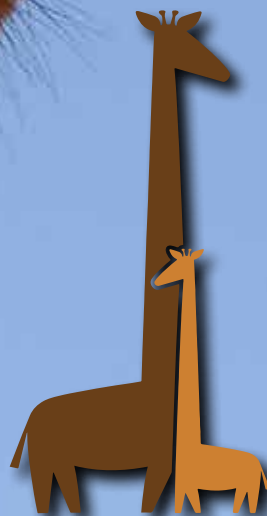


# ANNUAL REPORT

2019



save  
the  
giraffes



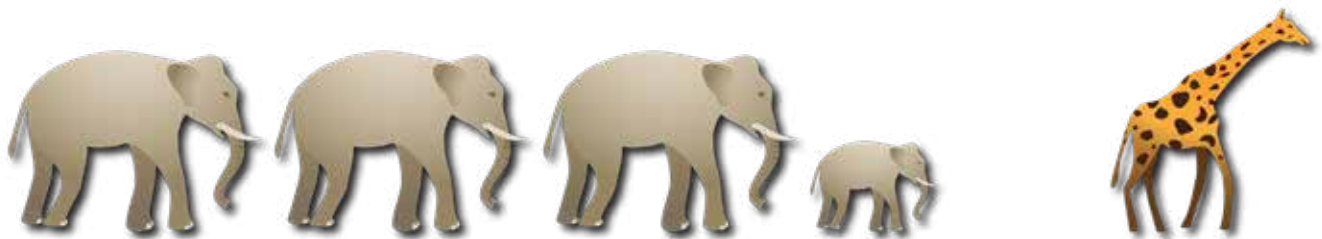
# save the giraffes

**MISSION: To guarantee that giraffes are protected and preserved in their natural habitat.**

**VISION: To support conservation research and education programs that strive to ensure the survival of giraffes and their ecosystems for future generations.**

## Table of Contents

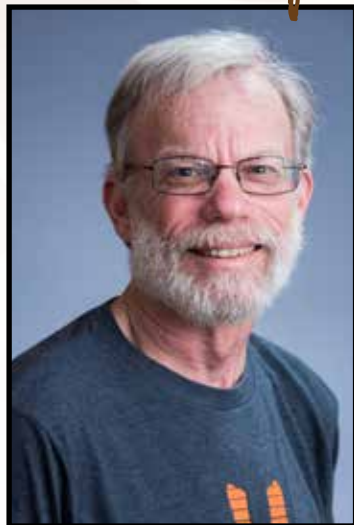
- Letter from the Executive Director .....3
- Meet the Team .....4
- Catching Giants .....5
- Wild Nature Institute ..... 6-7
- Conservation Through Education.....8
- Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust.....9
- Illegal Hunting of Masai Giraffes .....10
- Masai Giraffe Foraging Ecology .....11
- Snare Art from Poacher Wire Traps .....12
- Media .....13
- CITES.....14
- Financial Report.....15
- Donors.....16



**DID YOU KNOW? FOR EVERY GIRAFFE IN THE WILD THERE ARE 3.5 ELEPHANTS.**

*“We must work together to prevent the extirpation of giraffe in the wild.”  
– Anne Innis Dagg, PhD.*

# Letter from the Executive Director



**FRED BERCOVITCH, Ph.D.**  
California, USA

In 2019, one of our most ardent supporters, Anne Innis Dagg, PhD. was awarded the Order of Canada, an honor bestowed upon Canadian citizens that make "extraordinary contributions" to their country. Dr. Dagg received the honor for her pioneering field studies of giraffe and for her lifelong battle against sexual discrimination. In 1976, she published the first scientific book about giraffes, in which the word "conservation" does not even appear. Sadly, in the updated book she published in 2014, an entire chapter is devoted to the conservation of giraffes.

