



A Reference Guide to ZIMS for Studbooks for Animal Program Leaders

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INTRODUCTION: What is the purpose of this document?

This document was created to guide AZA's Animal Program Leaders who are new to ZIMS for Studbooks and to offer a directory to the many resources available. This document includes, but is not limited to, how to access the software, where to find training materials, where to access helpful materials for studbook management, and who to contact for help. This document is current to March 2021 and will be updated as needed.

OVERVIEW: What is ZIMS for Studbooks and where do users access it?

ZIMS for Studbooks – This is the program that maintains the studbook data. ZIMS for Studbooks replaces SPARKS and PopLink software.

The studbook data in ZIMS for Studbooks either:

- was imported from a pre-existing SPARKS or PopLink studbook database
- was added manually by the Studbook Keeper, in ZIMS for Studbooks
- or was entered into the studbook by the Studbook Keeper, by accepting a "Pending Update" and/or a "Suggested Animal" (real-time updates from Species360 institutional members in ZIMS for Husbandry.)

ZIMS for Studbooks differs from *ZIMS for Husbandry* in that *ZIMS for Husbandry* is for individual institutional data; the data are entered by one or more institutions (that are Species360 members).

AZA studbooks are required to be held in ZIMS for Studbooks. Exceptions have been made for a number of AZA studbooks that are currently maintained in software like Excel or Access, or that use the SPARKS Social Groups functionality. ZIMS for Studbooks is currently working to build the necessary functionality for these studbooks. Once built, these studbooks will also be required to use ZIMS for Studbooks.

In order to access ZIMS for Studbooks, users will need personal login credentials. Please contact Support@Species360.org for help or information on accessing ZIMS.

The best browser to use for ZIMS for Studbooks is Google Chrome (<https://www.google.com/chrome/>)

Log into ZIMS for Studbooks here: <https://zims.species360.org/>

ACCESS WITHOUT SPECIES360 MEMBERSHIP: What about AZA Program Leaders at facilities without ZIMS access?

All AZA Program Leaders, including Studbook Keepers, SSP Coordinators and TAG Chairs, will receive access to the ZIMS for Studbooks platform, and Species360 will waive access fees for individuals at facilities that are not Species360 members. Individuals with questions should contact PMC at pmc@lpzoo.org.

Access into ZIMS for Studbooks does not include direct access into other modules such as ZIMS for Husbandry.

ACCESS & ROLES: Who can access a studbook database in ZIMS for Studbooks?

ZIMS for Studbooks allows multiple people to have access at the same time to a single studbook database. APM Committee, PMC, and Species360 together have created guidelines to outline appropriate levels of access to data and help Studbook Keepers decide who may receive access to their studbook database.

- [AZA Guidelines for Roles and Access to ZIMS for Studbooks](#)

Contact AZA (animalprograms@aza.org) or PMC (pmc@lpzoo.org) for assistance.

Access to international studbooks or other regional studbooks for species similar to yours is encouraged, but works slightly differently. AZA is currently collaborating with international colleagues to create a helpful guidance document for these situations and will share it as soon as it is finalized. In the meantime, for access to a non-AZA studbook, please contact the PMC (pmc@lpzoo.org) for guidance.

TRAINING: How can Program Leaders receive training and learn more about ZIMS for Studbooks?

AZA's Professional Development Committee (PDC) and staff provide training and materials for our AZA community including AZA's Population Management I and II courses, training sessions at AZA Annual Conferences and Mid-Year Meetings, and advanced training opportunities for population biologists. For specific training within AZA, contact azatraining@aza.org for more information.

AZA provides resources for learning about, and working in, the ZIMS for Studbooks module:

- **Monthly ZIMS for Studbooks Tips** are provided in the [AZA Animal Programs Update](#).
- **Virtual "Office Hours" sessions** for AZA Animal Program Leaders who have questions about ZIMS for Studbooks are planned for April 27 (2-3pm ET), June 4 (12-1pm ET), and August 12 (3-4pm ET). Please contact animalprograms@aza.org for the meeting links.
- **Resource documents** mentioned throughout this document can all be found on the AZA Resource Documents page; <https://www.aza.org/resource-documents>

Species360 provides a variety of resources for learning about, and working in, the ZIMS for Studbooks module:

- **Monthly webinars** focused on getting started with ZIMS for Studbooks; [sign up here](#)
- **Video library** of past webinars about ZIMS for Studbooks functionality and general [ZIMS for Studbooks tips and tricks](#).
- **ZIMS for Studbooks Index**, [including documents, PowerPoints, and videos related to ZIMS for Studbooks](#).
- **Document library** of "ZIMSHelp" guides, containing [all ZIMS help materials](#) (must log into ZIMS for access).

