

CONSERVATION IN ACTION | NOVEMBER 2021

# WILDCRY

PRESENCE

A WILDLIFE MISSION

 THE  
ASPINAL  
FOUNDATION  
CHARITY NUMBER 326567

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# WELCOME

from Damian Aspinall

While we are seeing a continued easing of Covid-19 restrictions across the globe, the long-term impact of the pandemic on worldwide conservation efforts continues unabated. It has magnified issues such as human-wildlife conflict, driving an increase in poaching across many key locations. The resumption of air travel routes will likely preface a surge in global wildlife trafficking and the bushmeat trade, due to pent-up demand.

In this climate, our courage to pursue pioneering conservation work is more important than ever. Over this summer, we announced two world-firsts for conservation, which you can read about in this edition of Wildcry, along with some incredible news emerging from our successful projects in Congo and South Africa.

It is thanks to your valued support that these incredible projects can be realised and our fervency to conserve, protect and sustain wildlife populations remains undimmed.





## THE LIST OF REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL WILDLIFE MISSION IS SUBSTANTIAL AND SOMETIMES VARIED, BUT COLLABORATION AND SPEED ARE TWO ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS.

On the 31st January this year, the Bongani Mountain Lodge in South Africa was the subject of a suspected arson attack. Fortunately, there were no guests at the lodge and all staff were evacuated safely, but the lodge itself was burnt to the ground. The lodge was situated in the Mthethomusha Game Reserve, which shares its borders with the Kruger National Park, and is home to an abundant and diverse range of wildlife. Two of the rhinos were in close proximity to each other and captured together, with a final stage in the mission required to capture the remaining animal.

### A complex operation

Within days, The Aspinall Foundation, in partnership with WILDTRUST and the Wildlife Emergency Fund, collaborated with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) to provide assistance. Less than three weeks from the date of the fire, three female rhino had been successfully moved to Care for Wild, a rhino sanctuary, where they will be well cared for until they can be placed in a suitable long-term setting.

The rescue took place in stages. First, the team had to assess the situation and locate the rhinos. They then had to wait for the rhinos to be in strategic locations and close to the boundary of the reserve before the capture operations could take place. Two of the rhinos were in close proximity to each other and captured together, with a final stage in the mission required to capture the remaining animal. Dereck Milburn, our South Africa Regional Director, said: "Mthethomusha has very difficult

terrain to work in, but the mission could not have gone better." "This was largely due to the expertise and collaboration of all those involved".

### Mozambique elephants

Our translocation expertise proved invaluable yet again in May, when a herd of 13 elephants had to be moved urgently. The elephants had been roaming in the buffer zone of the Maputo Special Reserve, a 400-square-mile protected area which was founded in 1932 on the coast of Mozambique.

The herd had come into conflict with local communities and there were calls for them to be culled. It was clear that time was limited if the elephants were to be saved. The Aspinall Foundation collaborated with Mozambique's National Administration of Conversation Areas (ANAC), Peace Parks Foundation and The Wildlife Emergency fund to plan and accomplish the move. Translocation specialists Conservation Solutions and the Mozambique Wildlife Alliance both provided their services to realise the complex mission.

The transfer required considerable expertise, including an expert helicopter pilot flying close to the herd, whilst a vet used a dart gun to sedate each elephant. Amazing accuracy given he was aiming at a moving target from a moving helicopter! In one of the most challenging translocations we have been involved in so far, all 13 elephants were transferred safely to their new home at Zinave National Park.

# BACK TO THE WILD

- a defining moment:  
Djongo and Mayombe

Our previous issue of Wildcry featured an update on some of the gorillas at our groundbreaking gorilla reintroduction project in the Batéké Plateau National Park, Gabon.

Amongst the gorillas profiled were the placid and self-assured male Djongo (15) who had formed a positive, confidence-boosting bond with the more timid female, Mayombe (13).

We're delighted to announce that this close bond has led to conservation history being made, as this captive-born couple recently gave birth to a baby - the first ever birth to captive-born gorillas in the wild!

The newborn's arrival, back in June, was widely reported across both national and international media. Mayombe is proving to be a very protective first-time mother and the baby is being regularly monitored by rangers.

