

# John Ball Zoo

On behalf of Coldwater Solar, Apex Clean Energy awarded a \$100,000 conservation grant to John Ball Zoo in support of the Great Lakes Rare Butterfly Program (GLRBP), a partnership between the zoo and Michigan State University's Haddad Lab that is working to reverse population decline among some of Michigan's rarest and most endangered butterfly species.

## About the Great Lakes Rare Butterfly Program

Michigan contains critical habitat—particularly prairies and prairie fens—for several endangered butterfly species. Due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change, populations have declined rapidly over the past two decades. The Great Lakes Rare Butterfly Program was established to reverse this trend through targeted conservation efforts for the Poweshiek skipperling and Mitchell's satyr. The Poweshiek skipperling is now one of the rarest animals in the world, found only in Michigan and a single small population in Canada. Mitchell's satyr, a small brown butterfly facing severe habitat loss, has its Great Lakes stronghold in Michigan. Through careful captive breeding and managed releases, GLRBP has helped stabilize wild populations of both species. Wild Poweshiek skipperling observations grew from just nine individuals in 2022 to more than 190 in 2024, and zoo-reared releases increased from 102 butterflies in 2022 to 1,460 in 2024.



## About the Facility Expansion

This grant will enable GLRBP to expand its conservation capacity through several key investments: adding a fourth hoop house, developing dedicated indoor lab space equipped with incubators and workspaces, and hiring seasonal staff. Together, these improvements will support larger annual breeding and release efforts for the Poweshiek skipperling and Mitchell's satyr—and will allow the program to initiate propagation efforts for a third endangered species, the Karner blue butterfly, which faces significant habitat loss with the ongoing destruction of oak savanna ecosystems. The expanded facility will be used for at least five years, creating a sustainable pipeline supporting collaborative recovery efforts for all three species across multiple sites in Michigan.

## About the Apex Conservation Grant Program

As a company with a core value of sustainability, Apex Clean Energy endeavors to not only minimize our projects' impacts, but also promote an ecological balance. Through the Apex Conservation Grant Program, each renewable energy project commercialized by Apex will contribute a sum of money, proportional to the size of the project, to support local or regional wildlife conservation, reforestation and flora restoration, protection of sensitive habitats such as grassland or wetlands, and other environmental conservation initiatives in or near project communities.