



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Celebrating the fifth year of World Gorilla Day on September 24, 2021**

Join the global conservation community in celebrating the fifth annual World Gorilla Day on September 24, 2021. World Gorilla Day provides the opportunity for people all over the world to come together in celebrating gorillas and taking action to protect them in the wild.

Only found in the dense forests of central Africa, gorillas are critically endangered, threatened by illegal poaching, civil unrest, disease, and habitat destruction due to extractive industries such as mining. There are many great organizations and individuals dedicated to fighting for their survival, but greater awareness and investment are essential to gaining ground for gorillas.

Although raising awareness and a call to action remain at the forefront of the World Gorilla Day mission, this year, the five-year anniversary is also about celebrating successes.

In the past 5 years:

- Zoos and aquariums accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) collectively contributed more than \$7.2 M to gorilla conservation;
- No Cross River gorillas or Grauer's gorillas were killed in areas protected by the Wildlife Conservation Society teams in Nigeria or the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund teams in the Democratic Republic of Congo; both programs receive support from AZA's Saving Animals from Extinction (SAFE) Gorilla Program partners;
- Census data revealed the number of mountain gorillas has increased, making them the only population of great apes known to be increasing in number; and,
- New survey data suggest the global population of Grauer's gorillas is larger than previously thought.

Additionally, we celebrate the 44 gorillas born in AZA zoos as part of the Gorilla Species Survival Plan and all of the zoo professionals who contribute to the management, breeding, and welfare goals of the program. Together, 49 Gorilla SSP participant zoos provide outstanding care for nearly 350 gorillas who serve as ambassadors for conservation and help inspire conservation action by guests of all ages.

You are invited to join the fifth World Gorilla Day celebration on September 24. Celebrate gorillas, celebrate all the successes, and reenergize to keep working toward a safe future for gorillas.

Visit [www.worldgorilladay.com](http://www.worldgorilladay.com) for more information and resources, along with a list of all participating organizations. Also be sure to follow Gorilla SSP on FaceBook and Instagram for up to date World Gorilla Day details.

Contact:

[www.worldgorilladay.com/contact](http://www.worldgorilladay.com/contact)