

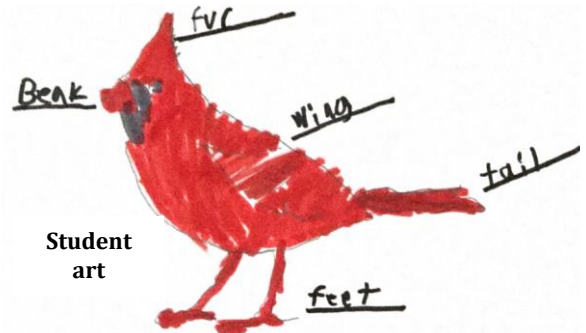
## 2020 Projects

2020 was a year full of unexpected adventures but despite COVID, Nature continued and thrived. Conservation programs continued as well, albeit not always as planned. Nature is resilient, as are the conservationists and educators that support it. We are especially proud of their work this year given the added challenges faced. In 2020 we supported eight projects in total, due to COVID and associated restrictions some programs had to transition to virtual formats while others had to be postponed. We applaud their resiliency and resourcefulness!

### Children in Nature Grant Recipients:

**The Boys and Girls Club of the Olympic Peninsula:** The Boys and Girls Club of the Olympic Peninsula had to modify their plans for outdoor activities at the Olympic National Park due to COVID limitations. They quickly pivoted to restructure their programs to be virtual and ensured children learned about Nature regardless of the virus.

**Audubon New York:** Audubon New York's "For the Birds!" Program successfully reached 1,807 students across 25 schools and 87 classrooms through a combination of in-person and virtual visits teaching children about birds.



**Conservation Heritage-Turambe:** To ensure gorillas and other primates remain safe from COVID, all visitors must now take a COVID test. While this is the best decision for the conservation of gorillas, tests are a great expense to Rwandan nationals. Therefore, Conservation Heritage-Turambe postponed children's visits to the forest until 2021 to ensure a larger number of students will get the opportunity once COVID restrictions have passed.

**Oneida Nation:** The Oneida Nation took high school students from the local Bureau of Indian Education school into Nature to learn about local, sustainable, and culturally relevant food resources. They experienced ice fishing for the first-time, learned to identify native and invasive fish, and about the importance of healthy waterways. Students gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of the ecology of the near-by Great Lakes and the challenges facing those resources.



**Girl Scouts of Gateway Council:** Girl Scouts of Gateway Council in North Florida provides immersive one-day outdoors wilderness experiences for urban girls who rarely - if ever - get to leave the city environs. They create hands-on, adventurous activities in the Great Outdoors that nurture a love and appreciation for the outdoors and nature, showing girls ages 5-18 the importance of preserving, protecting and enjoying our natural habitats and beautiful surroundings. The project provided healthy outdoors exploration opportunities for a total of 300 underserved girls from low-income, urban neighborhoods in metro Jacksonville and Gainesville, Florida.

"Our Children Need Nature and Nature Needs Our Children"

[www.papoosewildlife.org](http://www.papoosewildlife.org)

## Applied Conservation Grant Recipients:

**Cascade Forest** for the study of fishers and martens: Cascade Forest was involved with wildlife camera monitoring to determine the range and prevalence of two lesser-known mammal species, fishers and martens. Eight trips were made with the help of 34 volunteers, monitoring 57 wildlife cameras and download thousands of images. The project took place over 400 square miles in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in the southern Washington cascades. These two species have experienced population decline due to fur trapping, predator-control campaigns, and habitat loss related to logging and development. In recent years, local agencies made efforts to reintroduce fishers but lacked effective post-release monitoring. This study was designed to fill the information gap of the reintroduced fisher populations and sought to understand population dynamics between fisher and marten. The photo data is now in the hands of researchers at Oregon State University and the Portland State University Institute of Natural Resources (INR), who is working with Portland State undergraduate students to identify photographed species using the Wildlife Insights platform. Once the identification work is complete, research faculty at INR will model fisher and marten co-occupancy throughout the survey area. These results will ultimately yield guidance for future forest planning. This foundational effort is well suited to serve as a springboard to addressing additional conservation needs for fisher, marten, and other species down the road.



Fisher (left) and Marten (right)

**Tropical Conservation Institute** for pangolin work in Cote d’Ivoire: Our awardee studying pangolin faced COVID related travel restrictions. His study will resume in 2021 as soon as travel is reopened to Cote d’Ivoire. Postponing such important and impactful work is a difficult decision. We are glad to be able to support these projects as they resume next year.

**Sky Island Alliance** for jaguar work in Northern Mexico: “Path of the Jaguar” catalyzed a new collaborative initiative to enhance, protect, and sustain vital wildlife habitat in and around the Ajos-Bavispe Reserve in Sonora, Mexico. The Bavispe Reserve is a 500,000 acre Natural Protected Area spanning three mountain ranges (Sierra Los Ajos, Sierra Buenos Aires, and Sierra La Púrica) and a combination of federal, private, and communal lands. This region in northern Mexico is home to jaguars, black bears, ocelots, beavers, golden eagles, pronghorns, and other spectacular species that depend on private lands for food, water, shelter, and safe passage between federally protected lands in the U.S. and Mexico. By finding solutions that enhance rancher livelihoods while sustaining



wildlife habitats, they are building a stronger Sky Island community to ensure safe passage for its most vulnerable and iconic wildlife species—large cats. Fifteen undergraduate students in Sonora were trained in wildlife monitoring or spring ecosystem survey techniques, and four students were deployed to conduct assessments on private ranches. In 2020, they launched two habitat enhancement projects in the Bavispe Reserve region. The largest being a wildlife management capacity-building project on three properties within the Ejido Emiliano Zapata in Cananea, Sonora. Through this project, ranchers

gain the necessary technical and administrative skills to earn the certification of Unit of Environmental Management provided by the Mexican ministry of the environment. This designation gives landowners a better chance of protecting their properties and the wildlife in it against illegal hunting. The second project focused on restoration and wildlife monitoring on a property within the Ejido Ignacio Zaragoza in Cananea, Sonora, which is heavily impacted by soil erosion along riparian areas. The project identified sites where restoration would have the lowest cost and highest habitat benefit.

Restoration crews installed erosion control structures and native vegetation planting in these priority areas to create preferred hunting habitat for large cats including jaguar. This project is unique in that they will also conduct wildlife monitoring through cameras across different types of sites including riparian areas with no or little erosion, riparian areas with high soil erosion, and riparian areas with restoration interventions. This effort will help detect potential benefits to wildlife from riparian restoration efforts.

