



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT







# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT CONTENTS

Director's Letter **3**

All About Animals **4**

Conservation Projects **7**

Facilities Accomplishments **8**

Veterinary Update **9**

Education **9**

2021 Revenue **10**

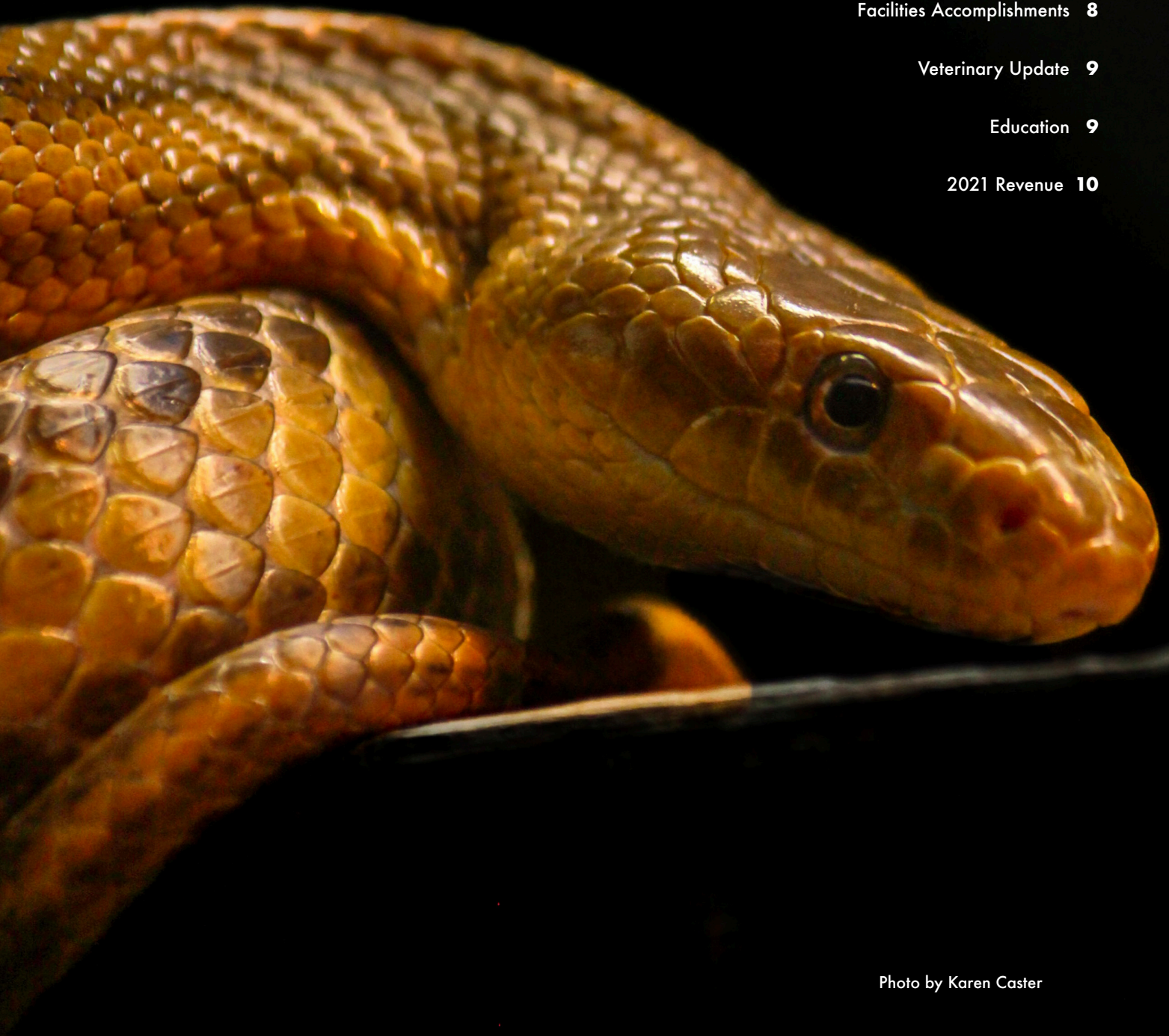


Photo by Karen Caster





Photo by Karen Caster

## DIRECTOR'S LETTER

# WILD WITH PRIDE

**T**he year 2021 proved to be a banner year for the Little Rock Zoo. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to create challenges but the Zoo saw one of its best years yet as more and more individuals turned to the Zoo for safe, affordable outdoor recreation. Attendance to the Zoo grew in 2021 and membership sales were stronger than ever as families continued to rediscover Arkansas's leading cultural attraction where guests are inspired to value and conserve our natural world. The Zoo opened new improvements in 2021 including a new colobus/guenon habitat and a new serval habitat. At the end of 2021, the Zoo brought a new family tradition to central Arkansas with the introduction of the GloWILD holiday lantern light event. This new

