



Welcome to the Year of Coexistence

Dear Fellow Defenders,

With all the challenges for wildlife these days — habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, overhunting, etc. — it's important that we take the time to focus on the positive impact of our work and the valuable partnerships we have with some amazing people. We are working hard to protect and to celebrate valued partnerships we've developed, and to honor our incredible wildlife. Defenders has declared this the Year of Coexistence. Over the course of the coming year, we'll highlight how far we've come and the innovative ways that people are sharing the landscape with wildlife. Throughout this Year of Coexistence, we'll be discussing living with wolves, bears, and panthers, as well as bats, tortoises, ferrets, bison, and orcas. We'll also feature some of our partners who recognize the importance of working together to save wildlife.

Simply put — coexistence is helping people share the landscape with wildlife and using innovative tools to reduce the conflicts that often occur with wildlife in their natural habitats. Defenders has been at the forefront of these efforts for decades, and we have pioneered transformational approaches and tools that successfully build social acceptance for wildlife in communities from Alaska to Florida to the desert southwest to northern Rockies and numerous places in between.

Defenders has created [a Year of Coexistence website](#) and we are creating new content — blogs, videos, interviews, and more — each month to help showcase coexistence throughout the year. We have identified a species for each month of 2019 to highlight - below is a calendar outlining each month. Our hope is that by sharing all of the positive, proactive efforts people are doing around the country, we will work towards more acceptance and more coexistence with wildlife.

Sincerely,

Megan Joyce

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We are encouraging monthly conversations about coexistence and sharing the landscape with wildlife! Share using the hashtag #YearOfCoexistence to join the discussion!

<p>January: Overview In January, we are sharing an overview of coexistence: what it is, why it's important, and showcasing some of the ground-breaking work we've been doing.</p>	<p>February: Grizzly Bears In February, we are focusing on grizzly bear coexistence, and our projects, including electric fencing, bear spray, and food lockers.</p>	<p>March: Florida Panthers In March, we are focusing on Florida panthers, to coincide with Save the Florida Panther Day (the second Saturday in March – this year the 16th). We will be discussing range expansion, predator-resistant enclosures, and vehicle-caused mortality.</p>
<p>April: Bison In April, we are focusing on bison and providing support to landowners outside Yellowstone through fencing and other coexistence measures.</p>	<p>May: Red Wolves In May, we are focusing on red wolves and the importance of education, outreach, and public support for coexistence.</p>	<p>June: Orcas In June, which is both Orca Month and National Ocean Month (hosting World Oceans Day on the 8th), we will be celebrating our work to protect southern resident orcas.</p>
<p>July: Birds In July, the ban on lead ammunition goes into effect in California, protecting the California condor. We'll also be discussing the coexistence of eagles and wind power.</p>	<p>August: Mexican Gray Wolves In August, we are focusing on coexistence in the Southwest, talking about range rider programs and tribal partnerships to protect Mexican gray wolves.</p>	<p>September: Sea Otters In September, we're going Sea Otter Savvy and focusing on coexisting with sea otters through responsible viewing, recreation, and driving practices.</p>
<p>October: Gray Wolves October hosts Wolf Awareness Week and we will be focusing for the whole month on all of our projects that help people share the landscape with wolves - from fladry and guardian dogs to range riders and wacky inflatable arm men!</p>	<p>November: Manatees November is Manatee Awareness Month because manatees start to seek warm water. We'll be focusing on boat safety, habitat restoration, and education and outreach.</p>	<p>December: Polar Bears In December, we're focusing on polar bears and the coexistence projects we've undertaken in the Arctic, like providing food storage lockers to help alleviate some of the impacts of climate change.</p>