

2026 PAWS International Captive Wildlife Conference

October 2-3, 2026 • Sacramento, California

Confirmed Speakers

Liv Baker | Research Director, [Mahouts Elephant Foundation](#); Chair, [PAN Works](#); Honorary Adjunct Professor, University of British Columbia (Thailand)

Carson Barylak, Senior Campaigns Manager, International Fund for Animal Welfare (US)

Kathryn Bertok | Assistant Director, [Carolina Tiger Rescue](#) (US)

Michael Bird | Investigative Journalist, [Wild at Heart Association](#) (Romania)

Scott Blais | CEO and Board President, [Global Sanctuary for Elephants](#) (Brazil)

Carol Bradley, Author, *Last Chain on Billie and Striped Reckoning: Tiger Kings and the Battle to Rescue America's Captive Big Cats* (in press) (US)

Jan Schmidt Burbach, DVM | Director of Wildlife Research and Veterinary Expertise, [World Animal Protection](#) (International)

Jake Davis | Senior Staff Attorney, [Nonhuman Rights Project](#) (US)

Grettel Delgadillo | Director, Programs and Policy, Latin America, [Humane World for Animals](#) (Latin America)

Shermin de Silva | Associate Professor, UC San Diego; President and Founder, [Trunks & Leaves, Inc.](#) (US, Sri Lanka)

Catherine Doyle | Director of Science, Research and Public Policy, [Performing Animal Welfare Society](#) (US)

Ovidiu Dunel-Stanco | Investigative Journalist, [Wild at Heart Association](#) (Romania)

Eve D'Vincent, Ph.D., LPCC, LMHC | Author, [Captive Ambassadors: The Hidden Lives of Zoo Animals](#) (US)

Kate Dylewsky | Assistant Director, Government Affairs, [Animal Welfare Institute](#) (US)

Courtney Fern | Director of Campaigns, [Nonhuman Rights Project](#) (US)

Jackie Gai, DVM | Director of Veterinary Services, [Performing Animal Welfare Society](#) (US)

Laura Hagen | Managing Director, Wildlife, [Humane World for Animals](#) (US)

Liz Cabrera Holtz | Senior Campaign Manager, [World Animal Protection US](#)

Marina Ivanova, DVM | [FOUR PAWS International](#)

Hyung Ju Lee | Executive Director, [AWARE](#) (Animal Welfare Awareness, Research and Education) (South Korea)

Lori Marino | President, [The Whale Sanctuary Project](#) (US, Canada)

Emily McCormack | Animal Curator, [Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge](#) (US)

Debbie Metzler | Primatologist and Managing Director of Captive Wildlife, [PETA](#) Foundation (US)

Brett Mitchell | Co-founder and Director, [WildChoices](#) NPC; Founder and Chair, [Elephant Reintegration Trust](#) (South Africa)

Pangea Trust Elephant Sanctuary (*speaker information to come*) (Portugal)

Khatijah Rahmat | Postdoctoral Scholar, [Max Planck Institute for the History of Science](#) (Germany)

Steve Shurter | President and CEO, [The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee](#) (US)

Tammy Thies | Founder and Executive Director, [The Wildcat Sanctuary](#) (US)

Andrew Westoll | Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, Creative Writing and English, University of Toronto Scarborough; Author, *Born to be Wild: Reckoning with the Zoo in the Age of Extinction* (*in press*) (Canada)



pawsweb.org