



ZOOCHECK NEWS & VIEWS! FALL 2025

Our periodic e-newsletter featuring news, events and updates.



Thank you for your support of Zoocheck's wildlife protection work in 2025

We hope you've had a wonderful holiday season (so far) and, in just another day, a great New Year as well.

Every time we reach the end of another year, we reflect on what's happened, how much we've done and how much work lies ahead. To be honest, when Zoocheck started all those years ago, we couldn't have imagined we'd still be around 41 years later and working to help animals across Canada and throughout the world. You helped make it all happen, so thank you for your support, encouragement and participation. We are all sincerely grateful.

Since we are now almost at the end of 2025 we thought we'd highlight some select Zoocheck activities and projects during the past 12 months. It's NOT a complete list, but it will give you an idea of the kinds of things we're doing on your behalf.

And, if you'd like to make a donation before year end and receive a 2025 tax receipt you can do so at the link at the bottom of this newsletter.

Some Highlights of Zoocheck Activities and Projects in 2025

WILDLIFE IN CAPTIVITY

* As part of Zoocheck's long-term effort to address the roadside zoo and private menagerie issue, we conducted more than a dozen investigations and site visits of zoos and other wildlife in captivity facilities in Ontario, followed by submission of expert complaints to relevant official agencies. Began initial research and planning for comprehensive major investigation of Ontario's wildlife in captivity facilities to take place in 2026.

* Continued work on the Reptilia London issue and collaborated with local activists in Toronto to force the shut-down of a shopping mall bird zoo.

* Funded several scientific and technical papers as part of our ongoing campaign to address Canada's reptile pet trade, including one analyzing the use of Positive List regulatory programs in Canada and how they can be improved.

* Worked to establish another positive list regulatory program in a major municipality.

* Provided support to the Vancouver Humane Society's successful campaign to obtain the endorsement of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for a resolution calling on the British Columbia government to regulate mobile zoos.

* Promoted federal Bill S-15 to prohibit the keeping of elephants, great apes and other animals in captivity in Canada. The bill made it through the Senate of Canada but died on the order paper when parliament was prorogued and a federal election was called. We are now engaged in an initiative with our colleague NGOs to push for a new version of Bill S-15 that we hope can be reintroduced into the legislative process in 2026.

* Continued to support and promote a municipal resolution, initiated by World Animal Protection, aimed at convincing the Ontario government to finally establish meaningful wildlife in captivity legislation. This included providing funding support for a booth and attendance at the annual conference of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Nearly 50 municipalities have signed on to the resolution so far, a clear indicator to the Ontario government that municipalities no longer welcome roadside zoos, private menageries or dangerous wildlife being kept as pets within their boundaries.

* Conducted a follow up investigation of solitary elephants in Japan, in association with our partner group Elephants in Japan. The results of this investigation will be used for lobbying efforts aimed at promoting the establishment of meaningful zoo and wildlife in captivity laws in Japan, as well as policy changes in industry oversight bodies and husbandry improvements in individual zoos. The project has already achieved several milestones in

previous years and we're confident more will be forthcoming in 2026.

- * Provided ongoing support to a ground-breaking, local citizen's initiative aimed at addressing numerous systemic issues in a major US public zoo and promotion of the zoo's transition into an Ecopark. If successful, this campaign would establish an important precedent that may convince other jurisdictions to do the same.

- * Partnered with Niagara Action for Animals to fund construction of a turtle waystation for non-releasable native Ontario turtles kept on public display in sub-optimal conditions at several locations. The first turtle was welcomed to the facility in the early fall and we expect more to follow in 2026.

WILDLIFE IN THE WILD

- * Provided significant support to the Southwestern Ontario At Risk Reptiles (SOARR) program. This outstanding local, hands-on initiative engages in conservation research, habitat restoration, incubation of turtle eggs and subsequent release of young, community education and more. We're happy to report that in 2025, in addition to its many other achievements, SOARR produced more than 12,000 turtle hatchlings.

