



- 2021 ANNUAL REPORT -

NATIONAL AVIARY





## Letter from the Director

### Dear Friends,

Each day, our team at the National Aviary goes above and beyond for birds. No matter the challenges—which have been plentiful in these last two years—our team provides outstanding care for our flock, always. Outstanding care is at the center of all that we do. It is the reason that, again in 2021, we earned accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the gold standard for our field, which we have maintained continuously since 1984. It is the reason the National Aviary is here today, embarking on the 70th Anniversary of our founding. We take pride in our work and feel immense responsibility to provide the highest standards of care because our birds deserve it.

With your support last year, we exceeded expectations through the continued uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. We sustained our operations while keeping safety top of mind. We helped our community maintain a connection to nature and continued to deliver our mission. And, we ensured our birds continued to thrive, even during unforeseen circumstances.

When Kodiak the Steller's Sea Eagle got out of his habitat accidentally in September, we knew we had to do everything in our power to safely bring this special bird back home. Kody's story resonated with the community as friends, family, neighbors, journalists, colleagues, and caring individuals across the country reached out to share their well wishes for Kody. Our entire team, together

with our incredible community, worked tirelessly to ensure Kody's safe return home. This experience, though extremely stressful and challenging, brought our team together and brought us closer to the community we serve, whose support helped lead to a happy outcome for Kodiak. Today, Kody is relaxing in the care of our compassionate team in a beautifully renovated habitat!

Now, we look ahead to a year full of possibility. We're commemorating our 70th Anniversary all year long with a beautiful hardcover book and exciting special events, including the return of our signature fundraiser, Night in the Tropics. With the reopening of our eagle habitats, guests can officially welcome Kody back. Soon, we will begin renovations of the Wetlands to restore its innovative structure, improve sustainability, and create exciting new features for our guests and birds to enjoy. We will continue to launch immersive seasonal themes with even more opportunities to connect with nature.

***We are truly grateful for your support of the National Aviary. You have made a difference.***

Sincerely,

**Cheryl Tracy**  
Executive Director

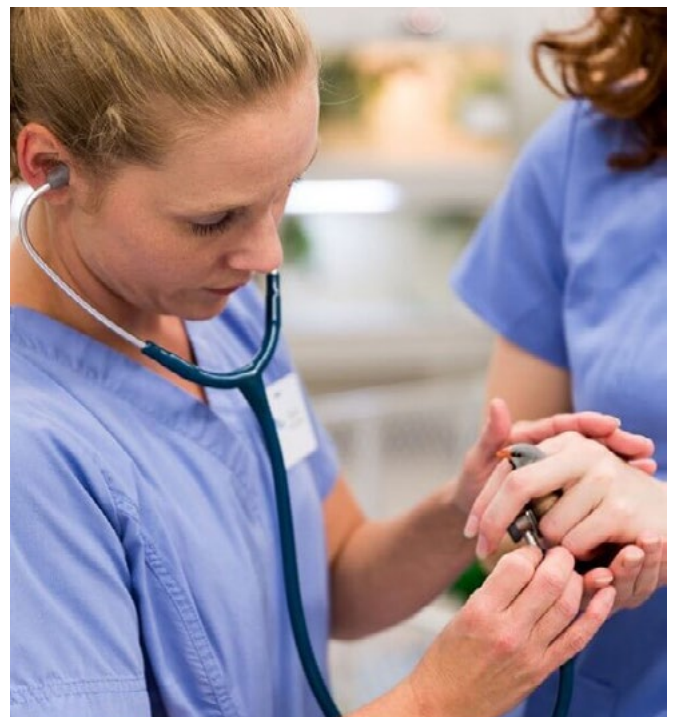


## Saving Lives with a Valuable Veterinary Tool

**Animals at the National Aviary require individualized care to play their important role in fulfilling our mission. In 2021, Dr. Pilar Fish and the highly skilled National Aviary veterinary team provided top-of-the-line medical care to our 500 birds and mammals, ranging from routine preventative procedures to revolutionary treatments for illness or injury.**

The National Aviary's Veterinary Hospital develops leading-edge techniques that are shared around the world. The first avian blood bank was established at the National Aviary in 2012, when Lianni the Andean Condor received a blood transfusion from multiple donors at the Aviary. This protocol was later successfully used to provide transfusions to three wild condors in Ecuador, helping to protect a vulnerable population. The blood bank is still a valuable, life-saving tool at the Aviary today, and in 2021, a Green-winged Macaw received a transfusion to treat potentially life-threatening, advanced anemia, a common condition in birds.

This dedication to individualized care spans all life stages for animals at the National Aviary, from prenatal through geriatric, and encompasses everything from daily care to groundbreaking surgeries and procedures developed right here in Pittsburgh and used throughout the world!





