We believe that compassionate communities all over the world, with access to humane and environmental education and veterinary training, can and will save their precious ecosystems and protect the future of our biodiversity.

Globally

We continued our annual trend to help more animals and reach more people than ever before. We treated over 4,400 animals globally, and taught compassion education to hundreds of children worldwide in important but threatened ecosystems.

For 2017, we expanded our efforts to more crucial locations around the world, with a focus on UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
Regionally

**GALAPAGOS**

The Darwin Animal Doctors team treated a total of 3,800 patients. Interestingly, 1,552 of those were dogs/cats that were already sterilized! This is a ground-breaking transformation of a community that did not have any year-round veterinary access when we first opened our doors in 2010. The more of our patients that become sterilized over time, the more we curtail long term threats to the Galapagos ecosystem.

We partnered with the government agency ABG to begin the first ever year-round animal vaccination program in Galapagos! After years of research confirming the presence of invasive diseases in Galapagos, thanks to generous sponsorship by LUSH and IDEXX, we are now working with ABG to ensure that domestic animals on Galapagos become vaccinated to safeguard the archipelago’s wildlife. This is a huge development following nearly a decade of work and research, and we would like to thank IGTOA for helping to fund our very first vaccination imports! Considering that we had to deal with multiple cases of Parvo and Distemper in Galapagos in 2017 (Distemper being deadly to Galapagos sea lions), and a majority of our patients turned out to have deadly Ehrlichia from ticks, the move to begin vaccinations could not come soon enough.
We have another measure of success, one of them being we only had 31 cases of emergencies to treat for the whole year. Before we began comprehensive humane education and preventative medicine, we had to treat emergencies nearly daily in Galapagos just a few years ago. In addition, we de-parasited well over 1,000 patients, and every de-wormed or de-ticked patient means that many fewer parasites threatening local wildlife!

Finally, we expanded our joint efforts with the Galapagos government. In addition to the vaccination program, we assisted ABG all year in satellite campaigns to help all the islands and hard-to-reach regions of the Galapagos.

We helped ABG treat 43 animals on Isabela Island in Galapagos, and 81 animals on the capital city island of San Cristobal, in addition to 12 more in an isolated region of Santa Cruz. In August, we returned with ABG to treat 9 more patients in a remote region of Santa Cruz, and 25 more on Isabela Island. In September, we once again went to Isabela with ABG to treat 36 more patients.

The Darwin team also assisted the Galapagos National Park in helping save wildlife year-round. Thanks to the Galapagos Conservancy, Darwin vets were able to assist with the giant tortoise restoration project on the islands.
The Galapagos National Park Directorate, with the help of the Galapagos Conservancy, is carrying out the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative to restore giant tortoise populations across the Galapagos Islands.

Sadly, in the past, giant tortoises were exploited as a food source and later for oil, which combined with habitat destruction and threats caused by introduced species, resulted in their numbers being drastically reduced. Of fifteen species of giant tortoise, only eleven remain today—most of these endangered. The giant tortoise has an important role in an island ecosystem, helping shape the landscape, spread seeds and, creating the habitat for other Galapagos plants and animals found there.

In 2015, Darwin Animal Doctors entered into an agreement with the National Park to treat wildlife in certain situations. Since then, this agreement has developed into a working partnership where Darwin Animal Doctors became the on-call Wildlife Rescue, and work alongside the Park in various wildlife cases.

The Park runs three rearing centers where tortoises are raised to help increase wild populations. Recently, at their center on Santa Cruz Island, one of the adult tortoises had decided not to eat. Without much knowledge available on how to treat a hunger striking giant tortoise, it was definitely a difficult case for Dr. Andrea, the Park vet, who called in the Darwin Animal Doctors to help. Dr. Carmen suspected an infection, and prescribed a combination of pain killers, anti-inflammatories and antibiotics. Replacing fluids was also important. As well as receiving subcutaneous fluids, Dr. Andrea suggested to move the tortoise to a shallow pool where he could just sit and absorb water.

The day after the treatment, the Doctors received great news; the tortoise was happily eating again and sitting in his pool. Now, if the Park ever has another tortoise refuse his food, thanks to Dr. Carmen and Dr. Andrea, they have some guidelines on treatment.

Darwin Animal Doctors are very proud to have been involved in such a remarkable initiative. The Galapagos National Park Directorate and Galapagos Conservancy, are working every day to restore the famous Galapagos giant tortoises across the Archipelago. For our Doctors it was incredible to be able to be part of this history making project.
The Darwin Animal Doctors team went on a three-month mission to beautiful Koh Tao island in Thailand to bring veterinary and education resources to this special place surrounded by beautiful marine life. There, we partnered with the one local clinic, Noi Star, on the island to treat hundreds of animals that otherwise would not have had access to veterinary care, and we assisted teachers at all the schools on Koh Tao.

We provided veterinary care for 223 cats and 125 dogs, for a total of 348, at their local clinic, Noistar. During this time, NoiStar sterilized 51 cats and 23 dogs with their team. Through the schools on Koh Tao, Darwin taught humane education workshops and curriculum to 300 students. Our humane community events brought the community together for very positive times.
The Thailand team put down their scrubs and surgery kits and picked up some books, lesson plans and games and headed down to the local elementary school. The team had a big task that day; for some, a task more daunting than surgery. The Koh Tao school is the only local school on the island, and is comprised of approximately 300 children. The Doctors were there that day to ensure that every child at the school received an age-appropriate Humane Education lesson. Back in the US, Darwin Animal Doctors’ Humane Education Coordinator had been working hard to ensure that the team would have all the tools they needed to have the day run successfully, from lesson plans to games, books and take-home information.

