



Colchester Zoo and Colchester Zoo Action for the Wild Conservation Commitment and 2022-2023 Plan



This document outlines Colchester Zoo and Colchester Zoo Action for the Wild's commitment to conservation and the conservation plan for 2022-2023. The BIAZA Conservation Policy is used as a basis on which to build this commitment to conservation.

Colchester Zoo's mission is to:

"Provide a first class visitor experience for all its visitors and at the same time further understanding and respect for animals. Through visitor's funds, Colchester Zoo undertakes breeding programmes for endangered species and funds *in-situ* projects in the wild."

Colchester Zoo pursues its conservation mission by:

- Participating in conservation breeding programmes
- Giving priority to species that are threatened in the wild
- Increasing public understanding of the issues involved in conservation and the breeding of endangered species
- Supporting field conservation programmes in the wild
- Developing its role as a centre for research
- Promoting care for the environment and leading by example
- Playing a significant role nationally and internationally to conserve endangered species and improve standards of animal welfare

Colchester Zoo charitable arm, Action for the Wild:

"Is dedicated to assisting conservation projects worldwide. We support and encourage conservation projects that address conservation priorities at both local and global levels. This is achieved through the provision of financial and technical assistance"

Action for the Wild:

- Provides financial assistance to both local and global *in situ* projects in order to support the conservation of endangered species and their habitats
- Provides technical advice to both local and global *in situ* projects in order to support the conservation of endangered species and their habitats
- Raises awareness and involvement of local people in community conservation programmes
- Encourages and supports scientific and quantitative research from which conservation and animal welfare benefits can accrue
- Provides habitat and survival aids for native species and supports nature projects nationally

Conservation Commitment and 2022-2023 Plan

Colchester Zoo is committed to participating in conservation breeding programmes coordinated by EAZA and by other conservation organisations

Colchester Zoo is committed to participating in activities coordinated by BIAZA working groups and EAZA taxon advisory groups

Current status:

- As of April 2022, Colchester Zoo participates in 49 EEPs and 18 ESB programmes

- Colchester Zoo's Curator, Clive Barwick, is a species committee member for 10 EEPs and is the ESB keeper for Malayan sun bears
- Colchester Zoo's Conservation Education Manager, Andy Moore, is education advisor to the canid and hyaenid TAG
- Colchester Zoo undertakes breeding and release of the Fisher's Estuarine Moth at the request of Natural England and Essex Wildlife Trust
- Colchester Zoo's Zoo Director and Reptile Team Leader sit alongside other stakeholders on the steering committee for the Fisher's Estuarine Moth

2022-2023 plan:

- To continue to undertake activities as recommended by the EAZA TAG or respective programme coordinators for species on existing conservation breeding programmes
- To continue to participate on the Fisher's Estuarine Moth breeding and release programme, working to increase breeding efforts and to train further staff to enable them to participate in this programme
- To continue to develop the Colchester Zoo Institutional Collection Plan to participate in further conservation breeding programmes to increase the animal collection conservation contribution
- To support staff in attending conferences and workshops hosted by BIAZA, ABWAK etc to further skills and knowledge to enable more successful participation in conservation breeding programmes
- To encourage and support additional staff members to take up positions on BIAZA working groups
- To encourage and support staff members to publicise their animal husbandry achievements and research in relevant journals e.g. Ratel
- To support Colchester Zoo's Head Keeper, Ang Matthews, to take over the position of the EAZA Monitor for smooth-coated, North American river, spotted-necked and sea otters
- To enable Colchester Zoo's Head Keeper, Ang Matthews, to undertake the EAZA ZIMS for Studbooks Online Training and the EAZA Academy Introduction to *Ex Situ* Programme Management course

Colchester Zoo is committed to prioritising threatened species on its Institutional Collection Plan

Current status:

- As of April 2022, Colchester Zoo houses the following threatened species: 7 critically endangered species, 17 endangered species and 21 vulnerable species

2022-2023 plan:

- To continue to review the IUCN red list status of species housed within the Colchester Zoo collection to ensure that the changing status of existing species is acknowledged
- To continue to develop the Colchester Zoo Institutional Collection Plan to increase the proportion of threatened species at Colchester Zoo where possible to increase the animal collection conservation contribution
- To recognise that whilst a species isn't threatened now, it may be in the future. Such horizon scanning will ensure that Colchester Zoo's Institutional Collection Plan recognises the increasing threat status of many species

Colchester Zoo is committed to being actively involved in the management and/or protection of wild animals in their natural habitat and/or habitats

Current status:

- Colchester Zoo set up in 2005 and manages the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa
- Colchester Zoo has developed a nature area to the south of the zoo site for the promotion of river valley marshland habitat
- Colchester Zoo's Zoo Director, Rebecca Moore, has played an active role in the BIAZA Field Programmes Committee since 2011

2022-2023 plan:

- To continue to manage the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve for the protection of wild animals in their natural habitat by following the UmPhafa Strategy 2022-2025
- To continue to manage the nature area south of the Colchester Zoo as a wildlife friendly habitat
- To continue to work with the Essex Wildlife Trust to trap mink as part of their eradication programme to boost the population of water voles in the region
- To support Colchester Zoo's Director, Rebecca Moore, as she takes on the position of co-vice chair of the BIAZA Field Programmes Committee in June 2022

