

*Focused Strategies  
for Species Survival*

2017 Annual Report



**NATIONAL AVIARY**  
PITTSBURGH, PA

## Dear Friends

What a busy year it has been, and we have you to thank! You made it possible for the National Aviary to undertake groundbreaking research and conservation projects, to achieve breeding breakthroughs, and to offer new and enhanced opportunities for visitors to engage with the natural world in meaningful ways.



This success has been the result of thoughtful planning and strategies to achieve our mission of inspiring respect for nature through an appreciation of birds. One of the ways we accomplish this is through environmental education. This year's cover features Pumpkin the Eurasian Eagle Owl, whose impressive size and powerful flight makes her one of our most popular education ambassadors.

A purposeful strategy and careful management are important, because when people engage and identify with birds in our care, they are more likely to protect all birds and their habitats. This year, Jonathan Hartman (pictured above) was recognized at our Donor and Member Appreciation Breakfast for raising philanthropic funds for avian conservation, becoming a Snowy Owl member of our Donor Society. It is inspiring to see families sharing a love of humanity and nature through the generations.

None of these achievements would be possible without your support. The 2017 Annual Report is a record of your accomplishments, and I hope you will read it with pride and satisfaction that you are helping to save birds and protect their habitats.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Tracy  
Executive Director

## On the Cover

Thanks to the skill of our aviculture, veterinary, and education teams, our charismatic Eurasian Eagle Owls thrive in multiple roles, from demonstrating natural behaviors in their customized habitat; to participating in educational programs, including free-flight demonstrations; to successfully breeding and fledging owlets that grow to reach hundreds of thousands of visitors at the National Aviary — and exponentially more when shared with zoos around the country.





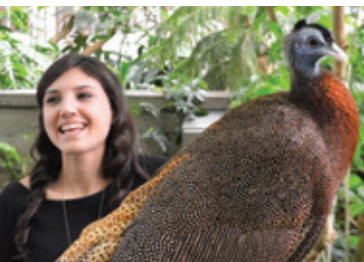
# Inspiring

## Teaching Our Lessons Near and Far

The National Aviary's team includes skilled educators and animal ambassadors who provide authentic opportunities for students and visitors to practice science, math, art, and other important disciplines. Our staff members provide accredited training to help local teachers bring these lessons to life in the classroom, and our mobile team even crosses bridges and rivers to take these lessons to students within a 90-mile radius of Pittsburgh.

In 2017, the National Aviary reached a record-breaking 24,180 students and teachers. We served 190 school classes onsite and 174 through outreach programs. While 66 percent of our programs were provided to Allegheny County schools, 20 percent of our schools were from Westmoreland, Washington, Beaver, and Butler counties; 8 percent were from other counties in Pennsylvania; and 6 percent were from West Virginia, Ohio, New York, Maryland, and Virginia!

### **PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: National Aviary Maker Entrepreneurs** *Furthering Bird Conservation through the Maker Movement*



*Two of Pittsburgh's renowned strengths — remarkable cultural institutions and pioneering entrepreneurship — came together in the first-of-its-kind National Aviary Maker Challenge to advance artistic entrepreneurship. Starting in July 2017, the Maker Challenge featured one maker each month who designed new products for the National Aviary gift shop that tell the conservation story of a selected species. The makers then worked with staff to design programming that connected visitors with that species' story. The National Aviary Maker Challenge is generously funded by the Richard King Mellon Foundation and continues through December 2018.*



### **SPOTLIGHT:** **Breeding Birds to Educate and Inspire**

National Aviary staff members have expertise working with species that are especially valuable for educational programs and, in many cases, have hand-reared birds from hatching. Specific hand-rearing techniques and careful training allow birds to identify with their species while becoming comfortable in a variety of environments, from close-up human encounters to multisensory programs with lights and music.

In 2017, our new flock of flamingos captured a national spotlight as they displayed their fascinating natural behaviors on daily walks and outings. The training staff also provided a valuable service by raising birds for other zoos, including Eurasian Eagle Owls for the Virginia Zoo, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, and St. Louis Zoo, where these captivating birds engage, educate, and inspire millions of visitors every year.



