



WILD

2023 Annual Report



HOOT, HISS, HOWL

A tribute to the soundscape of wilderness



ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST: Ramon Perez Gil is the IUCN Regional Councillor for Meso and South America, and the President of FAUNUM, one of Mexico's leading conservation entities. His lifelong service to conservation as a biologist and working in both global and regional leadership roles, has sometimes eclipsed Ramon's other great passion: art. WILD is thrilled to commission the Sounds of Wilderness featured on the cover of our 2023 annual report. We hope to display this and other pieces from Ramon's extensive collection at the next World Wilderness Congress, scheduled for August 25-31 in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

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Dear friends and colleagues,

WILD's team spends a lot of time exhorting you, and others like you, to use your voice. We believe, despite the many cynics in the world, that wilderness cannot flourish when its advocates remain silent.

But this year, we are asking for something a little different. While continuing to be a champion for wildlife and wild places, we want you to pause for just a moment in the hustle and bustle of your day, and . . . listen. All around you are the voices of others, a chorus of life, big and small, loud and soft. A hushed whisper in the trees, a bone-rattling roar in the night, a barely audible splash along the shore of a river.

For many, nature first appears. Maybe as a rainbow-hued desert sunset or a lichen-clad misty forest. It rises with the dusty plumes of migrating herds on the plains. It is drenched in color, shimmering with movement, visually signifying the presence of life.

And yet, experience wilderness with sight alone and we miss out on one of the best parts of nature, a soundscape of such abundance it's difficult to consciously apprehend it all.

Unfortunately, it is increasingly common to encounter stories that indicate that the volume on life's symphony is being dialed back.

Conservationists and others often report a deafening silence after venturing into a forest or national park for the first time since a war or conflict. No birds chirp. No monkeys chatter. The community within has vanished – hunted for food or trade, a casualty of human conflict. In recent years, major news publications have reported the expanding silence in Southeast Asian forests, the result of an unchecked illegal wildlife trade.

At the inception of the modern environmental movement, Rachel Carson wrote about the threat of a “silent spring,” when human interference – especially from the use of pesticides – would result in the collapse of birds and insects, and with them, a songless, hum-less, joyless quiescence. In this, Carson recognizes that wild nature isn't just a vision – it's a symphony, a texture, an aroma, a trans-sentience created by a million unseen, but ever-present, relationships.

Or to put it simply, wild nature is a community, vibrant and noisy, and one to which we also belong.

Human voices, too, are part of the libretto. For thousands of years, the stories and prayers of traditional cultures have reverberated on night breezes and morning dew, capturing in sound and memory our conscious interpretations of the world in which we live. These, too, are in jeopardy of falling silent, another casualty of an expanding empire of modern and anthropocentric lifeways.

Many have tried to define wilderness, but in the end have struggled to encapsulate its essence with rational, hyper-modern concepts. At WILD, we are united in our commitment to wilderness even as we recognize that it is no more rational than frog song on a summer evening or the percussion of waves against a solitary shore. Wilderness can only ever be partially defined. We know it only when we don't interrogate it, allowing it instead to unfurl for us across the multitude of our senses.

This is just one of the many reasons why the team at WILD is so dedicated to the wilderness cause. At the most profound level, we only know wilderness once we have experienced it – and it is in the wild that we discover so much about ourselves and our world. Ensuring that there is enough wilderness to support our survival and grant future opportunities to confront the wild and their place in it is a fundamental requirement for our species, physically and spiritually.

Whether or not you donated to WILD's work last year, our team extends its gratitude to you for being part of the community that is consciously listening to the needs of our wild home.

In gratitude,

Amy Lewis
Chief Executive Officer



Jennifer Meyer
Chief Operating Officer



RESOUNDING TRUMPETS

Commitments & Objectives

The survival of humanity, spiritually and physically, depends on our capacity and willingness to make space for wild nature.

Committed people everywhere are taking world-changing actions every day to ensure that our planet remains wild. But their actions will be in vain if others do not join them. WILD is prioritizing building and sustaining a global wilderness community to drive momentum at all scales, creating a mighty conservation chorus from the grassroots to global institutions.

COMMITMENTS

We at WILD are committed to creating a wilder, respectful and healthy world.

