Hobart Zoo & Aquarium

Six Pillars of Conservation Plan

2026 - 2030

HOBART ZOO & AQUARIUM

Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia

Our Vision

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium is a contemporary zoological institution dedicated to wildlife conservation, environmental education, animal welfare and sustainable community engagement.

Guided by our Six Pillars of Conservation, HZAA aims to inspire positive change for wildlife while contributing meaningfully to regional and global conservation outcomes.

We strive to create immersive experiences that encourage meaningful connections between people, wildlife and the natural world while fostering curiosity, empathy and long-term environmental responsibility.

Education & Community Impact

Education sits at the core of HZAA's mission and strategic direction. The organisation is committed to making high-quality conservation and environmental education accessible to children across Tasmania and beyond. HZAA delivers free online educational programs from Prep through to Year 12, aligned with the Tasmanian Curriculum and designed to support real-world wildlife and conservation learning through engaging educational experiences.

A key strategic focus of HZAA is becoming a leading community hub where families, schools and visitors can learn, explore and connect with nature through immersive exhibits, interactive learning experiences and conservation-focused programs.

HZAA also supports public education surrounding wildlife health, biosecurity and emerging environmental issues, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), reinforcing the organisation's commitment to conservation leadership and responsible environmental stewardship.

Our Mission

Founded through the lifelong vision and passion of owner Stuart Webster, HZAA has been shaped by a deep commitment to zoos as places of education, connection and conservation.

HZAA combines immersive visitor experiences with evidence-based conservation programs, professional animal care and sustainability-focused operations designed to increase public understanding of biodiversity, ecological responsibility and conservation action.

We believe modern zoos and aquariums have a responsibility not only to care for animals, but also to educate communities, support science, restore ecosystems and empower future generations to value and protect wildlife.

Introduction

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium is a contemporary zoological institution dedicated to wildlife conservation, environmental education, animal welfare, and sustainable community engagement.

Located in Richmond, Tasmania, just outside Hobart, the zoo spans 120 hectares of diverse landscape, including the Coal River Tier and surrounding peaks rising 400 metres above sea level.

This unique setting features native dry Eucalyptus forest and grasslands, providing habitat for a wide range of Tasmanian wildlife. Species include; Tasmanian devils, spotted-tail quolls, wombats, Bennett's wallabies, pademelons, and echidnas, along with rich birdlife such as rosellas, black cockatoos, hawks, and wedge-tailed eagles.

Established in 1999 as a wildlife park focused on rescuing and caring for native species. It has since evolved into a diverse zoo, now home to both native and exotic animals.

A new chapter began in September 2024 under owner Stuart Webster, whose experience visiting over 500 zoos worldwide shapes a vision centred on conservation, education and exceptional animal welfare, alongside creating meaningful, high-quality visitor experiences.

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium recognises its global responsibility to maximise conservation impact through partnerships with organisations including Proyecto Tití, the Zambian Carnivore Programme and the Save the Tasmanian Devil Appeal, supporting habitat protection, species management and community education.

Now home to over 150 marine and terrestrial species, the zoo continues to grow, guided by its Six Pillars for Conservation—aligned with Zoo & Aquarium Association of Australasia —ensuring its role as a leader in conservation, education, and animal welfare.

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PILLAR ONE

SUPPORTING EX-SITU ANIMAL POPULATIONS

PILLAR TWO

EDUCATE AND INSPIRE POSITIVE CHANGE FOR WILDLIFE

PILLAR THREE

PROTECTING WILD SPECIES AND HABITATS

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PILLAR FOUR

ENHANCING THE VALUE OF ZOOS FOR NATURE AND SOCIETY

PILLAR FIVE

SUSTAINING AND CARING FOR OUR LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS

PILLAR SIX

MAINTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Pillar 1
Supporting ex-situ animal populations

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium is committed to supporting ex-situ populations of managed species by exceeding animal welfare standards and creating exceptional, enriching habitats that promote natural behaviours.

We achieve this by:

- Housing over 971 individual animals in environments designed to encourage species-specific behaviours and wellbeing
- Contributing financially to global conservation partnerships, including Proyecto Tití and the Zambian Carnivore Programme
- Participating in coordinated species management programs through ZAA, with 33% of our mammal species listed as threatened on the IUCN Red List

We will continue to expand our role in conservation by increasing species diversity and strengthening support for both native and exotic ex-situ populations. Tasmanian devils remain a key priority, with plans to enter the coordinated breeding program.

Case Study: $1.2 Million Commitment to the Tasmanian Devil

The Tasmanian devil is more than an animal in our care — it's a symbol of this island, and one under real pressure in the wild. That's why we've committed $1.2 million to Tasmania Wild, a purpose-built precinct designed to be the world's best Tasmanian devil exhibit anywhere.

