



Indianapolis Zoo

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Thomas H. Kunz Nominated for the 2010 Indianapolis Prize

Acclaimed animal conservationist vies for \$100,000 award

INDIANAPOLIS --- Thomas H. Kunz, Ph.D., is one of 29 animal ecologists and conservation biologists nominated to receive the Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation. Kunz, an Independence, Mo., native, has been nominated for more than 40 years of significantly and instrumentally contributing to the conservation and teaching of bat ecology, physiology and behavior. As Professor of Biology and Director of the Center for Ecology and Conservation Biology at Boston University, Kunz is currently playing a key leadership role in searching for a cause and solution to White-nose Syndrome (WNS), a devastating fungal disease that over the past three years has spread to nine states and has affected six species of North American hibernating bats. If unchecked and it manages to spread further into the south and Midwestern U.S., WNS will place some of the largest bat colonies in the world at risk of extinction, with unprecedented ecological and economic impacts on forests and agriculture.

The Indianapolis Prize nominees' work spans the globe, representing a range of species from insects to mammals, and includes amphibians, elephants, bats, wolves and sharks, among many others. The Nominating Committee will review the applications and select the six finalists, who will be announced in the spring of 2010. The Prize Jury will then determine the winner who will be announced in mid-2010 and honored at the next Indianapolis Prize Gala, to be held Sept. 25, 2010, in Indianapolis.

In addition to receiving the \$100,000 Prize, the recipient is also awarded the Lilly Medal, an original work of art that signifies the winner's contributions to conserving some of the world's most threatened animals. The 2008 Indianapolis Prize was awarded to legendary field biologist George Schaller, Ph.D. Schaller's accomplishments span decades and continents, bringing fresh focus to the plight of several endangered species – from tigers in India to gorillas in Rwanda – and inspiring others to join the crusade.

“Following in Schaller's footsteps will not be easy, but we believe the current nominees are exceptional,” said Michael Crowther, CEO of the Indianapolis Zoo, the organization responsible for initiating the conservation award. “These conservationists are all living an adventure that battles the odds, achieves great victories and builds a future worth living in.”

The biennial \$100,000 Indianapolis Prize represents the largest individual monetary award for animal conservation in the world and is given as an unrestricted gift to the chosen honoree. The Indianapolis Prize was initiated by the Indianapolis Zoo as a significant component of its mission to inspire local and global communities and to celebrate, protect and preserve our natural world through conservation, education and research. This award brings the world's attention to the cause of animal conservation and the brave, talented and dedicated men and women who spend their lives saving the Earth's endangered animal species. It was first awarded in 2006 to Dr. George Archibald, the co-founder of the International Crane Foundation and one of the world's great field biologists. In 2008, the Indianapolis Prize went to Dr. George Schaller, the world's preeminent field biologist and vice president of science and exploration for the Wildlife Conservation Society. The Eli Lilly and Company Foundation has provided funding for the Indianapolis Prize since 2006.

-30-

EDITOR'S NOTE: Downloadable jpg images to accompany this story are available on the Indianapolis Prize micro web site at:

<http://www.indianapoliszoo.com/content.aspx?cid=789>.

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Jeff Trandahl

1st add

Indianapolis Prize Nominees Announced

The 29 nominees for the 2010 Indianapolis Prize include:

