
our impact
2025
Marwell Wildlife

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Great tit
Parus major

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A warm welcome from our directors

The directors and trustees are pleased to shine a spotlight on what was another busy year for Marwell Wildlife.

There have been many highlights including opening our Native Species Zone in March; relaunching the Marwell International Wildlife Art Society in May and celebrating the first international Scimitar-Horned Oryx Day in August.

All these have helped connect our guests, staff, volunteers and stakeholders with nature, inspiring respect, care and passion to protect the delicate balance of the planet we call home.

Our impact is centred around our mission - hands-on conservation, supporting nature's recovery.

We are proud to set ourselves apart by the depth and breadth of the conservation work we undertake and the forward-looking stance we hold on everything from education to ecosystem management and technology.

From our long-standing commitments to neglected species in regions of the globe, to innovative projects here in Hampshire, we continue to push the envelope on what a modern zoo can bring to science and society.

Being able to punch well above our weight is what drives us all forward. We truly believe in our power to be a leading voice for conservation, animal welfare and balance in the natural world. We look forward to introducing you to our work over the course of this impact report.

Thank you for reading.

The Director Team



Laura Read
Chief Executive



Will Justice
Animal Care



Sarah Berry
Marketing, Sales & Fundraising



Phil Riordan
Conservation



Sal Portman
Park Operations



Paul Brannan
Finance

Przewalski's horse
Equus ferus przewalskii

Hands-on conservation
Supporting nature's recovery

Our 2023-2027 conservation strategy set out ambitious goals under three key headings; Health, Connection and Innovation.

2025 saw us celebrate some incredible achievements under each of these headings. Here are some of the most notable:



Connection

In 2025, we welcomed over 150 guests to our first ever gala dinner, promoting the work and impact of Marwell Wildlife to a new corporate audience from our region.

We also joined Business South to further amplify our mission for nature to the business community. We have begun a much more proactive program of outreach to organisations, businesses and politicians, championing both our work and the need for nature to be a pivotal part of the region's story. The new International Scimitar-Horned Oryx Day, celebrated in August, was nominated by Marwell Wildlife and won the public vote to create a new day to celebrate species recovery.

The species is a ground-breaking conservation success story that can inspire people to action knowing that success is possible.



Innovation

Our pioneering work with uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs), incorporating machine learning, demonstrates Marwell's ability to think creatively and embrace new technologies.

Equally, our work with Buddhists in Bhutan shows the importance of not losing touch with ancient wisdom. True innovation looks to the future while keeping a firm grasp on the past.



Health

In June, we were delighted to be awarded with our BIAZA accreditation under the new accreditation scheme. As one of the first UK zoos to achieve this, it demonstrates our ongoing commitment to animal health and welfare, conservation and education.

In November, we achieved a funding award from Innovate UK for a knowledge transfer partnership with the University of Surrey that will allow us to keep pushing the boundaries of captive animal welfare through the development of an AI software tool. This project will commence in 2026. In September, we completed our gardens masterplan for the zoo, with an ambitious goal of creating 11 new garden spaces designed to support both nature connection and mental health and wellbeing.

We believe the health and wellbeing of our people underpins the health of our organisation.

In 2025, we completed our first employee wellbeing week featuring a range of activities that allowed our team to pause, reflect, grow and have fun, enhancing their own wellbeing at work.

Read our 2023-2028 conservation strategy:

Dartford warbler
Curruca undata

International **conservation**

Big cat conservation in Bhutan

In April, we brought together Buddhist scholars, religious leaders and conservationists from across Bhutan to discuss the initial findings from our Tiger Cultural Heritage project.

In their quest, our team have been searching archives and temples within monasteries to rediscover ancient depictions of tigers that might bring new insights to assist with modern efforts to protect tigers in Bhutan.

By highlighting the sacred role of tigers in Buddhism, our partners, the Druk Nyo Foundation, facilitated a unique workshop that inspired revelations about the importance of tigers for Buddhism.

Known as tak, one of the “four dignities”, tigers are also the third animal in the Buddhist zodiac.

Our teams uncovered lost or insubstantial connections between various practices (e.g. Puja or tantra) and teachings (Dharma) across disciplines including astrology and orientation of sacred places.

These new stories and novel findings for Buddhism will be published in 2026 and will underpin the next steps to connect these important nature-positive values with practical conservation of tigers in Bhutan.





International
conservation

Tunisia - biodiversity and megafauna evaluation

In 2025, we continued to monitor wildlife populations and habitats, and improve data collection, in collaboration with Tunisian partners within eight arid / semi-arid National Parks and Reserves in Southern Tunisia.

We particularly focused on scimitar-horned oryx *(Oryx dammah)*, North African ostrich *(Struthio camelus camelus)*, addax *(Addax nasomaculatus)*, slender-horned gazelle *(Gazella leptoceros)*, and dorcas gazelle *(Gazella dorcas)*, but our camera traps deployed across several protected areas continued to collect data on a wide range of wildlife such as striped hyena *(Hyaena hyaena)*, African wolves *(Canis lupaster)*, crested porcupines *(Hystrix cristata)*, and fennec foxes *(Vulpes zerda)*.

Throughout 2025, Marwell Wildlife has supported anti-poaching patrols and improved surveillance for reintroduced scimitar-horned oryx in Dghoumes National Park, Tunisa.

