

# SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund

**2014 ANNUAL REPORT** 

## The Fund Grants Over \$1 Million A Year With \$11 Million Granted Since Founded

#### A LEGACY OF COMMITMENT

Year after year, the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund continues to provide essential funding to species conservation projects worldwide. We are proud to partner with a diverse array of projects focused on species research, habitat protection, conservation education and animal rescue and rehabilitation. 2014 brought some significant milestones for the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund, including a new website, major achievements with the Rising Tide initiative, more focused giving priorities, and increased communications about these projects within the SeaWorld, Busch Gardens and Discovery Cove parks.

Despite these efforts, the demand for meaningful conservation efforts worldwide only continues to grow. The Fund receives a record number of applications each year, and our ability to fund projects is far outpaced by the need for this support in the field. The number of habitats and species in crisis continues to grow, and with the rapid changes from climate change and habitat loss, the importance of the Fund exponentially increases each year. There has never been a time where the efforts of the Fund have been more critical.

This annual report includes just a few of the projects supported through the Fund in 2014. For more information about the Fund, these and other projects, and how you can help, visit our website at swbg-conservationfund.org and become a Facebook fan at facebook.com/seaworldbuschgardensfund

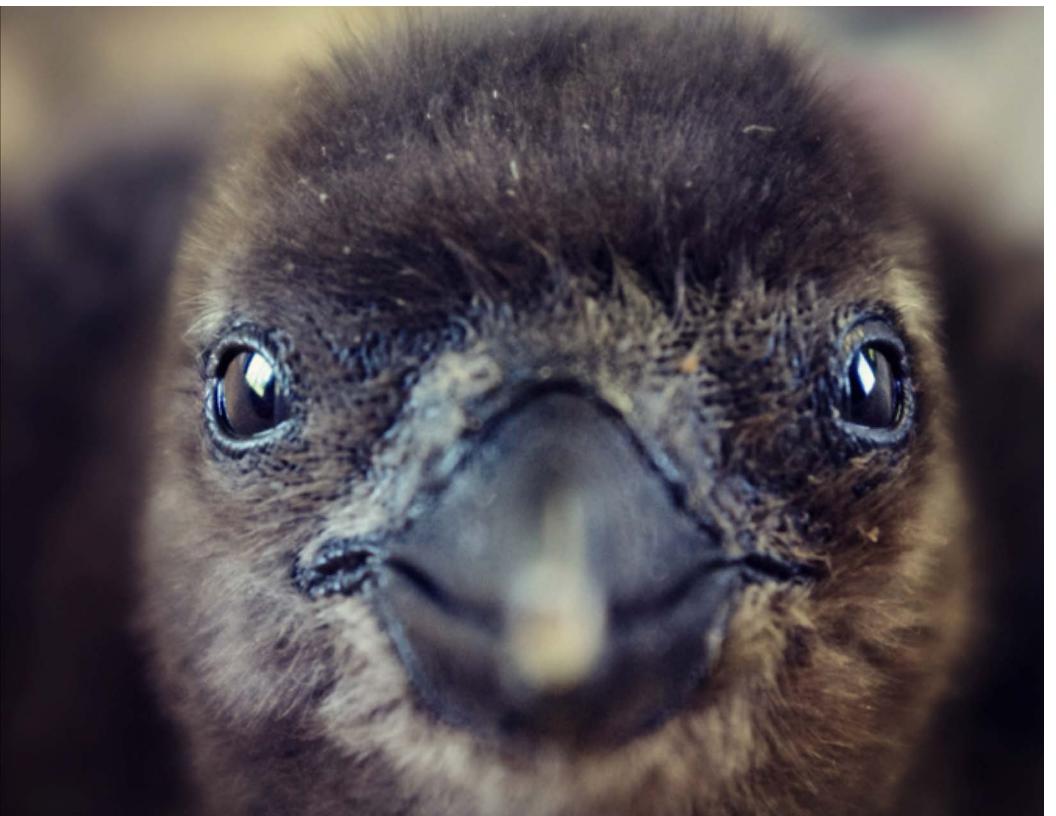
## **Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation**

#### REVERSING OUR IMPACT

The rate by which our environment is changing is greatly outpacing the ability for species to adapt to these changes. Whether it is an increasing amount of aquatic debris that become entanglement or ingestion threats, shifts in prey species that cause the younger and weaker of a species to suffer, purposeful human caused threats such as snares, or even just a natural injury or illness that threatens the life of an individual animal, we have the opportunity to lend our fellow species assistance. Rehabilitating and releasing animals nursed back to health are some of the most challenging and rewarding efforts we steward.

