

AZA's Giraffe SAFE Messaging Toolkit 2023

General messages:

1. Giraffe are in a “silent extinction” crisis in that their populations in the wild have decreased dramatically with relatively little public awareness.
2. Giraffe populations in the wild have decreased by ~30% in the past 35 years, and there are only ~117,000 giraffe left throughout Africa.
3. The IUCN Red List has classified giraffe as a species as Vulnerable to Extinction
 - Both Reticulated and Masai giraffe are listed as Endangered by the IUCN.
 - Giraffe are a CITES Appendix II species, due to concerns for international sales of giraffe parts.
4. Giraffe conservation threats include habitat loss, habitat degradation, habitat fragmentation, human population growth, population isolation, climate change, oil/gas exploration and poaching.
5. Giraffe live at more than 100 AZA zoos.
6. The AZA zoo community is working with NGO's and other field partners to help ensure a future for wild giraffe.
 - These collaborations include direct conservation action, education, scientific research, public awareness, and bringing the animal care skills of the zoo community to support conservation.
7. AZA zoos have collectively brought significant funds to giraffe conservation. In the 1st 4 yrs of the Giraffe SAFE conservation collaboration (2017-2020), this program brought more than \$4.3 million USD to support giraffe conservation.
8. You can help assure a future in the wild for the earth's tallest animal by:
 - Helping spread awareness and understanding of giraffe conservation efforts on social media. Please brand all events and activities with these hashtags, to help AZA track the collaborative messaging impacts.
 - i. **#standtallforgiraffe**
 - ii. **#WorldGiraffeDay**
 - iii. **#WorldGiraffeWeek**
 - Post giraffe stories for guests to share on zoo websites once per month.
 - Encourage others to take a pledge:
 - i. I pledge to:
 1. Share the message of the silent extinction of giraffe on social media three times during the week of World Giraffe Day
 2. Post once every month on social media sharing a relevant giraffe story using #standtallforgiraffe

- GPS collars placed on giraffe in the wild will help researchers track and understand as well as mitigate the effects of wildlife ranges, movement corridors and access to seasonal browsing areas. Fund GPS collars.

Specific messages:

9. Issues specific messaging:

- Habitat Loss and Fragmentation/ Human Expansion and Infrastructure
 - i. Increase of lands being used for grazing cattle and agriculture are impacting the landscapes where giraffe live which creates increased fragmentation
 - ii. Leads to an increase in conflict between local farmers and giraffe as they will raid crops
 - iii. Increased risk of exposure of diseases carried by livestock as they come into contact with each other
 - iv. Oil drilling in key giraffe habitats (Uganda) is also an increased pressure on critical populations
- Hunting/Snares:
 - i. Bushmeat is the main reason snares are used
 - ii. Bushmeat collection is illegal in protected reserves for wildlife
 - iii. Bushmeat is indiscriminate and kills or maims everything
 - iv. Removing snares requires a great amount of time searching for them
 - v. Anti-poaching units like the Black Mambas have reduced kills due to snares by over 80% in the areas they patrol
- Drought/water:
 - i. Giraffe get much of their water from the plants they eat
 - ii. Permanent change in habitat via desertification which reduces amount of foraging opportunities
 - iii. Importance of waterholes for giraffe well-being as they need to visit it every few days
 - iv. Waterholes last shorter time and are smaller during droughts
 - v. Droughts are becoming more frequent and severe in many regions of Africa. This included a severe drought in Kenya in 2021
 - vi. Without water, giraffe die off in great numbers
 - vii. Droughts lead to increased use of remaining waterholes by livestock, which can bring cattle and other livestock into areas only used by wildlife when there are not drought conditions
- Keeper care:
 - i. AZA-accredited zoos provide high quality care that meets the physical and behavioral needs of the giraffe in their care.
 - ii. Zoos provide top quality nutrition and health care
 - iii. Knowledgeable and experienced staff provide expert care to giraffe herds including positive reinforcement training so they can be volunteers in their own medical care (ie hoof care)

World Giraffe Day (June 21) Action ideas:

