



CONSERVATION 2026-29 STRATEGY

OUR VISION

To be Western Australia's journey
into the natural world

OUR PURPOSE

Empowering a future where wildlife
and humanity thrive together

Foreword

Minister for the Environment, Hon Matthew Swinbourn MLC



It is my honour to present Perth Zoo's Conservation Strategy 2025-29. This is a practical and forward-looking framework that will deliver real, tangible outcomes for animals in the Zoo's care, across our State, and around the world.

Here in Western Australia, we are privileged to be home to some of the most unique and extraordinary wildlife. Globally, ecosystems are under increasing pressure, and the need for strong, coordinated conservation action has never been more urgent.

The Western Australian Government is committed to protecting and conserving our biodiversity, and Perth Zoo plays a critical role in delivering on this responsibility.

I am proud to say this Conservation Strategy sets a clear and practical roadmap for the next four years, bringing together ex-situ and in-situ conservation, veterinary science, research, education and advocacy in a focused and measurable way.

It reflects both the expertise of Perth Zoo's staff and the strength of its partnerships across government, research institutions and the broader conservation community.

The scale of the challenge is clear. At the beginning of 2025, more than 40 per cent of species in Perth Zoo's care were listed as threatened or near threatened.

Perth Zoo's evolution reflects a growing responsibility to protect and drive change for these species.

When the Zoo first opened its gates 127 years ago, its purpose was to provide a place for the community to gather. More than a century later, that purpose remains, but has expanded significantly.

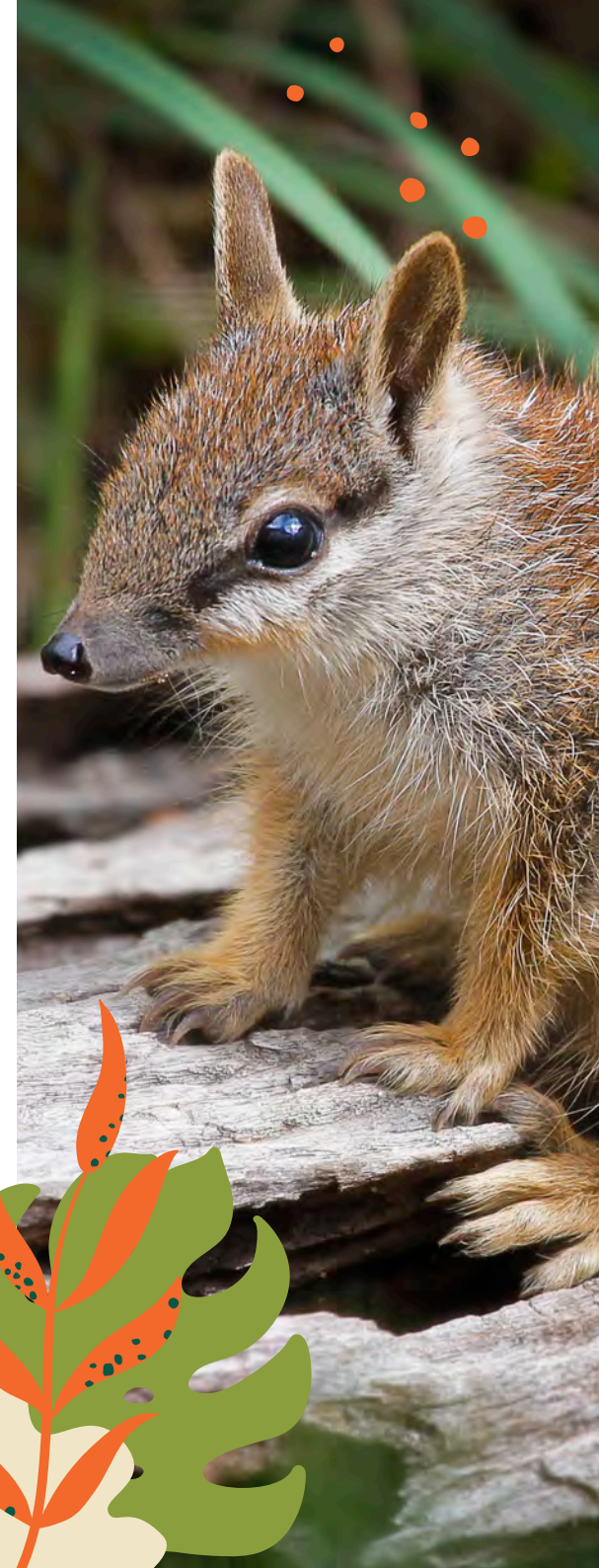
Today, as well as being a wonderful day out for families, Perth Zoo is a conservation leader, putting animal welfare first while caring for more than 1,300 animals.

