



*Photo courtesy Piedmont Farm Animal Refuge*



Global Federation of  
Animal Sanctuaries

# 2023 Annual Report



*Photo courtesy Rustic  
Acres Wildcat Rescue*



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

recognizing the power and commitment of true sanctuaries worldwide

Dear Friends,

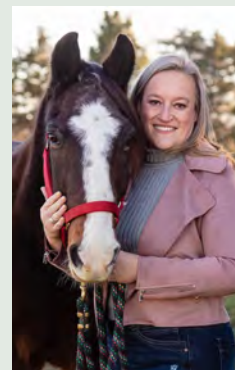
Reflecting on the accomplishments and milestones of the past year fills me with immense pride and gratitude for the unwavering dedication and commitment of true sanctuaries around the world. Each day, these remarkable organizations demonstrate their passion for animal welfare and their tireless efforts to provide refuge, rehabilitation, and lifelong care for animals in need.

At the heart of every true sanctuary lies a team of compassionate caregivers, veterinarians, educators, and volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of the animals under their care. Their commitment knows no bounds, as they selflessly devote themselves to the cause of providing sanctuary to those who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned.

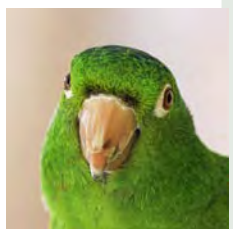
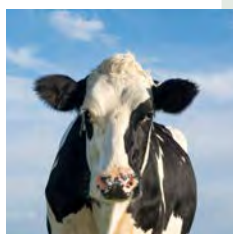
The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries is proud of our work over the past year to support sanctuaries, rescues, rehabilitation, and transition centers. No matter the task, from ensuring the physical, behavioral and social needs of animals are met through our sanctuary accreditation program to promoting how sanctuaries are vital to education and advocacy efforts, we are always guided by our core belief that recognizing and differentiating the work of true sanctuaries is integral to protecting the animals who depend on the success of these organizations.

As we look to the year ahead, let us continue to stand in solidarity with these heroes of the animal welfare movement - true sanctuaries. I hope you will join us in recognizing and celebrating their invaluable contributions, and partner with us, at GFAS, as we reaffirm our commitment to supporting their vital work.

On behalf of the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, I extend my deepest gratitude to our partners and collaborators, supporters and donors, our staff, Board, and volunteers, and most importantly, our true sanctuaries worldwide. Your dedication, your compassion, and your unwavering commitment are truly an inspiration to us all.



GFAS Executive Director Valerie Taylor



*Valerie Taylor*  
Valerie Taylor  
Executive Director

## OUR MISSION:

To accredit and recognize sanctuaries and rescue centers, support them to achieve the highest Standards of Excellence, promote collaboration, and raise awareness of their work.



# OUR PEOPLE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Allan E. Kornberg, MD Chair**  
*Director since 2012*  
Nutrition for Families,  
Executive Director  
Farm Sanctuary, Former Executive  
Director

**Kim Haddad, DVM, Vice-Chair Director**  
*since 2007*  
VCA San Mateo and San Carlos  
Animal Hospitals, Medical  
Director/Veterinarian

**Jill Nicoll, Secretary**  
*Director since 2018*  
Association of Zoos and Aquariums,  
Former COO

**Bill Nimmo, Treasurer**  
*Director since 2015*  
Tigers In America, President

**Sue Leary**  
*Director since 2008*  
American Anti-Vivisection Society and  
Alternatives Research Development  
Corporation, President

**Katie Moore**  
*Director since 2017*  
International Fund for Animal Welfare,  
Deputy Vice President-Animal Rescue

**Melissa Rubin**  
*Director since 2018*  
Greater Good Charities, Chief Strategy  
Officer

**Daryl Tropea**  
*Director since 2022*  
GFAS Program Director Equine  
2011-2021  
Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation -  
Director