Dagg was optimistic about the future of giraffes when the book appeared in 1976. She wrote: "With the arrival of white men and guns in Africa, the balance swung dangerously close to the complete extermination of the giraffe...The giraffe would certainly be extinct today if there had not been a change in both sentiment and law toward them...Eventually, because of human population pressures, giraffe will likely be restricted to National Parks and Game Reserves in Africa. Here they should survive well..." Alas, her prediction turned out to be partially true: most giraffes in Africa now reside in protected areas. However, they are under threat in National Parks. In Samburu National Park (Kenya) pastoralists herd their cows into the park for grazing, with the movement of people and domesticated animals disrupting the reticulated giraffes resident in the park. In Murchison Falls National Park (Uganda), areas used by giraffes have been gazetted for oil drilling and exploratory wells have impacted the Rothschild's giraffes living there.

But all is not a dark cloud hovering above giraffe, ready to burst, inundate, and drown these wonderful animals. With your support, we are able to take action that ameliorates the threat to giraffes. **Save The Giraffes** has promoted conservation education among African school children, the leaders of tomorrow, as well as enabling some of them to see giraffes for the first time in their natural habitat. We are assisting an African graduate student in studying Masai giraffe feeding behavior in Tanzania. We are supporting a team of scientists that have collected nearly a decade of records on the giraffes living in the Tarangire Ecosystem in Tanzania in order to provide solid conservation science input to biodiversity conservation programs.

Perhaps the greatest impact that **Save The Giraffes** has had on giraffe conservation is that we provided key advice and input to the international community that resulted in the listing of giraffes on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). In this Annual Report, you can read more details about our 2019 achievements.

As Dr. Dagg commented over 40 years ago, a change in sentiment and law provides the basis for saving species. Thanks to your support, and sharing our message, we are changing the mindset of many people. Giraffes are no longer suffering from a 'silent extinction' when people are taking action to stop giraffes from sliding into the same fate that befell the dodo bird, passenger pigeon, Tasmanian devil, quagga, and other animals. Your involvement in our efforts can help to ensure that future generations of giraffes will continue to roam the African continent and mesmerize our descendants, especially the youngest ones.

Thank you very much for your support.

Cheers,  
Fred

Fred B. Bercovitch, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



# MEET THE TEAM



**FRED BERCOVITCH, PhD. *Executive Director*** | California, USA

Fred's childhood dream was to become Tarzan. He has always loved animals and the outdoors; he spent one summer hiking from Yosemite National Park to Mount Lassen on the Pacific Crest Trail before it was completed. He earned his doctoral degree from the University of California, Los Angeles following a two-year study of baboons in Kenya. He then became a postdoctoral fellow at the Wisconsin Primate Center studying rhesus monkeys before becoming a staff scientist at the Caribbean Primate Research Center in Puerto Rico. In 2000, he moved to San Diego to begin work as the director of the division of behavioral biology at the San Diego Zoo; and in 2010, he accepted a position as professor at Kyoto University in Japan in order to help launch a new program that was designed to recruit graduate students from around the world who wanted pursue an advance degree studying wildlife biology, conservation, or primatology. In addition to giraffes, baboons, and rhesus monkeys, he has studied elephants in Africa and the zoo, koalas in Australia and the zoo, snow monkeys in Japan, and California condors, Nile lechwe, and cheetahs in the zoo. When not working, Fred thrives on hiking, camping, reading, sports, politics, and the news.



**TIFFANY SOECHTING *Secretary/Treasurer*** | Texas, USA

Tiffany started her career at Natural Bridge Wildlife Ranch in 1985, less than a year after their opening. In that over-30-year span of time, she has been a part of their giraffe program. She has witnessed first-hand the growth spawned from the founding sire and dam into a program with two established breeding herds that have produced 35 offspring and now the fourth generation to live and thrive in their safe home-away-from-home. Tiffany is the head caretaker of giraffe babies that have required extra nurturing and hand rearing. Her biggest baby, Buddy, was born in 2013. He is one of the ninth known giraffe twins born in the last 200 years. Buddy was the spark of inspiration and the first step of a journey that lead to the formation of this organization. Tiffany's career and personal life revolve around her family and their collective interest in raising and caring for animals. She has developed the educational programs and materials for Natural Bridge Wildlife Ranch, as well as the marketing and public relations programs. That 30 years of knowledge and experience is what she is bringing to help Save The Giraffes.