It delivers species-saving breed-for-release programs, provides lifesaving veterinary care to endangered wildlife, educates more than 44,000 students each year, and inspires the community to take action for wildlife every day.

This Strategy will build on these existing achievements and drive even greater impact in the years ahead. I particularly welcome its alignment with the Perth Zoo Sustainability Strategy 2025-2029, recognising that biodiversity conservation and broader environmental sustainability must go hand in hand.

Conservation is not the responsibility of any one organisation or sector; it is a shared endeavour.

Together, we all have a role to play and with Perth Zoo at the helm, I look forward to seeing the impact of this Strategy, where Western Australia's unique wildlife not only survives, but thrives for generations to come.



Introduction

There has never been a more urgent time to act for wildlife. Around the world and here in Western Australia, species are disappearing at an alarming rate, ecosystems are under pressure, and the effects of climate change are accelerating. **Conservation is no longer optional, it is essential.**

For more than 30 years, Perth Zoo has been at the forefront of wildlife conservation. From breeding and releasing endangered native species like the Dibbler and Numbat, to providing expert veterinary care for injured Black Cockatoos and marine mammals, our work has made a tangible difference. We've partnered with researchers, government agencies, and wildlife groups to protect biodiversity both within and beyond our South Perth site. In addition, every animal at Perth Zoo has served as an ambassador for its species, helping to inspire and educate hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

This Conservation Strategy sets out our roadmap for the next three years. It defines the goals, actions, and measurable outcomes that will guide our efforts, from ex-situ breeding programs at the Zoo and in-situ recovery work, to conservation medicine, education, and advocacy.

It is a practical, achievable plan built on the expertise of our staff and the strength of our partnerships.

But more than that, it is a call to action.

We invite you, our partners, supporters, and community to join us. Together, we can shape a future where wildlife not only survives but thrives.

In parallel with this Conservation Strategy, the Perth Zoo Sustainability Strategy 2026-2029 outlines complementary aims and actions for improving sustainability outcomes for climate, education, procurement, waste and water management.

At the start of 2026, 51 of the 128 species cared for at Perth Zoo (40%) were recognised as threatened (i.e. Vulnerable, Endangered or Critically Endangered) or Near Threatened by the IUCN Red List, the Western Australian State Government and/or the Australian Federal Government. Of these 51 species, 19 (37%) met one or more of Perth Zoo's criteria to fulfill a Conservation Recovery role.



This strategy identifies five key goals:



ONE

1



**Safeguarding
species through
ex-situ
conservation**

TWO

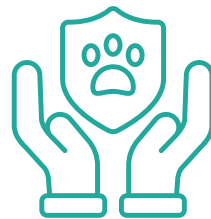
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**Restoring
wildlife in their
natural habitats**

THREE

3



**Advancing
wildlife health
and conservation
medicine**

FOUR

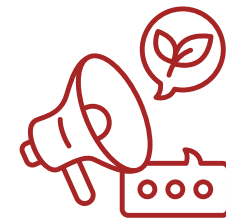
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**Inspiring and
educating wildlife
champions**

FIVE

5



**Championing
conservation
through
advocacy**

Together, we can shape a future where wildlife thrives. Perth Zoo invites partners, researchers, and the community to join us in delivering these conservation outcomes.