# JOURNEY TO AFRICA

Presented by  PEOPLES



## Journey to Africa

Last summer, Pittsburgh residents didn't need a passport to experience the arid deserts, lush rainforests, and rocky coastlines of the African continent. The National Aviary's summer season, *Journey to Africa Presented by Peoples*, offered opportunities for guests to explore the incredible biodiversity of the continent through iconic bird species like Red-billed Hornbills and African Penguins. Our staff planned a summer of dynamic and engaging daily programs, many included with admission. These experiences helped visitors get close to amazing birds and learn about our shared roles in protecting these species and their vital habitats.

The launch of Journey to Africa was complemented by the debut of the National Aviary's new immersive bird show, *African Adventure Presented by AAA Travel*. A guided journey through the many habitats of Africa, the show joins gorgeous video footage, thematic music, and the presence of live birds like Black Kites and Grey Crowned-cranes flying, waddling, and gliding close to guests in the Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater. On the savannah, two Hooded Vultures fly out overhead, and audiences learn that this species has declined at an alarming rate in the wild, going from a species of Least Concern to Critically Endangered in just over a decade. During a visit to the South African coast, an adorable African Penguin, Endangered in the Wild, waddles just feet from the audience.

Introducing visitors to vulnerable species is part of our mission to inspire respect for nature through an appreciation of birds. But, it's not enough for them to understand the threats to these animals. Through conservation messaging woven into all of our programs, our visitors learn the ways they can contribute to the preservation of species like African Penguins by choosing sustainable seafood and reducing their use of single-use plastics.

During their Journey to Africa experience, our guests learn that almost everyone is carrying a small piece of the African continent with them: coltan, a mineral used in the production of smart phones. The unsustainable mining of coltan is leading to habitat loss for already vulnerable species and has profound impacts on human well-being, as well. We partner with electronics recycling company Eco-Cell to offer recycling of old phones and tablets to help reduce the demand for coltan.

Throughout the summer, thousands flocked to the National Aviary for Journey to Africa *Presented by Peoples* and left with unforgettable encounters with some of the African continent's most amazing birds and the tools to help contribute to a brighter future for Africa's wildlife.



## Increasing Access to Engaging Family Recreation

### Pittsburgh Neighbor Nights

The National Aviary strives to inspire visitors to help save birds and protect their habitats, presenting the highest quality family recreational experience that a zoological institution can offer. To help provide access to this important service for those disproportionately impacted by financial hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Aviary launched a new program in 2021, Pittsburgh Neighbor Nights.

Pittsburgh Neighbor Nights offered our community a consistent opportunity to experience the National Aviary, its birds, and its programming for free. Once each month beginning in January 2021, the Aviary remained open until 7 p.m., adding a two-hour block to the end of the day with free admissions. Evenings included full access to our free-flight habitats, meet-and-greets with National Aviary birds, and a take-home craft activity.

We were proud to work with our longtime **One Northside For Every Student** schools to ensure the program was accessible to the families who needed it most. By engaging students during school hours and encouraging families to visit the National Aviary during out-of-school time, we created a more holistic learning experience.

The program grew in popularity throughout the year, and by December, **we served 517 Pittsburgh neighbors!** Thank you to The Grable Foundation for providing funding toward this critical program.







## Kodiak the Steller's Sea Eagle

**With his enormous yellow beak and talons, expressive eyes, and commanding presence,** Kodiak the Steller's Sea Eagle is one of the most recognizable birds in The Charity Randall Foundation Eagle Hall at the National Aviary, where he has thrived for more than 15 years. This much-loved bird, also affectionately known as "Kody," is an important ambassador for this species, which is considered vulnerable to extinction.

In September, Kody accidentally got out of his habitat. This was an extremely unusual and serious situation. We responded with the full force of our team, immediately mobilizing to get Kody back home safely. Our community sprang into action, too, calling in tips, sharing information from our official channels, and sending words of encouragement to our team. Those community tips helped our staff locate Kody and monitor him at his roost when he stopped to rest for the night, and we even camped out overnight to keep a watchful eye on him.

Our community's kindness and generosity during this incredibly trying time buoyed our team's spirits and gave us hope. Members of our community showed such hospitality to our team as we searched their neighborhoods—some of you even brought us home-cooked meals in the field or offered to send pizzas to our staff at the Aviary!

Bringing Kody back home safely was a true community effort, and we are thankful to each and every person who lent their support.

Now, Kody is safely back home at the National Aviary. His habitat is beautifully renovated, as is the adjoining habitat where two Bald Eagles reside. Thank you to Robert and Kim Fanelli for providing funding toward this critical renovation.

Guests are excited to see Kody in his new habitat. We remain immensely grateful to you, and our entire community, for supporting us, and Kody. We are elated that this very special bird is back home, safe and sound.



# 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

Following the uncertainty of 2020, the National Aviary worked determinedly to adapt, grow, and reach new audiences in 2021, demonstrating resilience and persistence. The ongoing support of our generous donors, members, visitors, and friends continues to be instrumental as we recover from the pandemic and deliver our mission through animal care, conservation, and education.