**Wim DeKok**  
*Director since 2023*  
World Federation for Animals, Vice  
President

*Organizational affiliations are for  
informational purposes only.*

## GFAS STAFF

**Valerie Taylor, Executive Director**

**Robin Mason, Director of Operations**

**Traci Hanson, Program Director-Equine**

**Jessica Harris, Program Director-Farmed Animals**

**Kristin Leppert, Program Director-Wildlife**



*Photo courtesy Redwings Horse Sanctuary*



*Photo courtesy Project Chimps*

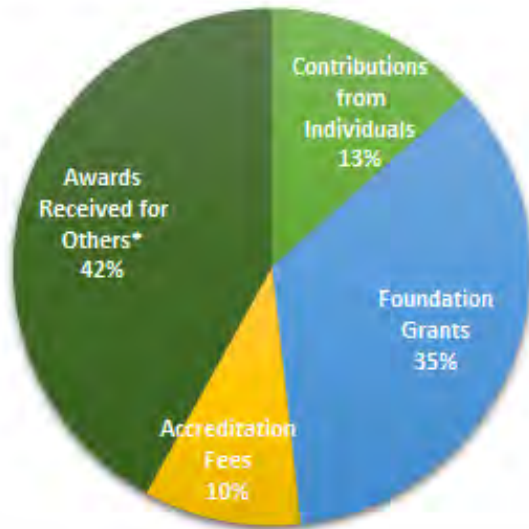
## THANK YOU!

GFAS is extremely grateful for our volunteers and partners who help us to conduct our accreditation program and related services. Our volunteers serve in diverse roles, participating on our Accreditation and Award Committees; conducting site visits to sanctuaries; assisting with data collection; and enhancing marketing, communications and fundraising efforts. This generous contribution of time, dedication, and expertise is incredible and greatly appreciated!

# FINANCIALS

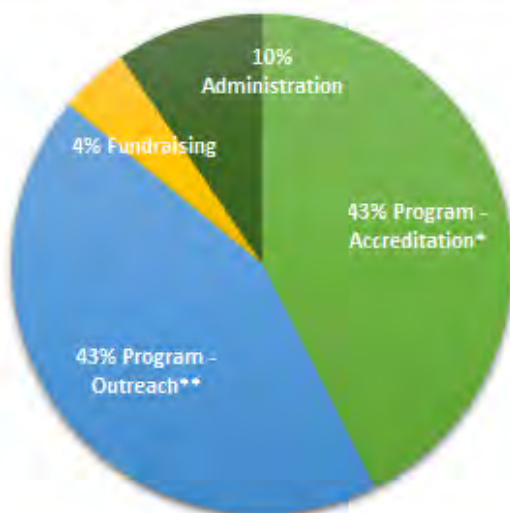
For year ending December 31, 2023. Access our most recent, complete audited financials on the GFAS website: <https://sanctuaryfederation.org/about-gfas/financials/>

## 2023 Revenue



\*Awards received for others includes funds received by GFAS as contributions to be distributed to designated sanctuaries consistent with the donor's intent.

## 2023 Expenses



\*Including \$17,500 in targeted assistance distributed to sanctuaries through the Adam Roberts True Sanctuary Fund

\*\*Including \$196,220 in prize funds and support raised and distributed to sanctuaries as a part of the annual Giving Day for Apes event

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 FOUNDATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORTERS !

American Anti-Vivisection Society  
Anonymous Giving  
Arcus Foundation  
ASPCA  
David Bohnett Foundation  
EQUUS Foundation  
Greater Good Charities  
Humane Society of the United States  
International Fund for Animal Welfare  
Tangram Insurance  
Tigers in America