- **LearnZIMS** is an on-call training tool for testing functionality (must log into ZIMS for access). For more information on LearnZIMS and how to access the tool, please refer to the document here ([LearnZIMS FAQs](#))

Contact Species360 support (support@species360.org) for more information about any technical aspects of the software.

Contact the PMC (pmc@lpzoo.org) for more information about AZA-specific studbook and policy questions.

INITIAL STEPS: What are some initial steps for Studbook Keepers to take as they begin their studbook management in ZIMS for Studbooks?

All AZA Regional Studbook Keepers are required to take the AZA Professional Development Course “Population Management 1 (PM1): Data Acquisition and Processing” within 2 years of becoming the AZA Regional Studbook Keeper. PM1 is typically offered each November, but will be hosted in a virtual format in spring and early fall 2021. An in-person PM1 course is under discussion for November 2021 in Saint Louis, MO. Priority registration is given to those with upcoming PM1 deadlines or planning dates. For more information, visit www.aza.org/PMI and www.aza.org/PMI-virtual or contact azatraining@aza.org.

AZA Animal Program Leaders who are new to ZIMS and/or studbook management may wonder where they should start after they access ZIMS for Studbooks and begin to work on their new studbook or in their new role. The following is a helpful outline of best practices in bringing your studbook up-to-date with current ZIMS data as well as a recommended order of prioritization:

[Tidying your Studbook in 5 Steps](#)

STARTING A NEW AZA STUDBOOK: When and how can a new AZA studbook be started in ZIMS for Studbooks?

There are several ways in which a new AZA studbook can come to be:

- A new studbook in ZIMS for Studbooks is created based on ZIMS for Husbandry data.
- An existing Candidate or TAG-monitored studbook is already in ZIMS for Studbooks, but is reclassified to become a new SSP.
- An existing studbook in PopLink, SPARKS, Excel, Access etc. is migrated over to ZIMS for Studbooks.
- A new blank studbook is created and data is entered manually by the Studbook Keeper.
- An existing studbook within ZIMS for Studbooks but managed by a different region or institution is transferred to AZA.

The process to follow in each of these situations is outlined in the following document: [Starting a New AZA Studbook in ZIMS for Studbooks](#)

Contact the PMC (pmc@lpzoo.org) for assistance.

PUBLISHING: How do Studbook Keepers publish their studbook using ZIMS for Studbooks?

It is required that AZA regional studbooks are published at least every three years. For assistance with your publication, please see the document [How To Publish a Studbook Using ZIMS for Studbooks](#)

Contact AZA (animalprograms@aza.org) for questions regarding your accountability deadlines.

STUDBOOK SCOPE AND THE SUGGESTED ANIMAL LIST: Is it possible to add animals outside of AZA to a studbook?

Yes, it is possible to add animals from outside of AZA to a studbook. AZA studbooks and international studbooks have different defaults for the animals included in their Suggested Animals list in ZIMS for Studbooks. AZA regional studbooks' default is AZA and international studbooks' default is all data; however, this list can be filtered by the Studbook Keeper. Select the "drop down" or "expand panel" on the right of the screen, above the list of suggested animals. Here you can toggle between a local or global view of the list, or filter by institution, region, etc.

For more information on Suggested Animals, please see the Species360 training index (Page 8): [ZIMS for Studbooks Training Index](#)

JOB LOSS OR FURLOUGH: How long may a Studbook Keeper keep their studbook and how do they get access to it in the event that they are furloughed or lose their job?

Recognizing the sometimes uncertain job market in our professional community, the Animal Population Management (APM) Committee offers a grace period for Program Leaders who experience loss of employment. All Program Leaders, including Studbook Keepers, who have lost employment at an AZA member facility and are looking to re-gain employment with another AZA member facility may keep their role(s) for up to six months.

Studbook Keepers who have been furloughed should consult with their facility about the legality of working on their Animal Program(s) during the furlough period.

Studbook Keepers affected by job loss or furlough, and wish to retain their role for the six-month grace period, should contact the AZA office (animalprograms@aza.org) to get an AZA account for access to their ZIMS Studbook.

Studbook Keepers who have not re-gained employment with an AZA member facility by the end of the grace period will be asked to relinquish their position from the SSP Program. Studbook Keepers who have re-gained employment with an AZA member facility may continue in their role by submitting a new Statement of Commitment and Support to the TAG Chair, and the AZA office will switch the Studbook Keeper's ZIMS access to a new account under their new facility.

CONTACTS: Whom to contact?

Topic	Person	Role	Email
Studbook data conventions; Giving others access to your studbook database	Kendra Strohmayer	AZA PMC	pmc@lpzoo.org
AZA accountability; Giving others access to your studbook database	Rebecca Greenberg	AZA	animalprograms@aza.org
	Miranda Brauns		
Training in AZA; Population Management I and II courses	Amy Rutherford	AZA	arutherford@aza.org
ZIMS for Studbooks software technical questions	Species360 Support	Species360	support@species360.org