



ALL THINGS WILD

CONSERVATION STRATEGY 2024



CONSERVATION AT ALL THINGS WILD

Life on our planet is under threat. Climate change, habitat loss, and overexploitation are just some of the many challenges facing the world's biodiversity. Both in the UK and abroad, many species are undergoing population declines and are threatened with extinction.

Biodiversity conservation is a responsibility we all share. And, when we protect biodiversity, we also help ourselves by safeguarding the ecosystems people rely on.

Therefore, at All Things Wild we are committed to supporting biodiversity conservation locally, nationally, and internationally. Our conservation strategy describes our conservation work, details the progress we have made so far, and outline the targets we have set ourselves to achieve in 2024.

Our strategy will be reviewed annually to measure our success at meeting our targets and to set new goals for the future.



WE HAVE A THREE-PART APPROACH TO CONSERVATION:





PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION



ANIMAL COLLECTION



Our animal collection provides us with an opportunity to support *ex-situ* conservation. Through careful management, we can help maintain healthy, genetically diverse populations of species that are threatened in the wild. This safeguards such species against extinction.

Both our existing collection and our future plans have been developed with conservation in mind. We prioritise acquiring and housing species of conservation concern, or those which have value to conservation education or research.

Additionally, to maximise our contribution to conservation, we intend to participate in European Endangered Species Programmes (EEPs). EEPs aim to conserve and safeguard the genetic health of captive animal populations across a network of European zoos and aquariums.



PROGRESS

- As of 2023, 16.7% of the non-domestic species in our collection are classified as either vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, meaning they are at high risk of extinction in the wild.

TARGETS

- For 50% of the new species we acquire to be classified as either vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- Partake in 3 European Endangered Species Programmes (EEPs).

RESEARCH



Research, grounded in scientific principles, enhances our understanding of conservation and delivers many benefits such as improved animal welfare and more effective science communication. We recognise that we occupy a privileged position where we can facilitate and undertake research in a variety of fields - including zoology, botany, ecology, and the social sciences - all of which are relevant to conservation.

We are therefore aiming to expand our existing programme of research – with several new and exciting projects already

planned. These include surveys of our onsite native biodiversity, (the results of which will inform future management and development of our site), as well as research into our captive species led by the keepers who care for them.

We also hope that we can collaborate with staff and students from higher education institutions (HEIs). This will facilitate knowledge-sharing and maximise the benefits that derive from research.



PROGRESS

- We have added a research tab to our website which highlights past projects that we have been involved in, aiding in the dissemination of results from these studies.
- Also on our website are details of our research programme and application forms, making it easy for potential collaborators to get in touch. We have sent this information directly to over 45 UK HEIs.

TARGETS

- Survey amphibian diversity in our onsite wildlife pond and share this data with the National Amphibian Survey.
- Carry out 2 keeper-led research projects.
- Complete our first official research project in partnership with a HEI.

NATURE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Our Nature in the Neighbourhood campaign launched in 2022. The importance of local conservation efforts is often understated, but conservation close to home can be just as valuable as projects overseas! The campaign therefore aims to promote how people can help native biodiversity in their local area and at home in an area as small as a window box or garden.

In line with this campaign, we try to actively contribute to conservation within our own community. We also incorporate consideration of native

biodiversity into the development and management of our site, with the aim of enhancing areas of native habitat wherever possible.



PROGRESS

- We provided wildflower seeds to our local community, and our team ventured out into the local village to collect and dispose of litter.
- We have run dedicated education sessions, general talks, and a social media campaign to educate people about how they can help nature in their own neighbourhoods.
- Parts of our site are managed for native wildlife, including areas of unmown grassland, two ponds, and multiple 'bug hotels'.

TARGETS

- Offer 10 local schools a free Nature in the Neighbourhood education session.

STEP INTO THE WILD COLLABORATION



Step into the Wild is a collaborative re-wilding project based at Fonmon Castle in South Wales. Together with The Wildlife Trusts, The Woodland Trust, and Natural Resources Wales, we are helping return over 100 acres of degraded woodland, grassland, and wetland habitat to its former glory.

Many species which used to be common visitors to Fonmon have steadily declined in the last 25 years. To encourage their return, we are contributing to a variety of habitat restoration initiatives including the re-establishment of saltmarsh

meadows and restoration of the Kenson river.

Now, after 3 years, we are beginning to see positive change. More species are being observed at the site, including owls, bats, and otters.



PROGRESS

- Alongside the Wildlife Trust, we ran a 'Bio-Blitz' at Fonmon to identify which species were present.
- We hosted a training day by the Vale Otter Project, teaching volunteers to identify signs of otters. We were pleased to report several indicators that otters were present around the river.
- Our staff attended a training session on conservation grazing and helped introduce Belted Galloway cattle to the valley.
- Our marketing team designed signs for Fonmon to help educate visitors and encourage sustainable behaviours.
- Our team helped remove Himalayan balsam (an invasive and destructive plant) from Fonmon.

TARGETS

- Create a display about rewilding at Fonmon for our site so visitors can learn about our offsite conservation efforts.

DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING



Through donations and fundraising, we support the activities of multiple conservation charities. This helps us expand our reach and contribute to conservation efforts across the country and overseas.

The charities we support are carefully chosen to ensure that their work aligns with our conservation principles and that any funds we donate are used appropriately and effectively.