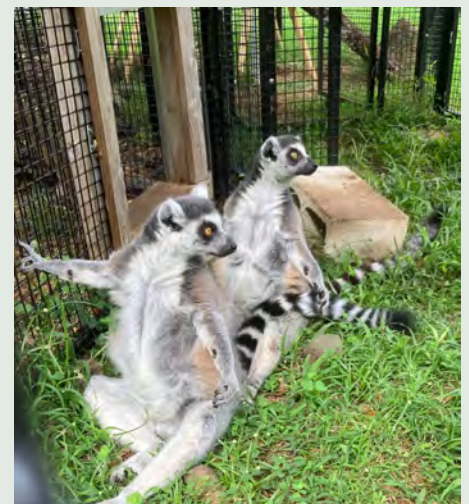


Photo courtesy Three Ring Ranch

# ACCREDITATION

## Congratulations to our newly Accredited and Verified organizations in 2023:

- February Star Sanctuary, *Maryland*, U.S.
- Lwiro Primates Rehabilitation Centre, *Democratic Republic of the Congo*, Africa
- Luvins Arms Animal Sanctuary, *Colorado*, U.S.
- On Golden Rescue, *Oregon*, U.S.
- P.E.A.C.E. Farm Sanctuary, *British Columbia*, Canada
- Second Chance Thoroughbreds, *New York*, U.S.
- Lakeview Monkey Sanctuary, *Berkshire*, England
- Karoo Donkey Sanctuary, *Plettenberg Bay*, South Africa
- Blackbird Ranch Farm Sanctuary, *Washington*, U.S.
- Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation-Pleasant Valley, *California*, U.S.
- Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation-Central Maryland State Farm, *Maryland*, U.S.

## Sea Change for Captive Whales and Dolphins



In a defining moment for the future of captive cetaceans across the globe, GFAS announced the creation of the first ever set of Standards of Excellence for cetacean (whales and dolphins) sanctuaries.

GFAS Standards for sanctuaries that care for land animals have been in place for many years. The establishment of Standards for cetacean sanctuaries was a clear next-step; whales and dolphins are highly intelligent, wide-ranging, socially complex cultural beings, whose species-specific needs simply cannot be met confined to concrete tanks in entertainment parks and aquariums. Such captive facilities are associated with a shockingly high animal mortality rate, as cetaceans need space to travel and depth to dive, the opportunity to live in a rich, supportive social network of friends and family, the ability to explore a dynamic environment filled with interesting objects and other animals, and the ability to make their own choices daily. Thankfully, public opinion has turned against keeping cetaceans in captivity and seaside sanctuaries for whales and dolphins retiring from marine parks and aquariums are now being created.

These new Standards are the product of GFAS's pioneering collaboration with top cetacean experts at the SEA LIFE TRUST, Merlin Entertainments, The Whale Sanctuary Project and the National Aquarium, as well as more than 30 expert contributors and reviewers from around the world.

As of December 31, 2023:



## 2023 Accreditation Snapshot



11 NEW GFAS CERTIFICATIONS

Newly accredited and verified organizations

24 RENEWALS

Renewals of accredited and verified status

65 NEW APPLICATIONS

Number of new applications initiated from sanctuaries and rescue centers



60 SITE VISITS

Site visits conducted in North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia





## The Donkey Sanctuary of Canada

Ontario, Canada



*Photo courtesy The Donkey Sanctuary of Canada*

The 2023 recipient of the GFAS Outstanding Equine Sanctuary Award, the Donkey Sanctuary of Canada (DSC) was founded in 1992 and has since rescued more than 325 animals from neglect, abuse, and other challenging situations. The DSC provides medical care, rehabilitation, and a safe environment for the animals to recover physically and emotionally.