## 75

### SPECIES PARTICIPATE IN AN AZA SPECIES SURVIVAL PLAN®



30,000

people reached on GivingTuesday

GIVING TUESDAY



13% of the world's population

of Extinct-in-the-Wild Guam Kingfishers were hatched at the National Aviary since 2014 to help save the species.



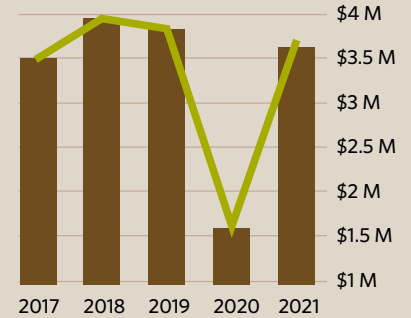
Presented by UPMC HEALTH PLAN

270 participants from 14 states hiked and biked 3,460 miles during the inaugural Hike-A-Thon.

## \$3,625,060

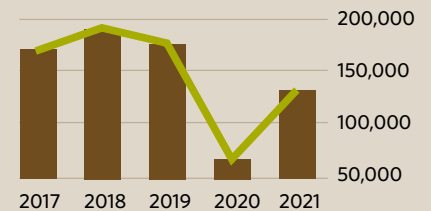
Earned Revenue

Includes admissions, merchandise sales, memberships, education revenue, facility rentals, parking



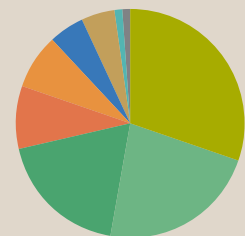
## 137,725

Total Visitors



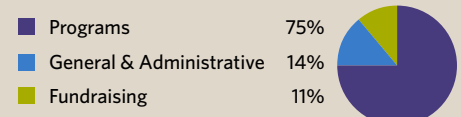
## \$7,254,567

Total Unrestricted Operating Support



## \$6,598,632

Total Expenses



## 7,860

people attended 99 special events at the National Aviary. Thank you for choosing the Aviary as your place to celebrate!



Congratulations and sincere thanks to **Janet Robb, 2021 Volunteer of the Year!** Janet has served more than **10,000 volunteer hours** in her 10+ years of volunteering for the National Aviary.



5,571 member households



## 5,696

FREE ADMISSIONS

provided to local schools, youth groups, and community partners for a total value of **\$93,699**

During 2021, **76 community volunteers** provided **8,525 hours of service** to the National Aviary, for a total value of **\$243,303.50!** Without our volunteers' generous support, our success would not have been possible.

**Thank you to all National Aviary volunteers!**





# DONOR SPOTLIGHTS



## Patti Rambasek and Rik Laird

### *Inspiring transformational change*

Inspiring transformational change is nothing new to Patti Rambasek and Rik Laird. Both have dedicated their lives to helping those in need, at home and abroad—Patti, serving as the National Aviary's Director of Development from 1997-2008, and Rik, devoting his time to the Peace Corps to help the most vulnerable in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. They have an insider's view of the impact people's generosity has on the mission of a nonprofit organization.

Patti and Rik have been loyal supporters of the National Aviary for many years, including more than 25 years as members! They visit often, attend programs and events, and are members of both the Donor Society and the Phoenix Society at the National Aviary. They supported the National Aviary during the uncertainty of the pandemic, and most recently through the Aviary's Name-A-Bird program, Rik surprised Patti by naming a Victoria Crowned Pigeon in her honor for their 40th anniversary. Over the years, they have made a big impact on the Aviary, helping us to provide care for more than 500 animals and supporting our conservation efforts around the globe.

We thank Patti and Rik for their decades-long generosity and dedication to our mission!



## S. Kent Rockwell Foundation

### *Partnering to increase bird diversity*

Throughout the spring and summer of 2021, the National Aviary embarked on a new field research opportunity. In partnership with the Foundation for Sustainable Forests (FSF) and with support from new National Aviary funder S. Kent Rockwell Foundation, Dr. Steven Latta, Director of Conservation and Field Research, began testing the efficacy of a sustainable forest management system used by FSF throughout forests in western Pennsylvania. FSF's innovative approach encourages the growth of a multi-aged forest by harvesting small patches of trees rather than the traditional method of clearing large tracts of land. Throughout the research period, which runs through 2023, the National Aviary will be conducting valuable research on the impact this forest management system has on local bird species of conservation concern. Thank you to the S. Kent Rockwell Foundation for supporting this promising research and monitoring program!





# NATIONAL AVIARY

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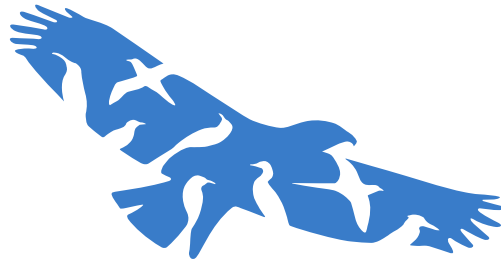


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# NATIONAL AVIARY

## PITTSBURGH, PA

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



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