

Megan R. Ross, Ph.D.

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. – Psychology, Georgia Institute of Technology, *Dissertation: The Effects of Ultraviolet Light on Bird Behavior*
- M.S. – Psychology, Georgia Institute of Technology, *Thesis: Pairing Behavior of Captive Chilean Flamingos as a Function of Separation Methods*
- B.S. – Biology and Psychology, James Madison University

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Animal care and welfare
- Research and science
- Zoo and aquarium ethics
- Strategic planning and visioning
- Zoo operations

ABOUT

Megan R. Ross, Ph. D., oversees all strategic, operational, and programmatic initiatives at Lincoln Park Zoo. She drives the zoo's mission and vision, helping keep the zoo free for all to connect with nature and inspiring communities to create environments where wildlife will thrive in our urbanizing world.

Megan joined Lincoln Park Zoo from Zoo Atlanta in 2000. During her 20-year tenure, she served as Hope B. McCormick Curator of Birds, general curator, vice president of Animal Care, and executive vice president before being named zoo director in 2018. She is the zoo's eighth director, growing its programs and evolving management strategies established by such celebrated leaders as Marlin Perkins, Dr. Lester Fisher, and Kevin J. Bell.

Megan is a passionate, published scientist and committed environmentalist. Her population management work has earned grants from the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) Conservation Endowment Fund. Her work developing behavioral monitoring tools and systems—including ZooMonitor, an app now used regularly by more than 300 zoos worldwide—has been funded by the Rice Foundation and Institute of Museum & Library Services. Today, the zoo's Conservation & Science department is home to more than 40 scientists who bring a data-informed approach to all of Lincoln Park Zoo's care, welfare, conservation, and community work—from supporting urban wildlife to helping save more than 250 species around the globe.

In addition to science, Megan is also widely regarded as an expert on zoo ethics: how do zoos provide optimal care and encourage positive welfare for animals in their care? How are zoos responsibly sustaining animal populations? How can individuals connect with wildlife in zoos while still giving animals the space and social structures they need to thrive?

Megan has served as chair of AZA's Ethics Board. These questions of sustainability, conservation, and ethics drive



Megan's leadership strategies as she works to evolve Lincoln Park Zoo as a leader within AZA and the global zoo and aquarium community. She is the program coordinator for AZA's Bali Myna Species Survival Plan® (SSP). In 2018, Megan partnered with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Reintroduction Specialist Group to host the 2nd International Wildlife Reintroduction Conference at Lincoln Park Zoo, and has an additional role with IUCN as a member of its Asian Songbird Trade Specialist Group. Previously, she served as program coordinator for both the AZA Guam Rail SSP and AZA Chilean Flamingo Population Management Plan.

Megan completed AZA's Executive Leadership Development Program and was a member of Leadership Greater Chicago's inaugural Daniel Burnham Fellowship cohort, inspiring executives to mobilize together for a better Chicago.

PUBLICATIONS

Wark, J.D., Cronin, K.A., Niemann, T., Kao, A., Shender, M.A., Horrigan, A. & Ross, M.R. 2019. Monitoring the behavior and habitat use of animals to enhance welfare using the ZooMonitor app. *Animal Behavior & Cognition*, 6: 158-168.

Wark, J. D., Cronin, K. A., Niemann, T., Shender, M. A., Horrigan, A., Kao, A., & Ross, M. R. 2019. Monitoring the Behavior and Habitat Use of Animals to Enhance Welfare using the ZooMonitor App. *Animal Behavior and Cognition*, 6(3), 158-167. <https://doi.org/10.26451/abc.06.03.01.2019>.

Ross, M.R., Gillespie, K.L., Hopper, L. M., Bloomsmith, M.A., & Maple, T.L. 2013. Differential preference for ultraviolet light among captive birds from three ecological habitats. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* 147: 278-285.

Ross, S.R., Ross, M.R., and Clark, A.B. 2010. Ethosearch: A comprehensive repository of ethograms for use in animal behavior research. *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Methods and Techniques in Behavioral Research*, 369 (abstract).

Travis, D.A., Gamble, K., Ross, M. and Barbiers, R. 2005. Development of a tool for assessing and managing the risk of avian mycobacteriosis during avian translocation. *Proceedings of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians*.

Kehl, N. and Ross, M.R. 2002. The breeding behaviour of a pair of cinereous vultures at Lincoln Park Zoo. *Aviculture Magazine*, 108: 3-7.

Ross, M.R. 2002. The Effects of Ultraviolet Light on Bird Behavior. George Institute of Technology (Doctoral Dissertation, George Institute of Technology, 2001). *Dissertation Abstracts International – B*, 62/11, 5360.