This isn't a standard enclosure. Every element of Tasmania Wild has been designed around two things: education and enrichment. We want visitors to see the devil the way it exists in situ — in habitat that reflects the real Tasmanian bush, not a bare pen — and to leave understanding why this animal matters and what threatens its future. And we want the devils themselves to have a life shaped by genuine behavioural enrichment, not just display.

It's the clearest expression of what this zoo stands for: conservation and education built on a foundation that also makes business sense, so we can keep doing this work for decades to come.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will deliver exceptional, species-specific habitats that exceed ZAA standards, ensuring enriching environments for 100% of all individual animals.

Pillar 2
Educate & inspire positive change for wildlife

We foster lifelong stewardship of wildlife by delivering meaningful, engaging conservation experiences.

We achieve this through

- Daily keeper talks, animal encounters and interactive experiences that build awareness of biodiversity, welfare and global conservation
- Formal education programs from Prep to Year 12, with curriculum-aligned, inquiry-based learning and accessible excursions
- Inclusive programs, including financial assistance, holiday programs and junior zookeeper experiences for diverse learning needs
- Pathways into animal care and science through volunteering, work-based learning and partnerships with the University of Tasmania

Case Study: Inspiring Action to Support Future Wildlife Custodians

The Junior Zookeeper Program was introduced in 2026 at 100% capacity for the first quarter. This led to the introduction of a monthly program now operating at 75% capacity.

Participants engage in hands-on animal care, enrichment and conservation learning alongside zookeepers.

Feedback highlights improved confidence, wellbeing and connection to conservation, reinforcing its value as a leading community education initiative.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will deliver an immersive on-site classroom and bus, increasing access and participation in conservation education excursions annually.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will achieve Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status and deliver accredited courses in animal care and conservation.

Pillar 3
Protecting wild species and habitats

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium supports global conservation through partnership and action.

We achieve this through:

- Partnerships with leading organisations, including Proyecto Titi, the Zambian Carnivore Programme and Save the Tasmanian Devil Program
- Direct funding of in-situ conservation through animal encounters, supporting research, habitat protection, education and anti-poaching efforts
- Visitor experiences that build empathy, understanding and strong support for conservation outcomes

Case Study: Supporting Colombia's Cotton-top Tamarins

Proyecto Tití protects critically endangered Cotton-top Tamarins in Colombia with fewer than 6,000 individuals remaining in the wild. Through funds raised, the program supports habitat protection, reforestation, population monitoring and community education.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will join a recognised ZAA conservation program for Western gorillas and develop a world-class habitat supporting breeding and welfare.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo and Aquarium will protect in-situ populations of Western gorillas in Central and West Africa by purchasing and securing natural wild lands.

Pillar 4
Enhancing the value of zoos for nature and society

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium is committed to being recognised by ZAA and WAZA as a leading zoo in conservation, education and visitor experience.

We achieve this through:

- Delivering high-quality, inclusive experiences that foster environmental stewardship and public connection to nature
- Providing accessible, nature-based spaces that support physical and mental wellbeing across all age groups
- Developing year-round, inclusive play and learning environments that encourage exploration, discovery and engagement
- Ensuring equitable access through affordable membership programs that sustain ongoing community connection
- Contributing to regional economic and professional development through business events, conferences and industry partnerships