Our vehicle is regularly seen throughout the park to deter poachers, monitor oryx, and collect vital information. We also recruited a private scout to patrol along the top of the mountains to detect wildlife and human activity.

The data provides crucial information on animal and habitat health. This allows us to provide emergency food and water to wildlife during the hot season in Dghoumes, Sidi Toui, and Senghar-Jabbes National Parks and Oued Dekouk National Reserve as habitat quality and animal health declined following consecutive droughts.

Food and water are likely to become more variable as the climate changes, and our surveillance ensures that we can develop proactive management strategies rather than relying on emergency interventions.

We continued to work closely with our Tunisian partners to increase capacity for wildlife monitoring and management to ensure the project is sustainable. This approach will help safeguard iconic species while strengthening ecosystem resilience.

In April, we delivered a talk on wildlife management and sponsored the International Veterinary Forum in Tunisia. This forum brought together veterinary and animal health professionals to build networks and increase knowledge amongst practising veterinarians in Tunisia. Then in May, Marwell sponsored 25 Tunisian delegates to attend the annual Sahelo-Saharan Interest Group Meeting in Tozeur, Tunisia. This was the first time that many of them had had the opportunity to attend this crucial meeting to support Sahelo-Saharan Conservation.

Scimitar-horned oryx
Oryx dammah

International **conservation**

Saving the slender-horned gazelle

Slender-horned gazelles *(Gazella leptoceros)* once roamed across the ergs (sand dunes) and regs (gravel plains) of the Sahara Desert in Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt.

Illegal hunting and disturbance have driven their populations down to around only 200-300 mature animals in the wild leaving the species on the brink of disappearing from its natural habitat.

Tunisia established an ex situ population in 1999 and Marwell Wildlife has been working closely with Tunisia's Direction Générale des Forêts (DGF) and partners to build additional enclosures in Sidi Toui National Park and El Gonna National Reserve to increase this managed population, provide veterinary care, and improved animal husbandry.

In 2025, we built two additional enclosures in Sidi Toui National Park and improved the existing enclosures at El Gonna enabling us to separate the gazelles into breeding groups.

In October, Darren Ives and Ian Goodwin from Marwell went to Sidi Toui with our Tunisian-based Conservation Biologist, Dr Marie Petretto and Field Assistant Abdelaziz Ben Mohamed, to health check, ear tag, and separate the gazelles into their enclosures whilst delivering training to Tunisian vets and animal keepers.

The team also translocated three female slender-horned gazelles from Sidi Toui to El Gonna to pair them with males already there. This has created two populations to facilitate intensive population management that should help grow the population for future potential reintroduction to the wild.

Through critical funding and technical collaboration, the project is building capacity, improving welfare infrastructure, and laying the groundwork for long-term, evidence-based sustainable population management to help save the species from extinction.









Slender-horned gazelle
Gazella leptoceros

International
conservation

Moving forward for grevy's zebra

We were delighted to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with our long-standing partners, Grevy's Zebra Trust (GZT) in Kenya.

We work in different regions of Northern Kenya, thereby covering the entire range of the **Grevy's zebra** *(Equus grevyi)*.

We cooperate on projects like collaring, drought response and national surveys.

The MoU solidifies this collaboration for the benefit of both organisations and, ultimately, the conservation of Grevy's zebra.

Fundraising at Marwell for a new field vehicle in Kenya was successful in 2025, providing a long overdue replacement for an aging vehicle. Our team now has a reliable mode of transport for their work with scouts and communities and allows us to increase the number of outreach visits.

Funds came through the gala dinner & auction held at Marwell Zoo and Marwell's 10k run.

We attended the International Wild Equid Conference (IWEC) held in Nanyuki, Kenya, where our project manager, Lizbeth Mate, presented our Grevy's zebra collaring work.

The Kenya team took part in the 2nd International Wildlife Scientific Conference in Naivasha. Lizbeth further represented Marwell at the ACT Con (Earthranger & SMART conference) in Vietnam with a talk on our scout data collection through SMART (spatial monitoring and reporting tool). This increased her network and advanced her knowledge of the software which is crucial for our Grevy's zebra monitoring work.





Grevy's zebra
Equus grevyi

UK **conservation**

30 years of Marwell at Eelmoor Marsh

In 30 years, we have seen impressive changes in the habitats and species using the site, including large increases in populations of **silver-studded blue** *(Plebejus argus)*, **early marsh-orchid** *(Dactylorhiza incarnata pulchella)* and **Dartford warbler** *(Curruca undata)*.



Numbers of **common blue butterfly (Polyommatus icarus)** increased by 44% since 2024, a success even more notable because it bucks a national decrease of 54%

In particular, 2025 saw:



- Greater bladderwort *(Utricularia Australia)* increased its cover by 23%, after a poor few years, in response to pond restoration work carried out since 2023.
- The number of **green-winged orchid** ***(Anacamptis morio)*** jumped from 2 in 2023, to 14 in 2025, the highest number of flowering spikes in over 20 years of monitoring.
- There was a 36% increase in **silver-studded blue** ***(Plebejus argus)*** populations from 2024.
- Populations of **grayling butterfly** ***(Hipparchia Semele)*** jumped from 46 in 2023 to 89 in 2025.
- 2025 saw a 50% increase in recorded observations of **dragonflies** and **damselflies**, following targeted management to open water bodies, restore pools, and rewet the landscape.
- Reintroduced **sand lizard** populations continue to breed healthily.
- Our nine **Dartford warbler** ***(Curruca undata)*** and four **nightjar** ***(Caprimulgus europaeus)*** territories on the dry heath were maintained.

