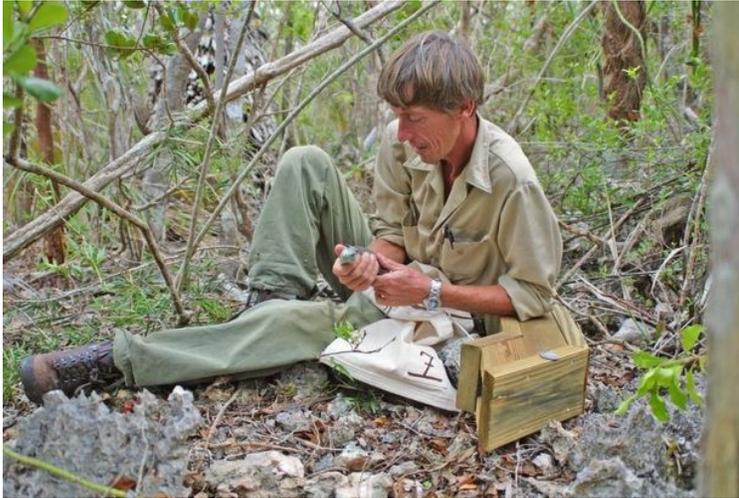


Indianapolis Zoo announces 39 nominees for coveted 2014 conservation award

Written by Shari Rudavsky
Aug. 28, 2013 |

indystar.com



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Steven Amstrup of Polar Bears International won the Indianapolis Prize in 2012.

Past Indianapolis Prize winners

2006: George Archibald the co-founder of the

International Crane Foundation.2008: George Schaller, senior conservationist for the [Wildlife Conservation Society](#).**2010:** Iain Douglas-Hamilton, founder of [Save the Elephants](#) and pioneer of research in elephant social behavior.**2012:** Steven Amstrup of [Polar Bears International](#).

In alphabetical order, the nominees for the 2014 Indianapolis Prize are:**Joel Berger:** (Wildlife Conservation Society) Distinguished scientist leading projects including pronghorn antelope migration corridor conservation, impacts of energy development on wildlife in Greater Yellowstone, impacts of climate change on musk ox in the Alaskan Arctic, and saiga antelope conservation in Mongolia.**Christophe Boesch:** (Max Planck Institute of Evolutionary Anthropology) Primatologist dedicated to decreasing pressure on wild chimpanzees, providing alternatives to bush-meat and applying new technology to great apes conservation.**Sheila Bolin:** (The Regal Swan Foundation, Inc.) Advocate for humane treatment and veterinary care for swans worldwide through conservation, research, veterinary medicine, education and swan-related product development.**Patrick Burchfield:** (Gladys Porter Zoo) Persistent defender of Kemp's ridley sea turtles against impossible odds; restored turtle nests and hatchlings released into the Gulf of Mexico by more than 3,000 percent since 1985.**Fred Burton:** (Blue Iguana Recovery Programme) Internationally-known director of an integrated conservation program for the endangered Grand Cayman Blue Iguana; successfully brought the species back from Critically Endangered status on the IUCN Red List in 2012.**Gerardo Ceballos:** (Instituto de Ecología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) Champion for jaguars in Mexico, conducting the first country-level jaguar census and the most comprehensive jaguar study to date. Finalist for the 2010 Indianapolis Prize.**Wendy Collinson:** (The Endangered Wildlife Trust) Passionate researcher and campaigner for the Roadkill Research and Mitigation Project; responsible for driving initiatives, international road ecology workshops, and action plans that address the recognized threat of roads to biodiversity in South Africa.**Andrew**