10. Ideas for World Giraffe Day or other Zoo wide event days

- Social media-
 - i. Utilize **#standtallforgiraffe**
 - ii. Post blogs
 - iii. Build a page on website that can have a donation or action step link to send people to
 - iv. Instagram frame, Instagram stories
 - v. E-blast before event
 - vi. Facebook event- postings, Facebook Live
 - vii. Photo opportunity- with a mascot, life-size plush, unique spot in or around the giraffe habitat
- Offer guest interactions in or around giraffe habitat. Set up spots/stations with staff/volunteers talking about giraffe.
 - i. Snare/hunting spot
 1. Have sample snares and use with an animal plush to show people how they work. Message how supporting snare removal projects is important not just for giraffe but all animals.
 - ii. Poaching spot
 1. Have biofacts from giraffe, skulls, skin, vertebrae. Message how poaching is affecting wild populations.
 - iii. Feeding spot
 1. Have a wheelbarrow with hay, grain, browse, and giraffe enrichment items. Message how well keepers care for giraffe nutrition & enrichment at the zoo.
 2. Let people help fill feeders/enrichment and raise and lower feeders.
 - iv. Waterhole spot
 1. Have a splay activity or drinking activity. Message how important water is to all.
 - v. Care spot
 1. Show how keepers train giraffe to participate in their own health care. Message how well keeper care for giraffe at the zoo.
 2. Show vet staff working with keeper staff to keep giraffe healthy.
 - vi. Donation spot
 1. Give people an opportunity to give. Message how donations can make a difference to a specific project.
 - a. You can highlight both past projects your zoo has supported for giraffe conservation, and current giraffe conservation needs.
 - vii. Pledge spot
 1. Have banners out for people to sign or thumbprint that they will **#standtallforgiraffe** on social media

- Promote Wildwatch Kenya
 - i. Help review trail camera photos, to identify and count the animals in them. They have tens of thousands of photos to sort through, and only a few researchers—your (& your guests) assistance will make a huge difference in the success of this project! They will use the results to better understand giraffe ecology and to inform on conservation efforts on the ground, for giraffes and the other species that share their habitat.
 - ii. <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/sandiegozooglobal/wildwatch-kenya>
- Celebrate World Giraffe Week- June 19-23
 - i. Promotion of submissions for Art contest: <https://www.worldgiraffeweek.org/art-contest>
 - ii. Share educational materials with kids, teachers, school groups, zoo camps <https://www.worldgiraffeweek.org/education>
 - iii. Visit a zoo this week and say hello to a giraffe
 - iv. Share #standtallforgiraffe on social media
- Read a Giraffe themed book
 - i. Storytelling time
 - ii. Sell giraffe themed books in gift shops with % of proceeds going towards giraffe conservation
- Stilts walk
 - i. Build stilts and let people try being at giraffe level
 - ii. Have different heights for small to big kids to try
 - iii. Invite stilt walkers to event
- Craft projects
 - i. Giraffe tongues- use socks for kids to make a tongue puppet. Have kids reach into feed buckets filled with shredded paper to pull out prizes/candy.
 - ii. Build a giraffe with paper plates, paper tubes, pipe cleaners, googly eyes, glue, non-toxic paint, paper bags
 - iii. Bead jewelry station- create giraffe theme necklaces/bracelets for a fee. Look at The Bead Company in Kenya.
- Special keeper chat, enrichment or training demo. Challenge entire animal staff to talk about giraffe at all chats throughout the zoo.
- Provide behind the scenes tours of giraffe barn allowing keepers to talk about how they care for giraffe.
- Create individualized for your zoo herd trading cards with individual stats, action steps, identification charts
- Art contest- host an art contest where the winners would be displayed on zoo grounds. Winner(s) get to meet giraffe behind the scenes.
- Pledge posters- have people use thumbprints for pledge. Tell story of uniqueness and similarities between us and giraffe.
- Partner/pen pal with a school in Africa and a local school. Facilitate the connection between the schools.
- Monitors on grounds- show videos from conservation organizations (GCF, Black Mambas, Operation Twiga) in places where guests have a chance to sit/watch/listen.

