

Meet zoo worker and Save the Rhino fundraiser **Stefanie Reska**

We are taking our conservation role as a modern zoo seriously. It's our mission to prevent rhinos and other species from vanishing from the face of the earth.

Stefanie Reska | Education and Conservation Manager, Wilhelma Zoo Stuttgart

I joined Zoo Stuttgart, the Wilhelma, 10 years ago and am in charge of Education and Conservation. My job is to teach people about our planet's fascinating wildlife and why it is threatened. Wilhelma supports more than a dozen conservation projects around the world. With the combined efforts of keepers, vets and educators, since 2006 our zoo has raised an amazing €75,000 to protect rhinos in the wild.

I love my job! It's like a dream job actually. When I started studying biology, I did so with the aim to contribute to conservation – to make people see how important it is to care for the environment.

As for fundraising, we have been experimenting with all kinds of different approaches. Thanks to the unwavering support of my colleagues we hosted games, lotteries, offered face painting and even issued special rhino editions of local wine and Fair Trade chocolate!

To bring rhino conservation closer to people's hearts and with the help of our dedicated keepers we were able to show people what it's like to care for these majestic animals during last year's World Rhino Day on 22 September 2016. Visitors at the Zoo had a chance to get hands-on and try to 'vaccinate' a toy rhino with a blow dart, as well as to take an opportunity to chat with the zoo educators and thereby learn more about all the five rhino species and the threats they face in the wild. As a bonus, visitors could enter a competition for a chance to win some cool prizes, including a 9-litre bottle of Wilhelma's bespoke Rhino Wine, produced in partnership with a local winery.

Of course awareness building isn't restricted to World Rhino Day! We offer more than 900 educational school tours throughout

the year. Many of them go to the rhino enclosure, where we explain that unfortunately there is a very real chance of losing these iconic animals – but also what we can do to prevent this from happening.

At Save the Rhino, support from our zoo partners is vital", says Michaela Butorova, Save the Rhino's Fundraising Officer. "Wilhelma Zoo is a striking example of what it means to be a modern zoo, championing their educational and conservation mission. On behalf of all of us at Save the Rhino HQ, a big thank you!"



Above and main: Special edition Fairtrade chocolate and local wine

Left: Wilhelma Zoo's World Rhino Day celebrations, 22 Sep 2016

