

Annual Report 2020



Active
For Animals

Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul. - Ed Abbey

Mission Statement

Sometimes we can feel a little overwhelmed by the complexity of the issues we see facing the natural world. The only decision we need to make is not to leave it to someone else to fix.

Active For Animals' mission is to support people of all generations, skills and experiences to take visible action for wildlife. In the months and years ahead, let's build an active network of caring citizens. Together we can find ways to help each other become visibly and constantly active to make a difference for wildlife.

It doesn't matter what you call yourself, activist or simply a citizen who cares what is happening for wildlife. At this critical point in time, when we are being asked to make the next decade matter for wildlife and the natural world, it is about what you choose to do.

Generations of people have watched in wonder the wildlife documentaries of Sir David Attenborough, listened in awe to the empathy and tenacity of Dame Jane Goodall and been inspired by the Swedish teenager, Greta Thunberg, whose sheer determination has created a global movement for change.

Now we must ask ourselves, what can we do to help their work and be a visible force for change in the 'real' world – beyond social media?

Active for Animals' Mission: To inspire people around the world to get active, active in helping endangered animals.

The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it. - Robert Swan





Founder's Report

I know as a father I knew I needed to be prepared for when my wildlife loving daughters asked me what I was doing to save the rhinos, elephants, lions etc. I wasn't prepared to tell them I was too busy with work and life!

In the first instance, and for some years, I supported other charities, mainly making personal donations or helping with fundraising. Then in January 2020 I decided to launch my own charity, **Active for Animals**. Great timing! In March 2020, Active for Animals received 501c3 status.

In some ways starting a new charity just as a global pandemic hit, creating a time like no other in living memory, has been undoubtedly hard. At the same time, the fact that this disease is zoonotic in nature is a daily reminder to me of why I need to take this action, and why I have chosen to get **Active for Animals**.

In 2019, the USA and the world commemorated 50 years since landing on the moon. As we commemorated this amazing milestone in human history, a question was constantly in my mind, "In 50 years from now, in 2070, what will be remembered with pride about this point in history?" Will we accept the challenge of rehabilitating our home planet "**as one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to win**", to quote **President Kennedy**. Each journey starts with a single step, my one small step moment was starting a wildlife conservation charity in the hope I could inspire others, who are currently not thinking about the wildlife extinction crisis, to join me in saying extinction isn't happening on my watch.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my family for their support, as I know this work takes up my time. I love the rhino themed gifts my two daughters, Tatum and Drew, give me; rhinos have crashed my life!

Based on my life path and career no one could have imagined or seen my eventual dedication and passion to helping the rhinos and getting a non-profit organization started to help endangered animals. But this is something I will now be involved in for the rest of my life. I hope I can inspire others to join me to get Active for Animals.

James Dunton
Founder, **Active for Animals**



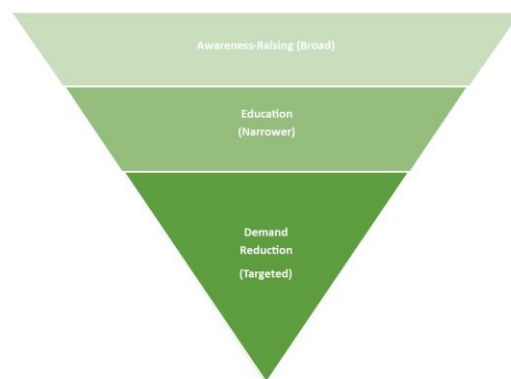
What We Do

The demand for illegal and endangered wildlife needs an ever-greater focus. Some animals have become so valuable for their parts that the cost of their 24/7 security is becoming prohibitive. While these security measures are needed, the only way to decisively close the market for wildlife is to change people's consuming behavior.

At **Active for Animals**, we believe it is important to have a US based organization focused on consumer demand for wildlife, as the USA is in the top three consumer countries for wildlife. As such, consumers based in the USA drive a significant amount of wildlife crime.

Active for Animals work addresses people's desire for wildlife, with our initial key focus being to collapse the demand for rhino horn driving the current rhino poaching crisis. To do this we are delighted to collaborate with Nature Needs More, an Australia-based charity, whose Breaking The Brand (to Stop the demand) campaigns we donated towards before launching Active for Animals.

While **Active for Animals** campaigns incorporate awareness-raising and education, these types of campaigns take longer to achieve results and are often more focused on generational behavior change to drive demand reduction.



In such instances where time is limited, because the scale of poaching is driving species to the brink of extinction in the wild, **highly targeted demand reduction campaigns** are needed.

