

## Mission Statement

The Indianapolis Zoo empowers people and communities, both locally and globally, to advance animal conservation.



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## Indianapolis Zoo

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# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Indianapolis Zoo and IUCN SSC Announce International Team for the New Global Center for Species Survival

*First of its kind Global Center connects thousands of wildlife conservation experts around the world*

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indianapolis Zoo employs a team of internationally known experts to amplify efforts to protect nature through the Global Center for Species Survival. Their roles focus on supporting, connecting and communicating the work and efforts of more than 10,600 conservationists of the [Species Survival Commission](#) (SSC) of the [International Union for Conservation of Nature \(IUCN\)](#), the world's largest environmental conservation organization. The Global Center is part of a groundbreaking partnership between the Zoo and IUCN SSC.

"This is the next important step in Indianapolis' commitment to protecting nature and inspiring people to care for our world," said Dr. Rob Shumaker, President & CEO of the Indianapolis Zoo. "The newest members of our team bring incredible expertise and passion for preserving biodiversity, and they will make a tremendous difference on a global scale."

Made possible through a grant from [Lilly Endowment Inc.](#), the Global Center advances the Zoo's efforts to make Indianapolis one of the world's most conservation-literate cities. The Global Center supports the wildlife experts whose findings make up the IUCN Red List, which outlines the specific extinction issues facing all species.

"This new team at the Indianapolis Zoo will bring unprecedented capacity to scale up the efforts of the SSC's world leading conservation experts who are working to secure a future for plants, fungi and animals in more than 160 countries," said Professor Jon Paul Rodríguez, Chair of the IUCN SSC. "The Global Center will help us to bridge the gaps and support leading conservationists as they tackle critical planetary issues leading to biodiversity loss due to global climate change, invasive species, habitat degradation, overexploitation and illegal wildlife trade."

Serving as the home for the Global Center, the Indianapolis Zoo hosts international meetings and conferences to support the work of the IUCN SSC. Through this partnership, the Zoo expands economic benefit to the community and its ability to connect science and scientists with the public, as it has for decades through internationally recognized exhibits and programming, and through the [Indianapolis Prize](#), the world's leading award for animal conservation.

The Zoo's Senior Vice President, Bill Street, leads the new team as the Director of the Global Center. "After an exhaustive worldwide search, we are excited to have these extraordinary conservationists join our Indianapolis community and continue their efforts to accelerate the conservation of animals, plants and fungi, both under water and on land," said Street. "Their work will be a significant contribution to saving species worldwide and redefine how zoos can support field conservation efforts."

The coordinators are:

**Monika Böhm, Ph.D., Freshwater Conservation Coordinator**

With more than a decade's experience supporting freshwater IUCN assessments, Dr. Monika Böhm brings vast knowledge on the diverse conservation issues affecting freshwater species. She has published papers on topics including climate change vulnerability and extinction threat and is a certified Red List trainer, involved in workshops around the world. She has been both a postdoctoral research assistant and research fellow at the Zoological Society of London and is a member of numerous IUCN SSC Specialist Groups.

**Cátia Canteiro, M.Sc, Plant & Fungi Conservation Coordinator**

Plants and fungi have been the focus of Cátia Canteiro's career for more than 10 years, beginning with conservation planning and action, including environmental impact assessments, monitoring studies and the restoration of temporary ponds. She's worked at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in London and for the past five years, assessed the extinction risk of more than 500 species for the IUCN Red List.

**Julia Geschke, M.E.M., Reptile & Amphibian Conservation Coordinator**

As a Federal Aid Coordinator with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife, Julia Geschke worked with Division staff and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees to fund a variety of projects, such as wildlife research and monitoring, habitat management on private land, and aquatic resources education. She brings her expertise in conservation policy and geospatial analysis to the Indianapolis Zoo as the Global Center's Reptile & Amphibian Conservation Coordinator.

**Sérgio Henriques, Ph.D., Invertebrate Conservation Coordinator**

As the chair of the IUCN SSC Spider and Scorpion Specialist Group, Dr. Sérgio Henriques uses his more than 20 years of experience mobilizing resources to promote arachnid conservation. He regularly engages with a global network, including other IUCN specialist groups and the Invertebrate Conservation Committee, to tackle threats such as the illegal wildlife trade, using the latest technological tools to reverse the ongoing decline of the most diverse group of organisms on earth, invertebrates.

**Samuel Ivande, Ph.D., Bird Conservation Coordinator**

Dr. Samuel Ivande is a conservation biologist and educator who most recently served as Research and Teaching Director at the foremost conservation and ornithology training institute in western Africa – the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute at the University of Jos in Plateau, Nigeria. Dr. Ivande describes himself as a passionate advocate for citizen participation in bird and biodiversity conservation and research, especially in Africa. He brings his talents in ornithological research, biodiversity monitoring and scientific writing to the Global Center.

**Riley Pollom, M.Sc, Marine Conservation Coordinator**

Riley has been a member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission for over eight years. He worked with the SSC Seahorse, Pipefish and Seadragon Specialist Group and the SSC Shark Specialist Group to co-author or facilitate over 600 species assessments for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. In 2020, as marine Resource Management Officer for Parks Canada, he surveyed the Southern Gulf Islands for and worked to conserve endangered Southern Resident killer whales. He served as the British Columbia Key Biodiversity Areas Regional Coordinator for Wildlife Conservation Society Canada. Riley has worked on species conservation across Canada and internationally, and has also held roles with The Nature Conservancy of Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service, and the Calgary Zoo.

**Angela Yang, M.Sc, Mammal Conservation Coordinator**

Leading a team with more than 150 global projects, Angela Yang's most recent role as the Chief Conservation Officer at Rainforest Trust fostered collaboration and built local capacity to protect the most critical tropical habitats for endangered species in the world. Angela has more than 20 years of experience in conservation, working with international NGOs, including the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Zoological Society of London, overseeing

conservation programs in Asia, Africa and the Americas. She is a member of two IUCN Cross-cutting Specialist Groups and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.

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***About the Indianapolis Zoo***

*The Indianapolis Zoo empowers people and communities, both locally and globally, to advance animal conservation. Located in White River State Park downtown, the Indianapolis Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the American Alliance of Museums as a zoo, aquarium and botanical garden. Visit [IndianapolisZoo.com](http://IndianapolisZoo.com)*

***About the IUCN Species Survival Commission***

*With over 9,000 members, the Species Survival Commission (SSC) is the largest of the six expert commissions of IUCN and enables IUCN to influence, encourage and assist societies to conserve biodiversity by building knowledge on the status and threats to species, providing advice, developing policies and guidelines, facilitating conservation planning, and catalysing conservation action. Visit [www.iucn.org/theme/species/about/species-survival-commission](http://www.iucn.org/theme/species/about/species-survival-commission)*

***About Lilly Endowment Inc.***

*Lilly Endowment Inc. is a private philanthropic foundation based in Indianapolis. The Endowment was created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family - J. K. Lilly Sr. and sons Eli and J.K. Jr. - through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. Although the gifts of stock remain a financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with its founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of [community development](#), [education](#) and [religion](#). Although the Endowment funds significant programs throughout the United States, especially in the field of religion, it maintains a special commitment to its founders' hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.*