Case Study: Immersive and joyful budgie feeding experience

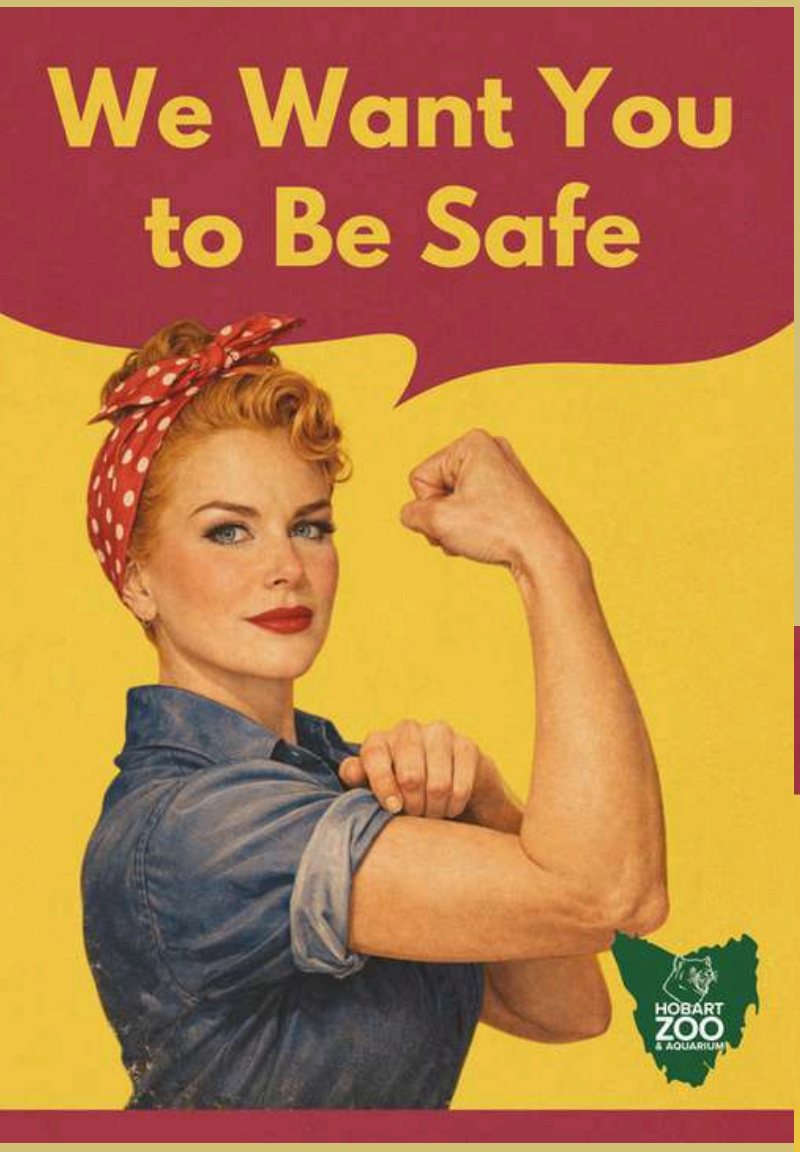
Hobart Zoo & Aquarium's twice-daily budgie feeding encounter is a standout visitor experience, offering guests the opportunity to hand-feed over 130 birds within an immersive walk-in aviary. Included with admission, it is highly valued for its accessibility, interactivity and family-friendly appeal, often described as a memorable highlight.

Beyond enjoyment, the experience also delivers strong educational value, with keeper interpretation and direct interaction helping visitors better understand animal behaviour, adaptation and welfare, reinforcing the zoo's role in connecting people with wildlife through engaging, conservation-focused experiences.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will be recognised as a world leader in small zoos, strengthening our role within the international zoo and aquarium community.

Pillar 5
Sustaining and caring for our local ecosystems

As an island state, Tasmania's biodiversity is particularly vulnerable to invasive species and emerging diseases. Hobart Zoo and Aquarium strengthen biosecurity awareness and action through:



- Providing clear, accessible information on environmental risks, including invasive species and diseases such as avian influenza
- Delivering practical guidance on prevention, early detection and response through interpretation, public messaging and education programs
- Embedding local and global conservation priorities into the visitor experience to drive awareness and action

- Promoting shared responsibility to protect wildlife, domestic species and ecosystems
- Supporting collaboration between institutions, researchers and the community to enhance long-term biodiversity resilience

Case Study: Tasmanian Devil facial tumour disease

A key example of this work is our daily Tasmanian devil presentations, where keepers educate visitors on the impacts of Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFTD), which has caused declines of over 80% in some wild populations. As a keystone species, devils play a vital role in maintaining ecosystem balance, underscoring the urgency of their conservation.

Through these presentations, visitors gain insight into current conservation efforts, including disease research, insurance populations and programs in partnership with the University of Tasmania. Enrichment demonstrations, such as feeding on whole prey items, further highlight natural behaviours, strengthening public understanding and support for protecting Tasmania's unique ecosystems.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will be recognised as a leading institution in Tasmania for community education on local ecosystem health and biosecurity.

Pillar 6
Maintaining environmental sustainability

Hobart Zoo & Aquarium is embedding sustainability in operations and growth to enhance natural systems across the property by:

We achieve this through:

- Responsible resource management, including water efficiency, on-site saltwater production and waste reduction
- Habitat restoration, tree planting, on-site food production and reuse of natural materials
- Landscapes designed to provide browse, shelter and enrichment while strengthening ecological resilience
- Reduced reliance on external supply chains through maximising on-site resources

Through these actions, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium demonstrates leadership in environmental responsibility while supporting animal wellbeing and contributing to broader sector sustainability goals.

Case Study: Eucalyptus planting for sustainability

The planting of eucalyptus trees across the property demonstrates our sustainability commitment in action. These trees not only support the dietary and behavioural needs of species such as koalas, but also provide ongoing browse, shade and enrichment materials that are sustainably harvested and reused across the zoo.

This integrated approach ensures that our landscapes function as both habitat and resource, supporting animal welfare while contributing to broader ecosystem health.

By 2030, Hobart Zoo & Aquarium will expand sustainable infrastructure by increasing water storage & implementing greywater reuse systems, while ensuring all new developments incorporate sustainable building practices.

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