In practical terms, this means safeguarding wild places by emboldening and empowering the people best positioned to get the work done.

VISION

A WILD WORLD:

WILD envisions a world in which we as a species have sufficient wild places to survive and thrive.

Scientific consensus and Indigenous traditional knowledge inform us that this target is at least Half, and in some places, such as rainforests, as much as 80%.



When more than half
an ecosystem is lost,
ecological services decline
precipitously, jeopardizing
life – including human –
in neighboring regions.

A RESPECTFUL WORLD:

WILD is committed to building a world filled with respect for each other and the planet, which is why we prefer to achieve conservation goals by restoring and strengthening the land tenure of traditional Indigenous cultures.

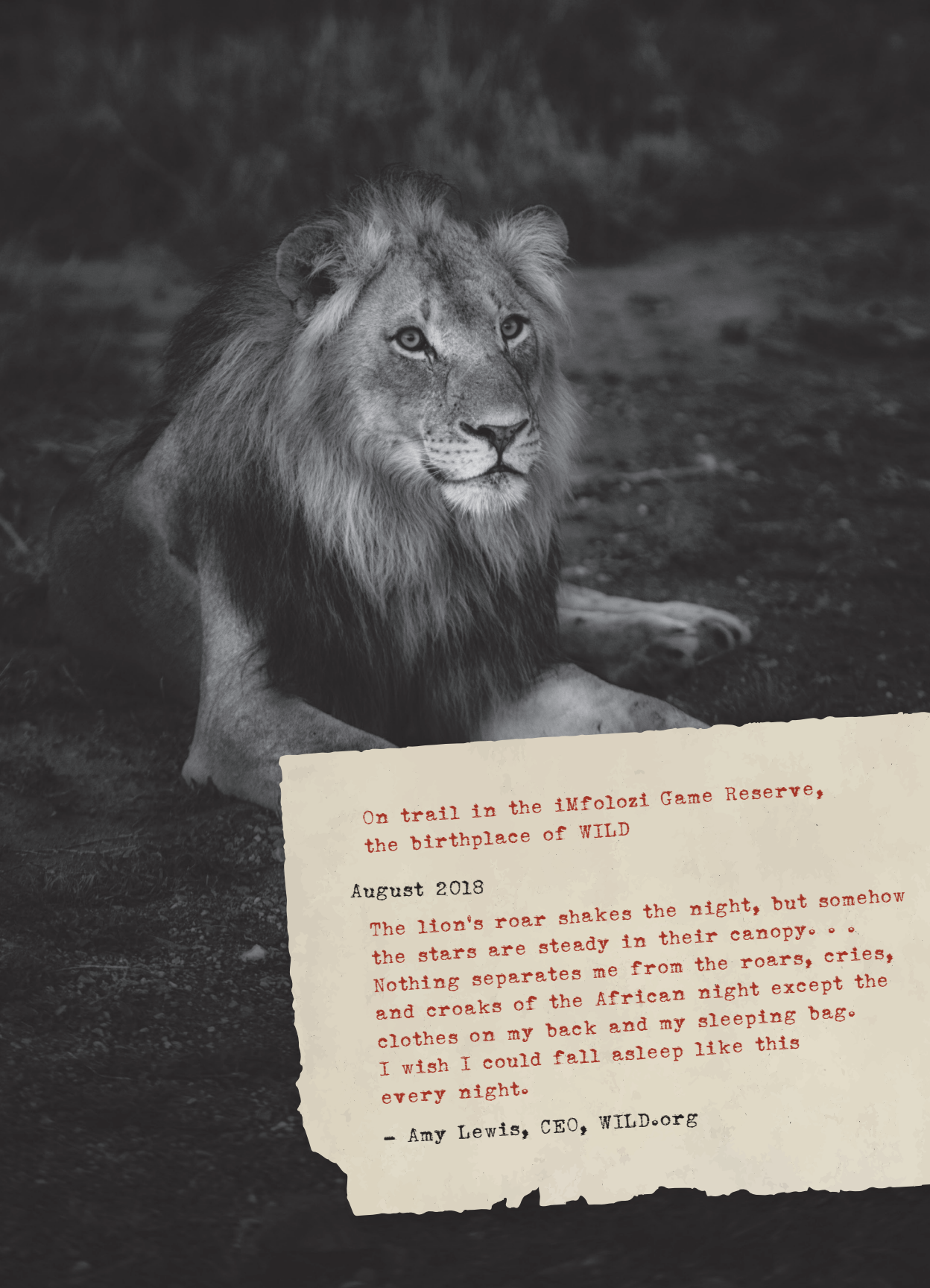
Not only is this the right thing to do, but the evidence tells us that they are the best stewards of biodiversity. In South America, Indigenous lands experience half the deforestation observed in protected areas. Furthermore, 80% of our remaining biodiversity (8 in 10 species!) are stewarded in Indigenous territories.



