

# 120 YEARS A CONSERVATION LEGACY

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Wildlife Conservation Society

**WCS**

SAVING WILDLIFE AND WILD PLACES

# 1890s



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**1894** Theodore Roosevelt, as Boone and Crockett Club president, appoints committee asking New York State to establish zoological society in New York City.

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**1895** New York Zoological Society (NYZS) is founded.

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**1896** New York Aquarium established at Manhattan's Castle Clinton, in present-day Battery Park.

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**1897** A.J. Stone travels across the Arctic for two years on behalf of NYZS and the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), studying the geographic distribution of animals and investigating native people there.

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**1899** The Bronx Zoo (formally, The New York Zoological Park) officially opens under the leadership of founding Director William Hornaday. **IMAGE ABOVE**

# 1900s



**1900** With the backing of NYZS leadership, the Lacey Act passes, prohibiting trade in wildlife, fish, and plants that have been illegally taken, possessed, transported, or sold.

**1901** Bronx Zoo establishes first veterinary department at a U.S. zoological park.

**1902** NYZS takes over management of New York Aquarium under the direction of Charles Haskins Townsend. **IMAGE BELOW**

**1907** American Bison Society begins the transfer of Bronx Zoo bison to protected lands in American West to restore decimated populations of this species. **IMAGE LEFT**



# 1910s



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**1911** The Fur Seal Treaty of 1911—signed by the U.S., Great Britain, Japan, and Russia, and promoted by William Hornaday's campaigns to protect the northern fur seal—becomes the first international treaty to address wildlife conservation.

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**1913** Bronx Zoo director William Hornaday helps write language in the 1913 Tariff Act, prohibiting importation of bird plumage for use in hats. **IMAGE LEFT**

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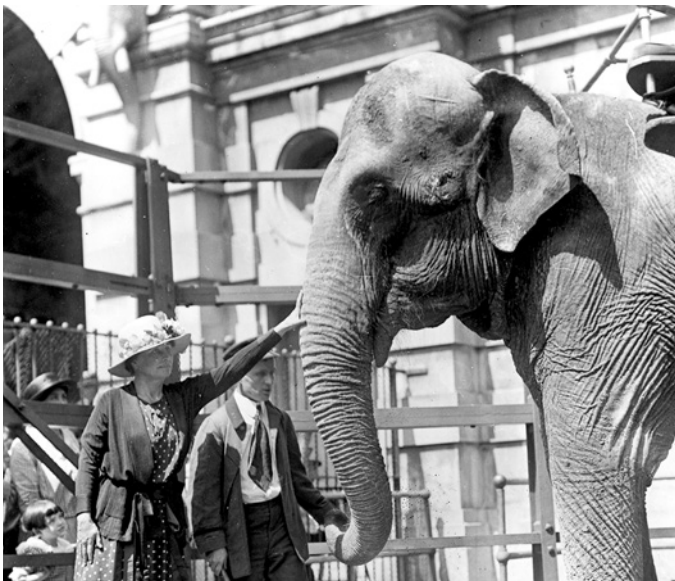
**1916** Bronx Zoo Curator of Birds William Beebe opens a tropical research station in British Guiana (now Guyana) and soon begins NYZS's Department of Tropical Research.

A fully-equipped animal hospital takes the place of the Bronx Zoo's previous makeshift clinic; Dr. Reid Blair serves as the Bronx Zoo's first veterinarian. **IMAGE BELOW**





# 1920s



**1922** Helen Keller visits the Bronx Zoo.

IMAGE ABOVE

**1924** Congress passes new code of game laws for Alaska as a result of NYZS advocacy.

**1928** In an effort to save the Galápagos tortoise from extinction, Charles Townsend collects different species from Ecuador and transports them to zoos in the U.S., Australia, Bermuda, and Panama. First-generation offspring of those tortoises survive today at the Bronx Zoo's World of Reptiles. IMAGE RIGHT

**1929** NYZS passes resolution to oppose introduction of non-native animals in U.S. national parks and urges National Park Service to prohibit all such introductions.