Our Projects and Campaigns

Awareness-Raising Poster Campaigns

Help **Active for Animals** campaign and get the message out. Different types of people respond to different messages. To get more people **Active for Animals**, we have created a series of posters for people to download and share on social media. Most importantly, the aim of these is to inspire people to create their own messages. At **Active for Animals** we are just ordinary people who decided to get into action, we aren't especially creative, but we are determined to give ideas a go. We encourage others to do the same and share their ideas because **"The smallest of actions is always better than the noblest of intentions!"**.

Campaign 1: Did they really once live in the wild? What happened?



Campaign 2: Wildlife Extinction. Not on my watch!



Campaign 3: What will you say?





One Small Step....

Over the coming months and years, **Active for Animals** will add ideas to the One Small Step campaign. These will be activities to help you take your first step into conservation activities.

Become A Rhino Ambassador – Letter Writing Campaign

The demand for rhino horn in Vietnam is high and this desire in Vietnam is driving rhino poaching. This campaign encourages people, wherever they are in the world, to become a Rhino Ambassador and one of the easiest and most effective ways of showing your support for rhinos is to send a letter to your local Vietnamese Embassy asking for their help to close down the trade. We encourage people to print and sign the sample letters and send them by post and not email; emails can too easily be ignored.

Letter 1: Time to Reflect



For the Attention of the Ambassador

Dear Ambassador,

The rapid economic growth experienced in Vietnam will provide wonderful opportunities for current and future generations. Nature and life have always been about sharing space and resources, and a fluid balance that evolves over time. While non-human animals seem to intuitively understand this balance, we, as humans, seem to have lost our way.

I want to be part of a global solution to restoring this balance and so I am writing to you to ask for your help. I ask that the Vietnamese government does all it can to stop the consumption of rhino horn in Vietnam. The selfish acts of a very small number of status driven Vietnamese men and the cruel poaching trade that supplies the rhino horn they desire to 'show off' to their peer group must stop.

Continental Africa's unique wildlife is vital to securing economic prosperity for its children, through the tourism sector. While poaching is still at alarming levels based on Vietnamese demand and it is vital that your government acts now.

I am asking for your help in ensuring that the desire for rhino horn is decisively closed down in Vietnam. It is a very visible step in showing the world we can share space with other species, and I hope this may be a first step to the re-introduction of rhinos to the wild in Vietnam. I was deeply saddened by the fact that the last Sumatran rhino, whose range was once so widespread, became extinct in the wild in Vietnam nearly a decade ago.

These wonderful animals deserve our compassion and commitment. We are privileged to be their custodians and we must all take responsibility to ensure their survival in the wild.

I hope that you will help to lead the solution to closing this trade in Vietnam.

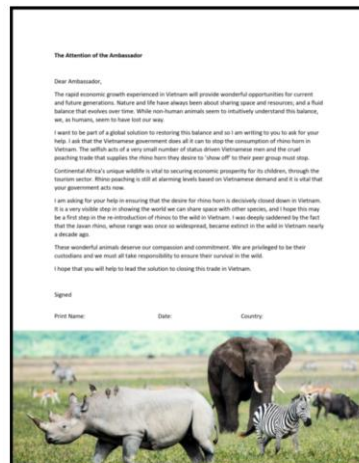
Signed _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Country: _____

Letter 2: Let's All Share



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Signed _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____ Country: _____



Letter 3: For Future Generations



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Signed _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Country: _____

The content of these letters was created with the support of **Active for Animals** many friends in Vietnam. Over several years now the Founder of **Active for Animals** has invested time in understanding the Vietnamese culture and how it is evolving. Initially by reaching out on social media and then by personal introductions and referrals discussions have been had with hundreds of

Vietnamese citizens, who have been open and thrilled to meet someone interested in learning about their lives.

By being curious, patient, non-judgmental and respectful in asking questions, **Active for Animals** now has strong relationships in Vietnam and a network of contacts in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Da Nang and Hue who are all happy to take my questions on the demand for wildlife in Vietnam.

In building these relationships, this group has helped with the projects for World Rhino Day, 22 September. For example, several people based in Vietnam donated their time to translate material in some of the early, pre-Active for Animal projects:

Let's Stop The Insanity

World Rhino Day, 22 September 2019
By James Dunton

This is the third year that I've been actively involved in World Rhino Day. I became inspired — once the shock wore off — after reading a news article about how three rhinos per day were being killed just so poachers could saw off their horns. Through a sophisticated global crime network, the horns are sold to arrive businessmen in China and Vietnam, who use the horn solely to improve their standing in the community. I heard about this behavior and was outraged. The injustice was simply too much for me NOT to get involved.

I had never been a social activist. My two teen-age daughters describe me as 'basic'. I am not exactly sure what it means but I don't think it means I am an extremist. But as Edmund Burke says, *"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."* And so, my hope in writing this piece is to inform and educate others about the plight of the rhino — so you'll be inspired to get involved as well. Or perhaps this article will move you to help other voiceless victims that need assistance.