In 2025, we had multiple visits from the Millenium Seed Bank

They took samples of three rare tree and shrub species at Eelmoor to hold in their secure facility, future-proofing them from extinction. These were **creeping willow** *(Salix repens)*, **bog myrtle** *(Myrica gale)*, and **petty whin** *(Genista anglica)*.

The opening of the new **white-clawed crayfish** breeding centre has allowed Marwell to develop an active role in this reintroduction programme, in partnership with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

Conservation **science & technology**

Snow leopard distribution research

Working with key partners in China and Kazakhstan, we published two landmark research papers that add significantly to efforts to protect threatened **snow leopards** *(Panthera uncia)* across Central Asia.

One focused on the recently designated Qilianshan National Park in China and the other on snow leopard movements in Kazakhstan. These studies present contrasting regions within the vast snow leopard range, characterised by high elevation and challenging terrain.

The research in Qilianshan highlights its critical role in protecting core habitats and movement corridors.

However, only 40% of core habitats and 50% of key movement corridors lie within the park's boundaries.

The study recommends expanding park boundaries or creating new protected areas to safeguard the landscapes vital to the species' survival.

The Kazakhstan research examined the Dzungarian Basin, a natural barrier between populations in China and Kyrgyzstan. Kazakhstan has few core habitats but provides essential "stepping stone" links across these mountains that keep snow leopard populations connected across borders.

Together, these studies underline the importance of habitat connectivity for a wide-ranging species that frequently roam far beyond the boundaries of protected areas and are already being used to advise policy and management decisions in each country.





Snow leopard
Panthera uncia

Conservation **science & technology**

Eyes in the sky helping conservation research

Marwell Wildlife and the University of Southampton conducted flight trials using uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs) in Altyn-Emel National Park, Kazakhstan, supported by a team from the Institute of Zoology and Wildlife Without Borders Kazakhstan.

Flight tests across four transects in the Ili River floodplains evaluated the application of technologies for assessing populations of **goitered gazelle** *(Gazella subgutturosa)* and **kulan** *(Equus hemionus)* that are synonymous with the landscape.

UAVs are a valuable tool in wildlife conservation and ecological monitoring, covering large or inaccessible areas more efficiently than ground-based approaches. UAVs can also reduce disturbance to wildlife, improve data consistency, and support the use of advanced technologies such as automated species detection.

Our team provided training for park managers in the use of UAV techniques. This provides a more complete estimate of the vital wildlife populations that are guiding management of the park.

Marwell Wildlife supporting IUCN assessments

Marwell Wildlife has hosted the Programme Office for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC), and Antelope Specialist Group (ASG) since 2014.

We work with the co-chairs and voluntary members to assess the extinction risk of antelope and gazelles for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and conservation impact assessments for the IUCN Green Status of Species.

These tools inform conservation priorities, funding decisions and policy worldwide, and track not only extinction risk but also species recovery.

In 2025, we focused on building the capacity needed to update the Red List and Green Status by recruiting and training a team of volunteers. This was the start of a process that will assess 150 species and sub-species of antelope and gazelle in 2025 / 26.

This is a huge piece of work, but our team and volunteers are ensuring the assessments that guide antelope conservation are robust, relevant, up to date and provide the best foundation on which to build conservation action.

Goitered gazelle
Gazella subgutturosa

Our conservation zoo

Opening our new Native Species Zone

This year, we expanded those opportunities further through new spaces, experiences and events designed to engage, educate and inspire.

We were proud to open our new Native Species Zone, shining a spotlight on wildlife found closer to home.

Highlights include **Hampshire's first white-clawed crayfish** *(Austropotamobius pallipes)* breeding facility, alongside a sand lizard habitat, wildlife pond, bug hotel and natural play area.

The project was part-funded by the UK Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund and received generous support from the Big Give Green Match Fund, the Marjorie Coote Animal Charity Trust and Marwell Wildlife supporters.

After almost a decade, we welcomed back the Marwell International Wildlife Art Society and their renowned Wildlife Art Exhibition. Featuring more than 250 artworks by over 70 artists from around the world, the exhibition offered guests a different way to engage with wildlife.





New ways to connect people with nature

We also introduced a new virtual reality (VR) experience, in partnership with Wild Immersion, using state-of-the-art VR headsets to transport guests into the natural habitats of some of the world's most iconic species.

In June, we hosted our inaugural gala dinner, raising over £20,000 for Marwell's Grevy's zebra conservation project and a new project vehicle.

It was an evening that brought together conservation, celebration and community.

On 16 August, we celebrated the very first Scimitar-Horned Oryx Day - a new international awareness day championed by Marwell and voted for by the public.

Guests met keepers, heard the remarkable story of the species' journey from extinction in the wild to recovery, and learned how zoos like Marwell continue to play a vital role in its conservation.

Recognising the financial pressures many families face, we launched a Community Access Scheme, offering reduced-price tickets to ensure that nature and wildlife remain accessible to all.

Through these experiences, we continue to strengthen the connection between people and wildlife - inspiring care, action and long-term support for nature.

