

PERTH ZOO STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



*We're working for
Western Australia.*

Our Vision

A world where diversity of species and habitats are secure

Our Purpose

To create a passion for wildlife, inspiring people to act for conservation and save species



Introduction

Sitting on the traditional lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people, Perth Zoo has been an iconic destination for Western Australians since it first opened in 1898. An urban oasis only minutes from the Perth CBD, Perth Zoo is loved by the Western Australian community who rightly regard it as 'their' Zoo. All of this places great responsibility upon Perth Zoo to act as careful custodians of this important place, an environment with a rich botanic estate providing sanctuary to a diversity of fauna.

Since our doors opened more than 120 years ago, Perth Zoo has undergone significant periods of transformation as infrastructure and animal husbandry practices have evolved to meet modern community expectations. We are now one of the world's leading zoo-based conservation organisations, dedicated to saving species and inspiring our community to act with us in saving wildlife. But now, it's time for Perth Zoo to transform again.

We are transforming Perth Zoo to engage, educate and excite a new generation of visitors



Our values

Our values define how we work, and in implementing our strategic direction we commit to:

Excellence

- supporting our people to be recognised as the best in their fields
- conducting exceptional conservation research and science
- continuously evolving our knowledge and implementation of contemporary animal welfare, visitor engagement and education practices.

Engagement

- inspiring wonder, providing immersive wildlife experiences, educating and motivating tomorrow's conservationists
- promoting awareness of our conservation efforts, particularly with Western Australian species
- working collaboratively with each other, our partners and our visitors to achieve our goals.

Custodianship

- celebrating an iconic botanic estate in the heart of Perth
- integrating sustainable practices into our daily operations
- working to safeguard animal species for the future.

Accountability

- good governance and financial management, respecting the trust the Western Australian community places in us
- providing a positive workplace culture
- working ethically and doing the right thing for the greater good.



Who we are

Perth Zoo is a conservation organisation committed to saving wildlife and preserving biodiversity.

We provide opportunities for our visitors to connect with wildlife, inspiring them to act for the future of the planet.

Occupying a 19 hectare site in the inner-city suburb of South Perth, Perth Zoo is a statutory authority established and regulated by the *Zoological Parks Authority Act 2001*. Perth Zoo's governing body is the Zoological Parks Authority Board which is responsible to the Minister for Environment. As part of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Perth Zoo provides a showcase for species conservation activities in Western Australia.

We are an active member of both the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia. As a member of these organisations we are globally recognised as a modern conservation zoo, committed to operating in a way which ensures responsible stewardship of the species in our care.

Licensed as a scientific establishment, Perth Zoo is required to abide by the Australian Code for the Care and Use of animals for Scientific Purposes, and we operate under the guidance of an Animal Ethics Committee responsible to the Zoological Parks Authority Board. This is further supported by the Perth Zoo Animal Welfare Charter which sets out our commitment to the animals in our care.

We continually build our knowledge about animal welfare and husbandry, seeking to advance the positive welfare of the species in our care. The Zoo and Aquarium Association's animal welfare-based accreditation program provides independent assurance of the integrity of our work.

Perth Zoo participates in a broad range of local, national and international conservation programs and wildlife research projects. Additionally we are one of Western Australia's largest non-school based provider of education programs, with 42,000 school children visiting the Zoo in 2018 for an excursion, and more than 1100 pre-school aged visitors enrolling in our A-Zoo program.



**We are internationally recognised for our
species conservation activities.**



What does our future hold?

In May 2019 the United Nations reported that one million of the world's species are now at risk of extinction, many within decades, and more than ever before in human history. News like this can be disheartening, but at Perth Zoo it has reinvigorated our focus on saving wildlife and wild places. It reinforces that the work we do at Perth Zoo, together with our community, is more important than ever before.

Our market research tells us the Western Australian community supports Perth Zoo in our conservation commitment, and trusts us to make sure the animals in our care thrive.

Perth Zoo is an inner-city urban Zoo. This, together with our geographical position, has consequences in relation to the number and type of animal species we can house. Bringing new animals into our Zoo from interstate or overseas can be very expensive and logistically challenging. Our urban footprint means we must make careful decisions about which species we can house, while also respecting and meeting their welfare needs.

As a zoo-based conservation organisation we have a responsibility to make sure we engage as many people as possible in our mission to save wildlife, empowering humans to make a difference to the survival of other species. Most of Perth Zoo's visitors live locally, and in 2018-19 almost 720,000 people visited us. However, visitation to Perth Zoo has not kept up with Perth's population growth over the last decade. It is time to reinvigorate local interest in Perth Zoo, maintaining our reputation as an important place to visit, and ensuring long-term revenue growth. While international visitors are not the Zoo's core market, there is considerable opportunity to meet tourists' interest in learning about and experiencing local wildlife.