World Rhino Day is a chance for the world to celebrate the existence of these magnificent animals that are still wandering the planet, much like they did over 50,000 years ago. (Rhinos are not, as some people assume, prehistoric. Today's rhinos are much different than the ones that walked the Earth 50 million years ago.) We celebrate today's rhinos for what they are — majestic, powerful creatures possessing the weaponry to cause much damage, and the willingness to use its awesome powers of destruction. But the rhino, unbeknownst to most, has a gentle, endearing side as well.

World Rhino Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of the fact that the rhinoceros is critically endangered and could easily become extinct in the wild during our lifetimes. There are less than 30,000 rhinos left on the planet (at the beginning of the 20th century there were over 500,000 and we are losing over 1,000 rhinos per year due to poaching. Rhinos are being systematically killed by transnational organized criminal groups who traffic in illegal wildlife products such as the rhino horn, which they sell to wealthy buyers in Asia. (Primarily China and Vietnam). This aggressive poaching of the rhino horn over the last decade is now threatening their very existence.

The once-diverse array of rhinos has been reduced to just five species: Africa's white rhinos, which are divided into northern and southern subspecies. There are approximately 20,000 southern white rhinos — while the northern white rhino is virtually extinct. There are two females left on the planet. Sudan, the last northern white male, died last year from old age. The other African species is the black rhino, which is critically endangered. The current population is estimated to be less than 5,000. Indian rhinos are considered vulnerable, but that's far better than critically endangered. Approximately 3,500 survive in northern India and southern Nepal. The smallest species is the Sumatran rhino, which is, unlike the other surviving rhinos, slightly woolly. It, too, is also critically endangered. And the last surviving member of the species, the Javan rhino, spars with its horns, which only the males possess. They're also critically endangered, being confined to a tiny area on the western tip of Java. There may be only 40 Javan rhinos remaining.



Hãy dừng cơn điên lại

22 tháng 9, 2019 · Vui lòng dành 5 phút để đọc

James Dunton

Đây là năm thứ ba tôi tích cực tham gia Ngày Tê giác. Thế giới ([World Rhino Day](#)). Sau khi cơn sốc qua đi, tôi đã được truyền cảm hứng — — khi đọc một bài báo về việc ba con tê giác mỗi ngày bị giết chỉ để những kẻ săn trộm có thể cưa lấy sừng của chúng. Thông qua một mạng lưới tội phạm tinh vi toàn cầu, những chiếc sừng được bán cho các doanh nhân đến tại Trung Quốc và Việt Nam, những người chỉ sử dụng sừng để cải thiện vị thế của họ trong cộng đồng. Tôi nghe nói về hành vi này và bị xúc phạm. Sự bất công đơm giản là quá nhiều để tôi KHÔNG dành lưu đến.

Tôi chưa bao giờ là một nhà hoạt động xã hội. Hai cô con gái tuổi teen của tôi cho tôi là "người bình thường". Tôi không chắc nó có ý nghĩa gì nhưng tôi không nghĩ rằng nó rất tuyệt. Nhưng như Edmund Burke nói, "Điều duy nhất cần thiết cho chiến thắng của cái ác là người tốt không làm gì cả". Vì vậy, hy vọng của tôi khi viết bài này là thông báo và giáo dục người khác về hoàn cảnh của tê giác — — có lẽ bạn cũng sẽ được truyền cảm hứng để tham gia việc này. Hoặc có lẽ bài viết này sẽ chuyển đến bạn để giúp đỡ những nạn nhân không nói được khác cần sự giúp đỡ.

Ngày Tê giác Thế giới là cơ hội để thế giới kỷ niệm sự tồn tại của loài động vật tuyệt vời này vẫn đang lang thang trên hành tinh này, rất giống như chúng đã làm hơn 50.000 năm về trước (Tê giác không phải là những động vật thời tiền sử như một số người vẫn nghĩ về chúng). Ngày nay Tê giác khác xa với những con đã lang thang trên Trái đất này cách đây hơn 50 triệu năm). Chúng ta tổ chức kỷ niệm tê giác của ngày hôm nay vì chúng là — — những sinh vật tài giỏi, mạnh mẽ, vô hại và khi gây ra nhiều tổn hại, và sẵn sàng sử dụng sức mạnh hủy diệt tuyệt vời của nó. Nhưng tê giác cũng có những mặt dịu dàng, đáng yêu của nó mà ít người biết đến.

Ngày Tê giác Thế giới là một cơ hội để nâng cao nhận thức về thực tế là loài tê giác đang trong tình trạng rất nguy cấp ([critically endangered](#)) và có thể sẽ biến mất tuyệt chủng trong tương lai nếu chúng ta không hành động. Có ít hơn 30.000 con tê giác còn lại trên hành tinh này (vào đầu thế kỷ 20 đã có hơn 500.000 con) và chúng ta



Active for Animals is very grateful for their interest and support. A foundation of trust has been built because no assumptions were made, questions were asked in a non-judgmental way with the desire to understand.