**CATHERINE CARTER LAND *Director of Media*** | Texas, USA

Catherine Carter Land is a Texan with a huge passion for creativity and adventure. She received her degree in film and digital media from Baylor University in 2013 and began her career in news reporting before moving on to become a producer at Third Crossing Productions and producer of NatGeoWILD's *Walking With Giraffes*. It was early in her career that she met Buddy, the twin giraffe born at Natural Bridge Wildlife Ranch. It was their friendship that encouraged her to set out on a journey to help this magnificent species. She is a member of the Coastal Conservation Association, New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce, Safari Club International, and the Wild Sheep Foundation. Catherine's family taught her the importance and value of protecting and enjoying the great outdoors at a very young age, which instilled her deep love and appreciation for wildlife and conservation. She has made it her goal to share that same love and appreciation with people around the world for the betterment of our environment.

## CATCHING GIANTS CONTINUES TO MAKE AN IMPACT



Francois Deacon's field team of Giraffe experts boosting one of 18 Giraffes that were captured and had GPS devices placed atop their heads.

"**Catching Giants**", a documentary film by Iniosante, Inc., directed and produced by former Board Member Ashley Scott Davision, describes field work in South Africa by a team of scientists organized by Giraffe specialist, Dr. Francois Deacon that was made possible by donations from **Save The Giraffes**. The film tracks the capture of wild giraffes and the work of a team of scientists engaged in collecting information useful for conservation. The full-length feature film made an appearance at numerous specialized and selective film festivals including:

- WorldFest – Houston International Film & Video Festival [**REMI AWARD: DOCUMENTARY FILM**]
- Changing Face International Film Festival [**BEST FEATURE DOCUMENTARY AWARD**]
- Rocky Mountain International Film Festival
- Utah Film Festival and Awards
- Barnes Film Festival
- Social World Film Festival
- Global Peace Film Festival
- Northeast Mountain Film Festival
- Artisan Festival International World Peace Initiative – Cannes
- Elements International Environmental Film Festival
- London International Motion Picture Awards
- International Wildlife Film Festival
- South Europe International Film Festival
- Borderscene Film Festival

## WILD NATURE INSTITUTE: Conservation Education



*Photos courtesy of Wild Nature Institute*



### Project GIRAFFE Conservation Education

Derek E. Lee, Ph.D. & Monica L. Bond, Wild Nature Institute

Students from Manyara Secondary School were brought to Lake Manyara National Park, where they saw giraffes, and other wildlife, in their natural habitat for the first time in their lives.

Educational material was shared with thousands of children living in the Tarangire and western Serengeti regions of Tanzania, as well as shared with secondary school children in Kenya through a collaborative effort with Children for Nature Education.

Advice was given to graduate students studying giraffe ecology (see Matana Levi), ungulate habitat selection, and the significance of blotch patterns.

Giraffe biology, ecology, demography, and conservation were discussed with safari guides-in-training at the Mwewe Ranger Training School.





## WILD NATURE INSTITUTE: Conservation Science



### Project GIRAFFE Conservation Science

Derek E. Lee, Ph.D. & Monica L. Bond, Wild Nature Institute

Six years of data have shown that the giraffes in the Tarangire Ecosystem, Tanzania, wander alone or in herds of up to 66 animals. They are most often encountered in herds of 5 individuals, or the same number as reported for giraffes in Zambia, Namibia, and Kenya.

Food availability was the major determinant of herd size among adult giraffes, but predation risk by lions was the key mediator of herd size among cows that had calves.

The 6-year database revealed that male home ranges were 172 km<sup>2</sup> (= 66 mi<sup>2</sup>), while female home ranges were 115 km<sup>2</sup> (= 44 mi<sup>2</sup>). Although giraffes travel over a large of area, they sometimes plop down to rest a bit.



*Photos courtesy of Wild Nature Institute*

## CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION IN BARINGO



### Conservation Through Education in Baringo

Ezekiel Chebeii,  
Children for Nature Education

Less than 2,000 Rothschild's giraffe live in Africa.

Close to 600 children were involved in conservation education classes that taught them about saving biodiversity, as well as exposing them to how to use binoculars.

A poster highlighting important life history traits of Rothschild's Giraffe was developed and circulated to schools and communities in Kenya.