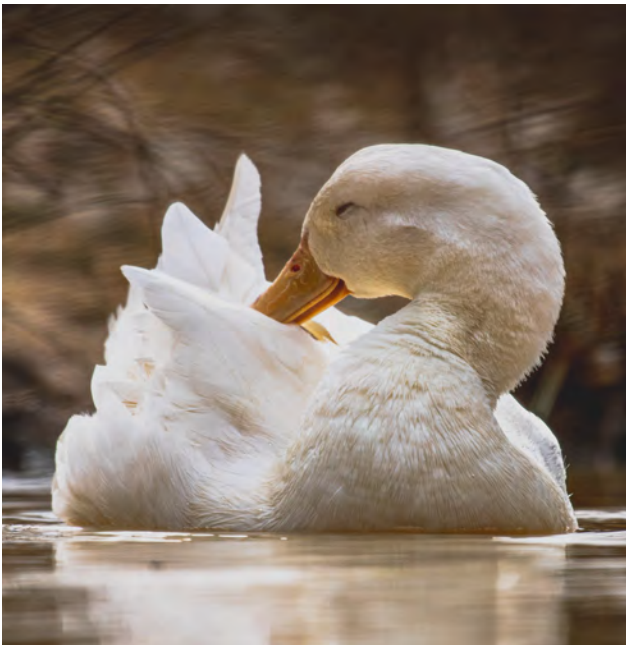
The DSC extends its reach through a Foster Farm network which makes it possible to care for more donkeys. Foster Farms are carefully vetted for suitability and supported with a wealth of information to help guide them. Donkeys remain under the ownership of the Donkey Sanctuary of Canada and can return to the Sanctuary at any time. The DSC also has an extensive Learning Centre, with displays and information designed to engage visitors in learning about the history, care, and unique characteristics of equines. Knowledgeable tour guides provide informative, educational experiences for school groups and other visitors and quarterly newsletters provide educational information and updates.

The DSC is transparent about operations, including financial practices and the care provided to the animals. In addition to opportunities for the public to visit, volunteer, and provide financial support, the DSC website publishes financial statements, annual reports, bylaws and other information. In September 2017, The Donkey Sanctuary of Canada became the first equine sanctuary in Canada to receive accreditation from the GFAS, leading the way by example and commitment to providing the highest standards of care for all equines.

For more information, visit <https://www.thedonkeysanctuary.ca/>

## Piedmont Farm Animal Refuge

North Carolina, U.S.



*Photo courtesy Piedmont Farm Animal Refuge*

The 2023 recipient of the Outstanding Farmed Animal Sanctuary Award, Piedmont Farm Animal Refuge has a striking culture of thoughtfulness and integrity which embodies true sanctuary. They have introduced the concept of true perspective taking when it comes to animals. The literal foundation of the Refuge is centered on the resident's needs and experience – they are notably famous in the sanctuary movement for their “animal-centered design”.

Animal Centered Design means that the sanctuary has based the design of the animal's homes and environment based on what the animals themselves would prefer (to our knowledge), based on their natural history, species-specific preferences, and personality. For example, the goat barns at Piedmont don't look anything like traditional farm structures – this is intentional. This is because they're not designed for humans, they're designed with goat preferences in mind.

Piedmont's integrity doesn't stop at animal care and housing, but extends to their thoughtful eye to ethics and inclusivity, careful consideration of sustainability, and meticulous attention to detail in their work. When you step into the Refuge, there is a sense of quiet, gentleness, and intention. It has indeed been a Refuge to animals and humans for over 10 years, and we know without a doubt their outstanding work will be shaking the world for years to come.

For more information, visit <https://www.piedmontrefuge.org/>

# SANCTUARY HIGHLIGHTS

*Read about GFAS accredited or verified organizations*

The 2023 recipient of the GFAS Outstanding Wildlife Sanctuary Award, the Vervet Monkey Foundation (VMF) is a remarkable organization that exemplifies the ideals of conservation, education, and community engagement in the realm of primate welfare. Established in 1993 by Dave and Josie Du Toit, this South African non-profit has since become a shining example of dedicated primate rehabilitation and sanctuary work.

At its core, VMF stands as a beacon of conservation. The foundation is unwavering in its commitment to rescuing, rehabilitating, and releasing vervet monkeys, an indigenous primate species in South Africa. Through meticulous care, the organization ensures that these primates regain their physical and emotional health, allowing them to thrive in their natural habitat once more. This emphasis on conservation is vital, as it safeguards the vervet monkey population and helps maintain the ecological balance.

Education is another cornerstone of VMF's mission. They actively engage with local schools and communities, fostering a sense of environmental stewardship. By educating people about vervet monkeys and the broader importance of wildlife conservation, VMF is creating a future generation of informed and empathetic conservationists. This commitment to education extends to international volunteers who gain hands-on experience, making VMF a global hub for primate education. The Foundation also exemplifies community engagement. VMF collaborates with local communities to address human-wildlife conflict, finding sustainable solutions that protect both vervet monkeys and people. By building trust and providing support, VMF bridges the gap between humans and wildlife, fostering harmonious coexistence.

