

IMPACT REPORT

MAY '24- APRIL '25



**VALLEY
ZOO**
DEVELOPMENT
SOCIETY™

ABOUT THE VZDS WHO WE ARE

The **Valley Zoo Development Society (VZDS)** is a registered charity and not-for-profit that was started in 1988. The VZDS acts in partnership with the City of Edmonton to ensure the continued development of the beloved Edmonton Valley Zoo.

Our mandate is the continued development and awareness of the Edmonton Valley Zoo, including its education and conservation initiatives.



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What a year! I welcomed my first child at the beginning of my term, which allowed me to see the zoo in a new light—not only in terms of its impact on key species and their conservation, but also in how it brings people and families together in a new and exciting way.

This year, we had the opportunity to plan what the zoo is to become over the next 5 -15 years, through our Master Planning process with the City. This is an extensive process that involves countless stakeholders, and we are thrilled to have great partners who will help bring our vision to life!

We took on several major projects at the zoo: we revamped the sloth habitat; completed and opened the new R. Mollot Arctic wolf habitat for Tundra, and his new packmates Aspen and Anuri; and committed to the Aspen Reforestation Project, which will bring ~9,000m² of aspen grasses and trees. These projects are a testament to our commitment to the unique species at the zoo, how we can educate differently, and how everyone is a part of conservation.

The VZDS also grew itself! We have historically been a small team, and with taking a more active approach in our fundraising, project development, and future planning, we have decided to bring on fund development and project management expertise as we grow our team and the Society's operating portfolio. As I reflect on the past year and the future of the VZDS, I feel immense pride and incredible excitement for what's to come!

THE ZOO IN 2024

OUR LEADERS

CITY LIAISON: GARY DEWAR *Director, Edmonton Valley Zoo*

The quaint, storybook-inspired Zoo that opened in 1959, continues to undergo a dramatic transformation to an accredited, progressive zoological institution with an increasing focus on conservation, education, research, animal well-being, species survival and preserving biodiversity.

With most of the ambitious 2005 Master Plan complete including Makira Outpost, Arctic Shores, Entry Plaza and Wander, and Nature's Wild Back Yard, a bold new chapter begins with an inspiring new 15 year Master Plan that was generously sponsored by VZDS. The roadmap reinforces our Vision for a sustainable world where all living things thrive and realizes our Mission to leverage our unique role to connect people with animals, care about wildlife and conserve the natural world.

Thanks to the Society, we opened the exciting new R. Mollot Arctic Wolf Habitat and treated our Sloths to a beautifully transformed jungle inspired space. A creative new funding and construction model between the City and VZDS will serve as a catalyst for future enhancements including the modernization of the Carnivores Habitat.

EVZ continues to enjoy growth in attendance exceeding pre-COVID levels. Despite a smokey summer and some bitterly cold December evenings, participation has grown 11% since 2022. We welcomed over 340,000 visitors including 38,000 program participants in 2024. The VZDS has and continues to play a catalyst role in the transformation of EVZ.

MANDATE IN ACTION

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

“If we don't have a place for nature in our heart, how can we expect nature to have a place for us.” – Abhijit Naskar

ARCTIC WOLF HABITAT

We celebrated the completion of the R. Molloy Arctic Wolf Habitat at the Edmonton Valley Zoo—a major step forward in the zoo's revitalization. Designed to encourage natural behaviours and provide more space to roam, the habitat now houses Arctic wolves Aspen, Anuri, and Tundra. With all three wolves moved in, careful introductions are now underway. This thoughtfully designed space not only improves the daily lives of the animals but also helps guests connect more meaningfully with this iconic northern species and the conservation challenges they face.

MASTERPLAN

The Valley Zoo Development Society proudly funded the development of the Edmonton Valley Zoo's new Master Plan—a visionary roadmap that will guide the zoo's future growth, revitalization, and conservation impact. The plan outlines exciting opportunities to enhance animal habitats, visitor experiences, and environmental sustainability across the site. While details remain under wraps for now, the Master Plan will be officially revealed to the public in 2025, and we can't wait to share what's next for the zoo we all love.



Arctic wolves Anuri and Aspen

SLOTH HABITAT UPGRADE

We celebrated the completion of a beautiful new sloth habitat—an inspiring labour of love built by the zoo's dedicated animal care team. Created in partnership with Salisbury Greenhouse, this lush, custom-designed space provides a warm and enriching environment for the zoo's sloths to explore, climb, and thrive. Every detail of the habitat was thoughtfully crafted to meet the animals' needs, resulting in a vibrant indoor rainforest experience that brings guests closer to one of the zoo's most beloved species.

AQUARIUM WRAPS

We added four bright, engaging wraps to the reptile enclosures in the Saito Centre. These new visuals enhance the space with naturalistic backdrops, helping guests connect more closely with some of the zoo's reptile residents.



Two-toed sloth BB Cop



Views: 693.3K

Reach: 493K (+468%)

Content interactions: 9.2K (+110%)

Link clicks: 12.5K (+270%)

Visits: 11.4K (+195%)



Views: 159.5K

Reach: 114.7K (+480.2%)

Content interactions: 5.2K (+100%)

Link clicks: 1.5K (+863.7%)

Visits: 7.8K (+239.5%)

MANDATE IN ACTION

EDUCATION & CONSERVATION

"In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we have been taught." Baba Dioum

CONSERVATION

In 2024, the Valley Zoo Development Society proudly supported over \$25,000 in donations to in-situ conservation efforts, benefiting organizations such as the Lemur Conservation Foundation, the Red Panda Network, the Wildlife Conservation Society (Amur Tiger Fund), Polar Bears International, Grevy's Zebra Trust, the International Elephant Foundation, and the Snow Leopard Trust.