Conolly: (African Lion and Environmental Research Trust) Cattle and wildlife rancher turned lion conservationist; founder of the four-stage African Lion Rehabilitation and Release into the Wild Program to secure a future for Africa's most iconic species. **Lisa Dabek:** (Papua New Guinea Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program, Woodland Park Zoo) Founder of the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program; responsible for the first Conservation Area in Papua New Guinea; used Crittercam technology for the first time on arboreal mammals, allowing scientists to record animal behavior through mounted video cameras and transmitters. **Johannes Fritz:** (Waldrappteam) Tireless advocate of the critically endangered Waldrapp Ibis and founder of the Waldrapp team project to re-establish the bird in its historic migration range from Bavaria to Italy. **Biruté Mary Galdikas:** (Orangutan Foundation International) More than 35 years of advancing research on wild orangutan ecology and behavior; established rehabilitation and release programs and saved millions of acres of tropical rain forest in Borneo. **Jane Goodall:** (The Jane Goodall Institute) First anthropologist to observe tool-making in primates, now inspires action on behalf of endangered species, particularly chimpanzees, while encouraging people to do their part to make the world a better place for people, animals, and the environment. **Helen Hays:** (American Museum of Natural History) Acclaimed ornithologist working on Great Gull Island to restore its population of Roseate Terns to the largest concentration in the western hemisphere. **Denver Holt:** (Owl Research Institute) One of the world's leading owl biologists; founder of the Owl Research Institute and the Ninepipes Wildlife Research Center. **Rodney Jackson:** (Snow Leopard Conservancy) Conducted in-depth radio-tracking studies of snow leopards since the 1980s; dedicated to building local communities' capacity as key players in conserving the species. Finalist for the 2008, 2010 and 2012 Indianapolis Prize. **Christopher Jenkins:** (The Orianna Society) Founder of the Orianna Society, dedicating numerous years to snakes, one of the most vilified and persecuted group of animals in the world. **Carl Jones:** (Mauritian Wildlife Foundation) Biologist who pioneered the techniques of applied population management to reverse the decline highly endangered species; instrumental in the creation of the first national park in Mauritius; involved in the recovery of five bird species coming from populations of less than ten specimens. Finalist for the 2012 Indianapolis Prize. **Stephen Kress:** (National Audubon Society) Widely respected ornithologist and expert in seabird conservation; known as "The Puffin Man" because of his extraordinary success leading Audubon's Project Puffin in Maine. **Amanda Lollar:** (Bat World Sanctuary) Established Bat World Sanctuary, the largest rehabilitation facility in the world dedicated exclusively to bats. Created the first nutritionally-sound diet for debilitated bats. **Patricia Majluf:** (Universidad Peruna Cayetano Heredia) Almost single handedly led marine conservation efforts in Peru, through political unrest, countless governments and systemic corruption; improved industrial fishery practices and initiated campaign for the use of anchoveta as a protein source for Peru's malnourished people. **Laurie Marker:** (Cheetah Conservation Fund) Founded the Cheetah Conservation Fund, leading a conservation program from humble beginnings in rural Namibia to an unparalleled model for predator conservation. Finalist for the 2008 and 2010 Indianapolis Prize. **Nick Marx:** (Wildlife Alliance) Revolutionized the rescue, care and rehabilitation of wild animals in Southeast Asia, risking his life many times and disrupting illegal wildlife trafficking by more than 75 percent. **Stephen McCulloch:** (Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution) Created legislation to fund several ongoing marine mammal research and conservation programs while working to construct the first teaching marine mammal hospital, science and education center. **Patricia Medici:** (IUCN Tapir Specialist Group) An unsung conservation hero with over 20 years experience conducting field work on tapirs and other wildlife species; founding member of the Institute for Ecological Research, the most respected and effective conservation NGO in Brazil. **Charudutt Mishras:** (Snow Leopard Trust & Nature Conservation Foundation) Conservation biologist working to protect threatened species and habitats throughout Central Asia, with a focus on the charismatic and endangered snow leopard. **Russell Mittermeier:** (Conservation

International) Visionary leader able to motivate every level of conservationist to support the greater good of many species, including primates; one of the first academic primatologists to become concerned with the welfare and conservation of primates. Finalist for the 2012 Indianapolis Prize. **Attaullah Pandrani:** (Save the Nature Organization) Marine biologist striving to improve nesting conditions of Pakistani sea turtles, protect mangrove trees as a natural habitat, and reduce hunting and trapping threats. **Michael Phillips:** (Turner Endangered Species Fund) Montana state senator and co-founder of the Turner Endangered Species Fund; working to restore imperiled mammals, birds, fishes, amphibians, and plants with an emphasis on wolf recovery. **Nicolas Pilcher:** (Marine Research Foundation) Founder and executive director of the Marine Research Foundation, working to further the understanding of marine ecosystems and their functions, and conserve the abundance and diversity of marine flora and fauna through research, conservation and education activities. **Gay Reinartz:** (Zoological Society of Milwaukee) Internationally recognized for her work on behalf of the bonobo in both the wild and captivity, working tirelessly to protect and conserve this endangered great ape that is found only in the remote heartland of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). **Carl Safina:** (Blue Ocean Institute) Brought ocean conservation into the environmental mainstream by using science, art and literature to inspire a “sea ethic.” Finalist for the 2010 Indianapolis Prize. **Joel D. Sartore:** (National Geographic Magazine) Renowned photojournalist with mission to give vanishing species and habitats a voice before they’re gone forever; co-founder of The Grassland Foundation. **John Seidensticker:** (Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute) Pioneered the use of radio telemetry to study cougars in North America and was co-leader of the team that captured and radio-tracked the first wild tigers in Nepal; dedicated to tiger science and conservation for nearly 40 years. **Claudio Sillero:** (Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme, University of Oxford) Founder and executive director of the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme, keeping watch over Africa’s rarest and most endangered carnivore. **Tara Stoinski:** (Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International and Zoo Atlanta) One of the world’s foremost experts in gorilla behavior and cognition, with over 13 years of dual-expertise in wild and zoo-housed populations. **Ronald Swaisgood:** (Institute for Conservation Research, Zoological Society of San Diego) Trained field biologist serving San Diego Zoo Global as director of applied animal ecology, overseeing recovery programs for species such as California condors, burrowing owls, Caribbean rock iguanas, mountain yellow-legged frogs, giant pandas, rhinoceros, kangaroo rats, and Pacific pocket mice. **Randall Wells:** (Sarasota Dolphin Research Program, Chicago Zoological Society) Program director of the Sarasota Dolphin Research Program, the world’s longest-running study of a wild dolphin population. **Romulus Whitaker:** (Madras Crocodile Bank & Centre for Herpetology) Devoted four decades of work to studying and conserving diverse reptiles and reversing both public and governmental opinion to one demanding conservation and appreciation. **Patricia Wright:** (Institute for the Conservation of Tropical Environments, Stony Brook University) Discovered the golden bamboo lemur in 1986, a species that was then unknown to science, which helped to catalyze the transformation of Madagascar’s park systems, turning it into a model for global conservation efforts. Finalist for the 2012 Indianapolis Prize. Source: Indianapolis Zoo

