

NALZS NEWS

Spring 2022

North Alabama Zoological Society
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NALZS.org

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Above and below: Children attend the 2022 NALZS Kids Festival in Huntsville

NALZS Happenings

What do you get when you combine a beautiful park setting, more than 50 local vendors and food trucks, and animals that range from snakes to baby chicks? A successful first NALZS Kids Festival!

We were thrilled to see thousands of you at this April 9 event, which took place at Monte Sano State Park in Huntsville.

Attendees were able to get their faces painted, hang out with the Huntsville Havoc and Rocket City Trash Pandas mascots, and watch “Zoo in the Sky” planetarium shows put on by the Von Braun Astronomical Society.

The fun didn’t stop there either! The festival featured lots of kids’ activities, plus animal encounters involving Alabama native snakes, Twickenham the tortoise, newly hatched chicks, and even hairless guinea pigs. NALZS also raffled off a free week at one of our “Be a Little Wild” Nature Camps. Congratulations to the winner, David S. of Huntsville!



We appreciate all of the volunteers, vendors, and donations that made this event possible, as well as our sponsor, Publix. The 2023 event will return to Monte Sano and happen on Saturday, April 15. Check out NALZS.org/kids-festival for the latest information.

A Note From the Executive Director



Happy spring, everyone! With it being the season of new beginnings, I'd love to share with you some of the new things going on with the North Alabama Zoological Society.

To start off, we're so grateful to the thousands of you who attended the first NALZS Kids Festival in April at Monte Sano State Park. We loved the opportunity to spend time outside and explore nature with the local community, including many of its youngest residents. The festival was so successful, in fact, we're already making plans for next year!

We're also excited for this summer's "Be a Little Wild" Nature Camps, where kids will get to learn about Alabama biodiversity, ecosystems, and conservation. One of the camps will be a collaboration between NALZS and the Land Trust of North Alabama – two great organizations focused on wildlife and wildlife habitat education.

Finally, we're in the middle of our annual fundraising campaign and have a new membership program you can join, [NALZS Palz](#). We appreciate everything you're doing and ask you to remember that donations are our lifeline. As a not-for-profit organization, your support is critical to our future and the speed at which we will be able to build the zoo and aquarium.

Ethan Woodruff
Executive Director

"A Zoo For You, North Alabama"

MEMBER

Join the Club!

Sign up for our NALZS Palz membership program, and you'll receive a variety of perks and gifts, including the nifty decal shown above.

Individual memberships start at \$250 and are available for just \$25 a month. Learn more at NALZS.org/nalzspalz

ConZOOvation News

The NALZS FrogWatch program is seeking volunteers to participate in our frog-monitoring citizen science project. Interested in joining this conservation effort? Contact hannah.graveman@nalzs.org for more information.

In April, the NALZS Conservation Team highlighted the importance of pollinators at the NALZS Kids Festival. Participants learned about area pollinators, plus their role in the growth of our food and health of our ecosystem. Visitors left with planted wildflower seeds in an earth-friendly

peat pot, so they can grow their own pollinator garden.



The conservation team also celebrated Earth Day at the EarlyWorks Earth Month Celebration in Huntsville and the Athens Earth Day event. Visitors to our booth learned about conservation projects in the local area.

Finally, the conservation team celebrated with the NALZS Junior Zoological Society during their first-anniversary festivities.

Above: A child plants wildflower seeds at Kids Fest

EdZOOcation News

It's a busy time for NALZS Education. We hope you all had a blast at our annual NALZS Kids Festival! A big thanks to all who made it happen and came out for a day of family fun! We hope you visited the "house hippos," Alabama native snakes, and made a mask. We look forward to seeing everyone out again next year!

Grab your paints and brushes for our next kids' activity. The NALZS 2nd Annual Student Art Contest, featuring Alabama's endangered species, is live thru May 27. We'll choose a winner for April and May, and showcase their work on our social media platforms. Hard copies will be displayed at upcoming NALZS Community Outreach events. According to the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](https://www.fishbase.org/), Alabama has 85 endangered species: 71 animals and 14 plants. We would love to promote awareness through your art. For guidelines and more information, please visit [NALZS.org/contests](https://www.nalzs.org/contests).