Damian Aspinall, Chairman, commented at the time: "This is a pivotal moment for wildlife conservation and a hugely emotional day for our entire team. This birth symbolises the foundation of our entire Gorilla Protection Project.

"35 years ago, our work saved Djongo's father and allowed that lineage to continue after the devastating loss of his family to poachers. The Aspinall Foundation enabled father and son to be repatriated together to Gabon. To now see Djongo's offspring born in freedom, the next generation of this critically endangered species given a full life in the wild, free from human

persecution is a powerful image in a project that has come full circle. Our team have observed the newborn getting stronger and more aware of its surroundings each day.

Mayombe is now very calm and confident around Djongo, who has been seen gently touching the baby and standing serenely next to Mayombe, observing. The average distance between them during feeding has decreased since the birth and it's been a pleasure for our team to observe the three of them together as a small family. The birth represents not only a hugely significant triumph for conservation, but a deeply moving legacy for grandfather Djala - an emblem of hope emerging from a life of adversity.

## Did you know?

The Aspinall Foundation has reintroduced over 70 gorillas back into the wild, including 26 who travelled from its two parks. Many have formed new family groups and are producing young. In total, more than 35 babies have been born in the wild across the charity's projects in Congo and Gabon.





# REHABILITATED JAVAN LANGURS RELEASED BACK TO THE WILD

Our Aspinall Foundation Indonesia team, headed by Made Wedana, is achieving great success with our Back to the Wild programme. In this update, we bring you news of their work with just one species: the East Javan ebony langur

## A new life in the wild

Earlier this year, after a visit to prepare the site at the protected area that is to be their new home, the team placed the selected langurs, two males and five females, into individual transportation crates. After checking they had settled after their transfer from the Centre to the release site, the group were released on 25th March 2021. Each release is to be celebrated, each animal given back its birthright of a life in the wild, but it is also the culmination of months of hard work which will continue with those yet to be released.



## Ongoing preparations

Whilst the monitoring team are taking daily observations of the newly-released group, there is only time for a deep clean of their empty cages back at the Centre before they are filled again with more langurs. There is a constant process of monitoring and assessment, and animals will pass through a number

of health checks, quarantine and socialisation phases before eventual release. Before the end of April, another group - one male and three females - was selected for release in July 2021. Aside from a pre-release medical, the group are observed in detail on a daily basis, the team keeping a good distance to ensure the behaviour they observe is not influenced by the proximity of

humans. Social cohesion is important, and a group that has developed a good social bond will cope better when released.

## Wide-ranging support

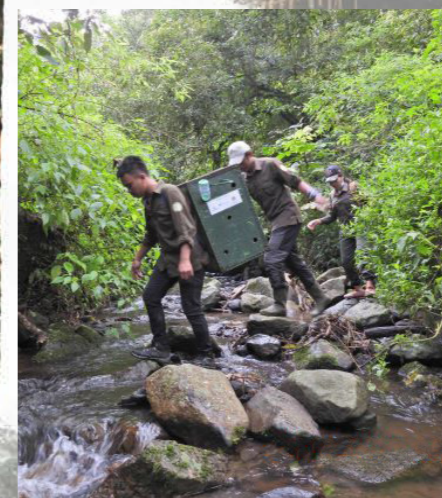
The work is both rewarding and extensive. In addition to the release preparations, the Centre also receives confiscated/rescued

animals, provides dedicated care for all resident langurs, carries out regular maintenance of the site, monitors the groups already living in the wild, and is involved in community support such as educational visits. In recent months, this is still being achieved, despite



Indonesia facing intense pressure from the coronavirus pandemic. Java, in particular, has been very badly affected.

It is so important that this work continues, and our team in Indonesia is hugely grateful for the support you give. Without you, much of the work would simply not be possible.



# LANGURS IN JAVA

# MADAGASCAR

## THE FRAGILE DIVERSITY OF A UNIQUE ISLAND

Madagascar's stunningly rich biodiversity stands in stark contrast to the extreme poverty of the island, particularly in rural areas. Yet whilst the subsistence lifestyle of many communities poses a threat to the natural environment, it also provides an opportunity. Through community-based conservation projects, it is possible to make the changes needed to improve living standards in a way that both builds the capacity of local people and utilises the knowledge of sustainable farming methods and land use. This formula is the basis for the work carried out by The Aspinall Foundation's Madagascar team.