The SeaWorld and Busch Gardens parks have long been leaders in the rescue, rehabilitation and release of marine animals and species native to the areas around the parks. Tens of thousands of animals have been saved and returned to the wild over the past several decades. These efforts have and continue to be solely supported by SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment.

However the need for animal rescue and rehabilitation programs is worldwide. The SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund supports the animal rescue, rehabilitation and release efforts of several endangered and threatened species, including endangered elephants, South African penguins, rhinos, and cetaceans to name just a few.







#### **SEA TURTLES IN NICARAGUA**

If you have ever seen a sea turtle, you are looking at a miracle. Tiny are the chances of a sea turtle hatching, reaching the ocean as a hatchling, surviving up to a decade or more in the ocean, and returning to the beach where it hatched to complete the circle of life. Less than 1% reach adulthood.

On Nicaragua's Estero Padre Ramos nesting beaches, that figure was 0%. Nearly every single hawksbill sea turtle egg was lost to poachers each year. With support from the Fund, Flora and Fauna International (FFI) trained and coordinated night patrols of the hawksbill nesting areas and educated local communities about the importance of the nesting sites. Through 2014, FFI protected over 700 nests resulting in over 80,000 hawksbill hatchlings to make it to the ocean.









#### **SOUTH AFRICAN PENGUINS**

Endangered African penguins are down to just 2% of the original 1 million breeding pairs counted in 1930. Over the years, nesting beaches have been impacted by oil spills, and natural prey has been overfished and impacted by changes in the ocean.

The South African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCOBB) has been the leader in the rescue, rehabilitation and release of African penguins and other seabirds. SANCOBB has treated over 50,000 penguins throughout its history, and its estimated that their efforts have bolstered the populations by 20%. The Fund has been a long time supporter of SANCOBB and aviculturists from SeaWorld have spent many weeks assisting them in their rescue efforts.











## **Conservation Education**

#### THE NEXT GENERATION

It is rare that the conservation of wildlife or wild places has a easy solution. The challenges that we face today, and future generations will face in years to come, will only be solved with knowledgable conservation leaders with the skills and passion to bring about change.

Despite all of today's conservation successes and achievements, one of our most important and sacred responsibilities is to help develop the next generation of conservation stewards. Today's youth are spending more and more time indoors, disconnected to the natural world. They learn about nature online rather than through personal experience. Who is developing the next generation of conservation stewards? We believe that if this trend continues, future generations will place less importance on the benefits of wildlife and wild places.

The Fund supports many approaches to conservation education efforts. Some programs are local, working directly with communities and individuals on the front lines of species and habitat preservation. Other programs identify emerging leaders and assist in developing the skills to make them more effective conservationists. Each conservation issue requires its own, unique approach to teaching those impacting and those being impacted by changes in our natural world.







#### **The Titi Club**

For the past five years, the Fund has supported Proyecto Titi's CARTITILLA program, which teaches Columbian students the basics of ecosystems, environmental conservation, and protecting the critically endangered cotton-top tamarin. Students learn how their actions impact their natural surroundings and projects instituted through this program provided field trips and leadership development opportunities to the most engaged students.

This program has led to community wide engagement in the protection of cotton-top tamarins, and opportunities for the TITI LEADERS to develop into the next generation of stewards.



















