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**THE LIVING DESERT ZOO AND GARDENS  
FEATURED IN NEW NETFLIX DOCU-SERIES "CONNECTED"**

**PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELLS, CA** -- (August 11, 2020) – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is featured in the first of six episodes of the new docu-series, "Connected: The Hidden Science of Everything," which is streaming now on Netflix.

Throughout the series, host Latif Nasser travels the world and takes viewers on a fun, educational journey to show how everyone is tied together through science and nature. In the first episode, entitled "surveillance," he revels in finding a connection to everything, from tracking birds via GPS to predict hurricanes, to how Tinder has a secret desirability score and is communicating with other apps, and how matchmaking for animals is saving endangered species. That's where The Living Desert comes in.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the science behind what we do here at The Living Desert," said President/CEO Allen Monroe. "We are a conservation first organization, working to save species around the world. This kind of show helps highlight that, and lets people know, on a deeper level, who we are and what we are trying to accomplish."

The Living Desert is part of a global conservation community that curates vital species information using the Zoological Information Management System (ZIMS). ZIMS is maintained by the non-profit organization Species360, and serves more than 1,200 wildlife institutions in over 100 countries. Its data is used to improve animal welfare and support species conservation.

During the show, Nasser playfully refers to ZIMS as "Tinder for Critters," and calls it, "The highest stakes dating app of all. Because some of these are endangered species and if a species dies out, there are going to be all kinds of consequences."

Filmed over two and half days in the summer of 2019, the show highlights The Living Desert's breeding programs for African Wild Dogs, Mexican Gray Wolf, Arabian Oryx, and Slender Horned Gazelles. Also featured is the Zoo's Senior Conservation Biologist Sarah Greely who shares details about the Zoo's many SSPs (Species Survival Plans).

For example, The Living Desert was instrumental in starting the SSP program for the Mexican Gray Wolf. Personally and professionally committed to carrying on this legacy, Greely recently took over as the lead and assists with gathering data, analyzing breeding options, and helping to restore the Mexican Wolf into their native habitat. "Monitoring these animals in both the wild and human care are instrumental in helping to grow their populations," said Greely.

"It's fitting that we are a part of the "Surveillance" episode," said Director of Animal Care RoxAnna Breitigan. "It's part of our mission to keep watch over endangered species and make sure they are not going extinct. When reintroducing species into the wild, there are

tracking methods in place to help gather data and be sure those animals continue to thrive and play their important role in the ecosystem.”

Nasser is the Director of Research for the New York Public Radio show. He has also given two TED Talks and written for the *Boston Globe*. Nasser holds a PhD in the history of science from Harvard University.

For more information about The Living Desert, visit [livingdesert.org](http://livingdesert.org), or call (760) 346-5694. The Zoo and Gardens is located at 47-900 Portola Ave, in Palm Desert and is open daily from 7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**About the Living Desert:**

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit, accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ensuring the highest standards of all aspects of animal care, education, conservation, public service, and operations. The Zoo is active in conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives around the world, as well as in its own community. The Zoo has been a top destination in the Palm Springs area for 50 years. The Living Desert is located at 47900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260. For more information: (760) 346-5694 or visit [livingdesert.org](http://livingdesert.org).

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LINK TO TRAILER: <https://www.netflix.com/watch/81084952>