A HEALTHY WORLD:

WILD is committed to igniting mainstream cultural change that brings society into harmony with ourselves and the world around us.

Sustainability doesn't have to be difficult. When values and institutions support right actions, as opposed to work against them, wilderness benefits. We believe traditional Indigenous communities provide powerful examples of what is possible with this approach.



On trail in the iMfolozi Game Reserve,
the birthplace of WILD

August 2018

The lion's roar shakes the night, but somehow
the stars are steady in their canopy. . .
Nothing separates me from the roars, cries,
and croaks of the African night except the
clothes on my back and my sleeping bag.
I wish I could fall asleep like this
every night.

- Amy Lewis, CEO, WILD.org

THUNDEROUS HOOFBEATS

Methods & Progress

In 2023, the WILD.org team is proud to report to our many partners and donors that we made the world healthier, wilder, and more respectful through a variety of actions and achievements. Our work concentrated in three method categories - expanding conservation areas through the strengthening of Indigenous land tenure, supporting livelihoods that make space for abundant biodiversity, and building a global wilderness community - across three geographic and conceptual terrains - Africa, South America, and global policy.



2023 WILD.ORG ACHIEVEMENTS

EXPANDING CONSERVATION AREAS THROUGH INDIGENOUS LAND TENURE

Brazil formally recognizes 187,000 hectares of Yawanawa Territory!

Since 2005, the Yawanawa territory in Brazil's Western Amazon had provisional demarcation from the federal government, which still left it vulnerable to reversals in policy and changes in political administrations. In March of this year, WILD sponsored a delegation to Brazil's capitol to advocate for permanent, formal demarcation with the Minister of Indigenous Peoples, Sônia Guajajara and President Lula de Silva. After a concerning delay during which our team and the Yawanawa community anxiously awaited news, President Lula finally announced the full demarcation on September 15th. This is a great triumph for the Yawanawa and conservation, taking an area half the size of Rhode Island off the table for deforestation and industrial development!



Chief Tashka announces the formal demarcation to the gathered Yawanawa People during the Mariri Festival, a celebration of the Yawanawa cultural renaissance.



A little girl in traditional face paint participates in Mariri, the communal celebration of the Yawanawa cultural renaissance.

WILD's delegation holds the IUCN and Biological Diversity COP accountable on Half

For the first time, WILD.org sent a delegation to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity to insert the scientific consensus (the protection of Half of Earth's lands and seas, ideally through the significant restoration of lands to traditional Indigenous stewardship). We hosted two events at the COP, one which focused on the role of Indigenous stewardship and land tenure in achieving sufficient wild areas for the stability of the biosphere. Our events resulted in the conversion of new and powerful allies, and also helped ground COP15 negotiations in the scientific reality.



WILD's Amy Lewis, OneEarth's Karl Burkart, Grounded's Julia Jackson, Avaaz's Oscar Soria, and CoalitionWILD's, Yen Parico hold a press conference at COP15 calling for the protection of Half of Earth's lands and seas and greater respect and support for Indigenous lands and leadership.

SUPPORTING LIVELIHOODS FOR BIODIVERSITY

Permaculture and sustainable supply chains for the Yawanawa

Since the pandemic, the Yawanawa territorial population has flourished, driven both by a desire to return to the land and live traditionally as well as a mini baby boom. In the 1990s, the population ebbed below 400 and now exceeds 1,600 which is good news for the forest (more stewards, guardians, and oversight) and the culture (traditional values and institutions are returning). Still, proactive measures are needed to preserve biodiversity. That is why WILD is funding a territory-wide permaculture education and farm revival to help the Yawanawa bring less forest under cultivation.

We are also working with the Yawanawa to identify sustainable supply chain opportunities for artisanal crafts and surplus food. Earlier this year, we connect the Yawanawa Socio-Cultural Association with the Lush Cosmetic Company buyer in Brazil for the purchase of resins and seeds used in the production of fragrances. And we are actively looking for buyers interested in the abundance of açai grown within the territory.



During açai season (March to June) the entire community is involved in gathering and processing berries found in the tall trees around the villages.

Youth leadership improving livelihoods and biodiversity in Kenya

The first ever on-the-ground work of CoalitionWILD is situated in Lake Jipe (7,413 acres), a transboundary area between Kenya and Tanzania. It represents a significant opportunity to promote harmonious coexistence between humans and elephants, protect biodiversity, conserve the environment, and enhance the livelihoods of the local community. From April to May 2023, we conducted the initial consultation with the community members and observation which provided the groundwork for a well-informed and community-driven approach to addressing these challenges. From the consultation with the local community, we concluded that our focus will be on exploring livelihood opportunities that serve a dual purpose: for the subsistence of community members and the mitigation of the mounting pressures on Lake Jipe, which is grappling with issues such as siltation and overfishing. In addition, members of the community prefer solutions that are not only environmentally conscious but also gender inclusive. These options include sustainable briquette production (using invasive species, *Prosopis juliflora*), permaculture, small-scale poultry farming, and beekeeping. The next steps will be presenting the results and determining a plan of action for each livelihood option with community members.



Yen Parico records elephant movements in Lake Jipe.

Stronger community-based natural resource institutions in West Africa

A crucial step has been achieved with the development and setting in motion of new local conventions that integrate with national legislation to improve local livelihoods and the protection of biodiversity. Through these agreements local communities of the elephant range are officially supporting the Gourma Biosphere Reserve (which was created in December 2021 and covers >4 million ha), and specifically the establishment of two core areas which are to be set aside for the exclusive use of elephants. The remaining parts of the reserve allow for the development of human activities in accordance with local rules and sanctions, including the development of natural-resource management (NRM) activities that support local livelihoods through environmental protection/ restoration. This has been possible because people have seen the tangible benefits of these NRM systems for their livelihoods and view the elephants as “their treasure” that they are committed to protect. This includes actively participating in the project’s monitoring activities, such as the recent and much awaited ground count of the elephant population which was conducted by >90 local youths.

BUILDING A GLOBAL WILDERNESS COMMUNITY

**The 12th World Wilderness Congress (WILD12) to be held in August 2024,
the Sicangu Lakota Treaty Council to host**

Building a global wilderness coalition requires making a space for environmental advocates to meet and coordinate. For nearly five decades the World Wilderness Congress has served as that platform, and it will continue to do so next year in He Sápa, the sacred Black Hills of the Lakota Nation. Invited by Phil Two Eagle, the Executive Director of the Sicangu Lakota Treaty Council, WILD12 will include many global themes, but will give special emphasis to embedding Indigenous leadership and traditional ecological knowledge at the center of wilderness conservation.



**To discover more, visit:
wild12.org**

WILD12 seeks to embed Indigenous values and visions at the center of global wilderness conservation.

Biodiversity monitoring and training for the Yawanawa territory and future eco-cultural corridor.

This year, WILD deepened our involvement with the Yawanawa People in order to provide them with critically needed support, including biodiversity monitoring training. The initial site visit with Greg Murphy, CEO of Chengeta Wildlife (a key partner of the Mali Elephant Project) and Matt Heaven, Co-Founder of Languard Conservation, occurred in September. Their proposal was unanimously approved by the Yawanawa Leadership Council, and will likely move forward in 2024. Not only will this work produce regular data regarding the health of Yawanawa lands, it will also become the basis for the more ambitious project of connecting Yawanawa lands with other Indigenous territories to form an eco-cultural corridor that stretches to the Peruvian border.



