



## Indianapolis Zoo

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Bob Johnson Nominated for the Indianapolis Prize *Acclaimed animal conservationist vies for \$100,000 award*

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**INDIANAPOLIS** --- Bob Johnson is one of 29 animal conservationists nominated to receive the Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation. Johnson, a Toronto resident and curator of amphibians and reptiles for the Toronto Zoo, has been nominated for his work with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Species Survival Commission's (SSC) Declining Amphibians Task Force. He has led projects associated with massasauga rattlesnake, Puerto Rican crested toad, and the conservation of urban amphibians and reptiles and the habitats that sustain them. Johnson also empowered Canadian citizens to conserve and restore wetland habitats through the Adopt-A-Pond program.

Indianapolis Prize nominees' work spans the globe, representing a range of species from amphibians to zebras, and includes elephants, tigers, wolves and whales, among many others. The Nominating Committee is reviewing the applications and will select the six finalists, who will be announced in early 2008. The Prize Jury will then determine the winner who will be honored at the next Indianapolis Prize Gala, held September 28, 2008, 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 Indianapolis Prize was first awarded in 2006 to Dr. George Archibald, co-founder of the International Crane Foundation, who, through his decades of work, has contributed significantly to the preservation of the world's 15 surviving species of cranes.

"While the task of selecting the finalists and ultimately a winner of the Indianapolis Prize will be challenging, we are pleased with the caliber of the nominees," said Michael Crowther, CEO of the Indianapolis Zoo, the organization responsible for initiating the conservation award. "All have shown tremendous dedication to preserving and protecting fragile species, some of which owe their continued existence to these extraordinary conservationists."

*The Indianapolis Prize was initiated by the Indianapolis Zoo as a significant component of its mission to inspire local and global communities to celebrate, protect, and preserve our natural world through conservation, education and research. This biennial 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.*

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**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>.**

## Fact Sheet

Indianapolis Prize Nominees

September 2007

The 29 nominees for the 2008 Indianapolis Prize include:

- **Greg Bossart, V.M.D., Ph.D.:** (Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution) Dedicated more than 25 years to improving wildlife health, spanning from birds of prey to dolphins and manatees.
- **Ian Craig:** (Lewa Wildlife Conservancy and Northern Rangelands) Mobilized enormous resources for security at a grassroots level in totally lawless areas in Kenya, enabling conservation areas to grow and thrive.
- **Michael Cranfield, D.V.M.:** (Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project, Inc.) Established programs to increase training and capacity of veterinary care and management of the mountain gorillas in Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Director of Research and Conservation at The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore.
- **Lisa Dabek, Ph.D.:** (Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle) Spearheaded the first research and habitat preservation efforts in Papua New Guinea's Huon Peninsula.
- **Michael Fay, Ph.D.:** (National Geographic Society/Wildlife Conservation) Established several national parks in Central Africa.
- **Johannes Fritz, Ph.D.:** (Zoo Vienna) Tireless advocate of the critically endangered Waldrapp Ibis and founder of the Waldrappteam.at project to establish the bird back into parts of its extinct migration ranges.
- **Elizabeth Gadsby:** (Drill Rehabilitation & Breeding Center, Nigeria) Established Drill Rehabilitation & Breeding Center, considered the world's most successful captive breeding program for an endangered primate.
- **Iain Douglas-Hamilton, Ph.D.:** (Save the Elephants) Founded Save the Elephants; devotes his life to the causes of elephant conservation – from testifying before Congress to leading anti-poaching aid programs in Africa.
- **John Hart, Ph.D.:** (Wildlife Conservation Society) Developed Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) to inventory elephants in Africa; expanded to monitoring of other species.
- **Rodney Jackson, Ph.D.:** (Snow Leopard Conservancy) Conducted the leading in-depth radio-tracking study of snow leopards in the 1980s; dedicated to building local communities' capacity as key players in conserving the species.
- **Jaime Jimenez, Ph.D.:** (Universidad de Las Lagos, Chile) Rediscovered the short-tailed chinchillas once thought extinct in the wild.
- **Bob Johnson:** (Toronto Zoo) Dedicated more than 35 years to amphibian and reptile conservation and stewardship; empowered Canadian citizens to conserve and restore wetland habitat through the Adopt-A-Pond program.
- **Ullas Karanth, Ph.D.:** (Wildlife Conservation Society) Spent decades championing the cause of tigers, wildlands and wildlife science in his native India.
- **Gerald Kuchling, Ph.D.:** (University of Western Australia) significantly and instrumentally contributed to the conservation and recovery of three of the world's 25 most endangered turtles.
- **Robert Lacy, Ph.D.:** (Chicago Zoological Society) Created software to understand the influence of environmental, demographic and genetic factors on the probability of extinction of threatened species.
- **Laurie Marker, Ph.D.:** (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.

- **David Mech, Ph.D.:** (Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geologic Survey) Leading authority on the wolf; supports wolf recovery in many countries throughout the world.
- **Don Merton, QSM; (Hon) DSc.:** (New Zealand Department of Conservation) Pioneered recovery techniques and over the past 50 years has led the rescue and recovery of some of New Zealand's – and the world's – most endangered birds, including the Saddleback, Black robin and Kakapo parrot.
- **Russell Mittermeier, Ph.D.:** (Conservation International) Dedicated life to understanding and educating others about the worldwide threat to biodiversity.
- **Roger Payne, Ph.D.:** (The Ocean Alliance) Devoted more than 40 years to the study and protection of whales.
- **George Rabb:** (Chicago Zoological Society) Forged the mission of the modern zoo as true conservation organizations; dedicated to confronting the current amphibian crisis.
- **Alan Rabinowitz, Ph.D.:** (World Conservation Society) Traveled the world to research and protect jaguars, tigers and leopards; established world's first jaguar sanctuary, world's largest tiger reserve and Myanmar's first Marine National Park; created range-wide conservation strategy, "Connecting the Dots," to save tigers, jaguars and lions.
- **Ted Reilly:** (Big Game Parks of the Kingdom of Swaziland) Spent the past 51 years in game park development and management; donated his family's property to establish Swaziland's first game reserve.
- **Carl Safina, Ph.D.:** (Blue Ocean Institute) Brought ocean conservation into the environmental mainstream.
- **George Schaller:** (Wildlife Conservation Society) Worked throughout the world with a variety of species; rediscovered two species, Vietnamese warty pig and Tibetan red deer, once thought extinct.
- **Simon Stuart, Ph.D.:** (IUCN-World Conservation Union) Developed the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria, which assesses the extinction risk for species.
- **Raman Sukumar, Ph.D.:** (Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science) Extensive research on Asian elephants recognized internationally; provides scientific basis for conservation programs across Asia.
- **David Wingate:** (Bermuda Zoological Society) Brought the Bermuda petrel or Cahow back from the brink of extinction over a 40-year period.