The Indianapolis Zoo on Wednesday announced 39 nominees for its 2014 coveted Indianapolis Prize, a biennial award that comes with the Lilly Medal, a \$250,000 purse and a priceless dose of status.

This year’s field, the largest of qualified nominees that the zoo has seen since it first awarded the prize in 2006, includes those who study orangutans, tigers, swans and bats, as well as many other members of the animal kingdom.

One of the prime goals of zoo officials when they devised the [prize](#) more than eight years ago was to provide future winners a platform from which to advocate for their causes.

“There’s now pretty much a universal understanding in conservation circles that the Indianapolis Prize is the Nobel Prize of animal conservation,” said Michael Crowther, president and CEO of the Indianapolis Zoo. “If you’re a wildlife conservationist, you want to win this thing.”

The money doesn’t hurt either. This year for the first time, the prize, supported in large part by the [Eli Lilly and Co. Foundation](#), has increased to \$250,000 in recognition of the fact the original \$100,000 didn’t go that far, Crowther said.

In addition, for the first time this year, the five finalists will receive \$10,000. A nominating committee of nine will whittle down the nearly 40 names to six by February. Another group, the jury, will choose the winner, to be announced in June.

Steven Amstrup of [Polar Bears International](#), last year’s winner, still cannot get over the fact that he got the call.

“Winning the Indianapolis Prize was the most humbling experience in my career,” he said. “That additional recognition translates into a little taller pulpit that I can use to deliver my message.”

Contact Star reporter Shari Rudavsky at (317) 444-6354 or on www.twitter.com/srudavsky or www.facebook.com/sharirudavsky.

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This prize likely led to another honor, Amstrup said, the “Our Earth” award at the [Bambi Awards](#), a German version of the Oscars. Aside from the added cachet that brought, said Amstrup, it’s likely the only time he will share a stage with Celine Dion.

As for the money, Amstrup has donated some. Some has gone to offset the unpaid work he does for his organization, from which he receives a part-time salary.

By not restricting the use of funds, the prize allows winners to use their imaginations, Crowther said. Iain Douglas-Hamilton, who won the award in 2010 for his work with [Save the Elephants](#), used part of his money to open a health-care clinic near his elephant-watch camp in Kenya, something he would never have been able to do with a traditional grant. The clinic, however, helped him win over locals to his cause — and improve their health.

Such efforts may seem far removed from the grounds of the Indianapolis Zoo, but that’s precisely what zoo officials envisioned when they pitched the idea of a prize to the Lilly Foundation.

“If we were going to have the impact we thought we could, we needed to develop new programs to make our efforts work harder and have greater leverage, and the prize has played a major role in that,” Crowther said.

This year’s list of nominees has something for every type of animal lover.

Have a soft spot for dolphins? Nominee Randall Wells of the Chicago Zoological Society also runs the [Sarasota Dolphin Research Program](#), the longest-running study of wild dolphins.

Perhaps you prefer land animals like snow leopards? Two of the nominees, Attaullah Pandrani of Save the Nature Organization and Rodney Jackson of the [Snow Leopard Conservancy](#), work with this endangered animal.

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Winged creatures catch your fancy? You might like the work of Amanda Lollar, who established the Bat World Sanctuary in Mineral Wells, Texas, or Helen Hays of the American Museum of Natural History, who works with roseate terns on Great Gull Island in New York's Long Island Sound.

Many of the nominees have been through it before, including Jackson.