Matt Heaven (Founder of Languard Conservation), Greg Murphy (CEO of Chengeta Wildlife), and Amy Lewis (CEO of WILD.org) during a meeting with Brazil's Minister of Indigenous Peoples, Sônia Guajajara, to discuss the feasibility of an eco-cultural corridor



Amy Lewis, CEO of WILD.org, learning about Yawanawa priorities during a Yawanawa leadership council meeting in September.

More mentorship opportunities to sustain youth leadership

CoalitionWILD's flagship programs, EXCEerator and Global Mentorship, have undergone significant enhancements. We've expanded our capacity to accommodate more participants, driven by donors keen on nurturing the potential of young changemakers they support. The EXCEerator now feature a more hands-on approach, with consideration for individuals facing challenges like limited internet access or time constraints due to school or work commitments. In 2023, a remarkable 80% of our webinars and workshops feature original content for our webinars and workshops are drawn from our own experiences, offering valuable insights. Moreover, the Global Mentorship Program has witnessed a 30% surge in applicants, emphasizing the growing demand among young individuals seeking mentors in the field of conservation. Looking ahead, we are committed to providing ongoing support to our alumni by assisting them in grant writing and advocating for their initiatives. In return, we seek permission to feature their impactful projects as case studies in future EXCEerator program cohorts. This mutually beneficial collaboration not only strengthens our alumni's work but also enriches the learning experience for future participants in our program.

Final publication of Wilderness Category 1b Management Guidelines in Mandarin

Working across cultures and institutions, WILD was, in June of this year, finally able to secure approval from all necessary authorities in China to publish the Wilderness Category 1b Management Guidelines. Category 1b is a subcategory of the IUCN wilderness protected area and places equal emphasis on the protection of ecosystems and the traditional cultures who live within those areas. The publication is generating renewed interest in wilderness in Chinese academic circles and will offer a powerful conservation model to scholars and practitioners in China who also engage with Indigenous Peoples and local communities.