# Guiding

## Developing Innovative Medical Treatments

National Aviary veterinarians are highly skilled in areas from preventive and neonatal care to emergency surgical procedures that improve our birds' health and save lives. Through years of specialized training, careful observation of the birds in our care, and collaboration with other professionals, our doctors have also developed innovative techniques, from using dental composite to repair beaks to athletic kinesiology tape to help a growing flamingo's legs to develop properly.

Because of our expertise, the National Aviary is a sought-after location for veterinary interns. Offering opportunities for hands-on patient care, observation, and academic training, the National Aviary draws veterinary students from across the U.S. and abroad. This year, we trained 24 interns and mentored an additional 25 people pursuing careers in veterinary medicine. Finally, our medical experts continue to present and teach at international conferences, where they also increase their own knowledge and skills.

### **DONOR SPOTLIGHT:** Liz Spence

#### *Advancing the Mission and Realizing a Tax Advantage, Too*



*An avid outdoorsperson and master birder, Liz Spence believes strongly in the National Aviary mission. She is a member of the Donor Society at the Martial Eagle level and makes annual contributions in her parents' memory. Her family even named Bette the African Penguin in honor of their mother. When Liz turned 70, she chose to direct the required minimum distribution from her IRA to the National Aviary. "This way, it does not show up as income for me," Liz says. "I get a tax advantage, and it goes to an organization that I was going to support anyway." Living in Pittsburgh, Liz knows that the National Aviary is a good investment. "I see that their work is being accomplished. They are saving birds, and they are working to protect bird habitats around the world."*



### **SPOTLIGHT:** *Life-saving Care*

This year, our veterinarians continued to design advanced treatments for critically ill or injured birds. Our birds are thriving, thanks to specialized intervention.

An African Hamerkop experienced egg binding, a common but serious complication where a female cannot safely pass an egg. Dr. Pilar Fish and her team surgically removed the egg, as well as five yolks that were stuck in the reproductive tract. The bird made a full recovery and was reunited with her mate in their outdoor habitat.

A week-old Guam Kingfisher chick fell out of its nest and ruptured its air sacs. This occurrence is fairly common in the wild, and the chicks rarely survive. Using a miniscule butterfly needle intended for premature human babies, Dr. Fish drew the air out, relieving pressure on the organs. The chick is now flourishing. Keep in mind that Guam Kingfishers are extinct in the wild!



# Leading

## Saving Species from Extinction

Through the Avian Conservation Fund, donors play a direct role in saving species from extinction through breeding programs to establish stable populations, and field research and conservation programs that provide information needed to protect birds' habitats.

In 2017, our Guam Kingfishers, which are extinct in the wild, fledged five chicks. After almost two years, Bridled White-eyes also fledged a chick, making us only the second zoo to successfully fledge this endangered species. We have even seen encouraging behavior in the newly established breeding program for the Black-faced Ibis.

Dr. Steven Latta studied the evolution and impacts of avian malaria in the Caribbean; and the human impacts and effects of water quality on the Louisiana Waterthrush both in its local breeding and Caribbean wintering grounds. Our ornithologist, Bob Mulvihill, conducted conservation projects in regional backyards and parks, such as Project OwlNet, Neighborhood Nestwatch, and birdwatching hikes and bus tours.

### DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Trib Total Media

#### Supporting Conservation through Sponsorship

*For Trib Total Media CEO Jennifer Bertetto, a commitment to the National Aviary is both a matter of professional pride and a personal passion. An animal and bird enthusiast, Ms. Bertetto shares her business acumen as a member of the National Aviary's board of trustees. Her corporation is a Platinum Sponsor of Night in the Tropics, our signature fundraising event. And in 2017, Trib Total Media also stepped up to support penguin conservation, hosting a public naming contest for two of our African penguins, resulting in the musically inspired names, Buddy and Holly. "The National Aviary engages people with world-class education and groundbreaking research, and Trib Total Media is proud to bring these experiences to the people of Pennsylvania and beyond," says Ms. Bertetto.*



### SPOTLIGHT: Bird Monitoring in Latin America

While pristine, un-logged forests are considered ideal for avian conservation, a groundbreaking study by Dr. Steven Latta and collaborators demonstrates that young tropical forest fragments can be more valuable for bird conservation than once thought.