**ROTHSCHILD'S GIRAFFE FACTS (Baringo giraffe; Ugandan giraffe )**

STATUS	POPULATION	TREND	REASON	CONSERVATION	STATUS
NEAR THREATENED	1,000	↓	HABITAT LOSS	POACHING	POACHING

**Scientific name:** Giraffa camelopardalis rothschildi

**Distribution ( where they live):** They now survive in only a few small and isolated populations in Kenya and Uganda.

**Threats :** habitat loss, poaching and habitat fragmentation

**Means of feeding and diet:** they browse with their prehensile tongue(50 cm long), they feed on tree leaves,fruits,pods and shoots mostly from acacia trees

**Social behavior :** they are non territorial and sociable, with group size ranging from solitary to large and mixed herds. They live in what are called "fission/fusion" social systems.

**Males and females:** Adult males are heavier and taller than females. Male giraffes often have less hair on their ossicones due to sparring with other males.

**Lifespan:** On average, giraffes live for about 16 to 17 years, but females can survive for at least 28 years and males for at least 21 years.

**Offsprings(number of young ones):** 1 calf - rarely twins, known to stay with mother until 22 months old.

**Interesting facts:** Each giraffe has individual markings, this acts like a fingerprint and is useful for identifying individuals. Giraffes don't have front teeth in their upper jaw.

[ezecheb@gmail.com](mailto:ezecheb@gmail.com)

Photos courtesy of Children for Nature Education.



## CHIPEMBELE WILDLIFE EDUCATION TRUST



*Photos courtesy of Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust*

### **Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust**

Anna Tolan Founder, CWET

Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust [CWET] conducts conservation programs in and near South Luangwa National Park, Zambia.

Only about 600 Thornicroft's giraffe live on our planet and all of them roam in the Luangwa Valley.

CWET conducted conservation education field trips into South Luangwa National Park. The trips exposed some of the 165 students to the natural habitat of giraffes and other wildlife for the first time in their lives.

The CWET community conservation education program was shared with 7,054 local people.

The CWET conservation education lessons for children were attended by 9,806 students.



## ASSESSMENT OF ILLEGAL HUNTING OF MASAI GIRAFFE



*Photo courtesy of Jackson Lyimo.*

## Assessment of Factors that Contribute to Illegal Hunting of Masai Giraffe in the Tarangire-Manyara Ecosystem

Jackson Lyimo, Soikone University of Agriculture

This project assessed local communities' attitudes towards giraffe conservation as well as factors that contribute to illegal hunting of Masai giraffe in the Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem by interviewing 365 local residents.

The primary findings produced a complicated and complex perspective regarding attitudes towards giraffes.

About 70% of people thought that giraffes were good animals, and 80% thought that they should be protected. However, 80% also thought that killing a giraffe for meat or sale is acceptable, while close to 80% believed that giraffe brains and bone marrow are cures for HIV/AIDS.

The greatest human threat to giraffes in the region was proximity to roads. Most giraffe killings occurred on or near the tarmac roads, but not because the local villagers are driving too fast. Outsiders are probably killing giraffes by speedy and careless driving, although because some giraffes are in open areas, they are easier to kill by local people.



## MASAI GIRAFFE FORAGING ECOLOGY



Photos courtesy of Matana Levi.

### **Giraffe Foraging Ecology in the Tarangire-Manyara Ecosystem**

Matana Levi Master of Science Student, Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology

The population of Masai Giraffes has declined by about 50% in the last 30 years, so documenting their food preferences is a crucial step in saving this subspecies. Giraffes feed selectively, and evaluating their food preferences is crucial for developing conservation management programs.

In the Tarangire-Manyara Ecosystem, giraffe change their diet and their ranging patterns depending on whether it is the wet or the dry season.

One of their preferred foods, *Dichrostachys cinera*, or 'sickle bush' is widespread, but the leaves desiccate during the dry season (see photo above), so the giraffes need to feed on other plants.

Habitat changes are due to human activities have a negative impact on giraffe ranging patterns, forcing them to seek alternate food sources.

Discussions with local ranch managers are aimed at protecting giraffes as well as the livelihoods of the local people.