GOAL 1

Safeguarding species through
ex-situ conservation

Safeguarding species through ex-situ conservation

Perth Zoo plays a critical role in safeguarding Australia's most vulnerable wildlife through targeted ex-situ conservation. By maintaining genetically healthy populations and leading breed-for-release and insurance programs, we ensure species have a future beyond the Zoo. Our work supports national recovery efforts, drives innovation in husbandry and reintroduction science, and inspires public support for conservation.

Of 23 threatened species at Perth Zoo, eight are Australian native species housed as, or as part of, the ex-situ component of integrated conservation recovery programs at either the state level (Hairy Marron, White-and Orange-bellied Frogs, Western Swamp Tortoise, Western Ground Parrot, Numbat) or national level (Greater Bilby, Tasmanian Devil).

Additionally, although not currently recognised as threatened, WA provenance Little Penguins are housed as part of a small ex-situ population that may have value from a conservation perspective given the steep decline that has occurred on Penguin Island over the last two decades.

Overall, approximately 7% of species housed by Perth Zoo are part of ex-situ conservation efforts. While this is a relatively small proportion of the total number of species housed on site, these nine species collectively accounted for 483 of the approximately 1,370 individual animals (35%) housed by Perth Zoo. This reflects a significant commitment of resources to ex-situ conservation efforts.



Aim

Perth Zoo is a leader in the protection of threatened species by maintaining genetically healthy, purpose-driven ex-situ populations that directly contribute to recovery programs and inspire public support for conservation.

Actions

- 1 Expand breed-for-release and head-start programs for priority species, ensuring genetic diversity and long-term viability.
- 2 Establish insurance populations for critically endangered species with declining wild populations.
- 3 Collaborate with national and international partners to strengthen ZAA Species Management Programs and integrate global best practices.
- 4 Integrate latest scientific research into all ex-situ programs to improve husbandry, breeding success, and reintroduction outcomes.

Measurable outcomes

- 1 By 2029, Perth Zoo is successfully breeding at least six threatened species, involving more than 300 animals conceived annually.
- 2 Two new breeding programs involving threatened species have been developed and are operational.
- 3 Annual reporting demonstrates measurable contributions to at least six national and regional recovery programs.
- 4 Identify additional release sites to increase capacity for conservation efforts.



GOAL 2

Restoring wildlife in their
natural habitats

Restoring wildlife in their natural habitats

Perth Zoo is committed to supporting wildlife in wild natural habitats. Through strategic partnerships enabled by the Zoo's Wildlife Conservation Action (WCA) program, field-based recovery programs, and the release of animals bred at the Zoo, we contribute directly to the survival of species in the wild.

Our site itself is a living example of biodiversity restoration, and we actively engage communities in protecting ecosystems beyond our gates.



Aim

Eight in-situ wildlife populations are not only surviving but thriving in their natural wild habitats thanks to Perth Zoo's conservation efforts.

Actions

- 1 Increase direct support for field-based conservation projects through funding, expertise, and animal releases.
- 2 Strengthen relationships with WCA partners and other organisations to deliver measurable conservation outcomes in priority habitats.
- 3 Expand staff participation in field recovery efforts, including disease risk analysis, translocation support, and habitat restoration.
- 4 Enhance Perth Zoo's site biodiversity through native planting, habitat creation, and removal of harmful substances like Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARS).
- 5 Promote citizen science and community engagement in local conservation initiatives.

Measurable outcomes

- 1 Financial support for WCA partnerships increased by 20% by 2029.
- 2 At least 30 peer-reviewed publications or conference presentations are being produced annually by 2029, informing field conservation.
- 3 SGARS are fully eliminated from the Perth Zoo site by the end of 2026, benefitting the local wild owl population.
- 4 Endemic native plant species have increased by 25% to enhance biodiversity and sustainability on site.