Following more than ten years of campaigning by Hornaday and other NYZS officers, the Migratory Bird Conservation Act passes.

Bronx Zoo opens its first wildlife education department, teaching zoology, conservation, and natural history to visitors and students.



# 1930s

**1930** NYZS officers head campaign against misguided slaughter of thousands of hoofed mammals in Zululand, South Africa to eradicate the tsetse fly.

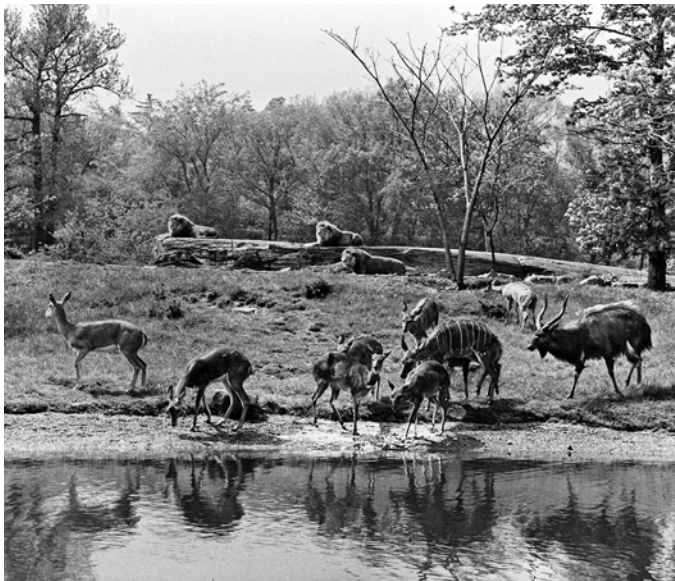
NYZS Department of Tropical Research distinguishes itself through the inclusion of several women scientists—including newly hired zoologist Jocelyn Crane—and artists in a field dominated by men. **IMAGE BELOW**

**1931** NYZS analysis of whaling logs illustrates range and seasonal migrations of whales and becomes foundation of later cetacean conservation work. **IMAGE RIGHT**

**1934** Bronx Zoo Curator William Beebe completes record-setting 3,028-foot dive in Bathysphere off Bermuda coast.



# 1940s



**1941** With the opening of its African Plains exhibit, the Bronx Zoo begins grouping animals by landscape rather than taxonomic order (big cats, primates, etc.), with prey and predator species separated by protective moats. **IMAGE ABOVE**

Bronx Zoo Children's Zoo opens **IMAGE RIGHT**

**1946** NYZS establishes Jackson Hole Wildlife Park to exhibit Rocky Mountain fauna. It becomes part of Grand Teton National Park in 1962.

**1948** The Conservation Foundation is founded to handle NYZS's ever-expanding conservation program. Foundation later fledges as a free-standing entity.

Conservation Foundation & NYZS identify effects of pesticides on animals 14 years before publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*.

NYZS president Fairfield Osborn writes *Our Plundered Planet*, calling attention to environmental destruction by humankind.



# 1950s

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**1952** NYZS supports research by A. Starker Leopold and Frank Fraser Darling on wildlife conditions in Alaska, focusing on forest destruction, overgrazing, and protection of wolves.

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**1956** NYZS supports expedition to southern slope of Alaska's Brooks Range by Olaus and Margaret Murie, joined by a young researcher named George Schaller. They later successfully urge Congress to create Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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**1957** New York Aquarium opens in Coney Island, moving from original Manhattan location after 16-year hiatus. **IMAGE BELOW**



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**1959** Through efforts of NYZS's Carleton Ray, world's first land and sea park is established at Exuma Cays in Bahamas.

Accompanied by his wife, Kay (pictured in gorilla nest), NYZS wildlife biologist George Schaller conducts first ecological study of mountain gorillas in Virunga Volcano landscape. **IMAGE ABOVE**





# 1960s



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**1960** NYZS surveys and conservation proposals for James's flamingos lead to establishment of Laguna Colorada Reserve in Bolivia. **IMAGE ABOVE**

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**1965** NYZS wildlife biologist George Schaller conducts first ecological and behavioral study of Serengeti lions.

