

Indiana Jones honored by Indianapolis Zoo: Harrison Ford wins award for wildlife conservation



(Photo: Indianapolis Zoo)

As the fedora-wearing, bullwhip-wielding, adventure-seeking character Indiana "Indy" Jones, Harrison Ford fought to save priceless artifacts and pieces of history. Though the character may be fictional, Ford is bringing that same fight to save the natural world and the wildlife that calls it home.

So it seems almost prophetic that the actor is now being recognized by the Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation. A "timeless hero of the silver screen," it is, in fact, his heroic devotion to the planet that has earned him the 2018 Jane Alexander Global Wildlife Ambassador Award.

This award — created by the Indy Prize in honor of Tony and Emmy-winning actor and conservation advocate Jane Alexander — recognizes individuals who have been "effective, credible and consistent voices for wildlife."



A "timeless hero of the silver screen," it is in fact Harrison Ford's heroic devotion to the planet that has earned him the 2018 Jane Alexander Global Wildlife Ambassador Award, created by the Indianapolis Prize. Here Ford is working in the field in Indonesia as part of a documentary film series. *(Photo: Indianapolis Zoo)*

Ford's selection was announced today by the Indianapolis Zoo. The actor, also known for his role as Han Solo in Star Wars, has spent countless hours both in the field and in boardrooms fighting for conservation.

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"Harrison Ford is among today's most credible conservationists," said Michael Crowther, CEO of the Indianapolis Zoological Society, Inc., which administers the award. "And [he] is widely respected by the professional and academic conservation communities."

The actor has been part of Conservation International, a nonprofit environmental organization, for more than 25 years. Serving on its executive committee, he has helped with the group's growth and direction. Ford also serves on the board for CI's Global Conservation Fund that has worked to protect more than 40 million acres across three continents.



Actor, environmentalist, and Conservation International (CI) Vice Chairman Harrison Ford tours the COP10 Convention on Biological Diodiversity venue in Nagoya, Japan (Photo: Haja Rasambainarivo, Haja Rasambainarivo)

His work has also taken him out of suits and into hiking boots.

Ford traveled to Indonesia to better understand the challenges of deforestation, taking viewers along with him in Showtime's Years of Living Dangerously documentary television series. He also narrated The Ocean, a feature as part of Conservation International's "Nature is Speaking" film series to invite "the human race to listen to nature."

"I care deeply for the natural world," Ford said in a release by the Indy Prize. "It's not about me; it's not about me at all. It's about the other world we're going to leave behind."

"If we don't stop the destruction of nature, nothing else will matter," he continued. "Jobs won't matter. Our economies won't matter. Our freedoms and ethics won't matter. Our children's education and potential won't matter. If we end the ability of a health natural world to sustain humanity, nothing else will matter."

Ford follows in the footsteps of stage and screen star Sigourney Weaver, who received the Global Wildlife Ambassador award in 2016 for her dedication to the mountain gorillas of Rwanda. Jane Alexander herself was the inaugural winner of the award the first time it was bestowed in 2012.

This recognition is not Ford's first in the world of conservation. He has earned several other honors, including the Founders' Award from Conservation International, the World Ecology Award from the International Center for Tropical Ecology, the Global Citizen Award from the Center for Health and Global Environment, and a Lindbergh Award for his efforts to balance technology and nature.

Ford's latest recognition comes just one month after he congratulated his longtime friend, Russ Mittermeier, for being selected as the winner of the 2018 Indianapolis Prize. Mittermeier, the chief conservation officer of the Global Conservation Fund, has discovered 18 new species and preserved millions of acres of habitat around the globe.

Both will be honored at the Indianapolis Prize Gala presented by Cummins, Inc. on Sept. 29 in Indianapolis.



A "timeless hero of the silver screen," it is in fact Harrison Ford's heroic devotion to the planet that has earned him the 2018 Jane Alexander Global Wildlife Ambassador Award, created by the Indianapolis Prize. Here Ford is with 2018 Indy Prize winner Russ Mittermeier working out in the field. (Photo: Indianapolis Zoo)