GOAL 3

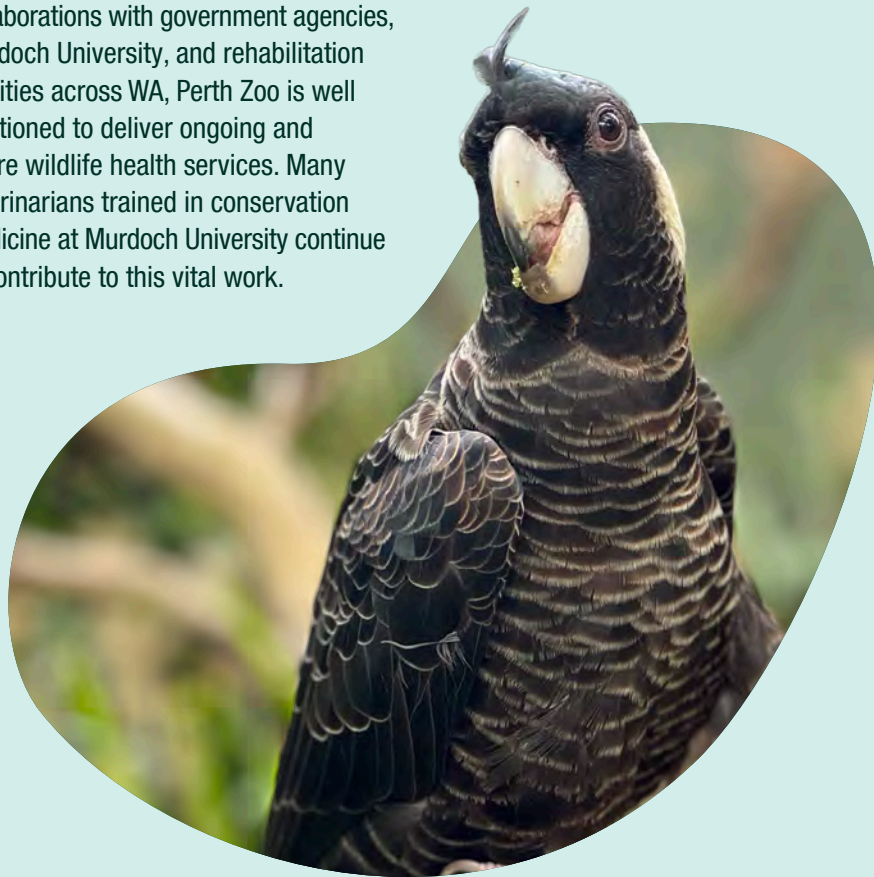
Advancing wildlife health and
conservation medicine

Advancing wildlife health and conservation medicine

Modern zoos play a vital role in wildlife emergency response and recovery, especially in the face of climate change. Perth Zoo's Veterinary Team provides specialised expertise across Western Australia's vast 2.5 million square kilometre landscape and 10,194-kilometre coastline, supporting wildlife welfare and endangered species recovery.

With decades of experience and strong collaborations with government agencies, Murdoch University, and rehabilitation facilities across WA, Perth Zoo is well positioned to deliver ongoing and future wildlife health services. Many veterinarians trained in conservation medicine at Murdoch University continue to contribute to this vital work.

Perth Zoo's Veterinary Team cares for the health of all Perth Zoo animals. It also provides specialised care for wildlife cases including Black Cockatoos, and statewide emergency wildlife veterinary response to marine mammal strandings and disease events.



Aim

Perth Zoo is recognised as Western Australia's leading centre for wildlife and zoo animal conservation medicine, delivering expert care, advancing research, and responding to wildlife emergencies across the State.

Actions

- 1 Deliver expert veterinary care, working in collaboration with government agencies and wildlife rehabilitation centres, for wildlife emergencies across WA, including marine mammal strandings and disease outbreaks.
- 2 Establish a state-of-the-art off-site wildlife hospital to increase capacity for emergency response and long-term care.
- 3 Launch a Zoo, Wildlife and Conservation veterinary residency program in partnership with Murdoch University.
- 4 Advance research in wildlife health and disease management to support recovery of threatened species.
- 5 Secure sustainable funding to expand Perth Zoo's conservation medicine services and infrastructure.