### Lemur projects

Our mission to protect lemurs and their habitats continues with community supported projects in the core sites at Andriantantely and Ambato-Boeny. Despite increased pressures due to

the coronavirus pandemic, two of our species-specific projects, supported by IUCN Save Our Species, have seen the number of lemurs increase across all seven of the target species. This is wonderful news, and we hope to continue and expand on this work going forward.

Yet the variety of vulnerable species and habitats on the island highlights the need for much more to be done. Participatory surveys in

the wetlands of the Maewatanana/Ambato-Boeny region provided us with a strong indication that several species, including some of the world's most Critically Endangered, would benefit from the implementation of conservation strategies in the area.

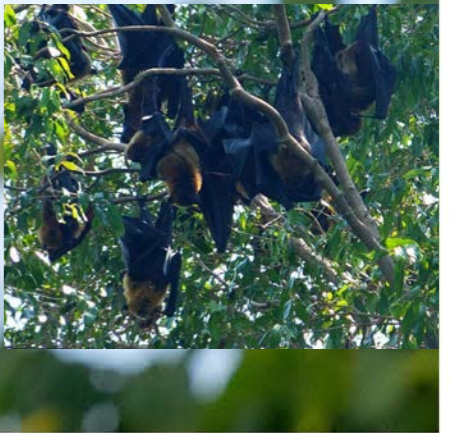
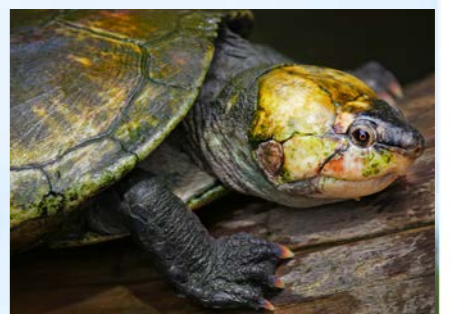
### The power of community

Thanks to the support of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, we have been able to spend the past four and a half years developing hard-won community relationships and collecting valuable data on Critically Endangered species such as the Madagascar fish-eagle, the Madagascar big-headed turtle, and an endemic cichlid fish known as damba mipentina. Other Endangered and Vulnerable species are also present, including the Madagascar flying fox, the Madagascar pond heron, and other species of cichlid.

### A fighting chance

Our achievements so far include the designation of almost 4,000 hectares of freshwater lakes for improved community-based management - and we are keen to maintain a presence in this area for the foreseeable future.

Without support, at least some of these species will become extinct. For example, it is estimated there may be as few as 120 breeding pairs of Madagascar fish-eagles. They only breed once a year, and only one chick will fledge for each pair per year. Last year, we discovered five nest sites at four lakes in the project site. Every chick that can survive to adulthood, and breed, is one more chance for survival of the species.





Our much-loved Howletts gorilla, Joshi, has made the long trip to Congo, where he will soon be living wild and free in the land of his ancestors.

# JOSHI AN EPIC JOURNEY



## OUR LATEST EXCITING REWILDING PROJECT

Earlier this year, Joshi made the greatest journey of his life as he flew to Congo to begin his life as a wild gorilla. This incredible journey took just 36 hours, our fastest transfer yet, and upon arrival, Joshi stayed in a custom-built habituation area to allow him to be monitored as he acclimatised to the new environment and diet. Here, he was introduced to Loukelela and Bomassa, two orphaned gorillas, who featured in our spring Wildcry. The three gorillas were then integrated into one enclosure, where they got to know each other.

### Next steps

The gorillas will spend a year or so on the island. At this point, they will be able to move to the wider Lesio-Louna Reserve. Here, they will live a fully wild life, meeting the other gorillas on the reserve. It is hoped that in time they will breed with female gorillas here and further boost the gorilla population in an area where they were previously hunted to extinction.