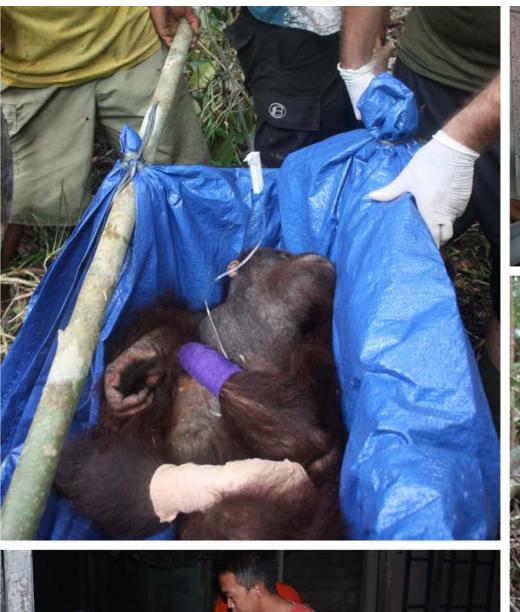




## AGRICULTURE ASSISTING ORANGUTAN CONSERVATION

Gunung Palung National Park contains the largest remaining wild population of Bornean orangutans. The Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program works within communities surrounding the national park to provide alternatives to rainforest destruction caused by agricultural practices and the need for wood as fuel. The program trains local farmers on organic agricultural practices and creates fish farms as alternatives and additions to traditional farming. The program also educates the communities about orangutans and their importance to ecotourism and the ecosystem, resulting in a greater appreciation and desire to protect the surrounding rainforest habitat.



















## BREVARD ZOO'S OYSTER ALL STAR PROGRAM

Brevard Zoo, located in Brevard, Florida, have restored over 60 oyster reefs along the Canaveral National Seashore and Mosquito Lagoon Aquatic Preserve. That alone is impressive, but even more astonishing is that over 35,000 volunteers have been a part of the effort. Brevard Zoo is developing the next generation of conservation stewards thousands at a time.

The Fund supports the training and operations of this conservation effort. In addition to the direct environmental benefit of this program, participants connect their daily actions with the health of the local environment and increase their appreciation and commitment to protecting the natural world.

## **Habitat Protection**

#### RESTORING AND PROTECTING THEIR HOME

Every living creature needs food, water, shelter and a place to raise their offspring. An animal's habitat provides all of these core necessities of life. Nearly all endangered and threatened species are impacted by changes to their habitat, and scientists and conservationists agree that habitat loss and changes are the #1 threat to wildlife. Human encroachment, habitat loss, natural and man-made natural disasters can take away the basic necessities animals require to survive and can forever change nature's balance.

Habitat conservation is vital to maintaining biodiversity. As plants and animals adapt to their changing environment, the natural cycle of life is often disrupted. Through the efforts of our conservation partners, we hope to restore and protect vital habitat to help ensure species survival.

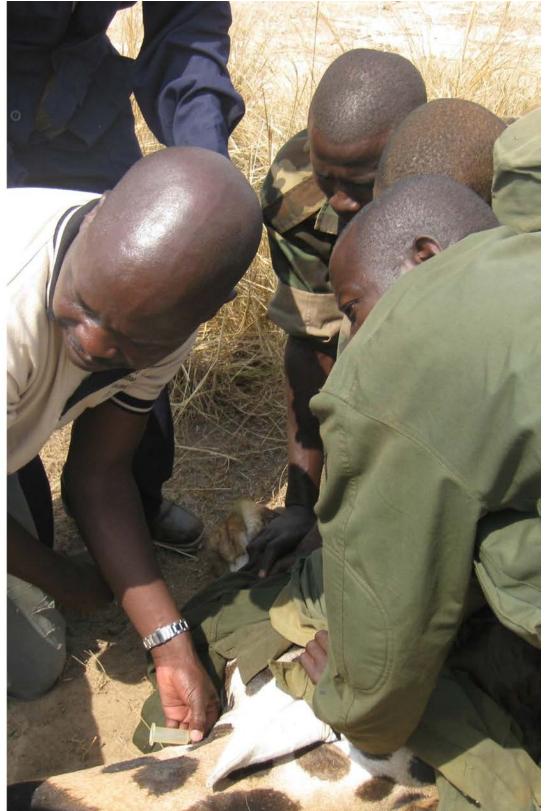




#### **SNARE REMOVAL IN UGANDA**

Staff at the Uganda Conservation Foundation (UCF) and Uganda Wildlife Authority are simply heroes. In 2011, poaching in northern Murchison Falls was out of control. In stepped UCF, and with the Funds support, they established armed ranger stations to keep the poachers out. Rangers began remove snares, up to 7,000 in the first year, and kept removing them acre by acre. UCF brought in veterinarians to attend to injured animals and assess the health of the existing elephants, giraffes and lions in the region. They built roads to help track down illegal poachers, and worked with the government to prosecute poachers when they were caught.

Today, only a few hundred snares are found each year and poaching has dramatically declined. Simply heroes.

























#### **FISHING TO SAVE LEMURS**

Give someone a fish, they eat for a day. Teach them to fish, and they eat for a lifetime.

The Duke Lemur Center at Duke University has taken that wisdom to a whole new level. In Madagascar, the people are reliant on their ecosystem for food, which in hard times, includes bushmeat such as endangered lemurs. Duke, with support from the Fund, has built fish farms in communities to provide a source of food for communities next to Marojejy National Park, home to several species of endangered lemurs. The program has dramatically reduced the hunting for bushmeat and is helping these endangered lemur populations to return.

















## CLEANING UP AMERICA'S WATERWAYS ONE RIVER AT A TIME

Established in 1998, Living Lands and Waters has a simple goal... to clean up America's waterways. Operating off a barge, the LL&W team brings hundreds of students together to learn about the importance of our rivers, identify ways they can reduce non-point source pollution, and to get to work cleaning up the river.

You have not seen anything until you see 100+ high schoolers heaving bags and bags of aquatic debris onto a barge along the shores of the Mississippi River while having contests to see who can find the weirdest pollution and jamming out to AC/DC. LL&W might not only run one of the most impactful aquatic debris programs in the country, but definitely runs one of the coolest.