Mission Mountains, USA

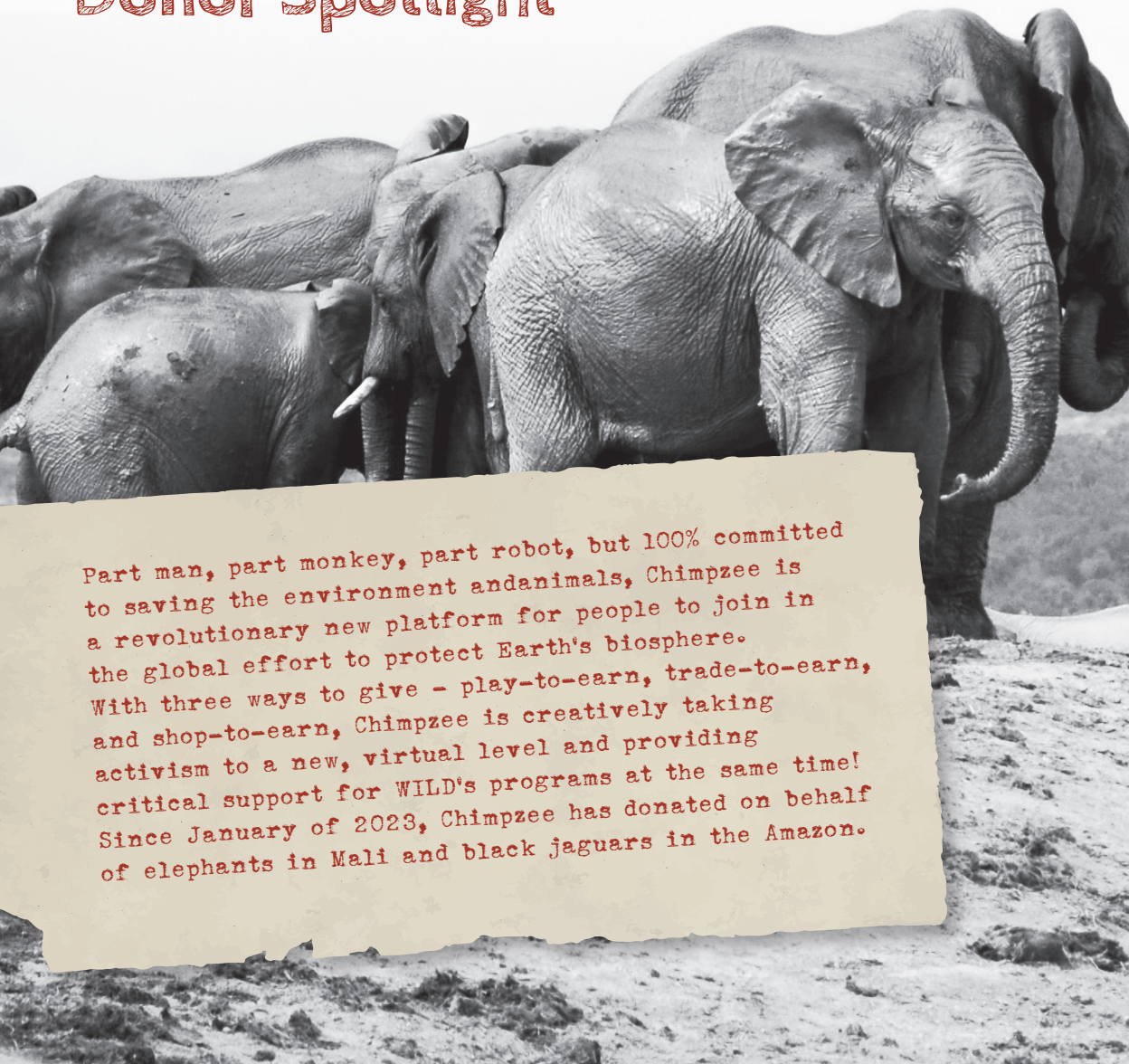
April, 2023

We strolled in the heart of the rugged Mission Mountains listening to a magpie chatting animatedly with a nearby burrowing owl. We were surrounded in the evensong of unseen birds, and a stalwart sense that we must protect and steward these voices.

Adam Hanson, Senior Conservation
Network Manager, WILD.org

ECHOING SONGS

Donor Spotlight



Part man, part monkey, part robot, but 100% committed to saving the environment and animals, Chimpzee is a revolutionary new platform for people to join in the global effort to protect Earth's biosphere. With three ways to give - play-to-earn, trade-to-earn, and shop-to-earn, Chimpzee is creatively taking activism to a new, virtual level and providing critical support for WILD's programs at the same time! Since January of 2023, Chimpzee has donated on behalf of elephants in Mali and black jaguars in the Amazon.

Donor Spotlight



*"THE TIME FOR TALK IS OVER.
CHIMPZEE IS HERE TO ACT
AND SHOW PEOPLE HOW
THEY CAN BENEFIT AND HELP
PROTECT WILDLIFE AT THE
SAME TIME!"*

from the Chimpzee Team

WILD is a proud partner of this fun and innovative conservation gaming platform.

To discover more, visit chimpzee.io.