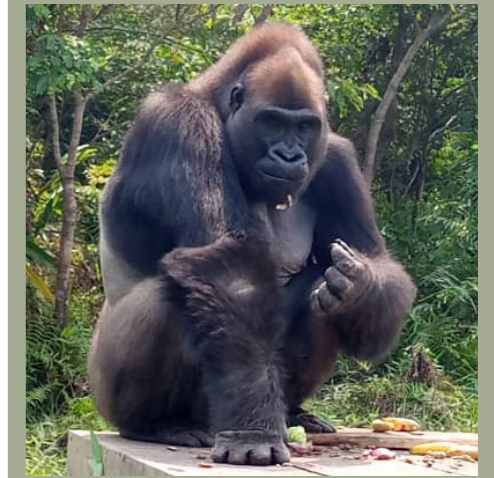
The orphans will help to teach Joshi how to live wild, showing him which vegetation to eat, and Joshi will provide protection for them due to his size.

### Building on decades of success

We believe all wild animals are entitled to live in freedom, in their natural habitats, and without fear of persecution by mankind.

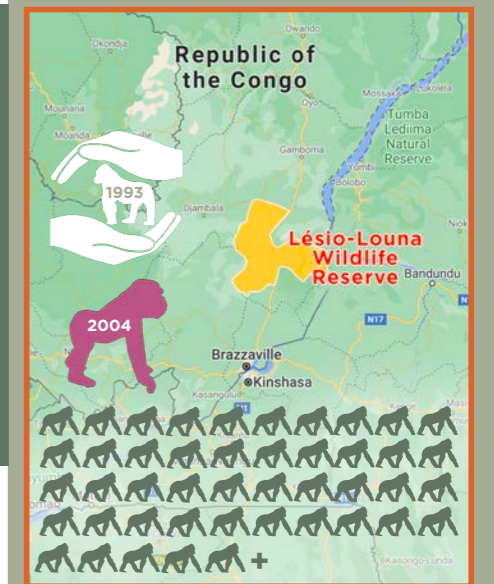
### How can I help?

The cost to care for these gorillas over the next year is around £34,000. If you can, please donate via our website or your cover sheet.



### Joshi factfile

**Age:** 13 years old  
**Weight:** 30 stone  
**Parents:** Kijo and Shumba  
**Born:** Howletts  
**Rewilded to:** Lesio-Louna reserve, Congo



### Onto the island

Recently, Joshi, Loukelela and Bomassa have made their next move, to a protected island in the Lesio-Louna reserve. This move will allow them to live as wild gorillas, while also allowing our expert team to monitor them, supplement their food and give them essential medicine.

The Aspinall Foundation is proud of its long history of rewilding gorillas. Over three decades, it has successfully reintroduced over 70 gorillas into the wild, with over 30 births to reintroduced animals.

### Lesio-Louna Reserve

**Size:** 173,000 hectares  
**Where:** 140km north of Brazzaville  
**1993:** the year the reserve was created to help protect gorillas  
**2004:** first baby born in the wild to reintroduced gorillas  
**45+** gorillas now living wild here



# BIG CATS GO WILD

## In our previous issue of Wildcry, we updated you on our incredible cheetah rewilding projects

Our much-loved Port Lympe-born cheetah brothers, Saba and Nairo, have been making fantastic progress in the vast expanse of South Africa's Great Karoo, following their transfer from Howletts back in February 2020. In other exciting news, captive-born cheetah brothers Kumbe and Jabari are thriving on a 4,500 hectare reserve in Zimbabwe, following their February transfer from Parc Safari in Canada. The transfer was managed by The Aspinall Foundation

in collaboration with Parc Safari, Imire Rhino & Wildlife Conservation and Ethiopian Airlines.

Below, we take a look at the progress of these two projects in more detail:

### Saba and Nairo

On 17th February 2021, The Aspinall Foundation team released Saba & Nairo from their training camp onto the main reserve at Mount Camdeboo. Free to run and hunt under cloudless skies in the shadow of the mighty Sneeuwberg range, the brothers are now entirely self-sufficient, effortlessly taking down large prey such as kudu with

a cheetah's characteristic pace and dexterity. They are being discreetly monitored using satellite and telemetry tracking collars by The Aspinall Foundation and Mount Camdeboo teams as they explore their expansive new home.