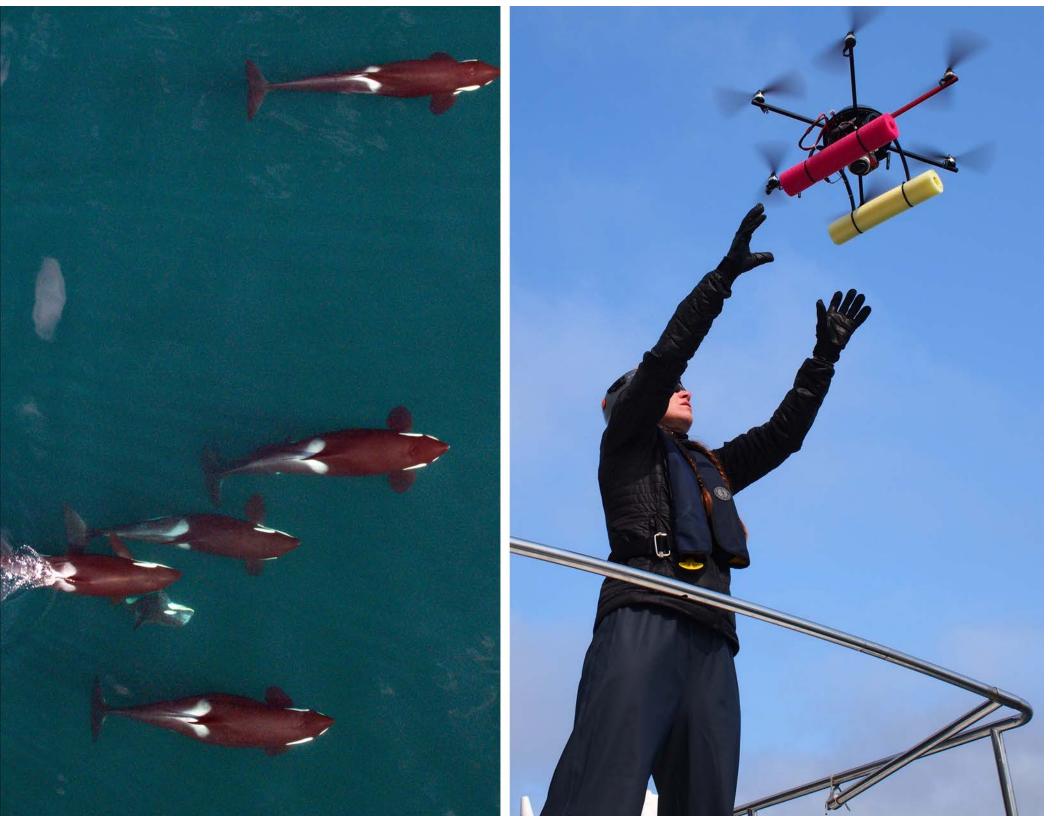
## **Species Research**

#### **CONTRIBUTING TO SCIENCE**

In a day and age where the access to information is nearly instantaneous, it is easy to assume that we already know nearly everything we need to about wildlife, habitats and the inter-relationship humans have with our natural world. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each day, we are astounded at the amazing discoveries being made about wildlife through the projects we support. Some of the information is heartbreaking, such as declining populations of already critically endangered animals. Some of it is hopeful, such as the advancements being made on strategies to reintroduce endangered and threatened species. And some of the information is surprising and transformational, such as what we are learning about marine fish reproduction and development that will soon lead to sustainable fish populations for zoos, aquariums and home aquarists.

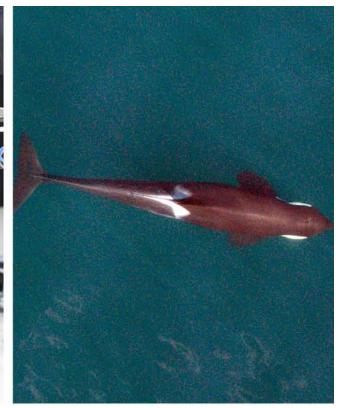
The SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund supports research project worldwide that contribute to the scientific body of knowledge. The research we support not only provides insight to the lifestyle, behavior and success of a species, but also may lead to innovations on how we can lessen our impact and protect our environment.













#### **KILLER WHALE RESEARCH**

Studying killer whales in their natural environment can be difficult. Two populations found near Vancouver Island are believed to be prey limited, meaning that their survivability rates and success are directly related to the strength of salmon returns. Being able to assess killer whale body condition as it relates to the salmon fishery will help scientists determine future protections for salmon and its impact on killer whales.

Supported by the Fund, Vancouver Aquarium is using drones to take aerial imagery of killer whales and to do body condition comparisons over time. This information, coupled with laser photogrammetry to estimate size-at-age curves and growth trends, will provide scientists with information about the health and potential recovery of this species.





## MARINE MAMMAL STRANDING IN TX

Texas Marine Mammal Stranding
Network, with support from the Fund,
organizes the stranding response for
marine and aquatic mammals along
Texas' coastlines. In recent years,
the Stranding Network has
responded to unusual mortality
events on a few species, including
bottlenose dolphins. The data they
collect provides a wealth of
information, including potential
distribution, emerging diseases, and
changes to the ecosystem and their
effects on animals.













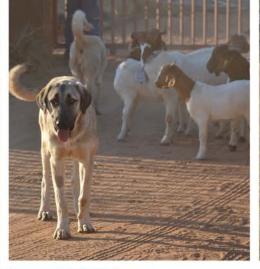
#### **DOGS SAVING CATS**

With the support of the Fund, Cheetah Outreach Trust is spearheading a Livestock Guarding Dog Program in South Africa. This effort trains dogs to assist farmers in protecting their flocks and has shown to greatly reduce stock losses due to predators such as cheetah. This natural solution eliminates the need for lethal persecution of cheetah and provides opportunities for conservationists and farmers to work together on common sense conservation solutions.

Although the use of guard canines has been proven effective, the research being conducted now focuses on ways to expand the program into other areas including the border communities of Botswana.