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**1966** NYZS establishes Institute of Research in Animal Behavior at Rockefeller University that professionalizes conservation work and gives home to leading scientists in the field.

NYZS wildlife biologist Thomas Struhsaker begins groundbreaking study of primate community within Uganda's Kibale Forest, beginning an association with wildlife conservation and scholarship in Uganda that continues today.

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**1967** NYZS supports Iain Douglas-Hamilton's ecological survey of elephant population in Tanzania's Manyara National Park.

Dian Fossey continues George Schaller's work on mountain gorillas with NYZS support.

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**1969** Conservation work in Argentina between 1960-1969 helps create six coastal reserves, including Punta Tombo and Península Valdés. **IMAGE BELOW**

Bronx Zoo World of Darkness opens; first zoo exhibit to feature nocturnal animals on a reverse light cycle.

# 1970s



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**1970** Recording of humpback whale communications by NYZS wildlife biologist Roger Payne generates wave of public interest in these mammals and contributes to movement to ban commercial whaling.

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**1972** Bronx Zoo World of Birds opens; revolutionizes how bird species are housed and exhibited. **IMAGE BELOW**



New York City's first native-born gorilla, Pattycake, is delivered at what will become NYZS's Central Park Zoo.

**IMAGE ABOVE**

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**1973** NYZS studies of field ecology and animal behavior help guide management of Kenya's Amboseli protected area

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**1977** 43-acre Wild Asia and Monorail exhibit opens at Bronx Zoo.

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**1979** NYZS-supported Amy Vedder and Bill Weber establish world's first wild gorilla tourism program in Rwanda's Virunga Volcanoes.

# 1980s



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**1980** NYZS wildlife biologist George Schaller begins long-term study of giant panda in China's Wolong Natural Reserve.

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**1981** Bronx Zoo becomes first to perform embryo transfer from gaur to domestic cow.

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**1984** NYZS helps create world's first jaguar reserve, in Belize's Cockscomb Basin.

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**1985** NYZS establishes Wildlife Health Center, one of the first modern zoo hospitals, at Bronx Zoo.

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JungleWorld opens at the Bronx Zoo.



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**1987** NYZS design and animal departments work on master plan for Kenya Wildlife Service Nairobi Safari Walk. **IMAGE ABOVE**

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**1988** Under contract to NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, NYZS assumes management of (and redesigns) New York City zoos. Central Park Zoo becomes one of NYZS's wildlife parks in 1988, followed by Queens Zoo in 1992 and Prospect Park Zoo in 1993. **IMAGE BELOW LEFT**

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**1989** NYZS elephant research and advocacy contributes to international ban on ivory trade.

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In heart of Brazil's flooded forest, NYZS launches Mamirauá Lake Ecological Station, which becomes Brazil's first Sustainable Development Reserve.

NYZS initiates first ever zoo-based field veterinary program.

# 1990s



**1992** Work by NYZS staff helps establish 5,300-square-mile Okapi Wildlife Reserve in present-day Democratic Republic of Congo. The okapis at WCS's Bronx Zoo help to raise awareness of this unique and endangered species. **IMAGE BELOW RIGHT**

**1993** Under the leadership of President and General Director William Conway, the New York Zoological Society changes its name to the Wildlife Conservation Society.

**1995** NYZS leads effort to establish Madidi National Park and Kaa-Iya del Gran Chaco National Park in Bolivia. Latter is first such area in Americas initiated by indigenous group.

**1998** WCS becomes first conservation group to work in Cambodia after fall of Khmer Rouge.

**1999** WCS wildlife biologist Mike Fay completes 1,200-mile megatranssect walk across Congo Basin. **IMAGE ABOVE**

Bronx Zoo's Congo Gorilla Forest exhibit opens, raising more than \$800,000 in each successive year for Central African conservation.

WCS plays pivotal role in documenting that West Nile Virus has spread to Western Hemisphere for the first time.



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# 2000s

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**2002** Gabon government establishes 13 national parks in wake of Mike Fay's 1999 megatransect.

