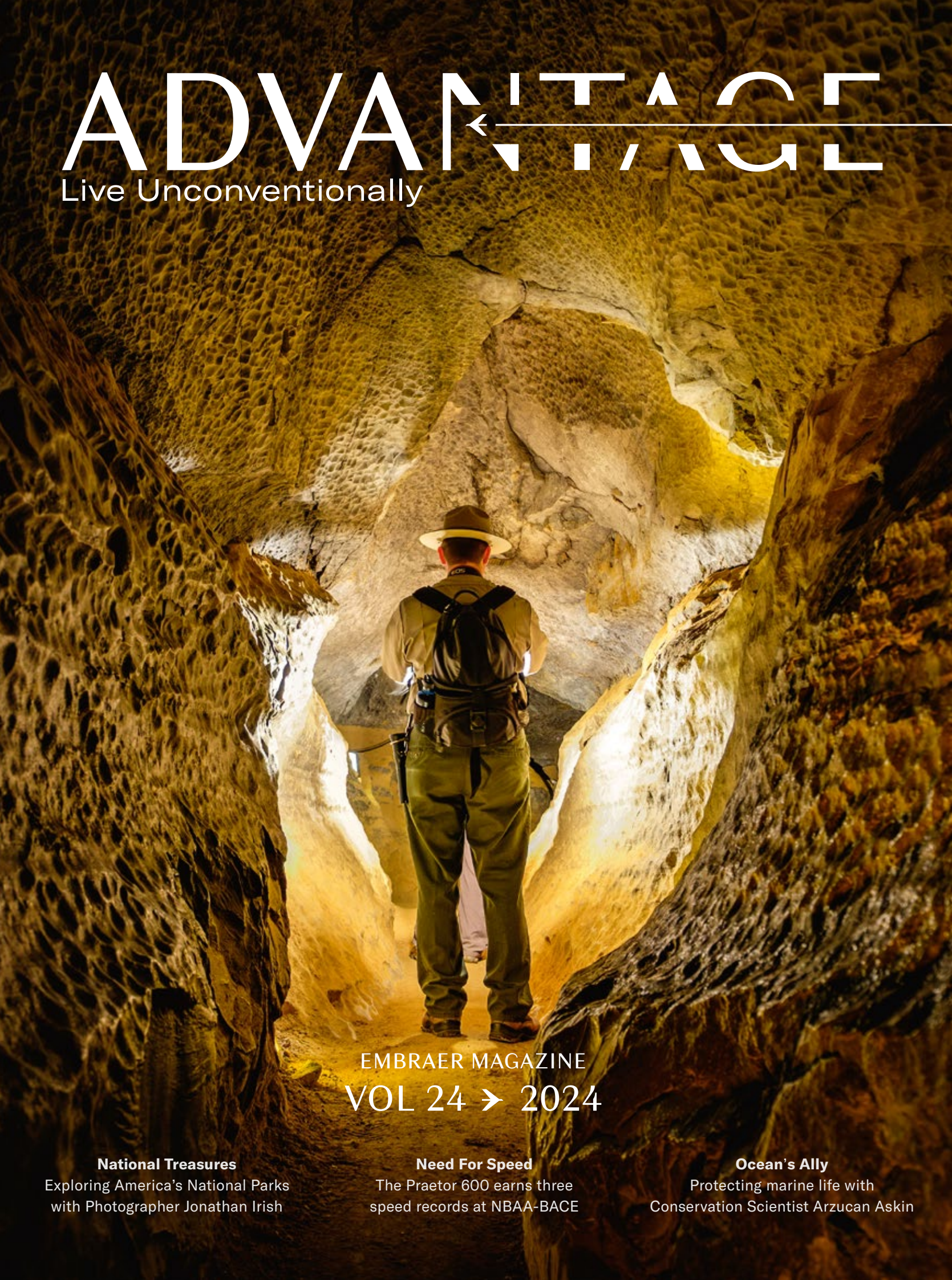


ADVANTAGE

Live Unconventionally



EMBRAER MAGAZINE
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National Treasures

Exploring America's National Parks
with Photographer Jonathan Irish

Need For Speed

The Praetor 600 earns three
speed records at NBAA-BACE

Ocean's Ally

Protecting marine life with
Conservation Scientist Arzucan Askin



IMPACTFUL ENCOUNTERS

Backed by the Embraer Foundation as a dedicated funder, Brevard Zoo has created a plan to educate and empower millions of people on preserving natural resources through joyful, accessible and meaningful connections with Florida’s marine life and coastal ecosystems



are home to more than 4,400 plant and animal species, including more than 50 species listed as endangered or threatened. Regrettably, years of human pollution in the IRL have resulted in recurring algae blooms and poor water quality. These harmful conditions have contributed to widespread habitat loss, including a severe decline in seagrasses, which many lagoon-dwelling species rely on as a food source.