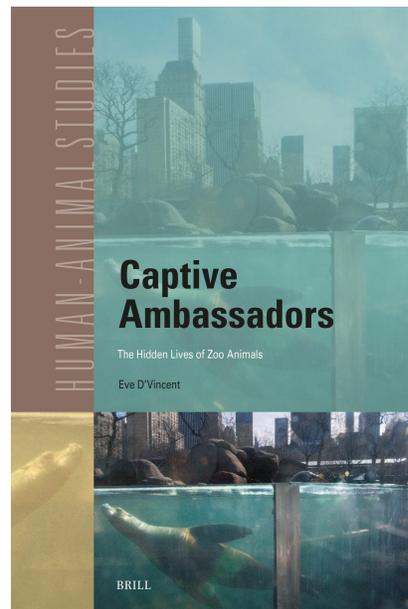
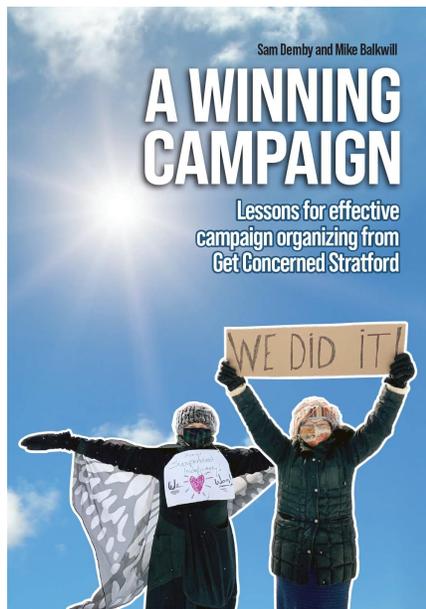
- * Continued long-term initiative to secure a future for Alberta's wild horses by funding helicopter aerial counts of wild horse populations, conducting public opinion polls that clearly show Albertans support leaving wild horses on the landscape, several other reports, including a genealogical study of the horses, and engaging in lobbying efforts to prevent culls from taking place this year and in 2026.

- * Supported and assisted local advocates in the Yukon Territory who are trying to protect their existing small population of wild horses, by funding trail cameras for use in determining horse numbers and movements, funding access to information requests to acquire additional information about the wild horse issue, and providing assistance with a DNA study of Yukon's wild horses.

- * Continued effort to convince the Manitoba government to abandon its spring bear hunt (that results in cubs becoming orphaned when their mothers are shot) through public opinion polls showing strong public support for ending the spring hunt and by collaborating with local Manitoban advocates in their bear protection activities.

- * Funded the construction of multiple beaver deceiver devices in a US municipality. The devices address flooding issues caused by beaver dams and help prevent the destruction of local beaver populations. The devices will be promoted to other municipalities as a model of how to humanely address wildlife issues in the hope that they will adopt them as well.

- * Continued longstanding effort to stop the unjustified killing of cormorants in the Great Lakes Basin and began to investigate newly emerging threats to



New Book Recommendations

A Winning Campaign, Lessons for Effective Campaign Organizing from Get Concerned Stratford

"A must read for anyone trying to influence local decisions about any issue."

An inspiring story of grassroots organizing and a victory that has made a lasting impact on communities and ecosystems in Ontario.

Stories about successful campaigns offer hope and inspiration for grassroots community organizing. Too often, we hear discouraging stories about campaigns that fail. Examples of residents successfully protecting their communities and ecosystems from powerful private interests are harder to find.

A Winning Campaign is a case study that explores how the residents' group Get Concerned Stratford defeated a factory slated to be built on prime farmland. Stratford City Council and the Ontario government worked in secrecy over a two-year period to make the Xinyi Canada Glass proposal a 'done deal'. However, once this proposal was revealed, Get Concerned Stratford were able to reverse the plans in just over fifteen weeks. The Stratford residents' victory was so complete that the Minister's Zoning Order imposed by the Ontario government was rescinded, a planner associated with the project was disciplined by his professional association and Stratford Council was rebuked by the Integrity Commissioner for its secretive behaviour.

The authors describe this fight as a 'textbook' campaign which illustrates

several lessons about effective grassroots campaigning. The main message of this story is that there is a method to winning campaigns that people in communities anywhere can use.

A Winning Campaign is a celebration of ordinary people achieving extraordinary things, offering hope, motivation and learning for those who believe in the power of collective action.

[CLICK HERE TO ORDER A WINNING CAMPAIGN](#)

Captive Ambassadors, The Hidden Lives of Zoo Animals

Captive Ambassadors, The Hidden Lives of Zoo Animals challenges the notion of zoo animals as "ambassadors" for their species, revealing the exploitative marketing tactics behind their individualized narratives. Drawing on cognitive and behavioral ethology, trans-species psychology, and critical anthropomorphism, this multidisciplinary work exposes how zoos fabricate biographies to mask the harsh reality of animals' lived experiences in captivity. It critiques the disruptions of animal culture caused by captive breeding programs and the tragic fate of surplus animals deemed no longer useful. Advocating for authentic animal biographies and ethical engagement, this book argues for a shift in human-animal relations that honors animals as unique individuals with intrinsic value, transcending the confines of their captive roles.

[CLICK HERE TO ORDER CAPTIVE AMBASSADORS](#)

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[Bluesky](#)

Support Zoocheck's Wildlife Protection work!

Join with us as we continue to push forward and win victories for animals held in captivity and free-roaming in the wild by making a tax-deductible contribution today!

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