Marwell hosts the international Antelope conference

Marwell's Hoofstock team organised and hosted the Marwell Antelope Conference covering a range of topics including species husbandry, care and welfare, staff training, zoo management and conservation both in and ex situ.

The conference attracted over 70 international delegates from the UK, Europe, UAE, Canada and across Africa.

For Marwell, Phil Robbins presented on his trip to Tunisia working with the slender-horned and dorcas gazelle and Ian Godwin looked back at all of the species we have worked with, past and present.

Practical browse identification workshops and behind the scenes tours were able to demonstrate how animal welfare is prioritised at Marwell and has been built into enclosure designs.

External speakers included
Dr. Robert Aruho (Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy) and Dr Donna Sheppard (Rhino Ark) who gave separate updates on their respective work with *bongo (Tragelaphus eurycerus)*. Dr. Abdullahi Hussein Ali spoke about his work with the Hirola Conservation Program and a team from Antelope Conservation gave an update on their work with **giant eland** *(Taurotragus derbianus)*.

Overall, the conference was a great opportunity for networking and relationship building and sharing Marwell's ongoing commitment to animal welfare and conservation.

Breeding programmes for conservation

Marwell continues the management of the international studbooks (ISB) for scimitar-horned oryx (SHO) and Grevy's zebra as well as coordination of the European Ex situ Programmes (EEP) for both species.

The studbooks are a register of every living individual of each species and its ancestors in zoos and similar holdings anywhere in the world.

The Marwell EEP coordinators not only manage breeding and transfers of the populations in European zoos, they also report to all holders of the species about status and conservation in the field.

Many zoos have become supporters of our SHO and Grevy's zebra projects.

Their financial donations enable Marwell to expand conservation work, provide equipment and training for colleagues in the field and deliver outreach and community support. They also rally during wildlife emergencies like drought or disease outbreaks delivering fast financial responses to the field teams.





Scimitar-horned oryx
Oryx dammah

The Marwell estate – a space for nature

In 2025, we also continued to participate in "spotted on site", a BIAZA initiative with iNaturalist to help us record some of the native species that are using our land.

Any sighting that is logged using the iNaturalist app is automatically added to our database, utilising citizen science to help us collect data. There are currently 210 observations, including the **Red cage fungus** *(Clathrus ruber)*, an uncommon species that caused a lot of excitement when it was seen within the zoo boundary.







Red cage fungi
Clathrus ruber

Cowlease Copse

Thanks to funding from our partners, DP World Southampton, this year we were able to undertake critical woodland management on the Marwell estate.

Ash dieback, a fungal disease that is spreading across the UK and parts of our woodland were deemed unsafe, limiting trips into the woods for our educational groups.

Through **DP World** Southampton funding we were able to carry out ash removal in **Cowleaze Copse** and make the area safe for children. Our onsite early years partners, **Kids Love Nature**, have already begun to benefit from this new 'woodland classroom' space.

In total we restored 100m^2 of education space and ash was removed along 140m of footpath.

To enhance biodiversity, some ash trees have been left standing away from footpaths, and if they show signs of disease resistance, to maximise the chances of ash recovery. Bat roosts have been added in standing dead wood, and the ground area opened up to allow more light to reach ground flora.

Botanical surveys of Cowleaze Copse and West Copse Field found over 250 notable species.

Butterfly surveys across the whole estate found 278 individuals of 18 species, including **silver-washed fritillary** *(Argynnis paphia)* and **brown argus** *(Aricia agestis)*, both uncommon species that have undergone wider declines in recent years.

Staff from **DP World** Southampton attended corporate volunteer days, collecting data using camera traps, bat surveys, and taking part in the **Big Butterfly Count.** They also removed large amounts of bramble from an area of woodland to encourage natural regeneration and helped to finish the education area by edging the woodland classroom with felled ash logs.







The next generation

Northern Kenya schools and herders outreach

The Marwell Kenya team holds regular outreach sessions in communities where we work.

School sessions introduce the concept of biodiversity, interconnectedness and living in harmony with nature.

The team also relay these themes to herders (children who don't receive formal education) through discussions and watching wildlife movies after days in the field.

One of our scouts meets with morans, teenage boys who have grown up as herders and now live in peer groups away from home.

He discusses the importance of conservation and protecting the wildlife around them.

All outreach aims to change attitudes towards wildlife as these children are the conservators of the future.

Children and nature project in Tunisia

In October, Marwell Wildlife, the Direction Générale des Forêts (Tunisia), Association Enfants de la Terre (RET, Tunisia), L'Ecole de la Nature – Branféré (France), and Fondation de France launched the Children and Nature Project in Dghoumes Villages in Tunisia.

Through our local partner, RET, we recruited local engagement officers to give children opportunities to connect to wildlife and nature. The launch was a lively affair with children excitedly joining in with all the activities.

This project will also revitalise the ecomuseums of Bou Hedma and Dghoumes National Parks creating learning and engagement hubs within these iconic protected areas.

The project has already introduced teachers from local schools to the national parks, and we plan to facilitate school visits in the future.

Together with partners, we have established Nature Clubs within schools and additional nature themed clubs for cinema, literature and reading.

The next generation

Enabling conservation careers



Three undergraduate students completed their 'Year in Industry' with our animal science team and 12 completed short-term animal science and veterinary placements.