Our visitors consistently report their experiences at the Zoo as highly satisfying and good value for money. However, for those who choose not to visit us, we need to communicate what we offer and elevate Perth Zoo to the top of their must-do activities in the city. This is particularly the case given the development of new

attractions in Perth increasing competition for visitors in the Zoo's core market, families with young children.

Much of the Zoo's infrastructure is aged and, in some cases, out of step with visitor expectations. Nationally and internationally, zoos are developing new concepts, exhibits and experiences, encapsulating the transition of zoos from animal collections to conservation institutions and at the same time ensuring they are exciting places to visit. While design of animal exhibit areas is continually improving at Perth Zoo, a new Master Plan will be a blueprint for development of the South Perth site over the next 20 years and facilitate significantly improved visitor experiences. A redeveloped Main Lake

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area and new café and function centre facilities will be the first significant steps on this journey.

Perth Zoo is internationally recognised for our species conservation activities. Our breeding support for threatened Western Australian species such as Numbats, Dibblers, Western Swamp Tortoises and Geocrinia Frogs has seen more than four thousand animals released into the wild, in partnership with our colleagues in the broader Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. We strive to share the story of this world class conservation work with our visitors as it is a powerful tool in empowering them to commit to saving our State's wildlife.

Our focus areas

1. Committing to conservation

Our objectives:

- be recognised as a leader in breed-for-release programs, helping to build sustainable populations of threatened native species
- grow recognition of Perth Zoo as an authority on wildlife conservation
- build business practices which use sustainable principles
- inform and empower the broader community to make sustainable choices for the future of the planet
- create awareness and influence human behaviour to inspire conservation of wildlife.



Over the next three years we will:

- partner with sustainable organisations working to protect habitats, ecosystems and biodiversity, both in Australia and internationally
- communicate the importance of the Native Species Conservation Breeding Program in saving Western Australian species, and the role of Perth Zoo in this work
- leverage the 'Saving Wildlife' brand to communicate Perth Zoo's strategic direction
- ensure all staff and volunteers are knowledgeable advocates of our conservation objectives
- expand our ethical procurement policy and examine how we can further integrate environmental sustainability into our business practices
- consider how we can maximise opportunities to demonstrate and showcase environmental sustainability at Perth Zoo.

Our performance indicators	How we will measure our achievement
Contribution to wildlife conservation	The level of direct investment into threatened species breeding programs and in-situ conservation programs. The number of animals bred and released to the wild. The level of visitor and community awareness of the Perth Zoo contribution to conservation.
Research that supports our conservation objectives	Through the number of publications and presentations aligned with our conservation objectives.
Sustainability of our operations	Through increased ethical and green procurement activities. Through use of sustainable development principles in upgrades of existing assets and new capital projects. Through reducing our use of scarce resources such as water and energy.

2. Excelling in animal care and welfare

Our objectives:

- be Western Australia's leading authority on native wildlife health and welfare
- be a respected national and international authority on the welfare and wellbeing of animals in captivity
- manage a diverse and sustainable animal collection which supports our conservation, education and animal welfare objectives
- provide the highest possible standards of animal welfare and husbandry to animals living at the Zoo.

Over the next three years we will:

- communicate openly with the community about decisions we make in the management of animals in the Zoo's care
- undertake an assessment of our animal collection to make sure it aligns with our conservation, education and sustainability objectives
- build stronger connections between our life sciences, visitor experience and discovery and learning teams to make sure we can meet our conservation, education and engagement objectives
- ensure our Zoo based research helps us continually improve the way in which we manage animals at Perth Zoo, and that the decisions we make are informed by the best available science
- plan for a new veterinary hospital, as part of a new Conservation Science Precinct, which will grow our capacity to provide excellent animal care and enrich our visitors' knowledge and understanding.
- provide training and support to our staff to make sure they can continue to deliver the best possible care for animals living at the Zoo and act as advocates for wildlife.



Our performance indicators	How we will measure our achievement
High standards of animal care	Accreditation by the Zoo and Aquarium Association, using the five domains model of animal welfare assessment.
Alignment of our animal collection with our conservation and education objectives	Assessment of 'match' against our conservation, education and welfare objectives.
Sustainability of the collection	Annual review of the animal collection to ensure we have the appropriate number and species to meet our long-term conservation, education and visitor needs.
Recognised as knowledgeable experts in the management of captive and wild animals	Presence of Perth Zoo as a credible voice in issues regarding animal welfare and wellbeing, in the media, through contributions to publications and conferences, and with stakeholders, the community and industry.