event saw more than 30,000 attendees, a record for the Little Rock Zoo, and ushered in a new way for the Zoo to offer guests a unique special event experience. As we look forward to the coming year, the Zoo continues its commitment to wildlife conservation with the introduction of a new conservation partnership for the eastern collared lizard and a renewed commitment to saving wildlife and wild places through our partnerships with conservation projects around the globe. As Arkansas's only accredited zoo, our zoo will continue to set the standard for the best in animal husbandry and wellness and we will continue to reach our community through diverse educational programming. We thank you for your continued support.

SUSAN ALTRUI  
LITTLE ROCK ZOO DIRECTOR





# ALL ABOUT ANIMALS

The Little Rock Zoo continued its focus on providing the best in animal care and husbandry in 2021. The Zoo focused on animal wellness, specifically, enhancing its training and enrichment program, to help deliver the best



care possible for the 400 animals who make their home at the Zoo. The Zoo also continued its participation in several important Species Survival Plan (SSP) programs and saw the successful birth of a variety of animals.



## RARE BIRTH

The Zoo saw the birth of Kevin, a black rhinoceros born to Andazi and Johari. Kevin is a rare birth for a zoo or in the wild. Black rhino populations are decreasing in the wild with more than 90 percent of the population declining in the last three generations.

## SAYING GOODBYE

The Zoo lost one of its long-time residents in 2001 with the passing of Cactus Jack, a black jaguar living at the Zoo since 2001. At the time of his passing, Cactus was almost 22-year-old and was one of the oldest jaguars in an AZA accredited zoo. Cactus was loved by staff for his sweet personality, especially in his old age, and was also loved by zoo guests who frequently looked for him in the jaguar habitat.



## SSP ACTIVITIES:

- Three Chacoan Peccaries acquired with SSP recommendation
- New male lion, acquired from Henry Villas Zoo per SSP recommendation
- Female ringtails were exchanged with another zoo for a breeding recommendation
- Mahale the chimpanzee moved to Sedgwick County Zoo
- More than \$8,000 in in-kind enrichment products donated to the Zoo

### Notable Births & Hatchings

- Two North American River Otter
- Black Rhino, "Kevin"
- Two Pygmy Slow Loris
- African Penguin, "Betty White"

## WELLNESS

The Little Rock Zoo focuses on the wellness of its more than 400 residents each and every day. This is done through a variety of programs established to monitor quality of life, health and a variety of factors. Staff take observational data to help inform decisions about animal wellness and training and enrichment recommendations follow specific, guided plans.

### In 2021, the Zoo accomplished the following for Animal Wellness:

- Over 1,500 animal wellness assessments completed in 2021
- The Zoo began evaluating noise levels and animal behavior to help develop guidelines for events and other activities
- Implemented program for tracking and monitoring quality of life





Photo by Karen Caster

## WHAT IS ENRICHMENT?

*Animal enrichment provides stimulation to an animal in order to elicit natural behaviors. Enrichment might be a puzzle feeder placed in a habitat that encourages an animal to use its natural abilities to forage for food. Enrichment could also be placing certain smells in a habitat to entice an animal's senses. Moving furniture around in a habitat, providing new furniture, etc., are also forms of enrichment.*

## ENRICHMENT STARS

**K**imberly-Clark Corporation donates large cardboard tubes used in the manufacturing of their products to the Zoo after they are no longer needed. These large, durable tubes are perfect for stuffing enrichment items in for animals and for decorating for the animals to celebrate animal birthdays and conservation education days. Thank you, Kimberly-Clark!