- **Gerardo Ceballos, Ph.D.:** (Instituto de Ecología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) Leader in designing conservation strategies for endangered species and threatened ecosystems; conducted the first geographically explicit analysis of patterns of population and species extinction in a major taxonomic group (mammals).
- **Nigel Collar, Ph.D.:** (BirdLife International) Researched and compiled a unique and comprehensive dataset on globally threatened bird species that was published in groundbreaking regional Red Data Books worldwide.
- **Iain Douglas-Hamilton, Ph.D.:** (Save the Elephants) Founded Save the Elephants; devotes his life to the cause of elephant conservation – from testifying before Congress to leading anti-poaching aid programs in Africa.
- **Karen Eckert, Ph.D.:** (WIDECAS: Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network) Dedicated to research, multilateral marine resource management and international conservation policy of sea turtles for more than three decades.
- **Ruth M. Elsey, M.D.:** (Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries) Fostered programs to enhance the survivability and sustainability of the American alligator, in addition to parallel efforts for other crocodylians.
- **George Fenwick, Ph.D.:** (American Bird Conservancy) Founded American Bird Conservancy; dedicated to creating and sustaining globally significant biodiversity reserves, tackling policy-based threats to birds and generating funding resources for the biodiversity community.
- **Rodney Fox:** (Rodney Fox Shark Expeditions/Fox Shark Research Foundation) Miracle survivor of one of the world's worst shark attacks; regarded as a world authority on Great White Shark research, observation and conservation.
- **Birute Mary Galdikas, Ph.D.:** (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 Kalimantan.
- **Paul Garber, Ph.D.:** (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) More than 30 years of dedication and commitment to research, conservation and educational programs involving the monkeys of Latin America.
- **Jack Hanna:** (Columbus Zoo and Aquarium) For more than 30 years, has been the public face of zoos, bringing the conservation message to millions of people worldwide; passionately dedicated to Rwanda's endangered animals and its people.
- **Maurice Hornocker, Ph.D.:** (Selway Institute) Devoted his career to understanding the ecological role of wild cats and advocating for the conservation of large carnivores, including the first-ever field investigation of cougars.
- **Rick Hudson:** (Fort Worth Zoo; International Iguana Foundation; IUCN Turtle Survival Alliance) Dedicated advocate for reptile conservation, including groundbreaking work with the Jamaican iguana and the coordination of the largest turtle rescue event in history.
- **Lisa Hywood:** (Tikki Hywood Trust) Worked tirelessly to preserve Zimbabwe's wildlife – including captive breeding, management and monitored release of endangered species and conservation education in under-privileged, rural areas.
- **Rodney Jackson, Ph.D.:** (Snow Leopard Conservancy) Conducted an in-depth radio-tracking study of snow leopards in the 1980s; dedicated to building local communities' capacity as key players in conserving the species.
- **Jana Johnson, M.S., Ph.D.:** (Moorpark College, The Butterfly Project) Founded The Butterfly Project, a center for endangered butterfly propagation and research; helped the Palos Verdes blue butterfly population, once presumed extinct, grow from 200 to 10,000.

2nd add

Indianapolis Prize Nominees Announced

- **James Earl Kennamer, Ph.D.:** (National Wild Turkey Federation) Devoted leader in wild turkey research, scientific wildlife management and forging cooperative conservation partnerships to grow the wild turkey population from 1.3 million to 7 million in less than 30 years.
- **Thomas H. Kunz, Ph.D.:** (Boston University) For more than 50 years, has significantly and instrumentally contributed to the conservation and teaching of bat ecology, physiology and behavior.
- **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.
- **Edward Louis Jr., Ph.D., DVM:** (Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo) Tireless conservation advocate of island biogeography, including the discovery of 30 percent of known lemurs to date.
- **Laurie Marker, D. Phil.:** (Cheetah Conservation Fund) Founded the Cheetah Conservation Fund; led a conservation program from humble beginnings in rural Namibia to an unparalleled model for predator conservation.
- **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.
- **Rodrigo Medellin, Ph.D.:** (University of Mexico) Galvanized bat research throughout Latin America by using a multipronged approach including research, education, population biology, molecular ecology and community involvement.
- **Gregory Rasmussen, Ph.D.:** (Painted Dog Conservation) Diligent advocate of the critically endangered African wild dogs; founder of the Painted Dog Conservation which strives to increase the range and numbers of wild dogs in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa.
- **Patrick T. Redig, DVM, Ph.D.:** (The Raptor Center, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota) Dedicated more than 35 years to protecting raptor populations through extensive field work, bench research, clinical work, professional teaching and community service.
- **Lente Lidia Roode:** (Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre) Established the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre, a nonprofit organization that provides a safe haven for orphaned and sick animals, complete with an education center, rescue unit and breeding program.
- **Patrick Rose:** (Save the Manatee Club) Worked to help educate opponents, build coalitions and focus on specific protection goals for manatees, including protecting the manatee's habitat and advocating for strong growth management laws.
- **Carl Safina, Ph.D.:** (Blue Ocean Institute) Brought ocean conservation into the environmental mainstream by using science, art and literature to inspire "sea ethic."
- **Simon Stuart, Ph.D.:** (IUCN-World Conservation Union) Developed the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, which assesses the extinction risk for species.
- **Amanda Vincent, Ph.D.:** (The University of British Columbia) First person to study seahorses underwater, document extensive trade and initiate a seahorse conservation project, Project Seahorse.