In the midst of their first South African winter, they experienced their first snowfall in Mount Camdeboo, sporting well conditioned winter coats and hunting and eating exceptionally well. In time, the spirited pair will encounter females and, when nature takes its course, will contribute their valuable genetics to the South African cheetah metapopulation.

### Kumbe and Jabari

Back in February this year, The Aspinall Foundation lent its expertise to a first-of-its-kind project for Zimbabwe. Cheetah brothers Kumbe and Jabari undertook a 7,600-mile journey from Parc Safari in Quebec to Imire Rhino & Wildlife Conservation in Mashonaland East district. Following a flight aboard a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner in specially-designed transport crates, they arrived safely at Imire after a 30-hour journey.

The pair then spent 60 days in a quarantine boma acclimatising to their new environment whilst being monitored closely by the Imire and

Aspinall Foundation teams. Before their release, the brothers were given health checks then fitted with tracking collars to carefully observe their behaviour.

Upon their release into the spectacular sprawling plains of the main Imire reserve, these two top predators wasted no time in demonstrating their instinctual hunting prowess, making their first successful kill within 12 hours of their release – a proud moment for our teams.

The programme, supported by the Zimbabwe government, is significant for being the first of its kind for the country, which has never before received captive-bred cheetahs

for rewilding.

## Celebrating success, looking to the future

We are delighted with the incredible success of these groundbreaking projects, which have proven that these magnificent captive-born cats can be successfully rewilded, yielding amazing results. We are already working with other organisations to replicate our trailblazing programmes and repopulate other reserves with these beautiful animals.

We will continue to bring you updates on the brothers' thrilling stories in future issues.



# PLAY OUR LOTTERY AND WIN FOR ANIMALS!

# WIN UP TO £25,000!



We have a superb new way for you to support The Aspinall Foundation for just £1 a week with our charity lottery!

Our lottery is a great way to support our work while also being in with the chance to win cash prizes, including the top prize of £25,000. 50% of all income goes directly to our work, so by playing you can also support our international conservation work around the world.

### Start playing in just three easy steps!

1. Pick how many £1 entries you would like to play each week.
2. Join online by direct debit or alternatively complete the postal form to register, and send it directly to Unity who run the lottery, or return it to us in the freepost envelope.
3. Once you receive your lottery numbers you're ready to go! If you win, your prize will be sent automatically. Please note: You must be 16 or over to enter

### Who are Unity?

Unity is the nation's fundraising lottery platform. When you join our lottery you are using the Unity platform, the platform guarantees that at least 50p of every £1 you play goes to The Aspinall Foundation.

Cause name:  
**The Aspinall Foundation**

Charity number:  
**326567**

This lottery is licenced by:  
**Folkestone and Hythe District Council**

Lottery licence number:  
**312**

The promoter of this lottery is:  
**The Aspinall Foundation**  
Port Lympne Reserve  
Lympe  
Nr Hythe  
Kent, CT21 4PD

#### 1. Your details (please print in block capitals)

Title:	First Name:
Surname:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Tel:	Mobile:
D.O.B.:	
Email:	
<input type="checkbox"/> If you do not wish your name to be publicised if you win, please tick here	
<input type="checkbox"/> If you would like to receive lottery correspondence via email, please tick here	

#### 2. Payment frequency

How many entries would you like each week?  
(Each entry costs £1 per week)

How often do you want to pay?  
(Please tick payment frequency & write amount in box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly / £4.34 Direct Debit only	X
<input type="checkbox"/> Every 13 wks / £13	
<input type="checkbox"/> Every 26 wks / £26	
<input type="checkbox"/> Every 52 wks / £52	=

Total amount payable:

#### 3. Select your payment method

**Payment by Direct Debit**  
Please fill in the form and return to Unity

Name(s) of Account Holder(s):

Branch Sort Code:

Bank/Building Society account number:

**Instruction to your Bank or Building Society**  
Please pay Unity from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Unity and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of accounts

**unity** Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit **DIRECT Debit**

Service User Number: 4 2 1 1 0 2

Reference:  
(For office use only)

Signature:

Date:

**Payment by Cheque**  I enclose a Cheque made payable to Unity (minimum payment £13)

#### 4. Your contact preferences

Please indicate how you would like to receive updates from your chosen cause:

Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Home Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Post	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Mobile Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
SMS	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

#### 5. Your consent to play

(I confirm I am over 16 and a resident of GB)

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Date:

For office use only:

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# PARK NEWS NEW ARRIVALS

## BEARS



July saw the exciting arrival at Port Lympe of a family of European brown bears. Rescued from a zoo in Andorra, they are now exploring their new custom-built three-acre woodland enclosure.

