

LITTLE ROCK ANNOUNCES BIRTHS

In May, Little Rock Zoo announced the births of one greater kudu and three maned wolf puppies, all born in February 2003. The kudu is the Zoo's first birth of the season in addition to being the first birth of the greater kudu species in Little Rock Zoo history. The baby, hand-raised by Zoo staff due to extreme weather conditions immediately following the birth, has moved to the greater kudu exhibit; Little Rock Zoo is now home to four greater kudu. The three maned wolf pups born in late February brings the number of wolves born at the Zoo to 19.



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SAN DIEGO CONSERVATION NEWS

Researchers at the San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park are thrilled to announce the birth of a male dhole in April. The puppy, named Nicolai, is outgoing and extremely social. He enjoys ambushing his parents and jumping into their exhibit pool. Although Nicolai is still nursing, he mimics his parents' foraging behavior. He is the first dhole ever to be born at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. His parents, Olga and Yuri, as well as three other adult dholes, arrived from Moscow two years ago. The Wild Animal Park is currently the only institution to house this threatened species in the United States. Nicolai's birth is the beginning of the Park's dhole breeding program. The dholes' sensitivity to unfamiliar noises means they will remain off exhibit while Park researchers learn more about the dogs. Dholes are found in a variety of Asian habitats including dense forests, mountainous alpine regions, scrublands and open steppes. The

dhole's range includes the former USSR, China, India, Thailand, Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, Tibet and Nepal.

Zoo visitors can also see a new female Indian rhinoceros calf from the Park's Wgasa Bush Line Railway, a 60-minute tour that offers views of the African and Asian animals in open plains. The 180-pound rhinoceros calf is sticking close to her 5,500-pound mother. The duo remained together in a maternity boma for 30 days in order to bond properly. The Park is home to 16 Indian rhinoceros, including several calves. There are approximately 2,000 endangered Indian rhinoceros left in the wild.

Also at the San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park, the critically endangered Przewalski's horse, once considered extinct in the wild, is being saved thanks to a successful breeding program. On 19 May, the Park's animal care staff celebrated the birth of a filly named Boutou, the 121st Przewalski's horse to be born in the Park's breeding program. Also referred to as the Mongolian wild horse, the species has almost entirely succumbed to excessive hunting and habitat loss. However, through an international breeding campaign between Russia, China, the United States and Europe, several herds were established in captivity. By maintaining a captive population, several zoological facilities then assisted in the reintroduction of the Przewalski's horse in reserves in China and Mongolia. According to Park staff, Boutou has been sticking close to her mom, Borzia, and is adapting well to her new surroundings at the Park's Mongolian steppe exhibit. The mother and filly, as well as the other ten horses in the Park's herd, can currently be seen on exhibit.

In another breakthrough for wildlife conservation, field researchers from the San Diego Zoo's Center for Reproduction of Endangered Species (CRES) have played a key role in the establishment of a new national park and several integral ecological reserves in Bakossiland, Cameroon. According to CRES Director Alan Dixson, Ph.D., Bakossiland lies within what scientists regard as the top one to two percent of Earth's most biologically diverse regions. The new protected area within western Africa will cover approximately 580 square miles of montane forest that's home to hundreds of threatened species including birds, amphibians, antelope, and endangered primates including red colobus, guenon, chimpanzees and drills.

While tracking through dense Ebo forest also in Cameroon, Bethan Morgan, Ph.D. and other CRES researchers recently discovered evidence of gorillas in a region where gorillas had never been seen before. Nest sites, dung and a gorilla skull were located before researchers discovered a silverback, a few females and some young. Two subspecies of Western lowland gorillas are native to Cameroon, but neither is known in this particular region. Due to CRES' significant discovery of the gorilla population, the Cameroonian government has recommended that their Ebo forest habitat be protected as a faunal sanctuary.

AUDUBON AQUARIUM ANNOUNCES STINGRAY BIRTHS

Audubon Aquarium of the Americas recently announced a number of rare births in their freshwater stingray breeding program. In April, four black peacock stingrays (*Potomotrygon leopoldi*) and