

TORONTO ZOO

2020

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES REPORT



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY

TZ'S GREEN ECO-ZOO TEAM (GEZT)

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the Toronto Zoo introduced the Green Plan which addresses the Toronto Zoo's major environmental impacts and provides action steps towards a greener solution by outlining goals, targets, timeframes, and areas of responsibility.

The Green Eco-Zoo Team (GEZT), lead by Kyla Greenham, Manager of Conservation Programs & Environment, is an advisory committee to the CEO and addresses the environment impacts of Zoo operations, making recommendations to lessen the Zoo's ecological footprint. This report highlights Toronto Zoo's environmental achievements in 2020.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

In 2020, GEZT continued with the 2018 Action Plan priorities for energy, water, waste, and the palm oil conservation message. GEZT and Project Management continued with the multi-year project installing three more water bottle filling stations for visitors.



The Toronto Zoo continues with an ongoing LED lighting replacement project. To date, approximately 30% of all Zoo lighting has been replaced with LED. A special project was undertaken in 2020 for the fish aquaria on site, replacing six halogen lights and one fluorescent light at three different aquaria.



The Toronto Zoo is pleased to report a total of nine water bottle filling stations now exist at the Zoo. Records at the end of 2020 showed that more than 26,624 water bottles were not used in 2020 and now more than 93,000 single-use plastic water bottles have not been used at the Zoo because of this initiative.



Vehicles: To date, 36 of the 78 vehicles (46%) are categorized as green vehicles.



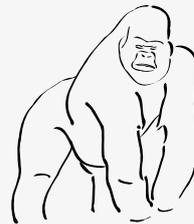
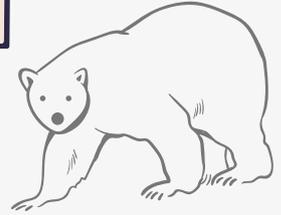
A second floating wetland was installed in the Americas Pond and the Zoo's zero-waste employee program was rolled out to the rest of the Zoo facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Environmental awareness and public outreach moved to a virtual platform for 2020. Through Facebook Live, Scenic and Holiday Drive-Thru commentaries, virtual education programs, and social media the Zoo continued to reach several audiences.

Polar Bear Dip Event: 64 people participated to raise awareness for polar bear conservation with more than **\$16,750** raised.

The Zoo participated in the 2020 Association for Zoos and Aquarium's (AZA) Gorillas on the Line...Answer the Call Campaign; an awareness and fundraising program to help Gorilla Conservation in Africa. The Toronto Zoo collected 2,431 cellphones during this campaign, the highest number of cellphones collected by all participating zoos.



RENATURALIZATION AND BIODIVERSITY

Toronto Zoo staff stepped up to assist Horticulture and Nutrition with gathering browse for the animals and preparing the new browse farm. The browse farm now has an official Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP).

Horticulture and the Conservation Programs & Environment offices hired an Invasive Species Management Assistant to begin a site-wide inventory of invasive plant species as the initial phase to developing an invasive species management plan.

A partnership with the University of Toronto has outlined an invasive species biocontrol research project at the Zoo. Psyllids were released in the fall of 2020 at the Zoo to research their effect on Japanese knotweed.



WORKING FROM HOME

Improvements to computer software programs used at the zoo and modifications by staff to develop an online work culture to accommodate work from home practices have resulted in a significant reduction in paper consumption at the Zoo. The Finance Unit reports a **50%** reduction in paper use and storage requirement!



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS



Kyla Greenham represents the Toronto Zoo as a member of the Ontario Biodiversity Council (OBC), Biodiversity Education & Awareness Network, AZA Green Scientific Advisory Group, Ontario Invasive Plant Council, and Partners in Project Green.

Partnered with Bullfrog Powered, the Zoo increased the amount of renewable energy by 11% which offsets the zoo's greenhouse gas emissions by 9.3 tonnes.

The Zoo expanded its environmental partnership compliment with Memorandum of Understandings with Pollution Probe and Second Harvest. As part of the Great Lakes Plastic Cleanup Program, the Toronto Zoo installed one Seabin and three LittaTraps which collect wayward plastic and waste.

The Zoo's Nutrition unit has worked with Second Harvest to be a recipient of surplus foods. A total of 33,000 lbs of food was donated via the Holiday Market and Drive-Thru.

Toronto Zoo partnered with Purolator Tackle Hunger Red Bag Campaign and Scarborough Health Network to collect more than 7,700 lbs of non-perishable food from items from Zoo staff for local food banks.

Supporting the Toronto Fire Services Toy Drive, the Toronto Zoo collected 43 cribs full of toys during the Holiday Market and Drive-Thru.

Toronto Zoo also became an Ocean Wise Partner in 2020. To support the launch of the Ocean Wise Partnership, 86 Toronto Zoo and Restaurant Associates staff and volunteers completed the Ocean Wise Ambassador Certificate program and attended one of two Toronto Zoo personalized Ocean Wise training webinars hosted by Ocean Wise Science Experts in November. The Zoo has also highlighted ten exhibits as Ocean Wise Approved, where the animals eat Ocean Wise approved items as part of their diet.

AWARDS AND CERTIFICATES



Eleanore Oakes Award at the 2020 Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) Annual General Meeting for excellence in Education Program for its 2019 #Every Action Counts Program supporting the Washed Ashore Exhibit and commitment to reducing plastic at the Zoo

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

To accommodate COVID-19 health and safety restrictions, the Zoo hosted a virtual Plastic Free Challenge and Waste Reduction Week.

The Toronto Zoo continues to participate in the TerraCycle recycling program. To date, the Zoo has recycled more than 90,000 items at a weight of 2,040 kg of waste diverted from landfill through TerraCycle.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN OBJECTIVES

Waste Management

The Toronto Zoo Material Collections branch working with the City of Toronto Waste Management Division in 2008 set a target of diverting 70% of all Zoo waste from landfill. Through the promotion of new and existing recycling programs, 2020 saw an increase in the waste diversion rate to **78.5%**. More than 421.5 tonnes of waste were diverted from landfill by using these alternative methods.



Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Management

Electricity and natural gas make up 99% of the Zoo's annual energy consumption, with the remaining 1% is comprised of diesel fuel and gasoline for the Zoo's transit fleet. In 2020, the Greenhouse Gas values are 28.1 below 1990 levels.

Water Management

Water consumption reductions continue to be a strong area of conservation for the Toronto Zoo. Consumption of potable water in 2020 was consistent with previous years. The water consumption value in 2020 was 42.15 below 1990 levels.

Table: Actual potable water consumption at the Toronto Zoo in the years 2007 to 2020