Restoring filter feeders, seagrasses and native shorelines along the IRL has become a community effort. The “Restore Our Shores” program is vital to the survival of the plants, animals and people who call it home. Embraer employees have often used their volunteer time off to participate in rebuilding oyster reefs that help filter the water and provide habitat to many species. Other initiatives like the adopt-a-mangrove program give local residents potted mangroves to propagate at home and return later for planting once they’ve reached maturity. Adding vegetation helps protect shorelines from erosion, filters pollutants and provides valuable habitats for plants and animals.

As an extension of Brevard Zoo, hundreds of trained volunteers will help staff the Aquarium and Conservation Center. The entire campus will occupy 14 acres of shoreline at Port Canaveral and serve as an outdoor classroom for an estimated 53,000 K-12 students annually. Visitors will encounter real-life applications of biology, pathology, anatomy, and physiology around every corner, as veterinary staff care for a wide range of Florida marine species

Thirty years ago, over 16,000 people came together to design and construct Brevard Zoo, making it one of the largest volunteer-built zoos in the world. Today, with the help of the Embraer Foundation, Brevard Zoo is advancing its conservation mission through sharing their joy of nature to help wildlife and people thrive.

A visionary project, Brevard Zoo’s future sister campus, the Aquarium and Conservation Center, will host programs and partnerships designed to help restore the ecological integrity of local waterways. Often referred to as “the cradle of the ocean,” the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) is part of the longest barrier island complex in North America, occupying more than 40% of Florida’s east coast, extending over 156 miles from Ponce de Leon Inlet to Jupiter Inlet in West Palm Beach. Its salt marshes, mangrove swamps, drift algae, oyster bars, and tidal flats

and biologists maintain diverse life support systems throughout the various exhibits. Here, the intention is to present a wide range of immersive, hands-on experiences to inspire a passion for nature and conservation. As part of their commitment to conservation, USD 1 from every paid Aquarium admission will go towards lagoon restoration and stewardship through the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program, making it one of the region’s largest funders of restoration work.

“Getting volunteers to help us do this work makes what we do possible,” admitted Ashley Rearden, Director of Conservation at Brevard Zoo, who attests to the importance of long-term conservation efforts. “The key to safeguarding the Indian River Lagoon and our other waterways lies with our community, especially the next generation. From how residents choose to landscape and fertilize their gardens to how they vote, their attitudes toward conservation and daily behaviors will significantly affect the health of coastal habitats for years to come.”

Volunteering isn’t the only way local residents can be good stewards of the environment. In

addition to its role as a “founding sponsor” of the Aquarium, the Embraer Foundation also contributed to a project at the Zoo’s conservation kiosk. The Teeny Tiny House exhibit focuses on teaching visitors how they can “live lightly” on the water. The idea came from a staff member at the Zoo who wanted to find a way to connect guests with educational programing related to sustainable choices.

This project aims to illustrate that people don’t have to live directly on the lagoon to help. Anyone can plant native plants, pick up their dog’s waste and abide by fertilizer bans. “Supporting projects like the Teeny Tiny House and the Aquarium allows Embraer to be part of the ecosystem that provides basic tools for children and families to learn about and practice sustainable living,” shared Monica Newman McCluney, Head of U.S. Corporate Social Responsibility & The Embraer Foundation. ◀

To join the Embraer Foundation in supporting this world-class Aquarium and contributing to the USD 100 million “Our Legacy Campaign,” please visit: ourlegacycampaign.org.

Opposite: For over 10 years, Brevard Zoo has worked to restore balance to the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) ecosystem

Below (left): Embraer employees have often used their volunteer time off to participate in rebuilding oyster reefs

Below (right): Funded by the Embraer Foundation, the Teeny Tiny House teaches visitors how to reduce their carbon footprint



WORDS: Jennifer Davis, IMAGES © Brevard Zoo