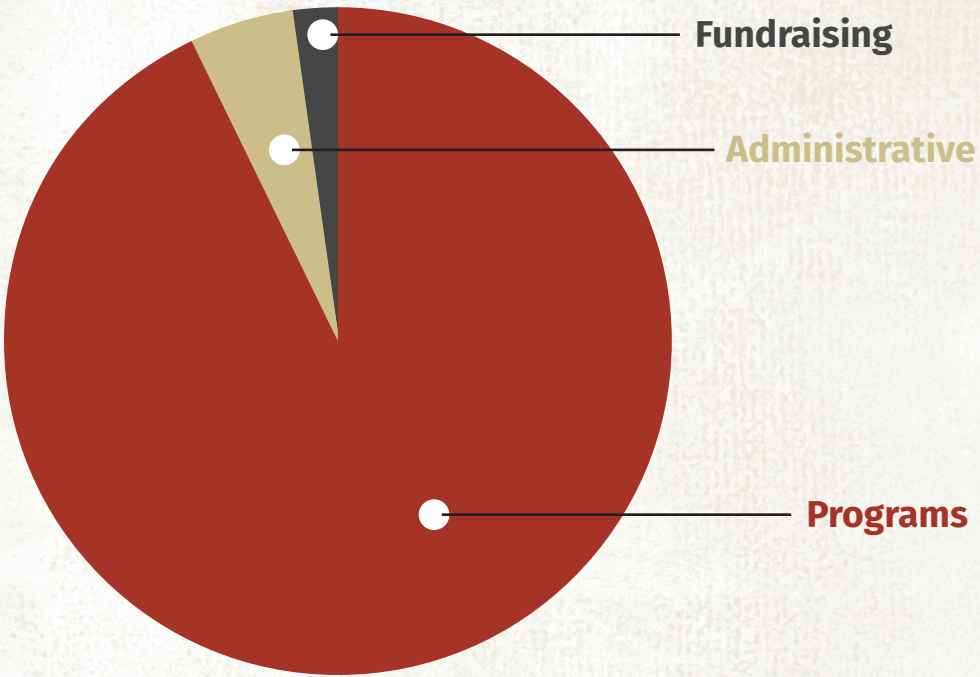
HYDROTIC HUMS

Financials

9 out of every
10 dollars

goes directly to program support,
meaning WILD's donors receive the
most impact for their generosity.