## SNARE ART FORM POACHER WIRE TRAPS



*Photo courtesy of Stop Conservation Crimes Initiative.*

### **Promoting Snare Arts to Reduce Impacts of Wire Snare Poaching on Giraffe Populations in the Greater Serengeti Ecosystem**

Alfan Abeid Rija, Ph.D., Soikone University of Agriculture

One of the major threats to giraffes is their illegal killing for bush meat, which is one reason that they are now listed on Appendix II of CITES [see p. 15].

Giraffe poaching is sometimes indirect, when caught in snares set for other animals, and sometimes direct, when caught in snares set in tree canopies that are aimed at strangling giraffes to death.

Removal of snares not only reduces their negative impact on giraffes, but using the snares to create art objects improves the local economy.

This project has trained ten women in two local villages to produce snare art made with wire traps that were destroyed by rangers.

The wires are used for jewelry, as well as to create animal sculptures, decorated with colored beads.



# TELLING THE WORLD TO *SAVE THE GIRAFFES*

## MEDIA COVERAGE

August 2019: *New York Times* "Giraffes Get New Protections, but Will It Be Enough?", by Rachel Nuwer, includes comments by Fred Bercovitch on the listing of giraffes on Appendix II of CITES [<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/23/science/giraffes-endangered-protections.html>]

August 2019: *The Guardian* "Wildlife Summit Votes Down Plan to Allow Huge Sale of Ivory Stockpiles", by Damian Carrington, includes comments by Fred Bercovitch on the listing of giraffes on Appendix II of CITES [<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/22/cites-wildlife-summit-giraffe-protections-global-trade-parts-saiga-antelope-horn>]

September 2019: WILDIZE interviews Fred Bercovitch about the listing of giraffes on Appendix II of CITES [<https://wildize.org/videos/>; click on "CITES Endangered Giraffes with Fred Bercovitch"].

## PRESENTATIONS

May 2019: "Species, Subspecies, Endangered Species: Giraffe Taxonomy and Conservation", Fred Bercovitch. Presented at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium International Giraffid Conference, Columbus, OH.

May 2019: "Game Ranching and Giraffes: Connections between Conservation and Sustainable Ownership", Francois Deacon. Presented at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium International Giraffid Conference, Columbus, OH.

May 2019: "Ecology and Environmental Education: How Wild Nature Institute Works to Conserve Giraffes", David Brown. Presented at the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium International Giraffid Conference, Columbus, OH.

Aug 2019: "The Life and Plight of Giraffes", Fred Bercovitch. Presented at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Geneva, Switzerland.

Sep 2019: "The Trail Connecting Sexual Selection in Baboons with Conservation Biology in Giraffes", Fred Bercovitch. Presented at the 12th International Symposium on Primatology and Wildlife Science, Inuyama, Japan.

## PUBLICATIONS *Names in bold are people funded by or associated with Save The Giraffes*

**Bercovitch, F. B.** (2019) A comparative perspective on the evolution of mammalian reactions to dead conspecifics. *Primates* [DOI <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10329-019-00722-3>].

**Bond, M. L., Lee, D. E., Ozgul, A., & Konig, B.** (2019) Fission-fusion dynamics of a megaherbivore are driven by ecological, anthropogenic, temporal, and social factors. *Oecologia* 19: 335-347.

Knusel, M. A., **Lee, D. E.**, Konig, B., & **Bond, M. L.** (2019) Correlates of home range sizes of giraffes, *Giraffa camelopardalis*. *Animal Behaviour* 149: 143-151.

## WEBLOGS:

May 2019: "Protecting the World's Giraffes" <https://voicesforbiodiversity.org/articles/protecting-the-world%E2%80%99s-giraffes>

September 2019: "Saving Endangered Species: Behind the Scenes at CoP18" <https://voicesforbiodiversity.org/articles/saving-endangered-species-behind-the-scenes-at-cit>

## CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES



The 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES CoP18, convened in August 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. Over 2,000 people from 183 delegations attended.

Proposal 5, to list giraffes on Appendix II, was submitted by six African countries (Central African Republic, Chad, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Senegal).

**Save The Giraffes** issued a letter in support of the proposal. We wrote: "At best, passage of this proposal will help host countries conserve their unique biodiversity; at worst, the proposal will have no impact on the illegal slaughter of giraffes for the sale of body parts. The benefits of listing *Giraffa camelopardalis* on CITES Appendix II far outweigh any costs of maintaining the status quo."

