

FLORIDA

Manatee Rescue, Rehabilitation & Release

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo works in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Marine Research Institute, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to rescue, rehabilitate and release injured or sick manatees. The David A. Straz, Jr. Manatee Hospital at the zoo is one of three critical care facilities in the state of Florida for West Indian manatees (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) and the only nonprofit facility. Between 1991 and 2006, the zoo's manatee hospital received more than 180 manatees for rehabilitation, and of those has released more than 80 back into their native waters. Though gross statistics suggest a 50 percent survival rate, if a manatee survives the first 48 hours, its chance of being released can be as high as 70 percent.

In addition to daily educational manatee shows, the zoo hosts an annual Manatee Awareness Day to further educate visitors on the plight of the manatee. Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo also provides funding annually to the Manatee Rehabilitation Partnership (MRP), which uses radio collars to track selected rehabilitated manatees in order to monitor their post-release progress.

Key Largo Woodrat

The endangered Key Largo woodrat (*Neotoma floridana smalli*), a native Florida species not to be confused with invasive pest species, is rapidly disappearing in the wild. They are currently found only in the northern part of Key Largo, Florida.

In 2002, the Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to acquire Key Largo woodrats. Since the program began, 16 pups have been born. The zoo's efforts support a captive breeding initiative and habitat protection for the future release of individuals back to the wild.

Endangered Whooping Crane

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission are working together to provide veterinary and staff support to both the non-migratory and migratory whooping crane (*Grus americana*) population in Florida. The zoo also manages a pair of the birds for captive breeding and education.

Red Wolf

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo has partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Red Wolf Species Survival Plan (SSP) to help bring red wolves (*Canis rufus*) back from the brink of extinction. With estimates of the wild population at fewer than 100, this program focuses on captive breeding, habitat protection and education, with long-term hopes to release captive born wolves back to the wild.

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo currently maintains three breeding pairs of red wolves, with one pair on exhibit in the Mason M. and Charles P. Lykes Florida Wildlife Center at the zoo and two pair housed at the zoo's facility at the Green Swamp.

Florida Panther Project

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo works with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to provide veterinary support for the wild Florida panther (*Felis concolor coryi*) population. The zoo also manages a non-breeding pair.

Wild Habitat Management

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo manages more than 1,300 acres at the Green Swamp north of Tampa, Florida, for the Southwest Florida Water Management District. A caretaker on-site eradicates exotic plants and maintains habitat for species such as gopher tortoises and indigo snakes. This facility is also used as an offsite location for the study, conservation and breeding of two pairs of red wolves and a group of Przewalski's horses.

Key Deer

Key deer (*Odocoileus virginianus claviam*) are the smallest sub-species of white-tailed deer, living only in the Florida Keys. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimated that there were fewer than 50 Key deer remaining in the wild in the 1940s. With the establishment of the National Key Deer Refuge in 1957, Key deer received the protection they needed and their numbers have rebounded.

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo has become an important part of this initiative by maintaining a Key deer exhibit to house injured wild deer in need of medical attention. This exhibit at the Mason M. and Charles P. Lykes Florida Wildlife Center at the zoo is not only a safe haven for injured wild deer, but also a "genetic reservoir" should a natural disaster occur in the Florida Keys.

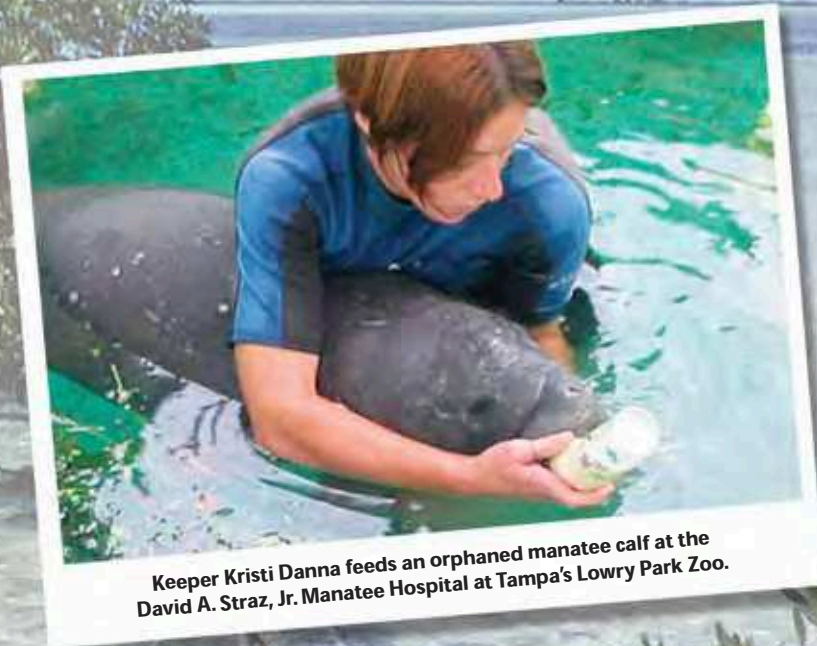
Everglades Restoration Project

The everglades ecosystem—the large and diverse wetland that stretches through South Florida—is in dire need of restoration. A comprehensive action plan has begun to restore, protect and preserve the water sources of central and southern Florida. By focusing on water storage and replenishing underground aquifers, this plan hopes to ensure the survival of this unique ecosystem and the wildlife that inhabits this area.

The Lowry Park Zoological Society has provided funding to assist with this restoration and is committed to educating our visitors on the importance of conserving Florida's unique biodiversity.

Recycling

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo is dedicated to conserving the earth's natural resources by recycling materials such as plastic, aluminum cans, glass, mixed paper, newspapers, cardboard, styrofoam, printer cartridges, cell phones and fluorescent light bulbs. Jill Fredericks, a docent at the zoo, began and organizes all of the zoo's recycling programs with the help of many dedicated volunteers.



Keeper Kristi Danna feeds an orphaned manatee calf at the David A. Straz, Jr. Manatee Hospital at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo.



Red wolves are one of the endangered species managed at the Mason M. & Charles P. Lykes Florida Wildlife Center at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo.