

NEW YORK, NY, October 05, 2013 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Rarely do our days transpire without interacting with an animal. As humans, we share this planet not only with animals, but also the habitats where they exist. October 4th marks another annual celebration of World Animal Day, a day where animal life in all its forms is celebrated.

One of the biggest controversies surrounding wildlife is the idea of a zoo. While zoo have typically operated in the realms of entertainment, as our planet depletes and our skyscrapers go higher, many have turned entertainment into forms of education and conservation.

The Garold Wayne Interactive Zoological Park, founded in 1997 by Francis and Shirley Schreibvogel, houses over 1,400 animals. "We try to keep a variety of animals for visitors to see and learn about," the park's website says. Tour guides lead groups around the park's 54 acres where visitors can learn about the 128 difference species and their habitats, and get close-up to the animals and interact with them.

"The most incredible thing that has come out of our zoo's education program is putting on the shows and doing what we can to educate the public about the awareness of why [animals] are in cages, and what we have to do to help save them in the wild," says Park Entertainer Joe Schreibvogel, also known as Joe Exotic.

Just last month, the zoo raised \$5,000 to help save the African rhinos. The Zoo is also working to replenish rainforests in India, and provide funds for tiger conservation in China.

"Our animals are ambassadors. They speak for the animals of the wild. The more we get involved in conservation and our animals educate the visitors of our zoo, it's just incredible how people will get involved in helping," says Exotic. "We could not do this without animals for visitors to see and touch. You can read about an animal in a book, You can stand 500 feet away to see a tiger at a zoo, but when you have a baby tiger or an animal from another country, whether it's an orangutan, or a spider monkey, sitting in their lap, making that bond for just two minutes, they start to care so much more."

The zoo faces many obstacles including harassment from animal rights groups, who want animals in the wild, yet unfortunately for most animals, their wild habitats are quickly disappearing and Zoos prevent extinction.

Fortunately, for animals like the endangered tiger, there is hope. The Garold Wayne Interactive Zoological Park has the largest number of tigers held in captivity in the United States. According to Joe Exotic, only 3,200 tigers are left in the wild, and due to poachers will not live ten more years. Until there is change, the only safe place for these animals are in zoos.

"The biggest misconception of animals in the zoos, granted none of us want to see animals in cages, is that a cage is too small or unfit for the species family. There are people that are out here doing it right, spending the money, making the proper habitat," states Exotic. "We are consuming our planet's wild habitat and what the general public has got to understand that this is the only way were going to save some of our species of animals that their kids and grandkids see, and are not just going to read about in a book."

Never turning down a rescue, the zoo continues to fight to save a wide range of species. According to Joe Exotic, sole purpose of the park is saving lives and educating the public, not profit.

To become involved in the zoos efforts you may visit <http://gwzoo.org> or email info@gwpark.org for more information.