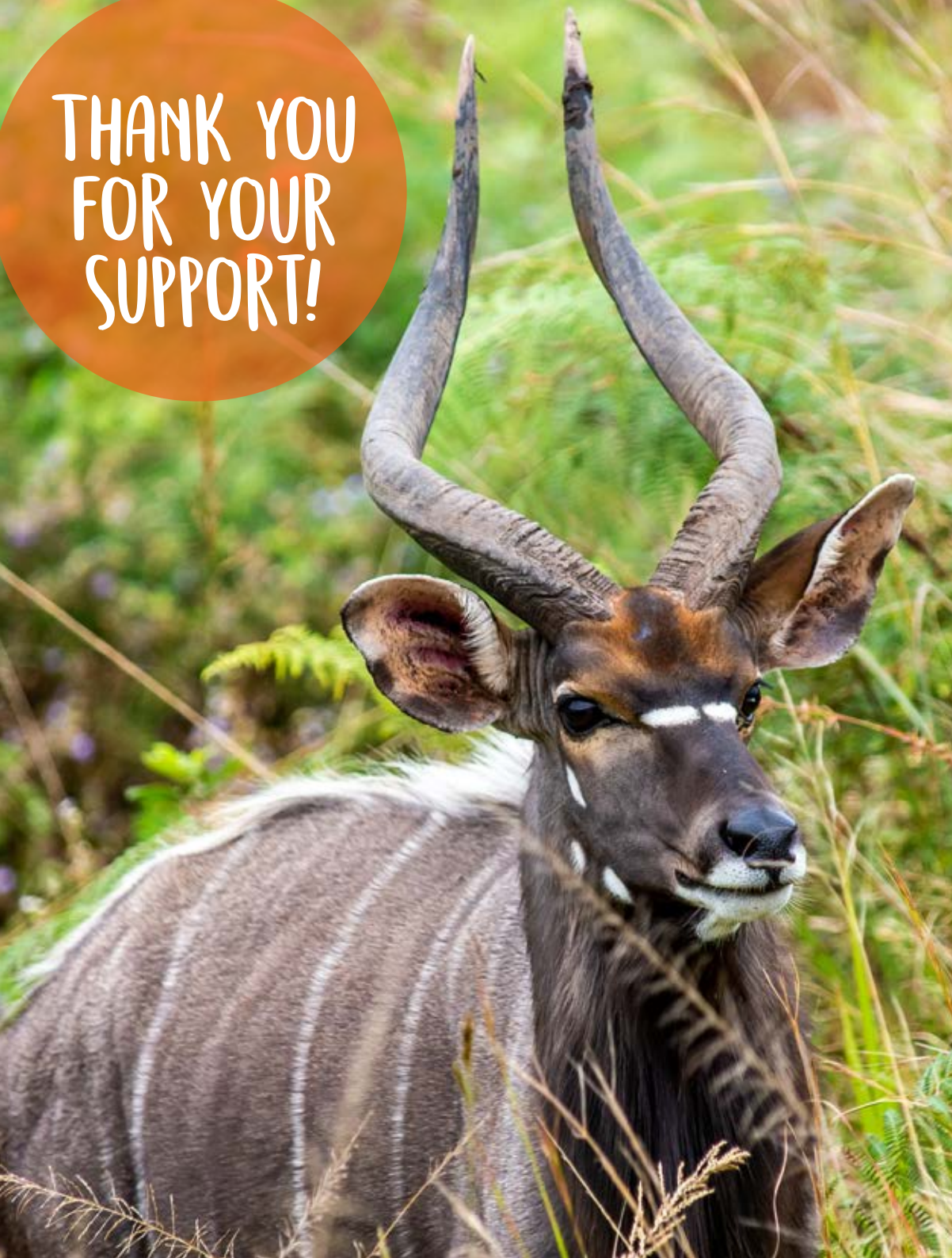
This aspect of the project started in 2014 to fill knowledge gaps regarding the conservation status and the biological peculiarities of the western population, providing information on activity budgets, the pattern of exploitation of the home range, and how seasonal variations affect behaviour, ecology, and social structure of the species in harsh environments. This will make it possible to compare the two environments (humid forest and dry forest) where Yellow Breasted Capuchin Monkey survive.

In 2022, Action for the Wild donated £4,486.65 to this project to support the researcher's car maintenance and fuel costs when working in the field studying the Capuchins and to provide extra drone batteries to extend the search time for the Monkeys in the forest. A drone with a thermal camera is used to assist in the search for the monkeys and increase the number of encounters with them, thus reducing the time spent for its habituation.

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THANK YOU
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MORE INFORMATION

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

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



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

www.colchesterzoo.org

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