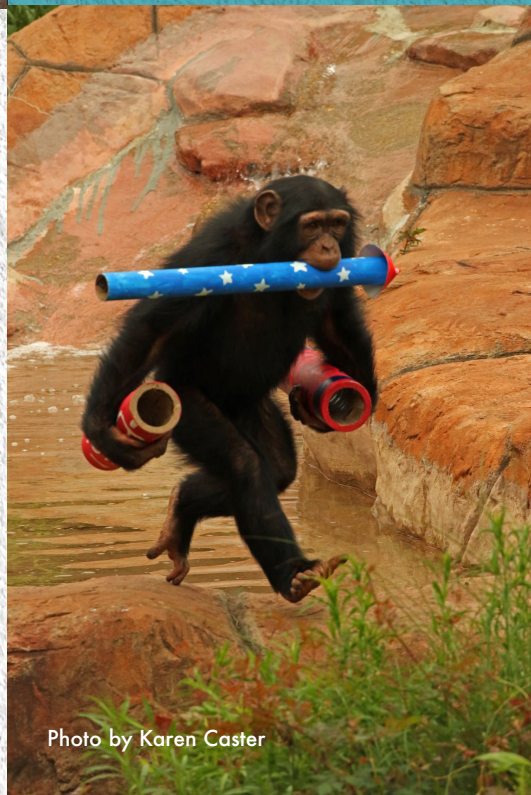


Photo by Karen Caster





# CONSERVATION PROJECTS



The Little Rock Zoo launched a new conservation plan with more targeted goals for wildlife conservation partnerships and assessment. The Zoo coordinated various conservation projects and launched two new sustainability initiatives to encourage the public to become involved in saving our planet.

## WHAT IS SAFE?

The Saving Animals From Extinction program, SAFE, was founded by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums as a way to leverage resources between zoos to coordinate and facilitate program activities and educational outreach dedicated to saving animals. The Little Rock Zoo is proud to be a founding member of SAFE and to support various animal programs.

### Conservation and Research:

- Eastern collared lizard conservation project launched
- Joined as a partner to the Chimpanzee and Black rhino Saving Animals From Extinction projects (SAFE)
- “Gorilla on the Line” cell phone recycling program started
- Species Survival Plan Sloth bear diet study conducted in partnership with Dr. Charles Robbins of Washington State University
- Launch of Green Restaurant initiative in partnership with the City of Little Rock Sustainability Office



*Did you know that the Little Rock Zoo Facilities/Operations division completes thousands of work orders every year to ensure that the Zoo's facility is working and reflective of what an accredited zoo should be. The Facilities/Operations division completes work orders alongside new construction projects, horticulture and a wide variety of other activities.*



## FACILITIES ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Zoo Facilities/Operations division manages the construction of new facilities at the Zoo, including animal habitats, maintains all Zoo facilities and provides horticulture services. This division saw the following accomplishments in 2021:

- New Eastern collared lizard habitat built
- Opening of colobus monkey and guenon habitat
- Opening of serval habitat
- Renovation of back holding for veldt habitat
- Continued improvement on Conservation Learning Center
- Changed board walk at cheetahs and upgraded other walkway fences
- Completed installation of third education building



# VETERINARY UPDATE

**T**he Little Rock Zoo Veterinary Department provides excellent care to the more than 400 animals who reside at the Zoo. The Vet Department in 2021 improved the quality of care to animals by adopting new strategies for treating certain health conditions and obtaining new equipment to facilitate care.

## Veterinary improvements

- Initiated new therapies for chronic arthritis using laser therapy
- Obtained donations for new equipment for the hospital
- Upgraded in-house blood machines to allow for faster blood work results and better care for animals

# EDUCATION

The Little Rock Zoo's Education Department hosted several community programs and on-site learning opportunities to help inspire people to value and conserve our natural world. The Zoo saw its popular camp, Zoofari, come back after a brief hiatus last year because of COVID -19. Plans are underway to improve the Zoo's community outreach efforts and to partner with the City of Little Rock's targeted schools initiatives.

## Volunteers

The Little Rock Zoo Education Department launched an adult volunteer program to provide more volunteer opportunities to adult interested in serving the Zoo. This new program requires less training than the Zoo Docent Program but still provides a great way to serve the Zoo and its mission.

## ALL ABOUT ALICE

*Alice the gorilla came to the Little Rock Zoo from another AZA Accredited zoo through a recommendation of the SSP. Part of the reason Alice was recommended for Little Rock was to help improve a chronic skin condition. The warm, more humid temperatures of Little Rock are better for Alice's skin and Zoo Veterinary Staff have worked closely with Animal Management Staff to help manage Alice's condition. Alice has seen huge improvement in her skin condition since her arrival.*



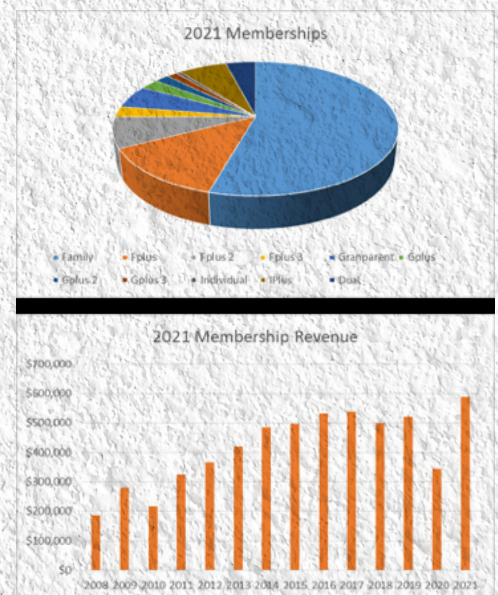
Photo by Karen Caster



# ZOO REVENUE

Photo by Karen Caster

Concessions	\$288,900
Education	\$8,333
Gift Shop	\$417,517
Membership	\$580,679
Special Events	\$10,016
Misc Revenue	\$21,154
Admissions	\$1,739,420
Amusement Rides/Tokens	\$237,336
Rentals	\$54,867
<b>\$3,358,222</b>	<b>Total Revenue Earned</b>
<b>\$5,752,022</b>	<b>Total Operations</b>
<b>\$2,393,800</b>	<b>Transfer In</b>