Measurable outcomes

- 1 An off-site cockatoo triage facility is operational by 2026 and supports at least 300 cases annually.
- 2 Black Cockatoo treatment success improves by 3% annually, based on discharge rates from the Veterinary Hospital.
- 3 Perth Zoo contributes to all major wildlife health investigations or emergency responses annually.
- 4 Perth Zoo and Murdoch University's veterinary residency program focused on wildlife launches in 2026, with first cohort completing Doctor of Veterinary Medical Science by 2029 year.



GOAL 4

Inspiring and educating
wildlife champions

Act for
Wildlife

Inspiring and educating wildlife champions

Conservation begins with connection. Perth Zoo's conservation education initiatives are designed to inspire, inform and empower individuals to take meaningful action for wildlife. Our commitment extends beyond the boundaries of the Zoo, supporting communities in safeguarding biodiversity and natural habitats.

Through immersive experiences, engaging programs, and impactful content, we raise awareness of biodiversity and threats to wildlife; foster emotional connections to animals and their habitats; promote sustainable behaviour that protects ecosystems; and support species conservation efforts.

**Act for
Wildlife**



Aim

By 2029, Perth Zoo is a national leader in conservation education, and inspires positive behaviour change. Through immersive on-site experiences and impactful off-site collaborations with schools, communities, and stakeholders, we have empowered individuals to take meaningful action for wildlife.

Actions

- 1 Deliver immersive, emotionally resonant experiences that connect visitors with wildlife and inspire conservation action.
- 2 Expand outreach programs to schools and communities, including Habitats for Wildlife and Youth at the Zoo.
- 3 Embed conservation messaging into all Zoo experiences, from keeper talks to digital platforms.
- 4 Use social science research to evaluate and improve education impact on behaviour change.
- 5 Develop targeted campaigns that empower individuals to take meaningful conservation actions.

Measurable outcomes

- 1 One Act for Wildlife campaign is delivered annually, with measurable engagement outcomes.
- 2 Habitats for Wildlife reaches 50 projects by 2027 and 100 by 2029.
- 3 Youth at the Zoo program is launched in 2026 and engages at least 100 schools by 2029.
- 4 Behind-the-scenes experiences for the public have increased by 20%.
- 5 At least three peer-reviewed research studies on the effectiveness of conservation education impact are published by 2029.
- 6 Perth Zoo's social media engagement grows by 5% annually.
- 7 90% of surveyed visitors agree Perth Zoo educates effectively on conservation issues by 2029.



GOAL 5

Championing conservation
through advocacy

Championing conservation through advocacy

Perth Zoo uses its voice to speak for those who cannot. As a trusted and visible institution, we advocate for threatened species and ecosystems through bold campaigns, strategic partnerships, and leadership in conservation networks. Our influence helps shape public opinion, inform policy, and mobilise action for wildlife.

Our active membership in the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) and the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia (ZAA), along with participation in industry committees, strengthens our credibility and reach.



Aim

By 2029, Perth Zoo has become a trusted and influential voice for wildlife conservation, leading impactful advocacy campaigns and shaping public and policy support for threatened species and ecosystems.

Actions

- 1 Lead advocacy campaigns that elevate public and political support for threatened species and ecosystems.
- 2 Strengthen Perth Zoo's role in national and international conservation networks through active participation and leadership.
- 3 Empower staff to take on formal conservation roles and contribute to emergency responses and policy development.
- 4 Zoo communications reflect current conservation priorities and inspire action.
- 5 Measure and grow Perth Zoo's influence through media reach, stakeholder engagement, and public awareness metrics.

Measurable outcomes

- 1 At least one major / comprehensive advocacy campaign is developed or supported annually.
- 2 Staff hold 90 formal conservation roles across national and international networks by 2029.
- 3 Advocacy campaigns achieve a 20% increase in public engagement year-on-year.
- 4 Public awareness or support for targeted species increases by 15%.



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