The bears – named Julio, Encam and Neu, and their young cubs – were transported 800 miles from Naturlandia, Andorra's only zoo, which was part of an amusement park. The decision to transfer them to Port Lympe was made following the announcement by Naturlandia's director, Xabier Ajona, that the Andorran zoo would be closing, as there were limitations on what it was able to achieve from a conservation perspective.

To facilitate the move, Port Lympe Reserve worked in partnership with Bears In Mind, an organisation which works to provide better living conditions for captive bears.

Their rescue was possible due to your generous support, which helped to raise the funds for the transfer and the custom-built enclosure. Specially designed by the park's expert team, the spacious enclosure includes water features, den areas and plenty of vegetation, allowing the bears to live the most natural life possible.

We are delighted to have finally welcomed these captivating animals, and our immense gratitude goes to all those who helped facilitate the move.

## LIONS

On 14th June 2021, we were delighted to announce the arrival of four lion cubs at Port Lympe, born to mum Oudrika and dad, Adras. Now third time parents, Adras and Oudrika have been keeping a watchful eye over the four adventurous youngsters as they explore their surroundings.

Currently located in an enclosure adjacent to the reserve's Lion Lodge and Pinewood cabins, the cubs, along with the adults in the eight-strong pride, will very soon be moving into a new eight-acre, custom-built, fully open-top habitat.

With these latest adorable arrivals, Oudrika is the proud mother of eight cubs. Khari, Binti and Kulinda from Oudrika's first litter live with their parents at Port Lympe. Azi, from Oudrika's second litter, is thriving under the care of the dedicated team at Howletts.

Support from gifts in wills allows us to do more, every year, around the world. Your gift to future generations could be to help our next rewilding project or protect threatened animals in their natural habitats around the world.

Leaving a gift in your will is something that costs nothing now, but could have an incredible impact in the future.

## GIFTS IN WILLS

All you need is the charity's address and registration number.

**The Aspinall Foundation,  
Port Lympe Reserve,  
Lympe,  
Nr Hythe, Kent CT21 4PD**  
Registered Charity Number: 326567

**Free online will for our supporters**

Make A Will Online make free, solicitor-checked wills for all our supporters. You can use this link: <https://www.makeawillonline.co.uk/aspinallfoundation>. We are notified when you leave a gift to us in your will. You can also share your name with us, which will help us further. All wills are checked by a qualified solicitor, and you can ask any questions at no extra cost.

**Alternatively: see a solicitor** If you already have a solicitor, please speak to them to ask them to update your will to include a gift to us. If you have complex legal needs, or a large or complicated estate – e.g., trust income, property overseas, or dependents. Relatives – you should speak to a specialist solicitor. You can find a solicitor by going to the Law Society website.

### UPDATE TO OUR PRIVACY POLICY

We carry out targeted fundraising activity to ensure that we are contacting you with the most appropriate communication, which is relevant and timely and will ultimately provide an improved experience for you. In doing so, we may use wealth profiling techniques to provide us with information about you. Such information is compiled using publicly available data about you or information that you have already provided to us. Our Privacy Policy has been updated in accordance with this. Please visit <https://www.aspinallfoundation.org/privacy-policy/> to read the policy in full

### FREE ENTRY

**TO HOWLETTS OR PORT LYMPNE  
WILD ANIMAL PARKS**

presentation of this voucher at the ticket office of either Howletts or Port Lympe Animal Parks will give the bearer one FREE admission. Please note there are restrictions on use

Voucher Valid Between:  
**1st Oct - 31st March 2022**  
excluding Bank Holiday Weekend

Please keep this voucher safe as we are unable to issue a replacement

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