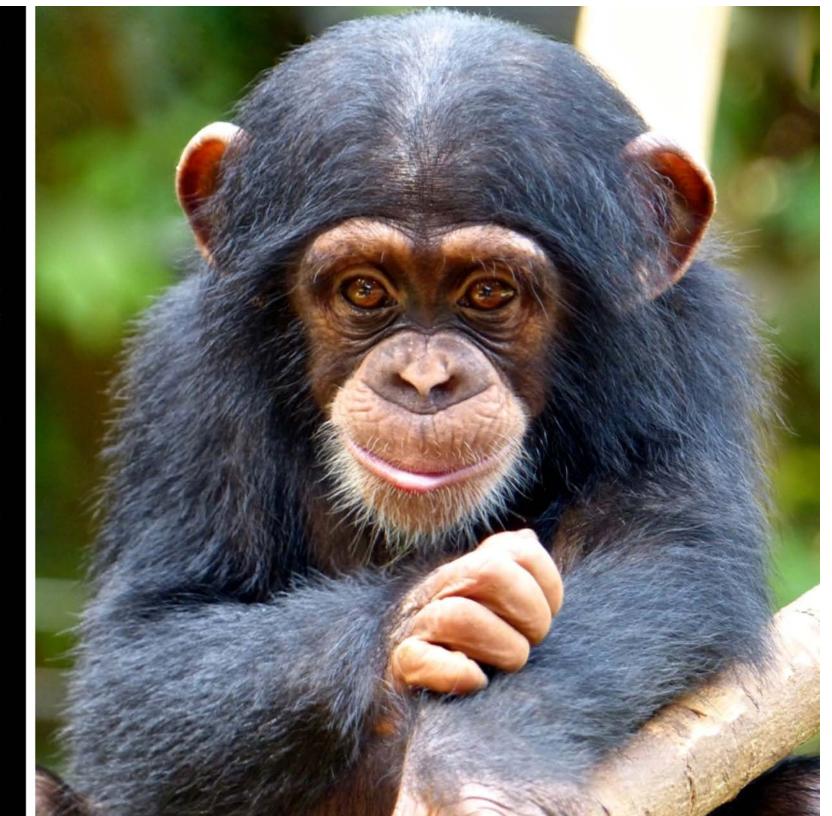


#### ANIMAL CRISIS GRANTS

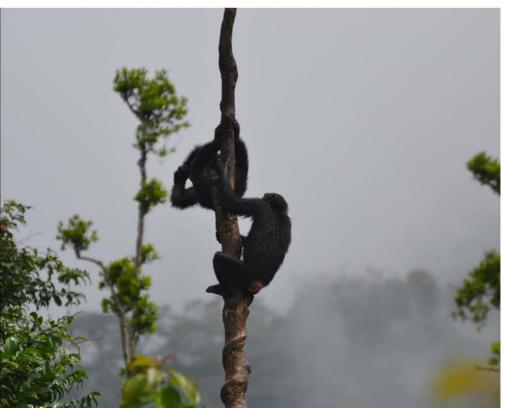
Sometimes, threats to wildlife or habitats happen without warning. It is at these times when conservation organizations often need the most help. Each year, the Fund sets aside funding for wildlife emergencies that could not be predicted or avoided. Some years, these funds are not needed, and other years we use all of our emergency resources.

In 2014, the Ebola outbreak affected millions of people throughout Sierra Leon. As the world focused on containing the virus, tourism disappeared, and with it, the resources that many environmental groups rely upon for their operations.

The Fund supported the Tacugama Chimpanzee Rescue Center during this difficult time. Our animal crisis grant assisted in purchasing food and supplies for the animals that would have normally been funded through visitation to their facility.







## BEWARE, EBOLA IS REAL

We share the grief of the bereaved families and friends of EBOLA victims and we remain firm in our support for the speedy eradication of this virus.