For the Doctors to be able to visit each age group, and to have enough time to deliver a full set of classes, the school divided the students into four groups, where the team would have 90 minutes with each age group. By the end of the day, the team had worked with children ranging from 3 to 15 years old. Depending on the age group, the children were given different lessons to help understand how to best care for the animals and environment around them.

The children played games which taught them to identify and understand the difference between wild and domesticated animals, and the different ways that we need to interact with and care for them. They played other games that aimed to teach children which foods are safe and unsafe for their pets, as well games which taught children different animal names in English. With older children, they also played animal care focused trivia games where the students were taught and ‘tested’ on a wide variety of aspects of pet and general animal care as well as aspects of environmental care.
After a long day, the team of Doctors left the school tired, but feeling very positive about all the information they were able to share with the students. The children all had a great day, full of games and excitement, and left with a much better understanding of how to best care for the animals and environment around them.

A huge thank you to Dr. Carmen, Dr. Kate, Lisa, Antoine, Rebecca and Katheryn who put in a huge effort that day to ensure each child on Koh Tao had a fun and entertaining education filled day, as well as our local partner NoiStar.
We embarked on a two-month pilot program with our lead vet and board member Dr. Jochem Lastdrager and educator Michelle Green, to Belize for two months. Much of this time was spent traveling to the various towns of the country, discovering the needs of the communities while helping to treat animals.

Dr. Jochem and Michelle treated every type of patient from puppies to wild ocelots, while meeting with Humane Societies from each part of the country. They met with the Belize Wildlife Referral Clinic, Cayo Animal Welfare Society (CAWS), Belmopan Humane Society, and Placencia Humane Society. They started dialogs with each organization about beginning humane education in their community.

Each region had strong need for education including spay/neuter information to basic animal care infrastructure like leashes and collars. The communities expressed wanting to use our education curriculum, activities and program, “A Piggy's Tale” We cannot wait to develop these relationships further.
Thanks to generous funding by LUSH Charity Pot, and A Well Fed World, we were able to embark on a landmark campaign to an incredibly important UNESCO Site: The Leuser Ecosystem in Sumatra. The Leuser ecosystem is the last place on the planet that tiger, elephants and rhinos live together in the wild, but all the animals of Sumatra and their jungle home are under constant threat from poaching and palm plantations clearing the land.

To help save Sumatra, we implemented our most ambitious year-round education program in partnership with the Bukit Lawang Conservation Trust, and we put on a huge conservation festival with local partners The Bukit Lawang Conservation Trust humane education school in Leuser.

Thanks to LUSH, we produced educational materials including for the local schools and universities of Sumatra. We brought Michelle Green, an international educator, and Sarah Wang, a community developer from UNICEF, and to train the local teachers in environmental education.
“I enjoy how Michelle and Sarah teach us. They make us laugh, and make us think. I like that.”

-Ida, Teacher, Bukit Lawang Trust

"The art work Darwin Animal Doctors had made for us has been very useful during collaborative events, such as saving orangutan week and our own conservation festival. They are timeless and the children revel in tracing the outline of the shapes with their fingers, whilst the older have really enjoyed having such visual techniques used to further their understanding and education."

-Lily Morgan, Head of Education, Bukit Lawang Trust
We trained teachers, students, and community leaders in Sumatra, with the humane education and community development programs LUSH funded. We taught workshops with K-12 teachers, colleges, specialty schools like the Pelita Bangsa school which trains people to become teachers, and business leaders. All these teachers and leaders initially came to us, asking for help, because their students and children wanted to learn how to create a sustainable future for their Sumatra. The kids did not want to work for palm plantations or wildlife markets. We taught the teachers how to implement humane and sustainability curriculums in their classes and in community events. From regular K-12 schools at the rainforest, to business colleges, to universities like Universitas Tjut Nyak Dhien in the Sumatran capital city of Medan.
As news spread of our program, more and more schools and universities in Indonesia began approaching us, asking if we can bring our LUSH-funded program to their classes too! From K-12 schools in remote villages like Batu Katak deep in the rainforest, to Indonesia’s aviation college, they’re all trying to Go Green, as they put it.

To directly ensure the wellbeing of wildlife in Sumatra, our team included a wildlife rehabilitation specialist who collaborated with Sumatran wildlife teams on improving rehabilitation for rescued animals. We implemented a new snake rehab enclosure, since snakes are commonly poached for the wildlife trade we met and collaborated with environmental law enforcers, and we had meetings with park rangers in the UNESCO site, to discuss how to work together to protect primates, reptiles, and the rainforest borders.

We provided expert advice from US wildlife rehabbers and herpetologists to help Sumatran rescuers, and we have been making collaborative plans on how to help the rangers do their jobs more effectively with our help.
We had the biggest, most successful community event, a huge conservation festival in the Leuser Ecosystem rainforest. We did it in partnership with the Bukit Lawang Trust K-12 school. We brought conservationists from all over Indonesia, like Rudy Putra who works with Leonardo DiCaprio, to rangers, to anti-plastics activists, to environmental professors and their students.

Thanks to a grant from A Well Fed World, there was plant based food and sustainability education for everyone in attendance, including the villagers of the Leuser Rainforest. We provided all attendees with reusable water bottles and reusable canvas bags that the kids painted animals on.

Finally, after establishing our education work all over the island, we were invited to become part of the Sumatran Roundtable, made up of local Indonesian businesses, Sumatran rangers, educators, and local conservation groups, working together to help solve the issues facing Sumatra.
We’re very excited that the community centered veterinary and education model that Darwin developed and tested in the Galapagos UNESCO World Heritage can now take roots in another World Heritage Site.

Thank you to our steadfast supporters, partners, volunteers, veterinarians and educators who made 2017 was a special year for expansion and growth – always for the animals.