This prize, he says, is unparalleled in the field of conservation.

"This is by far the most significant prize in terms of the amount of funds it brings with it, the prestige it brings and the outreach that it has," said Jackson, who has been conducting radio tracking studies of snow leopards for three decades. "There are other prizes here and there ... but this really is a prize that's focused on conservation action in the field for the endangered species of the world."

A number of species could use the increased attention that winning the prize bestows on a cause.

Orangutans, for instance, teeter on the verge of extinction, said Biruté Mary Galdikas, a nominee who has studied this primate for 42 years. The rise of palm oil plantations in Indonesia and Malaysia is destroying the orangutan's natural habitat.

When she first started studying the animal, she was working with one population of about 6,000. At the time, this population was not large or prominent. But because she protected this group as others were wiped out, today it is one of the largest orangutan populations in the world.

"It has gotten so much worse," said Galdikas, founder and president of the [Orangutan Foundation International](#). "I feel like my organization and I have just been putting our finger into the dyke while the water splashes over us."

A \$250,000 award could go to many programs, Galdikas said, such as setting up patrols to guard orangutan habitats or establishing a local school program to increase conservation awareness among the local communities.

While many of the nominees have lofty scientific degrees, others, like Sheila Bolin of Orlando learned on the job about protecting animals at risk. A former law enforcement officer, Bolin first became familiar with swans while working as a tennis pro at a Florida resort.

Now she and her colleagues at the [Regal Swan Foundation](#) are known worldwide as experts on the care of these birds in the wild and in captivity.

Before she was nominated, she had never heard of the award. Now, she said, she's honored to be among those considered.

Besides, there aren't many rewards in the type of work she and the other nominees do.

“If you do any type of wildlife and conservation, good luck,” she said. “There’s not a lot of money in it. I just think about one step at a time. If I can just save one animal at a time, eventually the word will get out.”

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THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR



Today's weather
LOW: 70 HIGH: 90
Our hot streak will
continue for a bit.
Details, B10

buyer's edge

Your Weekly Guide to Smart Shopping
Find our new guide to great savings from local
retailers you know and trust — inside today
and every Thursday!



Enjoy 5 Days of
Great Savings
Thur., Aug 29 - Mon. Sept. 2



Zoo announces 39 nominees for prestigious Indianapolis Prize

SAVING THE ANIMALS

By Shari Rudavsky
shari.rudavsky@indystar.com

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One of the prime goals of zoo officials when they devised the prize more than eight years ago was to provide future winners a platform from which to advocate for their causes.

» See ANIMALS, Page A8



CIB budget calls for \$21 million for Pacers

Deal with team is still in negotiations

By Jon Murray
jon.murray@indystar.com

Taxpayers should expect to continue paying subsidies to the Indiana Pacers to offset the team's operating costs at Bankers Life Fieldhouse for at least another year — and probably longer.

Though Indianapolis city leaders and the Pacers still are locked in negotiations over a long-term deal, hints of a developing agreement emerged Wednesday when the Capital Improvement Board unveiled next year's proposed budget. As "placeholders," the CIB's 2014 budget in-

WHAT'S NEXT?

The Capital Improvement Board's budget is set for its first public hearing before the City-County Council's Municipal Corporations Committee on Sept. 12, with a vote and any amendments likely on Oct. 3. The council plans final votes on all city/county budgets Oct. 14.

cludes an \$11 million payment to the Pacers to offset operating costs. It adds \$10 million for still-unspecified building or equipment upgrades at the fieldhouse.

That's \$21 million for the first year of a deal whose total costs and terms still are being negotiated out of public view.

» See PACERS, Page A10

IN TODAY'S STAR

DEATH SENTENCE IN FORT HOOD CASE

Army psychiatrist who killed 13 in shooting spree would be first military execution since 1961. A2

BISARD DEFENSE DEALT SETBACK IN COURT

Judge won't suppress set of blood test results in fatal crash. B1

IU, BALL STATE SET FOR SEASON OPENERS

Hoosiers look at a must-win year; former Cardinal returns to Muncie. C1, 3

Syrians flee in fear of attack

Some 6,000 cross border to Lebanon

By Albert Aji
and Ryan Lucas
Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria — Fears of a possible U.S. strike against Syria's regime over an alleged chemical weapons attack rippled across the region Wednesday, as about 6,000 Syrians fled to neighboring Lebanon in a 24-hour period and Israelis scrambled for gas masks in case Damascus retaliates

POISON GAS

Victims of an alleged strike by chemical weapons describe what they saw. A7

against them. U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon pleaded for more time for diplomacy and to allow U.N. investigators to complete their work. The experts, wearing flak jackets and helmets, collected blood and urine samples from victims during a visit to at least one of the areas hit in last week's attack.

» See SYRIA, Page A7