We are also excited about the annual Junior Zoological Society recognition event, which happened in April. Special thanks to the schools who participated. We are recruiting for our 2022-2023 JZS programming. For more information or to get involved, head to [NALZS.org/jr-nalzs](https://www.nalzs.org/jr-nalzs).

Also happening in April was our "Be a Little Wild" Little Tykes Day Camp for children ages



Above: Children play Zoo Bingo at Little Tykes camp; Right: JZS participants gather for their recognition event



3-5 years old.

If you missed out, look for another date at the end of summer. We just can't wait to see more of our children having a blast in nature!

Speaking of, our 2022 "Be a Little Wild" Nature Camps will be held in May and June. We are so excited to be partnering with the Land Trust of North Alabama and offering our BioBlitz Camp, as well, which will take place from July 13-15. If you want to know more about our camps, check out [NALZS.org/nature-camp2022](https://www.nalzs.org/nature-camp2022). We look forward to "being a little wild" with you!

Did You Know?

You can support NALZS by shopping at Kroger and Amazon! Scan the codes below to get started with Kroger Community Rewards and AmazonSmile, and help us reach our goal of getting 30% more subscribers. Best of all, it's free to sign up!



AmazonSmile



Kroger Rewards

Don't get left BEHIND!

Make sure your family or company are part of the permanent honor wall and donor display at the zoo!

Claim Your Spot at the Zoo!



Donations are tax-deductible.



It's easy, just visit the site below.

[nalzs.org/ClaimYourSpot](https://www.nalzs.org/ClaimYourSpot)



Research News

In celebration of the first NALZS Kids Festival, the NALZS Research Department launched a communitywide backyard bird survey.

Bird surveys are important because they can help researchers evaluate species diversity and monitor habitat conditions.

At the Kids Festival, families were instructed on how to make pine cone, peanut butter, and seed bird feeders and participate in a bird survey. Each family received a handout modeling the steps of the scientific method to use while working through the steps of the bird survey. At the end of the



instructions, families were encouraged to scan the QR code and report their data to the NALZS Research Department. Results needed to be entered by April 30 at 11:59 p.m. CDT.

The results of the collected data are now available on the NALZS website at NALZS.org. Results include a total bird count, species count, diversity index, and a map showing the location of the birds observed during the research.

Above: A child constructs a bird feeder during the NALZS Kids Festival

Upcoming Events

Visit NALZS.org and our social media pages to see the latest event info

- 2022 NALZS Art Contest: [Thru May 27](#)
- “Be a Little Wild” Nature Camps: [May 31-June 3 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.](#); [June 14-17 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.](#); [June 27-29 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.](#)
- Virtual Volunteer Orientations: [June 11 from 9:30-10:30 a.m.](#) and [August 18 from 8-9 p.m.](#)
- Boyd Family Farm Grand Opening: [June 25 from 7 a.m.-1 p.m.](#)
- BioBlitz Camp With the Land Trust of North Alabama: [July 13-15 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.](#)

Volunteer Highlight

Gretchen Krause, Second-Year Youth Counselor



Photo by LaShawn Webster

Why did you decide to return this year as a NALZS camp counselor?

The hands-on learning relationship that I built with the kids is unmatched, and their genuine curiosity brought me back this year!

How do you like to spend your time outside of NALZS?

Outside of my work with NALZS, I play tennis, I work with [the] Northeast Alabama FCA the remainder of the summer, and I am going to the University of South Alabama for my master’s in psychology.

What is your favorite animal, and why?

My favorite animal is the manatee, native to the coast of Florida. In the shallow waters, there are no natural predators of the manatee. So they evolved and no longer have the portion of their brain for aggression! They are the best gentle giants by far.

Honor Roll List of Donors

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(5 spots!)
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Join the NALZS Zoo Crew!

We're looking for volunteers to
help out with fundraising, projects,
events, and more.

Learn about our volunteer opportu-
nities at NALZS.org/volunteer