Colchester Zoo is committed to contributing part of the zoo's staff time and/or financial resources to support conservation projects situated off the grounds of the zoo

Current status:

- Colchester Zoo staff, including the Zoo Director, members of the Reptile Section and Apprentices, participate in the annual surveying of the Fisher's Estuarine Moth looking for feeding signs and to monitor habitat quality
- Colchester Zoo funds the Zoo Director to visit the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve in South Africa to support their conservation efforts as per UmPhafa Strategy 2022-2025
- Colchester Zoo Action for the Wild welcomes applications from zoo staff to enable support of conservation projects (for instance a grant of £500 enabled Colchester Zoo's Head Keeper, Ang Matthews, to assist in flamingo rescue efforts following drought in South Africa and to visit Action for the Wild's supported project, VulPro)
- Colchester Zoo Action for the Wild dedicates financial budget each year to support *in situ* conservation projects that link with the Colchester Zoo collection

2022-2023 plan:

- To continue to participate in the annual surveying of the Fisher's Estuarine moth in July 2022; to train more staff in surveying methodology and to devote more staff time to monitor additional newly created sites
- To continue to support Zoo Director, Rebecca Moore, to visit the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve in September 2022 to oversee their conservation efforts
- To encourage staff to put in applications for funding to enable them to support conservation projects situated off the grounds of the zoo and share their knowledge

- To identify, and encourage funding applications from, an increased number of *in situ* conservation projects in 2022
- To work to further link the Colchester Zoo Institutional Collection Plan with *in situ* conservation projects, particularly focused on those species housed at Colchester Zoo that are critically endangered in the wild, to increase the animal collection conservation contribution
- To continue fundraising efforts on behalf of Action for the Wild through the development of new income streams to further financial support of conservation projects situated off the grounds of the zoo

Colchester Zoo is committed to increasing public understanding of the issues involved in conservation and the breeding of endangered species

Current status:

- Colchester Zoo makes information about conservation and supported conservation projects available to its visitors via signage, enclosure encounters, educational sessions and events, an online presence and via published media
- Colchester Zoo displays educational material onsite and digitally to all visitors which conveys the zoo's conservation outlook on conservation
- Colchester Zoo promotes public education and awareness in relation to conservation of biodiversity via community outreach
- Colchester Zoo Education Staff collaborate with Colchester Borough Council to implement an annual bioblitz in Castle Park, Colchester to a non-zoo audience

2022-2023 plan:

- To continue to develop information and interpretation for zoo visitors, both onsite and digitally, to raise awareness of conservation and Colchester Zoo's conservation outputs
- To increase conservation education output by implementing the actions recommended in the Education Plan 2021-2023
- To source funding and implement a new conservation technology session to secondary pupils (funding achieved)
- To recruit and train a new volunteer cohort to assist the Conservation Education team in promoting conservation messaging to visitors
- To continue to forge relationships with local communities bordering the UmPhafa Private Nature Reserve to increase awareness of wildlife and conservation issues as per UmPhafa Strategy 2022-2025

Colchester Zoo is committed to participating in research projects for which conservation benefits accrue

Current status:

- Colchester Zoo actively seeks to collaborate with universities and other organisations to provide data or conduct research projects here at Colchester Zoo which have a conservation output (see Colchester Zoo Research Policy, Projects Conducted at Colchester Zoo and Published Research documents)
- Colchester Zoo staff assist in data collection by conducting habitat surveys of feeding signs and habitat condition for the Fisher's Estuarine Moth

- Colchester Zoo welcomes researchers to the UmPhafa Private Nature reserve to conduct conservation-focused research
- Colchester Zoo financially assists research projects, often in collaboration with the TAG, from which conservation benefits accrue

2022-2023 plan:

- To continue to welcome collaboration with universities and other organisations to provide data or conduct research projects which have a conservation output
- To continue to forge relationships with universities and conservation bodies to utilise UmPhafa as a location for conservation research as per the UmPhafa Strategy 2022-2025
- To be more proactive in identifying conservation research projects with which we can participate at Colchester Zoo through linkage with the Colchester Zoo Institutional Collection Plan and Regional Collection Plans
- To identify, and encourage funding applications from, an increased number of *in situ* conservation research projects in 2022

Colchester Zoo is committed to promoting care of the environment and leading by positive example

Current status:

- Colchester Zoo actively seeks to promote public awareness of sustainability issues on the zoo site and offsite via digital media
- Colchester Zoo encourages behavioural change and environmentally responsible behaviours of its visitors
- Colchester Zoo strives to reduce its environmental footprint and increase its usage of sustainable initiatives as per the Colchester Zoo Green Policy aims and objectives

2022-2023 plan:

- To increase the promotion of public awareness of sustainability issues via further messaging on the zoo site and publication online and in the zoo's magazine
- To increase the encouragement of visitor behavioural change and environmentally responsible behaviours via the new Animal Ambassador volunteers and educational campaigning
- To further investigate options and increase the use of sustainable initiatives on the zoo site as per the Colchester Zoo Green Policy
- To make a start on calculating the carbon footprint of Colchester Zoo operations