Our Executive Director, Fred Bercovitch (pictured above, fifth from left), was recruited to attend the meetings as a 'giraffe expert' who has been involved in conservation research on giraffes since 2002. His experiences are summarized here: <https://voicesforbiodiversity.org/articles/saving-endangered-species-behind-the-scenes-at-cit>

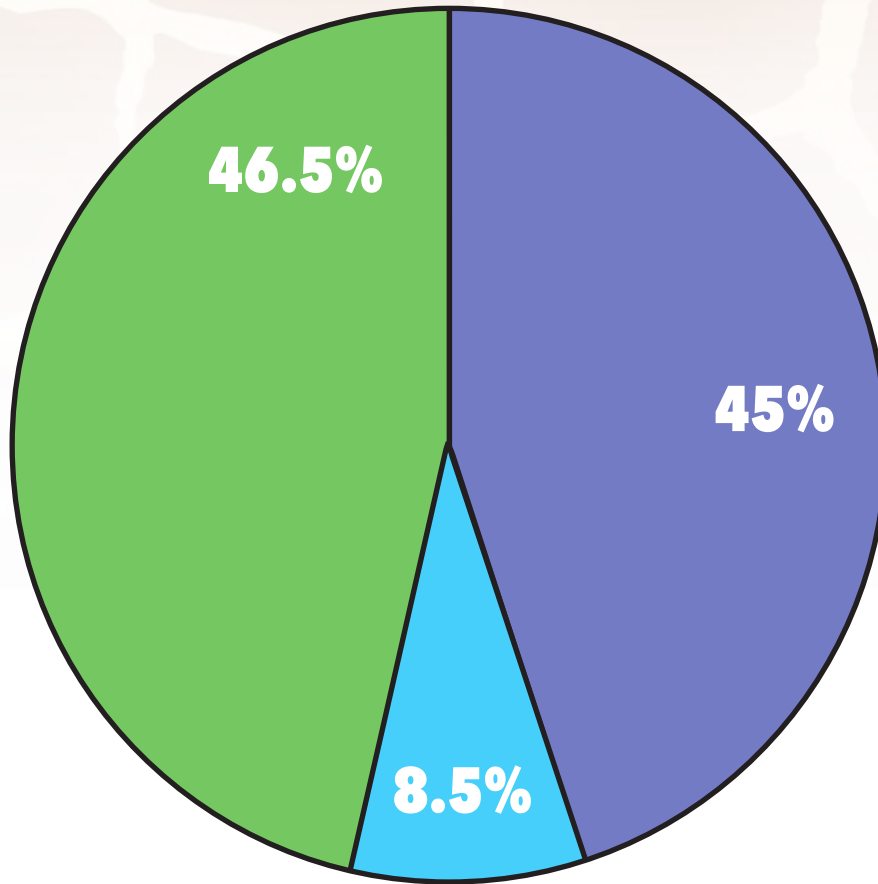
When the vote came, 83% of countries voted in favor of listing the giraffes on Appendix II.

The CITES Appendix II listing establishes a foundation to carefully monitor and control the illegal killing and movement of giraffe parts across international boundaries and thereby adds one more action item adopted in an effort to save giraffes from extinction. We are proud to have been a part of this international effort to address one of the major threats facing giraffes in the wild: poaching for commercial purposes.





# FINANCIAL REPORT



## PROJECTS FUNDED IN 2019 OPERATION COSTS FUNDS CARRIED TO 2020

Generous end of year contributions provided ability to fund projects at the beginning of 2020 instead of waiting to mid-year.

**Save The Giraffes** is thankful to all of the donors. Without your generosity, our progress would not have been possible. Future donations for **Save The Giraffes** and the projects it supports may be made online at [SaveTheGiraffes.org](http://SaveTheGiraffes.org).

*NO FUNDS HAVE BEEN USED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES.*



Aaron Todd  
 Amazon Smile  
 Amy Cuddy  
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**HAVE HELPED US MAKE  
 SAVING GIRAFFES A REALITY**

*Thanks for sticking  
 your neck out  
 for giraffes!*