Building on the strong foundations of our Higher Education projects, placements and education initiatives, we continue to expand our impact in shaping the next generation of scientists.

Our growing collaborations with universities and the increasing breadth of projects and placements have supported early-career vets, teachers and conservationists to develop practical skills, professional confidence and sector-ready experience. This work continues to be driven by the dedication and award-winning expertise of Marwell's UK conservation, veterinary, conservation science and innovation and engagement teams, ensuring our programmes remain relevant, impactful and future-focused.



Our MRes research continues to deliver tangible conservation impact, from advancing welfare monitoring in captive and wild populations, habitat suitability assessments for birds in Tunisia and small mammals in the UK, to empowering communities through evidence-based conservation education programmes with our partners in Kenya.



We supported 37 early career scientists (six PhD, 16 Masters, 15 undergrad), including supervising nine MRes Wildlife Conservation students, with studies driving innovation in areas such as invertebrate welfare, gut microbiome health in captive animals, and the use of technology to enhance welfare monitoring.

The next generation

Expedition Marwell and Home Educator weeks

In 2025 we launched Expedition Marwell, the first step in a fully updated educational offer. Designed for pre school to Year 6, this immersive, zoo-based adventure places pupils in the role of young conservationists.

Through hands-on challenges and real conservation science, learners build curiosity, observational skills, and a deeper connection to the natural world.

The programme is fully inclusive and SEND aligned. Expedition Marwell sits alongside a projected 25,000+ self-guided student visits, creating a richer, more flexible learning ecosystem.

With secondary and Further Education programmes next, this launch sets the foundation for a fully refreshed, future ready educational pathway.

Home Education Event Weeks, also new for 2025, connect families who are home educating with curriculum-led sessions tailored to Marwell's conservation messages. Catering for all ages, and including parents and grandparents, the programme strengthens intergenerational learning and deepening connection to nature.

We kicked off with Big Cat Week welcoming 1,200 guests, followed by a series of themed weeks exploring Small Cats, Mythology of Animals, and Bioluminescence.





The path to true net zero

As part of Marwell's journey to net zero carbon and beyond, electric vehicle charging is coming to Marwell Zoo.

As a rural destination, travel to the zoo is a significant part of our climate impact and something we are keen to address.

With the transition to electric vehicles accelerating, we need to be sure we are supporting this change.

While many electric vehicles can travel hundreds of miles on a single charge, guests need to be confident they can charge their vehicles ready for the journey home, whatever vehicle they drive.

The coming chargers will include slower versions that will charge the car while guests enjoy their day at the zoo and rapid chargers that will charge the car more quickly while the driver enjoys a coffee, breakfast, lunch or afternoon tea at Keeper's Kitchen.

As part of a research partnership with the Universities of Southampton, Portsmouth, Surrey and Sheffield some of the charges will be completely powered by renewable energy with no connection to an external electricity supply.

'Off-grid' charging like this will be essential for rural and coastal destinations where there is no electricity supply to allow vehicle charging.

Making our work possible

None of our work would be possible without the extraordinary people and organisations who stand behind it.

From the dedication of our staff and volunteers to the generosity of our partners, supporters and funders, every achievement this year has been built on collective effort.

Our staff bring passion, expertise and determination to their roles every single day.

Whether caring for animals, advancing conservation science, engaging guests, educating young people or supporting the organisation behind the scenes. Their commitment ensures our mission is lived out in practical, meaningful ways.

Alongside them, our volunteers give their time, energy and skills so generously, helping to create welcoming experiences for our guests and providing vital support across the zoo and beyond.

Their contribution is invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for the role they play in our success.

We are equally thankful to our partners, collaborators and supporters who share our vision for a future where wildlife and people thrive together.

Through trusted partnerships, we are able to extend our reach, strengthen our impact and deliver conservation programmes that make a real difference both locally and internationally.

These relationships allow us to combine knowledge, resources and ambition to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the natural world.
To our funders, donors and members: your belief in our work enables everything we do. Your support helps care for animals, protect habitats, inspire future conservationists and deliver long-term change for species at risk. Every gift, large or small, is a powerful statement of hope for wildlife. Together, you make our work possible.

Thank you for being part of our community, for believing in our mission, and for helping to create a better future for nature.



"Wonderful animals cared for by amazing humans who are knowledgeable about every single animal in their care, from tiny beetles to the sloth in the tropical house."

Looking to the future







The future of Marwell Wildlife is set out in our ten-year organisational strategy, Marwell 2035.

This presents an ambitious and inspiring vision for growth, impact, and connection, outlining how we will transform into a hub of conservation excellence where every guest, learner, supporter, and partner plays a meaningful role in restoring nature.

By 2035, we aim to engage more than one million people each year, doubling our annual guest numbers while delivering world-class education opportunities from cradle to career.
We will expand our conservation reach to protect wildlife and ecosystems both locally and globally, while continuing our long-term commitment to existing projects.

Alongside this, we are committed to achieving true net zero across our operations by 2035 and establishing a dedicated nature reserve on the Marwell Estate.

Our zoo masterplan will play a central role in delivering this vision, creating an inspiring and coherent journey that introduces new species, enhances guest facilities, and deepens connections between people and nature.

We will extend our impact beyond the zoo by reaching more than 100,000 children and young people through our education programmes and by delivering an ambitious art strategy that positions Marwell as a hub for nature-inspired creativity.

