



COP 28

The Institute thanks its many partners and supporters who participated in COP28 over the past two weeks to ensure that, alongside ending fossil fuel use, conservation was central to negotiations. Although many hoped the more substantial and urgent conservation commitments, the final agreement validates that science and indigenous knowledge are foundational to protecting our oceans, our forests, and our biodiversity.

FEATURED PARK



Photos and facts of your favorite parks, one issue at a time

National Park of American Samoa American Samoa

FACT 1: The National Park of American Samoa is the *only* US national park in the **southern hemisphere**. 30% of the park's 13,500 acres are underwater, covering an expansive coral reef habitat that supports 1,200 species of reef fish and coral.



FACT 2: The park's land is not owned by the US government, but is instead **leased** from the local communities.

WHEREAS, the lands to be leased are owned by the Government of American Samoa, individuals and families in the villages of Afono, Vatia, Pago Pago, and Fagasa on the island of Tutuila; Fitiuta, Ta'u and Faleasao on the island of Ta'u; Ofu and Olosega on the island of Ofu...

— Park Lease Agreement, signed 9/9/1993

Nominate *your* favorite local, state, or national park [here](#) so our subscribers can learn about it.

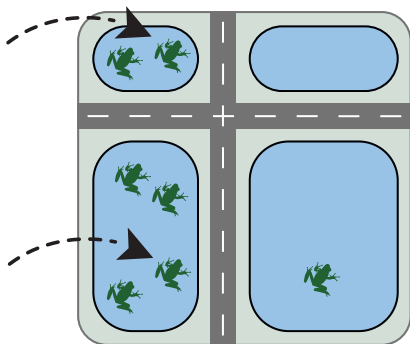
PARK PERKS



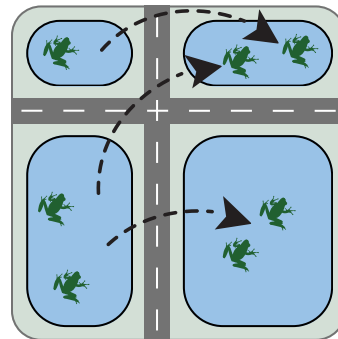
Visualizing key research to show why parks matter

While conservation work often centers on pristine habitat, *urban habitat* can contain important biodiversity, novel species adaptations, and potential for new management insights. A 2020 [article](#) published in the journal *Nature* examines species conservation in urbanized environments. Incorporating insights from the existing conservation literature, the authors constructed a management framework for urban biodiversity anchored in evolutionary concepts such as gene flow, inbreeding, and species adaptation. They then identified and described several key strategies for species conservation in urban contexts, where populations are often isolated by human development.

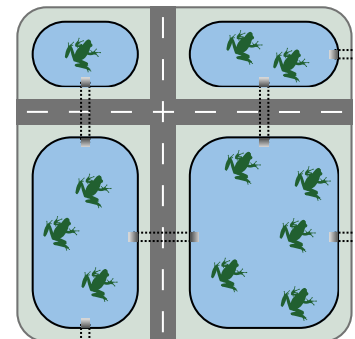
Strategies for Conserving Locally Adapted Species



Stocking populations increases species abundance in its current habitat.



Assisted colonization introduces the species to further suitable habitat, establishing new populations.



Increased connectivity establishes physical links between populations, lowering the risk of inbreeding.

Adapted from Lambert and Donihue, *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 2020; 4
DOI: [10.1038/s41893-023-01150-4](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-023-01150-4)

The authors argue that deprioritizing conservation in urban environments is a *mistake*, as many habitat fragments present valuable conservation opportunities. The team instead suggests that a population-oriented understanding of urban conservation, focused on **connectivity and genetic diversity**, will better protect underappreciated urban biodiversity and further the scientific understanding of species stewardship. Beyond its management implications, better-informed and more effective conservation work may bolster public support for urban conservation measures.

PLAY GROUND

Which habitats are the most magnetic?

ferrets' habitats

SHOPPING FOR A RECENT OR SOON-TO-BE GRADUATE?

Sustainably built *Park-It Frames* are the perfect gift idea and help support the Institute's conservation workforce programming.



SHOP FRAMES