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Joel Sartore, Founder of National Geographic Photo Ark, to Make a Special Appearance at the Phoenix Zoo

Fundraising Event Benefitting the Doornbos Animal Rescue and Care Center

PHOENIX (July 14, 2026) – The Phoenix Zoo is proud to welcome renowned National Geographic Explorer, photographer and conservationist Joel Sartore for a special fundraising event benefitting the future Doornbos Animal Rescue and Care Center (Doornbos ARCC).

Tickets for this extraordinary event, priced at just \$125 per person, include an inspiring presentation by the artist himself, up-close animal encounters, hors d'oeuvres, beverages and a visit to the Zoo's Savanna Gallery in the Savanna Grill, to view a curated exhibition: "Joel Sartore: An ARCC Toward a Better Future" on Friday, October 16, 2026, from 5 – 8 p.m.

For those seeking an enhanced experience, a Premium Experience ticket is available for \$175 and includes all general admission benefits, plus a special pre-event meet-and-greet with Joel Sartore, complimentary drinks and appetizers, and the opportunity to have a book signed by Joel. Guests may bring their own book or purchase Sartore's 20th Anniversary Edition National Geographic Photo Ark book for \$50.

The exhibition will run from October 1, 2026, through February 7, 2027, and will feature 22 of Sartore's most iconic images. 14 of them are animals from the Phoenix Zoo.

Sartore is the founder of the National Geographic Photo Ark, a groundbreaking multi-year project dedicated to documenting every species living in zoos, aquariums and wildlife sanctuaries while inspiring action to protect wildlife and wild places. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Photo Ark, celebrating two decades of using photography to raise awareness about species extinction and conservation.

The event at the Phoenix Zoo will highlight the important role the Doornbos ARCC will play in animal rescue, rehabilitation, conservation and veterinary care throughout Arizona and beyond. Similar in spirit to Sartore's Photo Ark mission, the Doornbos ARCC represents a commitment to protecting and caring for wildlife while inspiring future generations to value and conserve the natural world.

"Joel Sartore has spent his career showing the world why every species matters," says Bert Castro, President and CEO of the Phoenix Zoo. "His work perfectly aligns with the objective of the Doornbos ARCC and the Phoenix Zoo's commitment to wildlife conservation, rescue and care."

The exhibition is presented as part of the Zoo's [Art on the Wild Side program](#), which features rotating art exhibits throughout the year in both the Wild Side and Savanna Galleries. Dedicated to inspiration, celebration and conservation through art, exhibitions and artists are selected who share their unique vision of wildlife and conservation via photography, paint and mixed media, allowing new ways for guests to engage in the Zoo's mission to care for the natural world while being inspired by nature and animals. These exhibitions highlight artists whose work inspires a deeper appreciation of wildlife, conservation and the natural world.

"We are honored to welcome Joel Sartore to the Phoenix Zoo for this special event supporting the Doornbos ARCC," says Jean Bingham, Trustee and member of the Zoo's Arts Committee. "His ability to inspire wildlife conservation through photography and storytelling beautifully reflects the Zoo's mission."

Tickets for this special Phoenix Zoo appearance are limited and expected to sell quickly. <https://www.phoenixzoo.org/events/joel-sartore-opening-reception/>

About the Arizona Center for Nature Conservation

The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation operates the Phoenix Zoo. The ACNC advances the stewardship and conservation of animals and their habitats while providing experiences that inspire people and motivate them to care for the natural world.

The Phoenix Zoo is the only zoo in the Valley accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is a non-profit zoological park, serving 1.4 million guests annually. The Zoo is home to more than 3,000 animals, many of which are endangered and threatened species. For information on upcoming events, exhibits and activities at the Phoenix Zoo, visit phoenixzoo.org.

About Joel Sartore

Known for his striking animal portraits and engaging storytelling, Sartore is a photographer, speaker, author, educator and regular contributor to National Geographic magazine. His work has appeared in Audubon Magazine, The New York Times, Life, Newsweek and Sports Illustrated, among many others. He has also been featured on 60 Minutes, the Today Show, CBS Sunday Morning, NPR, PBS and NatGeo Wild. Sartore has authored numerous books including *The Photo Ark*, *Birds of the Photo Ark*, *Photo Ark Babies: Growing Up in the Animal World*, *RARE: Portraits of America's Endangered Species*, *Insects*, *Vanishing* and *Wonders of the Photo Ark*.

joelsartore.com