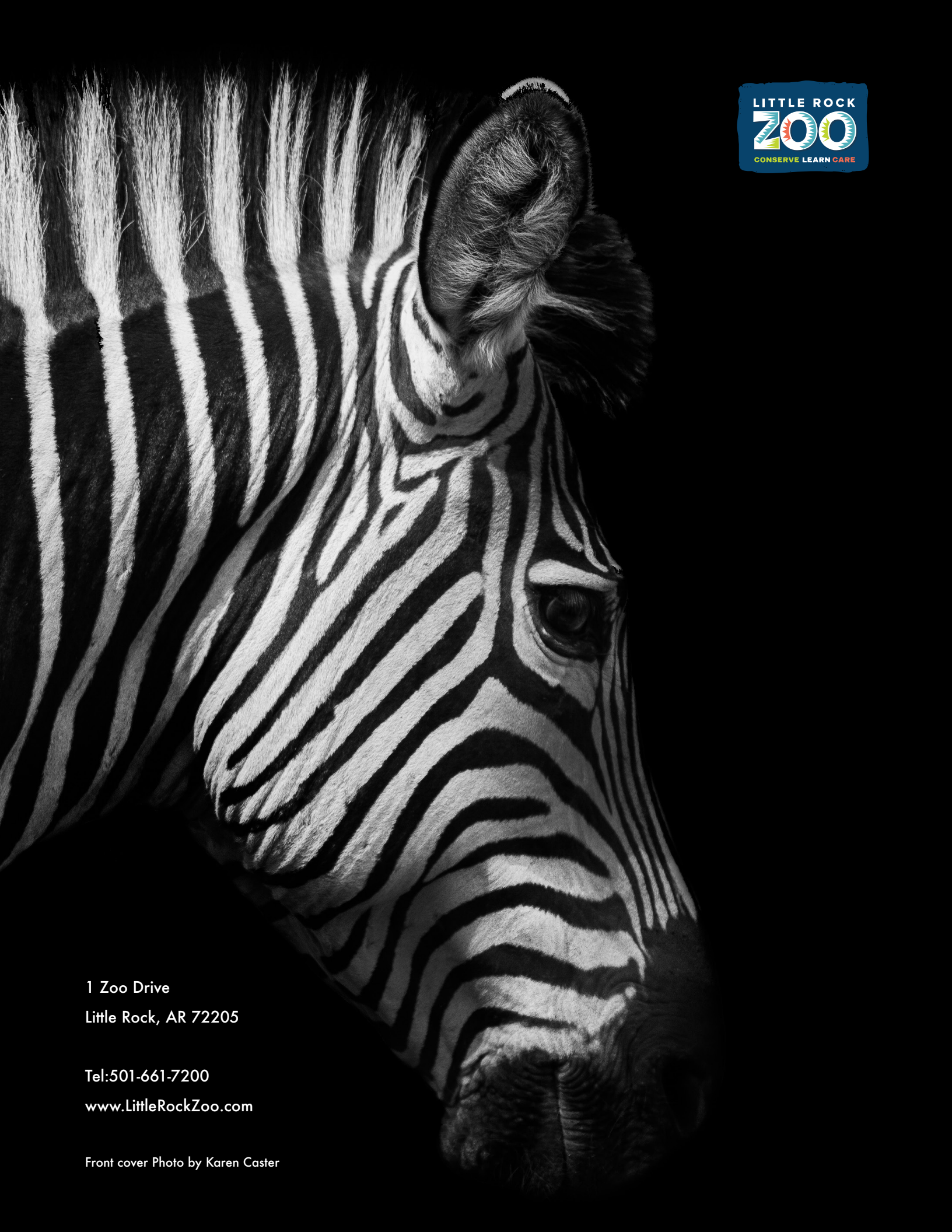
## F U N   F A C T S

*Did you know that the Little Rock Zoo hosted more than 200 educational programs in 2021? From Zoo to You, to classroom visits, to other educational opportunities and trainings, the Zoo focuses on educational excellence.*



Photo by Karen Caster





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