3. Creating magic moments for visitors

Our objectives:

- connect people with wildlife so they are inspired to act for conservation
- welcome people into the world of the Zoo, providing easy and friendly access
- provide all visitors with a great day out, making sure they leave with memorable experiences
- harness the passion and knowledge of Perth Zoo's people in engaging visitors in the ordinary and extraordinary activities of the Zoo
- exceed visitor expectations and regularly seek feedback about where we can improve.

Over the next three years we will:

- work with our commercial partners to develop new café and function facilities on the Perth Zoo site, improving the available food and beverage options and building commercial opportunities
- create new opportunities for visitors to experience the wonder of nature, through immersive exhibit design and fun learning experiences, wherever possible bringing people into the life of Perth Zoo
- engage with Aboriginal people to develop visitor experiences which recognise connection to the land on which the Zoo stands
- draw on both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal knowledge and understanding of the animals and plants in our care
- support our team, through training, development and recruitment, to engage with visitors in an informative, meaningful and fun way
- use story-telling, narration, serendipitous and structured animal encounters, aligned with our conservation objectives, to connect our visitors with wildlife
- tell people about the richness of our botanic estate, enabling visitors to enjoy Perth Zoo's role as a sanctuary in the city
- harness the power of technology to enhance the Perth Zoo experience.



Our performance indicators	How we will measure our achievement
Visitor satisfaction	Through annual market research assessments of visitor experience and monthly analysis of visitor feedback. The number of people visiting Perth Zoo.
Membership numbers	The rate of growth in our membership numbers.
Participation in our education programs	The development of successful new programs and enrolment in them.



**We must connect with our visitors,
to help them understand the plight of many animals in the wild,
and empower them to act.**

4. Ensuring we are financially sustainable

Our objectives:

- generate increased levels of income, through commercial growth, partnerships, government support and fundraising
- develop a long-term view of our financial needs, including providing for asset maintenance and replacement
- operate in an efficient and effective way
- be transparent and accountable in the use of our funds.



Over the next three years we will:

- ensure our financial model maximises revenue and controls expenditure
- identify new opportunities for income through partnership with corporate entities, universities, and not for profit organisations
- implement a fundraising strategy which delivers a significant contribution to capital development
- develop and implement improved e-commerce capability to support increased revenue generation and operational efficiencies
- develop new commercial products and revenue streams, aligned with our conservation focus and animal welfare ethos, to diversify the visitor base and smooth seasonal visitation
- create a comprehensive asset maintenance and renewal plan (consistent with our new Master Plan) to ensure the integrity of our assets in the short and long term
- develop successful business cases to seek support for new exhibit development, consistent with the staging set out in our new Master Plan
- ensure all staff are aware of their legal, financial and risk responsibilities, and the compliance framework within which Perth Zoo operates
- ensure efficient and effective governance, internal control and risk management frameworks are maintained.

Our performance indicators	How we will measure our achievement
Audit	By maintaining annual best practice agency recognition provided by the Office of Auditor General.
Budget	By meeting our budget objectives.
Commercial products	By ensuring, through regular evaluation, that our commercial products are profitable.

5. Providing a great place to work

Our objectives:

- a capable, motivated and engaged team
- a safe and positive environment for our staff, volunteers and visitors
- support and respect for organisational decisions
- a culture which makes Perth Zoo a great place to work.



Over the next three years we will:

- make sure our staff and volunteers understand Perth Zoo's strategic direction and the values with which we operate
- harness the passion with which our staff commit to their work at Perth Zoo through a Learning and Development Strategy which:
 - recognises all sources of learning and identifies opportunities to build capability to meet our strategic direction
 - sets out mechanisms to share knowledge and advocate for the role of Perth Zoo.
- find new ways to celebrate the strong collaborative working relationship between Perth Zoo staff and volunteers
- continue to build our positive health and safety culture with staff, volunteers, visitors and other members of the Zoo community, driving best practice achievements in this area
- strengthen the opportunities to realise the benefits of a 'joined-up' department, as part of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- improve pathways to employment at the Zoo for Aboriginal people.

Our performance indicators	How we will measure our achievement
Staff engagement and morale	We will participate in the public sector employee climate survey, and action the opportunities identified for employee engagement and development.
Occupational health and safety	We will closely monitor, audit and continuously improve the Zoo's Occupational Health and Safety management framework.