Over the last 8 years, we have supported the following selection of conservation charities:

- The Wildlife Trusts
- The Shark Trust

- Cool Earth
- Madagascar Fauna and Flora Group
- Macaw Recovery Network
- World Parrot Trust
- WIRES



PROGRESS

- In the last 5 years, we donated a total of £7000 to support conservation charities.

TARGETS

- Host a charity fundraising event.
- Find a new charity to support that works towards the conservation of a threatened species we hold at the park.



CONSERVATION EDUCATION & VISITOR ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION SESSIONS



Education is a cornerstone of conservation. Through education, we can help to inspire and empower future conservationists, environmental scientists, and advocates for nature.

Delivering conservation education is therefore very important to us, and, as conservation is an important issue for everyone, we want to reach a wide audience with our education sessions.

Currently, conservation is an embedded theme in the talks we offer visitors as part of our daily itinerary. However, we are also aiming to develop

additional education programmes specifically for schools and home-educated children.

Our aim is that through these sessions, we can help people understand their connection to nature and encourage them to act as stewards by understanding, appreciating, and protecting biodiversity.



PROGRESS

- We run daily itinerary sessions for visitors that include discussions about the conservation of the species that they are learning about.
- We hosted a 'Shark Weekend' in early 2024, where visitors could learn about shark and ocean conservation by engaging in fun activities and listening to talks from a shark biologist.

TARGETS

- Review the content of our daily itinerary sessions and ensure they are aligned with the most up-to-date conservation science.
- Run a series of conservation-themed educational sessions for home-educated children that link to the national curriculum.
- Introduce a conservation-themed educational session for the school groups that visit us.

CONSERVATION ACADEMY

For the last two years, we have run our 'Conservation Academy'. Aimed at children and young adults aged eight to sixteen, Conservation Academy is a series of free sessions enabling participants to explore their passion for conservation by working with our team to enhance our conservation messaging.

As well as offering a unique opportunity to participants, these sessions help us understand how we can better engage younger demographics with conservation.



PROGRESS

- Our young conservationists tested and helped us improve our plan for a new Endangered Species Trail, making it a better learning tool for children.

TARGETS

- Run Conservation Academy again in the coming year, offering the opportunity to a new group of young people.

DISPLAYS AND SIGNAGE



A principal way we can engage with visitors is through signs and displays situated within the park. We therefore integrate conservation messaging throughout our site, with the twin aims of raising awareness of conservation issues and encouraging sustainable behaviours.

Many topics are covered across our range of signs and displays. This includes issues like deforestation, marine pollution, invasive species, and reducing water and energy use.

Our aim is that our consistent messaging will resonate with visitors – to foster environmentally

- conscious behaviours and positive attitudes to conservation.



PROGRESS

- Exhibit signage informs visitors about the characteristics and conservation status of every animal in our collection.
- General signage informs visitors about pervasive and wide-ranging threats to biodiversity as well as encouraging sustainable behaviours.
- Our audio-visual 'Ocean Voyage' display highlights threats to marine environments.

TARGETS

- Create an informative and inspiring video that showcases our conservation efforts and can be displayed to visitors.
- Introduce an interactive 'Endangered Animals Trail' to bring attention to critically endangered species.



SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES & TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE



SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES



Environmental sustainability means using natural resources in a manner that does not deplete them and ensures they are available for people to use in the future. Unsustainable use of resources such as water or timber is a major challenge for conservation.

We therefore aim to implement sustainable practices wherever possible throughout our operations. Our sustainability policy describes these efforts in detail and can be viewed by anyone under the 'conservation' tab on our website.

In addition to our own efforts, we want to encourage environmentally-conscious behaviour in our visitors. We try to make it easy for our guests to behave sustainably, for example, by providing recycling facilities and free drinking water refills. Furthermore, we hope that our education efforts help to embed sustainable actions more permanently in our visitors.

PROGRESS

- We have developed a comprehensive sustainability policy which is published on our website to ensure transparency.
- We won the National Farm Attractions Network (NFAN) 2022 Sustainability Award, which recognises attractions that are '*...committed to building sustainability into their long-term plans*'.
- We have provided free drinking water refills that have saved the equivalent of 19,000 bottles from landfill.

TARGETS

- Review our sustainability policy to assess areas for improvement.
- Introduce an incentive to use reusable cups in our café.
- Partner with a local business to reuse all our cardboard boxes.
- Save a further 15,000 bottles from landfill by providing free drinking water refills.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION



Ongoing and future climate change is a huge threat to biodiversity and a major challenge for conservation, with average global temperatures rising substantially above pre-industrial times. Reducing and ultimately eliminating our contribution to climate change is therefore fundamentally important.

To tackle climate change, reducing anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases is essential. At All Things Wild, our approach to emissions reductions is multi-faceted and closely linked to our ongoing efforts to engage in more sustainable practices.

PROGRESS

- Sustainable practices help reduce our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.
- We use carbon accounting software (via CBN expert) to report our carbon emissions. This helps us to identify key areas for improvement.
- We are partnered with Good Journey to encourage car-free travel from our visitors, by offering free hot drinks to those who travel by bus, train, or bike.

TARGETS

- Investigate the feasibility of different timescales in which we can achieve net zero.
- Run a social media campaign to promote sustainable travel by our visitors and highlight our partnership with Good Journey.