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**2003** The Bronx Zoo opens Tiger Mountain, the 7th Bronx Zoo exhibit to receive the AZA's award for exhibit excellence—more than any other AZA member zoo.

IMAGE BELOW



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**2004** WCS establishes One World-One Health to prevent disease transmission at interface of wildlife, livestock, and human communities.

With land donated by Goldman, Sachs & Co., WCS shepherds creation of 1,160-square-mile Karukinka Reserve in Chile.

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**2007** WCS-led conservation science helps define 6-fold expansion of Canada's Nahanni National Park, protecting wilderness 3 times the size of Yellowstone.

Cambodian prime minister declares Seima forests as protected area, bringing number of new protected areas declared as result of WCS's Cambodia work to four. **IMAGE RIGHT**

WCS surveys reveal that world's 2nd largest land migration survived decades of war in southern Sudan.

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**2008** WCS efforts lead to creation of first federally-designated U.S. wildlife migration corridor, the Path of the Pronghorn, to protect longest land migration in lower 48.

WCS discovers 125,000 western lowland gorillas, more than half of world's population, in Republic of Congo.

Madagascar! exhibit opens in Bronx Zoo's former Lion House.

WCS work in Patagonia leads to creation of marine protected area, Golfo San Jorge, a key habitat for Magellanic penguins.

WCS launches a partnership with Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute to conduct national elephant survey and frame national strategy for their conservation.

WCS's Center for Global Conservation, HQ for its field programs, opens at Bronx Zoo.

WCS conservationists discover nearly 6,000 Irrawaddy river dolphins, among world's rarest species of marine mammal, in freshwater mangrove system of Bangladesh.

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**2009** WCS helps establish Band-e-Amir, Afghanistan's first national park.





# 2010s



**2010** WCS policy efforts lead to protection in Alaska's National Petroleum Reserve of 170,000 acres of land vital for caribou and migratory birds.

WCS joins international effort to protect world's last remaining wild tigers.

A decade's work results in U.S. Postal Service stamp benefiting U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Multinational Species Conservation Funds.

**2012** WCS embarks on effort to protect the 25 most endangered turtle and tortoise species through propagation efforts based at the Bronx Zoo.



2,000 Kihansi spray toads bred at the Bronx & Toledo Zoos are released into former Tanzania habitat after going extinct in wild.

**IMAGE ABOVE**

New York Aquarium begins recovery from devastating impact of Hurricane Sandy.

**2013** With the slaughter of African elephants reaching 35,000 a year (96 a day), WCS establishes the 96 Elephants campaign and joins African range countries, NGO partners, and the Clinton Global Initiative in a commitment to stop the killing, stop the trafficking, and stop the demand for elephant ivory. **IMAGE ABOVE**

With the help of WCS, the Isla Pingüino Coastal Marine Park and Makenke Coastal Marine Park are established in Argentina, safeguarding marine mammals, sea birds, and other coastal species.

WCS and partners successfully press for protection of 7 species of sharks and rays at meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

**2014** New York Aquarium breaks ground for the new Ocean Wonders: Sharks! exhibit that will highlight the marine life of New York's regional waters.

Komodo Dragon and Aldabra Tortoise exhibits open at the Bronx Zoo.

WCS 96 Elephants campaign succeeds in effort to pass state ivory ban laws in New York and New Jersey.

**2015** WCS celebrates its 120th anniversary.

## THIS PAGE

The Niassa National Reserve, where WCS has been working in partnership with the Mozambique government to protect a core population of elephants.

## FRONT COVER

A mountain gorilla in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park. WCS has been studying this species since George Schaller's groundbreaking 1959 survey.

## BACK COVER

Explorer and Bronx Zoo founding bird curator William Beebe atop the Bathysphere submersible in which he completed his 1934 record-breaking dive.

## IMAGE CREDITS

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# DISCOVER·PROTECT·INSPIRE

## MISSION

WCS saves wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature.

## VISION

WCS envisions a world where wildlife thrives in healthy lands and seas, valued by societies that embrace and benefit from the diversity and integrity of life on earth.