SOME OF OUR NATIONAL HEROES KILLED BY EBOLA

May Their Souls Rest in Perfect Peace











#### The ABC of EBOLA

- A AVOID personal contact
- B BEWARE of EBOLA symptoms (headache, fever, joint pains, diarrhea, red eyes, skin rash, bleeding or vomiting)
- C CONTACT the appropriate health facility for any suspected EBOLA case

TRIPLE SOLUTION FOR EBOLA ERADICATION

SELF-DISCIPLINE, PATRIOTISM & GLOBAL SUPPORT

SPONSORED & FINANCED BY OUR GROUP OF COMPANIES









SLICO HOUSE, 68 SANDERS STREET, FREETOWN.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH





## 2014 Organizations Supported

#### \$1,xxx,xxx Granted to xx Conservation Projects in 2014

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Steller Sea Lion Research Program, Asociacion Panamericana para la Conservacion, Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, Australia Zoo Wildlife Warriors, Brevard Zoo, California Wolf Center/Mexican Wolf Fund, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Cheetah Outreach Trust, Coral Restoration Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, Duke University, Ecology Project International, Ewaso Lions, Fauna & Flora International, Gunung Palung Orangutan Conservation Program, Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute, International Rhino Foundation, Living Land and Waters, Mabula Ground Hornbill Project, Minton Farm Animal Rescue Centre, N/a'an ku se Foundation, National Audubon Society, National Marine Sanctuary Foundation/Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, New Nature Foundation, Painted Dog Conservation, Polar Bears International, Project Wildlife, Proyecto Titi, Regents of the University of California, Davis, Restore America's Estuaries / Galveston Bay Foundation, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, SANCCOB, Save The Elephants, Sea to Shore Alliance, Sea Turtle Conservancy, Tampa Bay Watch, Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network, Uganda Conservation Foundation, University of Central Florida Research Foundation, University of Florida-Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory, University of Oxford, Department of Zoology, The Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust, Vina Foundation, Wilderness Foundation, Wildlife Alliance, Wildlife In Need, World Wildlife Fund

#### **FUND PRIORITIES**

As the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund continues to grow, we will be developing strategies to combat several of today's conservation challenges.

Visit the Fund's website at:

www.swbg-conservationfund.org

to learn more about the current funding priorities and how you can help support the Fund's efforts













#### **Board of Directors**

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### **ASSETS AND EXPENDITURES**

#### Statements of Financial Position as of December 31, 2014

Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents Other Assets Property - Net	<b>2013</b> \$412,993 \$0 \$18,489	<b>2014</b> \$765,959 \$9,600 \$43,343
Total Assets	\$431,482	\$818,902
Liabilities Grants Payable Accrued Bank Fees	\$133,000 \$1,000	\$0 \$895
Total Liabilities	\$134,000	\$895
Net Assets Temporarily Restricted Unrestricted	\$182,008 \$115,474	\$494,502 \$323,505
Total Net Assets	\$297,482	\$818,007
Total	\$431,482	\$818,902

## **HOW YOU CAN HELP**

#### Take Action to Support Wildlife - Learn, Act, and Give

Just by reading the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund Annual Report, you've shown an interest in conservation. Thank you. One of the easiest ways to support the Fund is just learning more about the projects the Fund supports and sharing that information with your friends and family. Become a Facebook "fan" at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/SeaWorldBuschGardensFund">www.facebook.com/SeaWorldBuschGardensFund</a> and receive timely animal stories and wildlife conservation news from around the world. Just start somewhere, and the difference you make will keep growing.

You can take your interest even further easily. Challenge yourself to do one thing different this week that helps save natural resources...then keep doing it. You can also join SeaWorld's myActions (myactions.seaworld.com), a fun way to track the behaviors you do each day that benefit the environment. Each behavior you report on SeaWorld's myActions results in a donation to the Fund.

One of the greatest benefits of donating to the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund is that 100% of your contribution will support animal rescue, habitat protection and conservation education programs in the U.S. and around the world. All expenses and overhead for the Fund are provided by SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment, so every single penny you donate goes directly to the projects supported by the Fund. To donate to the Fund, visit:

www.swbg-conservationfund.org/donate



#### SWBG-CONSERVATIONFUND.ORG

A 501 (c)(3) non-profit private foundation, the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund focuses its resources in four strategic areas: Species Research, Habitat Protection, Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation, and Conservation Education. Since its launch, the Fund has granted over \$12 million for more than 1,000 projects in countries all around the world.