Our journey will be guided by bold innovation and a deep commitment to our people, our animals, our projects, and our guests.

Through a values-led culture that empowers talented people to build rewarding careers, we will create an organisation capable of delivering lasting change.

With determination and passion, we will inspire change, champion biodiversity, and lead the way towards a future where nature flourishes for everyone.

How you can help

Our conservation work is only possible because of the generosity of people who care deeply about wildlife and the world we share.

By supporting Marwell Wildlife, you help protect endangered species, restore habitats and inspire future generations to value and protect nature.

There are many ways to get involved and make a difference:

- Visit Marwell Zoo and connect with nature
- Become a member
- Donate to support the animals you love
- Leave a lasting legacy with a gift in your will
- Volunteer to take action

Together, we can support nature's recovery and create a healthier world for both people and wildlife.



"I just love Marwell and visit every year. It is our happy place."



"A great day out with my 9-year-old great-grandson. Memories made and to treasure."

Sand lizard
Lacerta agilis

For further information
marwell.org.uk/conservation

To access our publications
marwell.org.uk/publications

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Marwell Wildlife

Photographic Contributors

Jason Brown
Paul Collins
Will Justice
Charlotte Bennett
Phil Riordan
Sophie Whitemore
Kenya Wildlife Service
Marwell Wildlife

Shutterstock

Cover: Irma Ferreira Photography
Przewalski's horse: Yantar
Dartford warbler: Fercast
Bhutan monastery: Framalicious
Bengal tiger: Ondrej Prosicky
Grevy's zebra: Peter Hatch
Common blue butterfly: Chris276644
Green winged orchid: Lessio
Sand lizard: Marek R. Swadzba
Black darter dragonfly: Alslutsky
Whin bush: Chweiss
White-clawed crayfish: Marco Maggesi
Snow leopard: Chris Desborough
Goitered gazelle: Tamer Yilmaz
Schimitar-horned oryx: Bieszczady Wildlife
Cage fungi: Jolanda Aalbers
Silver washed fritillary: Esin Deniz
Net zero: Me Dia

Our conservation zoo

Opening our new Native Species Zone

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After almost a decade, we welcomed back the Marwell International Wildlife Art Society and their renowned Wildlife Art Exhibition. Featuring more than 250 artworks by over 70 artists from around the world, the exhibition offered guests a different way to engage with wildlife.





New ways to connect people with nature

We also introduced a new virtual reality (VR) experience, in partnership with Wild Immersion, using state-of-the-art VR headsets to transport guests into the natural habitats of some of the world's most iconic species.

In June, we hosted our inaugural gala dinner, raising over £20,000 for Marwell's Grevy's zebra conservation project and a new project vehicle.

It was an evening that brought together conservation, celebration and community.

On 16 August, we celebrated the very first Scimitar-Horned Oryx Day - a new international awareness day championed by Marwell and voted for by the public.

Guests met keepers, heard the remarkable story of the species' journey from extinction in the wild to recovery, and learned how zoos like Marwell continue to play a vital role in its conservation.

Recognising the financial pressures many families face, we launched a Community Access Scheme, offering reduced-price tickets to ensure that nature and wildlife remain accessible to all.

Through these experiences, we continue to strengthen the connection between people and wildlife - inspiring care, action and long-term support for nature.

Marwell hosts the international Antelope conference

Marwell's Hoofstock team organised and hosted the Marwell Antelope Conference covering a range of topics including species husbandry, care and welfare, staff training, zoo management and conservation both in and ex situ.

The conference attracted over 70 international delegates from the UK, Europe, UAE, Canada and across Africa.

For Marwell, Phil Robbins presented on his trip to Tunisia working with the slender-horned and dorcas gazelle and Ian Godwin looked back at all of the species we have worked with, past and present.

Practical browse identification workshops and behind the scenes tours were able to demonstrate how animal welfare is prioritised at Marwell and has been built into enclosure designs.

External speakers included
Dr. Robert Aruho (Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy) and Dr Donna Sheppard (Rhino Ark) who gave separate updates on their respective work with *bongo (Tragelaphus eurycerus)*. Dr. Abdullahi Hussein Ali spoke about his work with the Hirola Conservation Program and a team from Antelope Conservation gave an update on their work with **giant eland** *(Taurotragus derbianus)*.

Overall, the conference was a great opportunity for networking and relationship building and sharing Marwell's ongoing commitment to animal welfare and conservation.



Scimitar-horned oryx
Oryx dammah

Breeding programmes for conservation

Marwell continues the management of the international studbooks (ISB) for scimitar-horned oryx (SHO) and Grevy's zebra as well as coordination of the European Ex situ Programmes (EEP) for both species.

The studbooks are a register of every living individual of each species and its ancestors in zoos and similar holdings anywhere in the world.

The Marwell EEP coordinators not only manage breeding and transfers of the populations in European zoos, they also report to all holders of the species about status and conservation in the field.

Many zoos have become supporters of our SHO and Grevy's zebra projects.

Their financial donations enable Marwell to expand conservation work, provide equipment and training for colleagues in the field and deliver outreach and community support. They also rally during wildlife emergencies like drought or disease outbreaks delivering fast financial responses to the field teams.





The Marwell estate – a space for nature

In 2025, we also continued to participate in "spotted on site", a BIAZA initiative with iNaturalist to help us record some of the native species that are using our land.