For 10 years, Dr. Latta and his collaborator traveled to Costa Rica each fall and winter to count birds in secondary forests. They counted nearly 50,000 birds from 152 species, finding that the abundance of birds consistently increased. This indicates that if human populations are stabilized and forests are allowed to recover, growing populations of birds will respond and return to these forests much sooner than expected, as long as a remnant bird population still exists as a source for these new recruits.

# 2017 Donors

The National Aviary values all donors and has made every attempt to accurately recognize each one. If you see an error or omission, please accept our apologies and contact the Philanthropy Department at [gregory.kottler@aviary.org](mailto:gregory.kottler@aviary.org) or 412-258-9465.

The following foundations, businesses and organizations, and Donor Society members played a key role in our growth in 2017 by supporting exciting new programs, significant capital improvements, and essential daily operations. We thank them for helping us save birds and protect their habitats.

## Foundations

Allegheny Foundation  
V. Wayne and Cordelia Whitten Barker Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation  
Bison Charitable Trust  
Courtney Babcock Borntraeger Foundation  
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## Businesses and Organizations

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Please visit [www.aviary.org/Annual-Report](http://www.aviary.org/Annual-Report) to see a complete list of 2017 donors.

# by the Numbers

## 5,832

**Birdly® flights**

Thank you to our presenting sponsor, Pittsburgh International Airport!



## 24,180

**students served**

through onsite and outreach education programs

## 4,335

**member households**

## 176,528

**visitors**



## 3,714

**RAD Day visitors**

Thank you to the Allegheny Regional Asset District for your ongoing support!



## 49

**veterinary professionals served**

24 interns trained  
25 professionals mentored

## 35

**Guam Rails hatched**

and released into the wild since program inception



MELISSA WOLFSLAYER

*Volunteer of the Year*

## 329

**volunteers**

## 20,477

**hours donated**

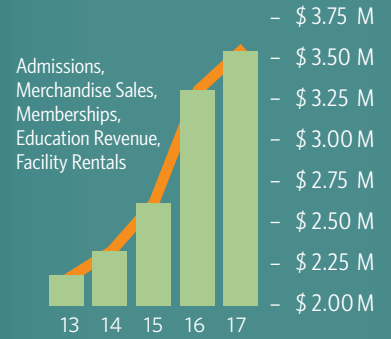


## 494,315

**value of time**

## 64%

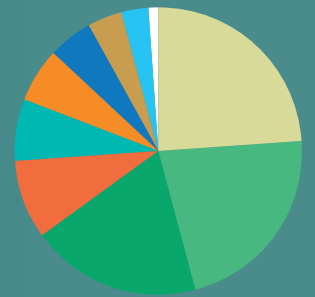
**Increase in Earned Revenue**



## \$7,543,000

**Total Restricted and Unrestricted Support**

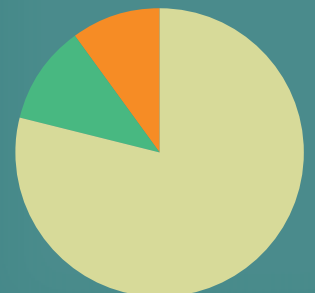
Donations	24 %
Admissions	22 %
Government Grants	19 %
Education Programs	9 %
Fundraising Events	7 %
Merchandise Sales	6 %
Membership	5 %
Facility Rentals	4 %
Donated Facilities, Goods & Services	3 %
Other Income	1 %



## \$6,192,000

**Total Expenses**

Programs	79 %
Fundraising	11 %
Administration	10 %



Your contributions support the National Aviary's conservation, research, education, and avian medicine programs. To learn more, please visit our website or contact Jeremy Davit in our Philanthropy Department at [jeremy.davit@aviary.org](mailto:jeremy.davit@aviary.org) or 412-258-9429.



## NATIONAL AVIARY PITTSBURGH, PA

*The National Aviary inspires respect for nature  
through an appreciation of birds.*

### National Aviary in Pittsburgh, Inc.

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