

# News

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Photos and video are available to download in the [Zoo's newsroom](#).

## Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute and JumpStart® Games Launch "Zoo Guardians" Mobile Game

*Build a Zoo, Care for Animals and Help Save Species From Extinction*



The furry, feathered and scaly world of zoos, animal care and conservation comes to life in "Zoo Guardians," a new mobile game launched today by the Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute in partnership with JumpStart® Games. "Zoo Guardians" invites children and animal lovers starting at age 9 to build their own zoos, care for animals, complete quests and interact with realistic 3D representations of wildlife via augmented reality. As players expand their zoos, they learn from Smithsonian animal experts and conservation scientists how

to help animals thrive under human care and in their native habitats. “Zoo Guardians” is free and available to download in the [App Store](#) (for Apple devices) and on [Google Play](#) (for Android devices).

In “Zoo Guardians,” players join forces with other zoos worldwide to protect animals as part of the Young Guardians Initiative, a global organization dedicated to defeating the villains of climate change, deforestation and habitat loss that threaten animals’ survival. As of today, players can adopt up to 58 species—from giant pandas and Asian elephants to lemur frogs and snowy owls—and advance their zoo career by learning about the habitats, food, social groupings and [enrichment](#) items animals need to thrive from Smithsonian zookeeper and scientist mentors. In augmented reality (AR) mode, players interact with animals and learn which foods they enjoy, snap research photos and earn fun fact cards and videos.

“Connecting young audiences with wildlife and nature is paramount to our mission to save species,” said Steven Monfort, John and Adrienne Mars Director, Smithsonian’s National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute. “With ‘Zoo Guardians,’ we’re thrilled to offer the next generation of conservationists a chance to go behind the scenes and explore how zoos operate, care for animals and work together to save wildlife from extinction. By introducing players to a host of cool creatures in this virtual world, we have a real chance to motivate this generation to save animals in the real world.”

Players explore their zoological world through quests that mimic challenges faced by real world zoos and earn “Zoo IQ” to level up. As part of “World Watch,” players can work individually or together to relocate the animals in their zoos to the wild or to a zoo in the animal’s native country.

“‘Zoo Guardians’ is the perfect game for kids and animal lovers,” said Jim Czulewicz, president and CEO of JumpStart<sup>®</sup> Games. “It gives users the ability to learn about 58 different species in a fun and engaging way. By escalating their Zoo IQ, they’re being challenged, all while becoming a conservation hero.”

To learn more about the “Zoo Guardians” mobile game, visit [ZooGuardians.com](#) and connect with other players on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#). or follow the hashtag #ZooGuardians. While the game is free to download and play, in-app purchases are available.

## **About the Smithsonian’s National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute**

The Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute leads the Smithsonian's global effort to save species, better understand ecosystems and train future generations of conservationists. The Zoo instills a lifelong commitment to conservation through engaging experiences with animals and the people working to save them. Founded in 1889, the Zoo is home to 2,700 animals representing more than 390 species. More than 200 scientists and their partners, in more than 30 countries, create and share knowledge to aid in the survival and recovery of species and their habitats. Findings from these studies provide critical data for the management of populations under human care and valuable insights for the conservation and management of wild populations. For more information, visit [nationalzoo.si.edu](http://nationalzoo.si.edu). Follow the Zoo's social media on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About JumpStart® Games**

JumpStart® Games is the leader in creating interactive family experiences that enrich, entertain and educate. For more than 20 years, Jumpstart® has produced high-quality products that are engaging, social, creative and most importantly, fun! JumpStart® builds mobile, web and console games and experiences under its flagship brands—JumpStart®, Jumpstart Academy®, School of Dragons®, Neopets®, Zoo Guardians® and Math Blaster®. JumpStart's dedication to positive, safe and enriching experiences has earned it the trust of millions of teachers, parents and respected organizations such as Common Sense Media and The National Parenting Center.

JumpStart® Games is a subsidiary of NetDragon, a global leader in building internet communities, and is based in Los Angeles. For more information, visit <http://www.jumpstart.com>.

### **About NetDragon Websoft Holdings Ltd.**

NetDragon Websoft Holdings Ltd. is a global leader in building internet communities with a long track record of developing and scaling multiple internet and mobile platforms that impact hundreds of millions of users. These include China's number one online gaming portal, 17173.com, and China's most influential smartphone app store platform, 91 Wireless, which was sold to Baidu for US\$1.9 billion in 2013 as the largest Internet M&A transaction in China. Established in 1999, NetDragon is one of the most reputable and well-known online game developers in China with a history of successful game titles, including Eudemons Online, Heroes Evolved and Conquer Online. In recent years, NetDragon has also started to scale its online

education business on the back of management's vision to create the largest global online learning community, and to bring the "classroom of the future" to every school around the world. For more information visit [www.netdragon.com](http://www.netdragon.com).

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**Photo caption:** "Zoo Guardians," a new mobile game from JumpStart® Games and the Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute, invites players to build their own zoo and learn what it takes to care for wild animals and save them from extinction.

**Photo credit:** JumpStart® Games Inc.