Any sighting that is logged using the iNaturalist app is automatically added to our database, utilising citizen science to help us collect data. There are currently 210 observations, including the **Red cage fungus** *(Clathrus ruber)*, an uncommon species that caused a lot of excitement when it was seen within the zoo boundary.







Red cage fungi
Clathrus ruber

Cowlease Copse

Thanks to funding from our partners, DP World Southampton, this year we were able to undertake critical woodland management on the Marwell estate.

Ash dieback, a fungal disease that is spreading across the UK and parts of our woodland were deemed unsafe, limiting trips into the woods for our educational groups.

Through **DP World** Southampton funding we were able to carry out ash removal in **Cowleaze Copse** and make the area safe for children. Our onsite early years partners, **Kids Love Nature**, have already begun to benefit from this new 'woodland classroom' space.

In total we restored 100m^2 of education space and ash was removed along 140m of footpath.

To enhance biodiversity, some ash trees have been left standing away from footpaths, and if they show signs of disease resistance, to maximise the chances of ash recovery. Bat roosts have been added in standing dead wood, and the ground area opened up to allow more light to reach ground flora.

Botanical surveys of Cowleaze Copse and West Copse Field found over 250 notable species.

Butterfly surveys across the whole estate found 278 individuals of 18 species, including **silver-washed fritillary** *(Argynnis paphia)* and **brown argus** *(Aricia agestis)*, both uncommon species that have undergone wider declines in recent years.

Staff from **DP World** Southampton attended corporate volunteer days, collecting data using camera traps, bat surveys, and taking part in the **Big Butterfly Count**. They also removed large amounts of bramble from an area of woodland to encourage natural regeneration and helped to finish the education area by edging the woodland classroom with felled ash logs.



The next generation

Northern Kenya schools and herders outreach

The Marwell Kenya team holds regular outreach sessions in communities where we work.

School sessions introduce the concept of biodiversity, interconnectedness and living in harmony with nature.

The team also relay these themes to herders (children who don't receive formal education) through discussions and watching wildlife movies after days in the field.

One of our scouts meets with morans, teenage boys who have grown up as herders and now live in peer groups away from home.

He discusses the importance of conservation and protecting the wildlife around them.

All outreach aims to change attitudes towards wildlife as these children are the conservators of the future.



Children and nature project in Tunisia

In October, Marwell Wildlife, the Direction Générale des Forêts (Tunisia), Association Enfants de la Terre (RET, Tunisia), L'Ecole de la Nature – Branféré (France), and Fondation de France launched the Children and Nature Project in Dghoumes Villages in Tunisia.

Through our local partner, RET, we recruited local engagement officers to give children opportunities to connect to wildlife and nature. The launch was a lively affair with children excitedly joining in with all the activities.

This project will also revitalise the ecomuseums of Bou Hedma and Dghoumes National Parks creating learning and engagement hubs within these iconic protected areas.

The project has already introduced teachers from local schools to the national parks, and we plan to facilitate school visits in the future.

Together with partners, we have established Nature Clubs within schools and additional nature themed clubs for cinema, literature and reading.

The next generation

Enabling conservation careers



Three undergraduate students completed their 'Year in Industry' with our animal science team and 12 completed short-term animal science and veterinary placements.



Building on the strong foundations of our Higher Education projects, placements and education initiatives, we continue to expand our impact in shaping the next generation of scientists.

Our growing collaborations with universities and the increasing breadth of projects and placements have supported early-career vets, teachers and conservationists to develop practical skills, professional confidence and sector-ready experience. This work continues to be driven by the dedication and award-winning expertise of Marwell's UK conservation, veterinary, conservation science and innovation and engagement teams, ensuring our programmes remain relevant, impactful and future-focused.



Our MRes research continues to deliver tangible conservation impact, from advancing welfare monitoring in captive and wild populations, habitat suitability assessments for birds in Tunisia and small mammals in the UK, to empowering communities through evidence-based conservation education programmes with our partners in Kenya.



We supported 37 early career scientists (six PhD, 16 Masters, 15 undergrad), including supervising nine MRes Wildlife Conservation students, with studies driving innovation in areas such as invertebrate welfare, gut microbiome health in captive animals, and the use of technology to enhance welfare monitoring.

The next generation

Expedition Marwell and Home Educator weeks

In 2025 we launched Expedition Marwell, the first step in a fully updated educational offer. Designed for pre school to Year 6, this immersive, zoo-based adventure places pupils in the role of young conservationists.

Through hands-on challenges and real conservation science, learners build curiosity, observational skills, and a deeper connection to the natural world.

The programme is fully inclusive and SEND aligned. Expedition Marwell sits alongside a projected 25,000+ self-guided student visits, creating a richer, more flexible learning ecosystem.

With secondary and Further Education programmes next, this launch sets the foundation for a fully refreshed, future ready educational pathway.

Home Education Event Weeks, also new for 2025, connect families who are home educating with curriculum-led sessions tailored to Marwell's conservation messages. Catering for all ages, and including parents and grandparents, the programme strengthens intergenerational learning and deepening connection to nature.

We kicked off with Big Cat Week welcoming 1,200 guests, followed by a series of themed weeks exploring Small Cats, Mythology of Animals, and Bioluminescence.





The path to true net zero

As part of Marwell's journey to net zero carbon and beyond, electric vehicle charging is coming to Marwell Zoo.