The Edmonton Valley Zoo also had another successful year with its Northern Leopard Frog breeding program, contributing to the recovery of this endangered species. We also launched the *Spilling the Beans* monthly coffee chats, offering insightful discussions on pressing conservation topics, further strengthening our commitment to wildlife preservation and education.

VIRTUAL VIDEOS SERIES

This year, we expanded our virtual education series with eight new videos that bring animals and conservation to life. Designed to align with the Alberta curriculum, this growing series continues to inspire curiosity, support classroom learning, and connect students with the vital work happening at the zoo every day.



A Day in the Life of Red Pandas



A. Blair McPherson School's
March Animal Madness winners

PAY IT FORWARD FOR THE PLANET

The end of 2024 marks the second full year of Pay it Forward. We've helped connect over 1529 students to classroom conservation and hands-on learning, and provided them with memorable curriculum relevant education on-site at the Edmonton Valley Zoo.

Thanks to generous donor support, over 96 classes have completed conservation projects they would not have otherwise attempted. Turning students into environmental stewards and conservationists, and seeing the real-world impact of their projects.

From projects that engage entire schools in month-long animal advocacy initiatives, to protecting River Valley trails from litter and learning about the animals who call it home, Pay it Forward has moved beyond schools and has begun engaging entire communities.

20
CLASSES

444
STUDENTS

13
PROJECTS

MANDATE IN ACTION EVENTS AT THE ZOO



2024 EVENT ATTENDANCE

ZOOBREW: 4,590

ZOOMINESCENCE: 31,934

ZOOBREW

Zoobrew 2024 was a fantastic success, taking place over three exciting days throughout the summer with 4,590+ attendees! Each event brought together beer lovers, local craft breweries, and the Edmonton community for a fun-filled experience.

Attendees enjoyed a curated selection of craft beers, tasty food, live entertainment, and the unique opportunity to explore the zoo while supporting a meaningful cause. This year's Zoobrew raised crucial funds for the construction of the new Arctic wolf habitat, providing Aspen, Anuri, and Tundra, a beautiful new space to call home.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in making Zoobrew 2024 such a memorable event. We can't wait to raise a glass together again in 2025!

ZOOBREW 2025 DATES:
JUNE 21, JULY 19 & AUGUST 22



Rig Hand Craft Distillery



Northern Spirits Art Installation by Ace Wood Co.

ZOOMINESCENCE: A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

Presented by The King's University, the 12th annual Zoominescence: A Festival of Light, was our biggest winter festival yet! 31,934 guests attended in 2024 and helped us celebrate our theme of "Animal Conservation Success Stories." The Zoo was illuminated with over 125 light installations, including six conservation-themed art installations by local artists Trew Facks, GABS, Ace Wood Co., We-Met Wire Work, and Cliff Vacheresse. Live entertainment featured 12 character performers and much more!

Going into our thirteenth year, our 2025 theme is "Our Wild Neighbours." We're excited to bring even more creative animal light displays to our Zoo for all to enjoy this winter!

ZOOMINESCENCE 2025 DATES:
NOV. 28-30, DEC. 5-7, DEC. 12-23,
DEC. 26-31, 2025

LOOKING FORWARD FUTURE PLANS

INCOMING PRESIDENT: MIKE WALKER

As a board member for the past five years and someone with deep family ties to the Edmonton Valley Zoo, I am honored to begin my term as President of the Valley Zoo Development Society. Through the collaborative efforts of the Society and Zoo leadership, I get to start my term with the unveiling of the Edmonton Valley Zoo's Masterplan – a road map for the next 15 years– and I could not be more excited to share it with all of you, our supporters.

This marks a pivotal moment for the society. While we continue championing the Zoo's vital conservation efforts, exciting current projects such as enhancements to the carnivore yards and education initiatives like the Pay It Forward Program and Video Series, the Masterplan sets us on a transformative path for the years ahead. It heralds a new chapter for the Zoo and amplifies the responsibilities of the Society

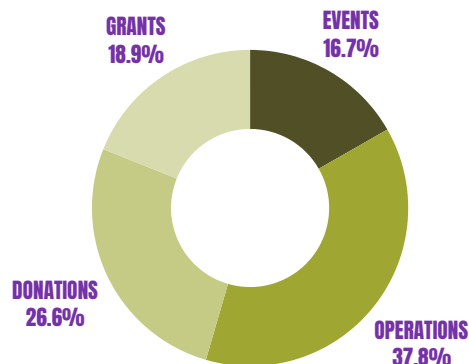
Once we reveal the plan, we will embark immediately on its ambitious phases. This endeavor is bold, exhilarating, and profoundly significant, and we cannot wait to take you along on this journey.



Incoming Board President: Mike Walker

2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED: \$2,606,982.00



PROJECT SPENDING

-  **EDUCATION: \$3,960**
-  **ENRICHMENT: \$12,898**
-  **CONSERVATION: \$30,947**
-  **CAPITAL: \$2,048,568**



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Robert Mollot

Robert Mollot has been a long-time supporter of the Edmonton Valley Zoo, supporting our meerkats and otters. He believes zoos are more than places to see animals—they're vital spaces where people connect with wildlife and each other.

His commitment to the zoo as a whole spearheaded the Malliner Charitable Foundation's support of the R. Mollot Arctic Wolf Habitat, highlighting the natural tundra home of Arctic Wolves.

Thanks to Robert and the Malliner Charitable Foundation, more guests can experience the wonder of wolves up close and leave inspired to protect their natural home.

THE VALLEY ZOO DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY
THANKS YOU
FOR SUPPORTING OUR CONSERVATION &
REVITALIZATION EFFORTS



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