Strong relationships have also been built with a number of Vietnamese-Americans. Similarly, I have found this group to be open and willing to share lots of very helpful information, as well as speak to family and friends still living in Vietnam, on behalf of **Active for Animals**.

These relationships will be vital in helping to understand how the global pandemic will change consumer desire for wildlife products, including rhino horn. Given the zoonotic nature of COVID-19, this is a time to monitor consumer motivations and to understand how demand reduction campaigns need to evolve in response to changes in consumer thinking and behavior because of the pandemic.

Rhino Horn Demand Reduction Campaigns

Active for Animals looks forward to collaborating with Nature Needs More to build on the work of Breaking The Brand (to stop the demand for rhino horn in Vietnam). **Active for Animals** Founder, James Dunton, personally donated or raised funds for a number of Nature Needs More's RhiNo demand reduction campaigns.

The highly targeted campaigns focus on the motivations of the key rhino horn user group, wealthy men who use rhino horn to negotiate business deals and convey status. The campaigns use messages that will trigger an emotional response in this group, challenging their leadership ability, reputation and business acumen. If they have to use the 'prop' of rhino horn to negotiate a deal, then they must be mediocre businessmen and leaders:



Image: Courtesy of Nature Needs More



Image: Courtesy of Nature Needs More



Image: Courtesy of Nature Needs More



Image: Courtesy of Nature Needs More

Thankfully the rate of rhino poaching has slowed since it peaked in 2014, when 1,215 rhinos were killed for their horn in South Africa alone. While the rate of poaching has slowed there is still much to do, with some predicting that rhinos could become extinct in the wild by 2030.

For those who would like to learn more about reducing the demand for rhino horn, **Active for Animals** encourages you to read the reports on the Nature Needs More Website:



Financial Statement

As a newly formed tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, **Active for Animals** filed all the documentation required by IRS. Our form 990 can be viewed on the IRS website as well as our Determination Letter. Fundraising activity has been minimal as a result of the global pandemic.

Next Steps

Activities covering the next financial year, 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021, will be heavily dependent on how the pandemic evolves.

The main activities for this period are expected to cover the following areas:

1. Research tour to Vietnam, once travel is possible in the post-pandemic era. Face-to-face meeting with the contact **Active for Animals** has made in Vietnam will be critical to understand any changes in the motivation to consume rhino horn. This research tour will cover meetings in five major cities throughout the country, including Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh and Da Nang.
2. In addition to this international program tackling the demand for rhino horn, which is currently our priority, **Active for Animals** will research a USA based project which best uses our developing knowledge of consumer demand reduction and behavior change techniques.
3. In everything **Active for Animals** does, we understand the need to collaborate to deliver the best impacts, and will seek out other organizations, nationally and internationally, to partner with on projects. Our key focus is to work with others on demand reduction projects.
4. In 2021, **Active for Animals** will join the World Games For Wildlife. We have been a part of creating the online event platform that allow our supporters to create their own fundraising event, based on their personal interests and fitness goals. Key to this project is to raise the profile of donating to wildlife and conservation. As the US based Charity Navigator platform highlights, only 3% of non-government donations go to Animals and the Environment. The scale of biodiversity loss cannot be addressed while too few people are focused on this issue.



Thank You

To my family and especially my two daughters, Tatum and Drew, who have encouraged and supported my wildlife conservation activities from the beginning. And to my Dad, who I know is proud of me for sticking with my convictions.

To my long-term friends for their feedback about me starting a not-for-profit; I appreciate them investing the time to listen to my reason. They are all very supportive but, in addition, shocked and surprised that I continue to commit more-and-more time and resources to this conservation work. I think most of them thought it was just a phase! Many have become the initial donors of **Active for Animals** and for this I am extremely thankful. I also love the fact that they have sent me lots of email and text messages any time there is a rhino story in the news! All part of the awareness-raising!

To my friends in Vietnam who have been so open and welcoming in sharing their insights, experiences and ideas. I don't know that I could have started this project without their support. I look forward to the day we can meet face-to-face.

To Dr Lynn Johnson, of Nature Needs More, for sharing so much knowledge and helping my education of what is possible.

In closing, **Active for Animals** must acknowledge again the difficulties of launching a new charity in a year that saw a global pandemic, which triggered a worldwide health and economic crisis. At the same time, the fact that this COVID-19 disease is zoonotic in nature is a daily reminder why it was the right thing to do, and why more people need to get **Active for Animals**. Only when this happens can we save wild species from extinction, and given the experience of the last 12 months, this may reduce the risk of future pandemics.