For more information, visit <https://vervet.za.org/>

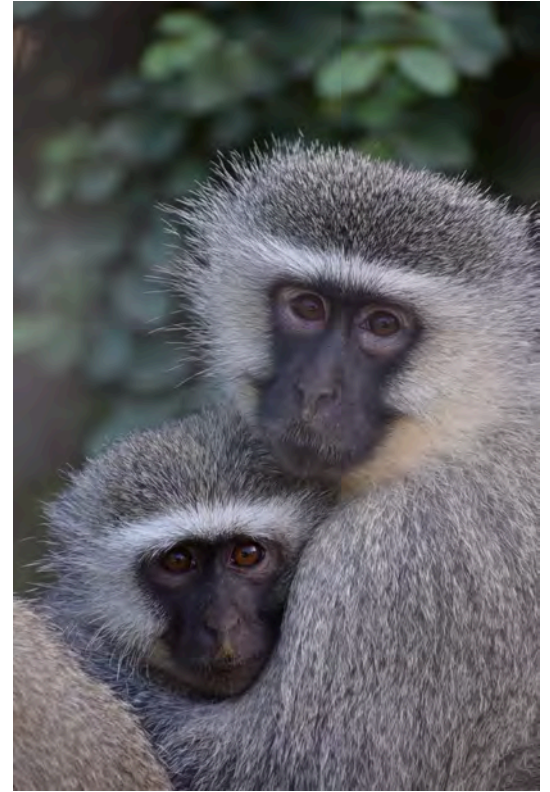
The 2023 recipient of the GFAS Outstanding International Sanctuary Award, Lilongwe Wildlife Centre (LWC) in Malawi, is a program of the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust. The Trust works tirelessly to bring an end to wildlife crimes through its campaigns for change. Its work includes supporting the government in enforcement of laws against wildlife trafficking, development of sentencing guidelines for forestry crimes, and operation of a Wildlife Detection Dog Unit.

LWC rehabilitates and releases native species including servals and vervet monkeys, providing permanent sanctuary to those who cannot be released. Between April 2022 and March 2023 alone, it rescued 132 animals, many confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade, and released 101 animals back to the wild. Pangolins – the most trafficked mammal in the world - now make up a third of its intakes, and LWC has developed a specialized pangolin rescue and rehabilitation program for which it is sharing its research and experience with the veterinary community and public at large. The centre produced a short film about the pangolin trade in partnership with the Dept. of National Parks and Wildlife and also recently a new environmental education center opened at LWC, which has now been visited by more than 6,000 schoolchildren across Malawi. LWC developed an education program with modules including wildlife conservation, wildlife crime, forest and water management, and climate change that is currently being incorporated into the national primary school curriculum, with the potential to reach an estimated three million primary school children across Malawi.

