

Toledo Zoo's 125 Years of Impact Symposium Brings Global Conservation Voices Together

Renowned scientists, wildlife leaders, and conservation innovators unite in Toledo for a three-day international event, Oct. 21–23

TOLEDO, OH, UNITED STATES, October 20, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Toledo Zoo's 125 Years of Impact Symposium will not only celebrate a century and a quarter of conservation leadership—it will bring the world to Toledo. From the African rainforest to the Himalayan peaks and the Philippine islands, experts from seven countries will convene Oct. 21–23 to share stories, strategies and science shaping the future of wildlife conservation.



"This symposium reflects the Toledo Zoo's deep global connections," said Jen Brassil, director of PR & communications events at the Toledo Zoo. "Our speakers represent decades of field experience and community-driven conservation work. They embody the Zoo's mission to inspire people to care for wildlife everywhere—from our own backyard to ecosystems across the planet."

The 125 Years of Impact Symposium will feature global leaders in conservation, including:

Jerry Aylmer – Limbe Wildlife Centre, Cameroon

An engineer-turned-conservationist, Jerry Aylmer leads the Limbe Wildlife Centre, a partnership with the Government of Cameroon that rescues and rehabilitates primates from the illegal wildlife trade. Aylmer's leadership focuses on expanding sanctuaries, developing community programs, and strengthening partnerships—like the one with the Toledo Zoo—to elevate international standards for animal welfare and wildlife protection.

Dr. Paras Bikram Singh – BIOCOS Nepal

Director of BIOCOS Nepal, Dr. Singh is a leading conservation ecologist whose work in the Himalayas has advanced understanding of Red pandas, musk deer, and snow leopards. His approach blends rigorous field science with community-based conservation—bringing local youth and even national athletes into the fight to protect mountain ecosystems.

Matt Ward & Ysabella Montaño-Ward – Talarak Foundation, Philippines

This husband-and-wife team leads groundbreaking recovery programs for some of the Philippines' rarest species, including the Negros Bleeding Heart Dove, Visayan warty pig, and spotted deer. Their field and breeding work with the Talarak Foundation, supported by the Toledo Zoo, is revitalizing endangered island ecosystems once thought beyond saving.

Torie Curr Smith – Limbe Wildlife Centre, Cameroon

A veteran primate rehabilitation expert, Smith's global experience—from Australia to Malawi to Cameroon—has advanced humane rescue and veterinary care for thousands of primates impacted by trafficking. At Limbe, she oversees animal care operations, training staff and refining welfare standards for long-term rehabilitation.

Dr. Lochran Traill – University of Leeds

An expert in African megaherbivore ecology, Dr. Traill integrates technology, data, and field science to better understand how elephants and other large mammals interact with landscapes under threat. His research offers powerful insights into balancing conservation and development across Africa.

Joe Wood – Toledo Zoo

Conservation Biologist Joe Wood oversees the Zoo's global conservation initiatives and serves as founder and Co-Chair of the IUCN SSC Pigeon and Dove Specialist Group. His leadership in avian conservation includes the creation of a captive assurance population of Santa Cruz Ground Doves and collaborative research across continents.

Narelle Wilson – Toledo Zoo Adviser & Biosecurity Specialist

With experience across Australia and the Pacific, Wilson brings expertise in animal health, invasive species management, and biosecurity policy. Her current advisory work supports Toledo Zoo's Solomon Islands dove recovery efforts, integrating scientific strategy with cross-cultural collaboration.

Oliver Crowther – OC Aviaries, UK

A conservation aviculturist and science communicator, Crowther combines breeding expertise with public engagement through his OC Aviaries platform. His work has supported conservation for Twites, Turtle Doves, and Shrikes across Europe—bridging aviculture and advocacy to inspire the next generation of conservationists.

The three-day symposium will span local and international topics: from Ohio's endangered turtles and butterflies to snow leopard conservation in Nepal and primate rehabilitation in

Africa. Sessions will include live discussions, Q&A opportunities, and a chance for students, professionals, or anyone interested in conservation to connect directly with these global experts.

Admission is free and open to the public. Sessions on Oct. 21–22 are geared toward college audiences and conservation professionals, while Oct. 23 offers youth-focused programming on education, community engagement and the future of conservation.

After the Tuesday and Wednesday sessions, attendees can explore the Zoo for special keeper talks, demonstrations and feedings at various animal exhibits.

The symposium concludes with the Impact to Action: A Legacy Gala on the evening of Oct. 23, a separately ticketed celebration of the Zoo's 125-year journey, featuring chef-inspired tastings, live music and animal encounters.

For more information or to RSVP, visit toledozoo.org/125symposium.

Media must apply for credentials [here](#).

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About the Toledo Zoo

The Toledo Zoo & Aquarium, situated in Toledo, Ohio, proudly holds membership in the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Boasting a diverse collection, the Toledo Zoo & Aquarium is home to more than 16,000 individual animals spanning 680+ species. Actively engaged in conservation efforts, the Zoo participates in over 80 species survival programs. With a robust community of over 78,000 active membership households, the Toledo Zoo & Aquarium welcomes about 1.1 million visitors annually.

About "Honoring our past. Envisioning our future."

"Honoring our past. Envisioning our future." is the 125th-anniversary campaign for the Toledo Zoo, commemorating 125 years of conservation, education and community connection. Since its inception in 1900, the Toledo Zoo has grown from a modest collection of animals into a world-renowned zoological institution.

Throughout the 2025 calendar year, the Toledo Zoo will host a series of special events, exhibits, and programs to honor this remarkable milestone. These celebrations will highlight the Zoo's historic achievements, ongoing conservation efforts and ambitious plans for the future. Visitors can look forward to engaging experiences that connect them to the Zoo's mission of inspiring people to care about wildlife and natural environments.

Join us in 2025 to celebrate this extraordinary milestone and help shape the next chapter of the

Toledo Zoo's incredible legacy.

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