- Partner with Zoo Food/Retail or local brewery and host a Longnecks for Longnecks beer event.
- Encourage guests to wear giraffe print to event, give discount if they participate.
- Facilitate a giraffe parade led by a giraffe mascot around or through giraffe area, incorporate a costume contest.
- Jeans for Giraffe- have denim donation drives. More to come on this.

Misc. ideas:

11. Other good ideas but at this time do not have a direct connection to giraffe other than funds going to projects

- Gift card recycling
 - i. Collect used gift cards and take them to Best Buy or any place that can recycle them properly. In 2012, the global card industry produced 33 billion gift cards. Most of those cards are made of PVC, which poses serious environmental risks. According to the [Center for the Environment, Health and Justice](#), the manufacturing of PVC results in elevated human exposure to chemicals in the form of high amounts of toxic additives. These additives are released during use and disposal. Moreover, dumping gift cards along with other forms of PVC causes those toxic additives to leach into the groundwater. In addition, landfill fires release dioxin, a chemical used in PVC, which is a toxic gas.
- Partner with local restaurants to receive percentage of proceeds towards giraffe conservation. Ex. Rubios, Panda Express, Chipotle

Collaborators:

12. Conservation organizations collaborations to date with AZA facilities:

- Kenya:
 - i. Giraffe Conservation Foundation
 - ii. Save Giraffes Now
 - iii. Kenya Wildlife Service
 - iv. Twiga Walinzi
 - v. Northern Rangelands Trust
 - vi. Loisaba Conservancy- Laikipia
 - vii. Lewa-Borana Wildlife Conservancy
 - viii. Namunyak Conservancy
 - ix. The Nature Conservancy
 - x. Sahara Camp
 - xi. Senckenberg Biodiversity & Climate Research Centre.
 - xii. Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute
- Tanzania:
 - i. Giraffe Conservation Foundation
 - ii. Save Giraffes Now
 - iii. Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute
 - iv. Black Mambas
 - v. Tanzania National Parks
- Uganda
 - i. Giraffe Conservation Foundation
 - ii. Save Giraffes Now
 - iii. Uganda Wildlife Authority
 - iv. Uganda Wildlife Education Centre
 - v. Care for Karamoja



World Giraffe Day 2023 – Additional GCF Resources & Messages

Giraffe Conservation Foundation's 2023 World Giraffe Day celebrations are dedicated to restoring giraffe to Mozambique.

GCF's main messages are:

- There are ~117,000 giraffe remaining in the wild – that is 1 giraffe for every 3-4 elephant in Africa.
- In the last 300 years, giraffe have lost almost 90% of their natural habitat – habitat loss is the main threat to giraffe.
- GCF is helping to reverse this trend by bringing giraffe back into areas where they have gone locally extinct or only occur in low numbers. Mozambique is a great example! Years of civil unrest have driven giraffe to the brink of extinction. Today, there are only 250 giraffe left in the country.
- We have now set everything in motion to bring giraffe back to Mozambique in a big way! We're planning our most ambitious giraffe translocations EVER! Over the next 5 years, together with the Mozambique government and our partners, we are going to move over 350 giraffe to four key areas in the country: Zinave and Banhine National Parks, Maputo Special Reserve and Karingani Game Reserve. You can read more about our Mozambique Programme here.
- This series of translocations will more than double the population, re-establish southern giraffe within their historic range and open over 3 million acres of prime habitat for giraffe to thrive!
- World Giraffe Day 2022 is dedicated to this ambitious operation and we need your help!
- To find out more, visit the [WGD website](#).
- GCF founded WGD celebrations. You can find some great ideas on how to celebrate on the [GCF website](#).

World Giraffe Day 2023 – Additional Resources:

- <https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/sandiegozooglobal/wildwatch-kenya>
- <https://savegiraffesnow.org/get-involved/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/AZAungulates/>
- World Giraffe Day 5K
 - To run: <https://runsignup.com/Race/TX/PilotPoint/WorldGiraffeDay5K>
 - To donate: <https://runsignup.com/.../TX/PilotPoint/WorldGiraffeDay5K>