For more information, visit <https://www.lilongwewildlife.org>

## Vervet Monkey Foundation

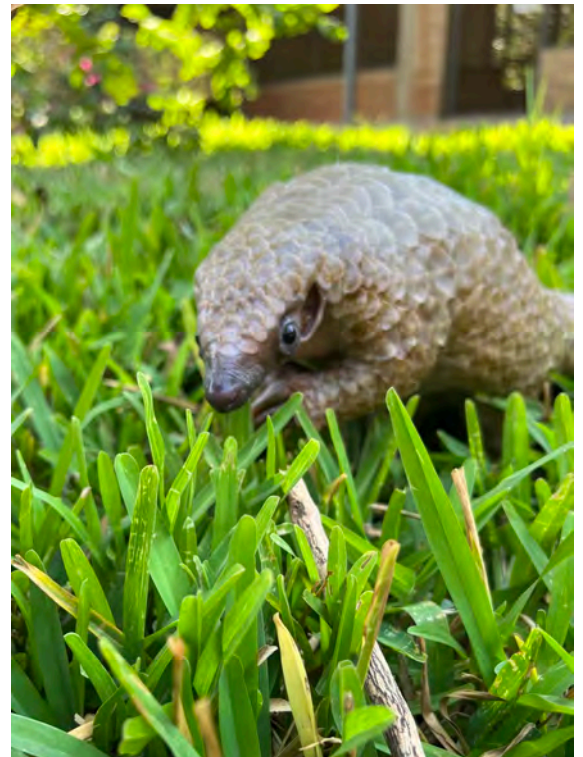
*Tzaneen, South Africa*



*Photo courtesy Vervet Monkey Foundation*

## Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

*Malawi, Africa*



*Photo courtesy Lilongwe Wildlife Trust*



# OTHER PROGRAM NEWS

## 2023 Carole Noon Award

The 2023 Carole Noon Award for Sanctuary Excellence was awarded to Tammy Thies, Executive Director of The Wildcat Sanctuary in Sandstone, Minnesota.

Tammy's first priority is providing the best animal care possible in the safest environment for her team. Tammy seeks to create equity across her organization and is pushing to improve professional standards and practices in the sanctuary field. Always a step ahead, Tammy and team are envisioning how the sanctuary can be transformed in the future to receive mainly small cats due to the burgeoning trade.

Tammy is a respected member of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance. In addition to running the sanctuary, she coordinates communications around large scale seizures and court cases with sheriffs, judges, and lawyers. Her knowledge and professionalism have also made her a sought after spokesperson on the captive wildlife crisis. Tammy also mentors new startups. The Wildcat Sanctuary's website and social media channels offer excellent educational resources and campaigns regarding issues affecting wildcats in captivity such as No More Wild Pets and Say No to Hybrid Cats.

A true leader, Tammy Thies, is a force, much like Carole Noon. She is fearless in dealing with big cat exploiters, a passionate advocate, a sharp minded administrator, and a visionary leading the way.



GFAS completed the most robust global census of farm sanctuaries, to date, identifying key regions where the movement is emerging and mapping its development, over time.

Results demonstrated interesting trends in levels of formalization, discovery of sanctuary networks, and indications of growing cultural support for sanctuaries. Our findings indicate a correlation between sanctuary development and regions with greater acceptance of animal rights principles. The methodology needed to complete this project highlighted the lack of regulation and oversight for sanctuaries and poor consistency in their classification, worldwide, indicating an opportunity for differentiation through sanctuary accreditation. A similar census, focusing on wildlife sanctuaries, is underway.

## Research



## Giving Day for Apes



In October, GFAS presented the 10th annual Giving Day for Apes, a day to support sanctuaries and rescue centers throughout Asia, Africa, and North America that care for chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans, bonobos, and gibbons. Many of these apes have been rescued from previous lives in research laboratories or as victims of the illegal pet trade, or orphaned or displaced by destructive actions such as deforestation and poaching.

Giving Day for Apes is a project of GFAS, in collaboration with supporters including Arcus Foundation, American Anti-Vivisection Society, David Bohnett Foundation, Tangram Insurance, and the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA). The 2023 event saw 36 organizations participating to raise funds and win prizes. Over \$840,000 was raised and awarded!

GFAS actively works to represent true sanctuaries within animal welfare, protection, and advocacy spaces. In 2023, GFAS attended and presented at several industry conferences and events, including:

- Super Pod 8, a whale conservation and education conference to share research and ideas to protect cetaceans in their natural habitat and bring an end to orca captivity;
- Asia for Animals Conference, where GFAS presented on the role of sanctuaries in creating change;
- Parrot Conservation Alliance conference, a group of rescue, sanctuary, and conservation organizations working to improve the welfare of parrots in captivity and conservation of wild populations;
- Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance conference, where international rescues, the small cat crisis, disaster preparedness and response, Board development and donor growth were topics;
- North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance workshop; and
- ASPCA Right Horse Summit, for good conversations on increasing equine adoptions and connections with equine rescues and transition centers.

## Events









[www.sanctuaryfederation.org](http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org)

P.O. Box 73308, Phoenix AZ 85050, USA