2023 / By the Numbers



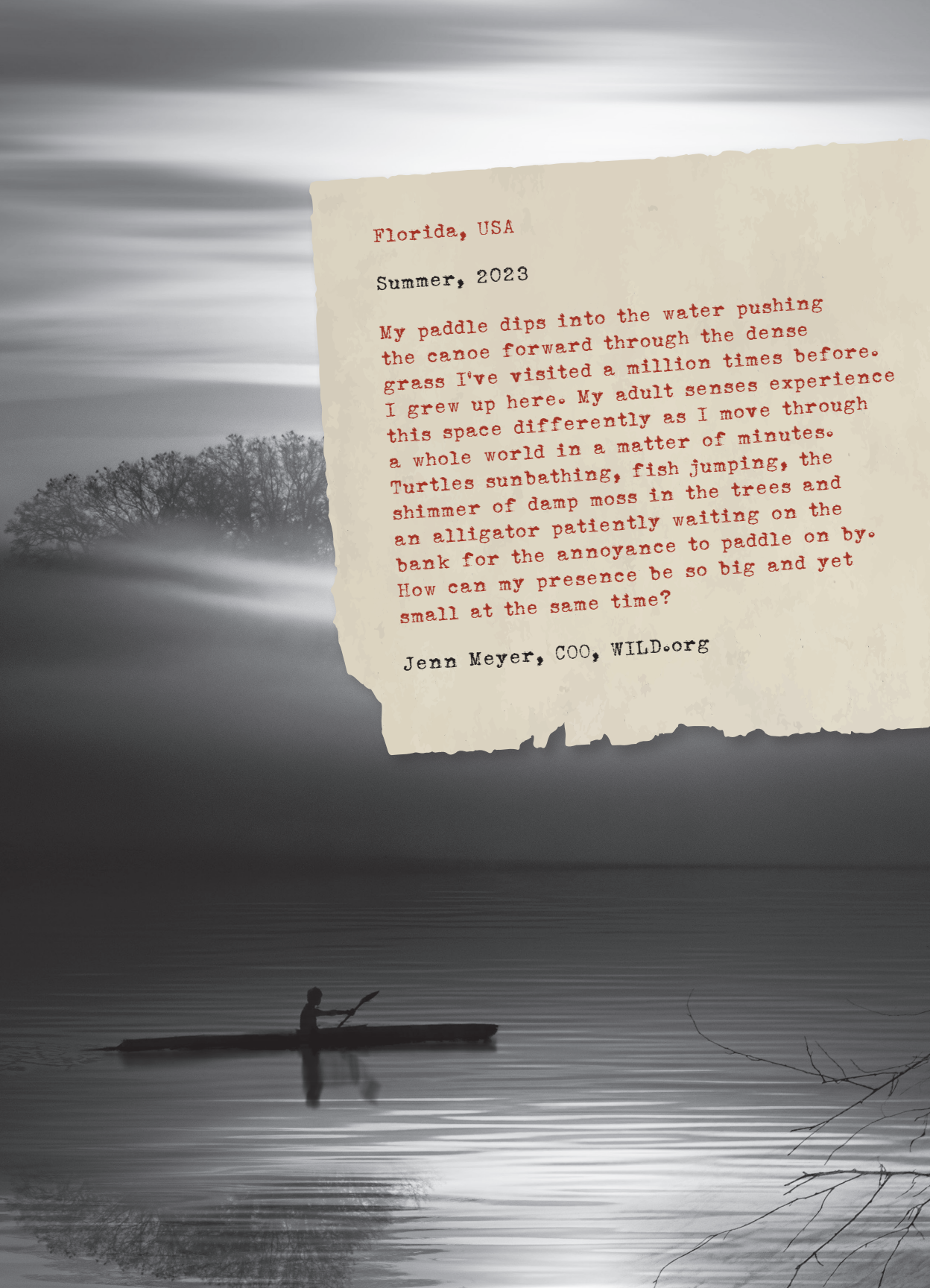
Programs: \$5,472,947 | 93%

Administrative: \$311,900 | 5%

Fundraising: \$113,853 | 2%

MAKE
SPACE
FOR
WILD
NATURE

The text is rendered in a bold, hand-drawn font where each letter is a canvas for intricate black and white illustrations. The 'M' features a person in a hat and a globe. The 'A' shows a person with a backpack. The 'K' depicts a person with a hat and a globe. The 'E' shows a person with a hat and a globe. The 'S' features a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'P' shows a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'A' depicts a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'C' shows a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'E' features a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'F' depicts a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'O' shows a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'R' features a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'W' depicts a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'I' shows a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'L' features a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'D' depicts a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'N' shows a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'A' features a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'T' depicts a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'U' shows a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'R' features a person with a backpack and a globe. The 'E' depicts a person with a backpack and a globe.

A person in a canoe is silhouetted against a misty, overcast sky over a body of water. The person is using a paddle. The water is calm, reflecting the light. In the background, there are trees and a misty atmosphere. The overall mood is serene and quiet.

Florida, USA


Summer, 2023

My paddle dips into the water pushing the canoe forward through the dense grass I've visited a million times before. I grew up here. My adult senses experience this space differently as I move through a whole world in a matter of minutes. Turtles sunbathing, fish jumping, the shimmer of damp moss in the trees and an alligator patiently waiting on the bank for the annoyance to paddle on by. How can my presence be so big and yet small at the same time?

Jenn Meyer, COO, WILD.org

GENTLE CHUFFING

HONOR ROLE



WILD's conservation victories are made possible by a global community of donors. It is their commitment and vision that fuels our work. Many thanks to all those who support our team!

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In remembrance:

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Lake Jipe, Kenya

May, 2023

I hear Manolo, a bull elephant that frequents the lake, feeding on the papyrus beds. Manolo's rustling, munching, and occasional snorting add another layer of sensory experience. The dry leaves and stems yield to their enormous grace, creating a melody that harmonizes with the surrounding calm. What makes this a more interesting experience is the near-silence of his movement just before coming to the lake. His padded feet tread lightly, leaving barely a trace. This contrast, the gentle sounds of feeding against the near-silent footfalls, captures the essence of Lake Jipe.

Yen Parico, Director CoalitionWILD

A SPECIAL REQUEST

From the Amazon to the deserts of Africa to the halls of the United Nations, people are taking big risks to help save life on Earth and our own civilization. In this historic moment, every contribution counts.

Please consider a gift to [WILD.org](https://www.wild.org) now

to help create more victories for wildlife and wild places in the years to come.

*In respect and gratitude for our wild community,
The WILD Team*

Amy Lee

Giulia Jackie Yen

Tori Ann

Maddy Brian

A photograph of a dense, misty forest. The scene is filled with tall, thin trees and thick foliage, creating a hazy atmosphere. In the foreground, a piece of aged, yellowish paper is taped to the surface, partially obscuring the forest floor. The paper contains handwritten text in red ink. The overall mood is serene and natural.

In Chief Tashka's home on Yawanawa
Territorial Lands

April 2023

Cradled in my hammock, I am also
cradled in song: the sweet chirps and
momentous bellows of a frog metropolis
flourishing along the riverbank at
the end of the rainy season. Every so
often, Tashka (in the neighboring
hammock) will contribute to the melodious
cacophony, identifying a new voice—
this-or-that nightbird and a sundry
of insects. I fall asleep blanketed in
contentment listening to the voices of
the many we work to protect.

- Amy Lewis, CEO, WILD.org

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