As a rural destination, travel to the zoo is a significant part of our climate impact and something we are keen to address.

With the transition to electric vehicles accelerating, we need to be sure we are supporting this change.

While many electric vehicles can travel hundreds of miles on a single charge, guests need to be confident they can charge their vehicles ready for the journey home, whatever vehicle they drive.

The coming chargers will include slower versions that will charge the car while guests enjoy their day at the zoo and rapid chargers that will charge the car more quickly while the driver enjoys a coffee, breakfast, lunch or afternoon tea at Keeper's Kitchen.

As part of a research partnership with the Universities of Southampton, Portsmouth, Surrey and Sheffield some of the charges will be completely powered by renewable energy with no connection to an external electricity supply.

'Off-grid' charging like this will be essential for rural and coastal destinations where there is no electricity supply to allow vehicle charging.

Making our work possible

None of our work would be possible without the extraordinary people and organisations who stand behind it.

From the dedication of our staff and volunteers to the generosity of our partners, supporters and funders, every achievement this year has been built on collective effort.

Our staff bring passion, expertise and determination to their roles every single day.

Whether caring for animals, advancing conservation science, engaging guests, educating young people or supporting the organisation behind the scenes. Their commitment ensures our mission is lived out in practical, meaningful ways.

Alongside them, our volunteers give their time, energy and skills so generously, helping to create welcoming experiences for our guests and providing vital support across the zoo and beyond.



Their contribution is invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for the role they play in our success.

We are equally thankful to our partners, collaborators and supporters who share our vision for a future where wildlife and people thrive together.

Through trusted partnerships, we are able to extend our reach, strengthen our impact and deliver conservation programmes that make a real difference both locally and internationally.

These relationships allow us to combine knowledge, resources and ambition to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the natural world.
To our funders, donors and members: your belief in our work enables everything we do. Your support helps care for animals, protect habitats, inspire future conservationists and deliver long-term change for species at risk. Every gift, large or small, is a powerful statement of hope for wildlife. Together, you make our work possible.

Thank you for being part of our community, for believing in our mission, and for helping to create a better future for nature.



"Wonderful animals cared for by amazing humans who are knowledgeable about every single animal in their care, from tiny beetles to the sloth in the tropical house."

Looking to the future



The future of Marwell Wildlife is set out in our ten-year organisational strategy, Marwell 2035.

This presents an ambitious and inspiring vision for growth, impact, and connection, outlining how we will transform into a hub of conservation excellence where every guest, learner, supporter, and partner plays a meaningful role in restoring nature.

By 2035, we aim to engage more than one million people each year, doubling our annual guest numbers while delivering world-class education opportunities from cradle to career.
We will expand our conservation reach to protect wildlife and ecosystems both locally and globally, while continuing our long-term commitment to existing projects.

Alongside this, we are committed to achieving true net zero across our operations by 2035 and establishing a dedicated nature reserve on the Marwell Estate.



Our zoo masterplan will play a central role in delivering this vision, creating an inspiring and coherent journey that introduces new species, enhances guest facilities, and deepens connections between people and nature.

We will extend our impact beyond the zoo by reaching more than 100,000 children and young people through our education programmes and by delivering an ambitious art strategy that positions Marwell as a hub for nature-inspired creativity.

Our journey will be guided by bold innovation and a deep commitment to our people, our animals, our projects, and our guests.

Through a values-led culture that empowers talented people to build rewarding careers, we will create an organisation capable of delivering lasting change.

With determination and passion, we will inspire change, champion biodiversity, and lead the way towards a future where nature flourishes for everyone.

How you can help

Our conservation work is only possible because of the generosity of people who care deeply about wildlife and the world we share.

By supporting Marwell Wildlife, you help protect endangered species, restore habitats and inspire future generations to value and protect nature.

There are many ways to get involved and make a difference:

- Visit Marwell Zoo and connect with nature
- Become a member
- Donate to support the animals you love
- Leave a lasting legacy with a gift in your will
- Volunteer to take action

Together, we can support nature's recovery and create a healthier world for both people and wildlife.



Sand lizard
Lacerta agilis



"I just love Marwell
and visit every year.
It is our happy place."



"A great day out with my
9-year-old great-grandson.
Memories made and to treasure."

For further information
marwell.org.uk/conservation

To access our publications
marwell.org.uk/publications

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Marwell Wildlife

Photographic Contributors

Jason Brown
Paul Collins
Will Justice
Charlotte Bennett
Phil Riordan
Sophie Whitemore
Kenya Wildlife Service
Marwell Wildlife

Shutterstock

Cover: Irma Ferreira Photography
Przewalski's horse: Yantar
Dartford warbler: Fercast
Bhutan monastery: Framalicious
Bengal tiger: Ondrej Prosicky
Grevy's zebra: Peter Hatch
Common blue butterfly: Chris276644
Green winged orchid: Lessio
Sand lizard: Marek R. Swadzba
Black darter dragonfly: Alslutsky
Whin bush: Chweiss
White-clawed crayfish: Marco Maggesi
Snow leopard: Chris Desborough
Goitered gazelle: Tamer Yilmaz
Schimitar-horned oryx: Bieszczady Wildlife
Cage fungi: Jolanda Aalbers
Silver washed fritillary: Esin Deniz
Net zero: Me Dia