

SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS IN CONSERVATION



© Indianapolis Zoo

INDIANAPOLIS ZOO AFRICAN ELEPHANT GIVES BIRTH

The Indianapolis Zoo announced that African elephant Kubwa has successfully delivered a calf conceived via artificial insemination (AI) – the first time in history that an African elephant has successfully conceived and delivered a calf via AI for a second time. The calf was born on 18 October, after a very short labor inside the elephant barn at the Zoo. The October delivery was earlier than anticipated (she had originally been predicted to deliver in mid-November after a 22-month gestation), but the Zoo staff, carefully monitoring her condition, was ready when Kubwa's calf was born.

The calf is a male and weighed in at 200 pounds at birth. Initial examinations by the Zoo's veterinary staff indicate that the young calf is in good health. He has already passed his first milestone – nursing from his mother. This is an important development that means the calf received colostrum from the mother that will help protect it from infection.

Kubwa is 29 years old. She made history in March 2000 when she gave birth to the first African elephant to be successfully conceived and born through AI. That female calf, later named Amali, was not only a history-making elephant, but with her upbeat personality, she was a favorite among the Zoo staff and the public. Unfortunately,



Amali died in 2003 due to a massive infection, so the staff was especially pleased when Kubwa again became pregnant in early 2004. Kubwa, although she was a first time mother to Amali, proved to have very good mothering skills, and the staff is optimistic that she will again demonstrate those skills with the new calf. The sire of this calf will not be known until further blood tests are completed. Kubwa was inseminated with a mixed sample that included donations from two different bull elephants – one in Pittsburgh and one in Florida.

The Zoo also has another African elephant – Ivory – that is pregnant and due to give birth in September 2006. Ivory previously gave birth in August 2000, to the second African elephant in the world successfully conceived and born through artificial insemination. That elephant is Ajani, a young bull that quickly became a favorite animal for Zoo staff and the public and that celebrated his fifth birthday at the Zoo this past summer.

the barn area. The Wilds has endangered species roaming part of the nearly 10,000 acres, is an environment that encourages breeding through natural social systems and natural food sources. This facility is able to research species in an open environment in order to better understand ecological habitats and help advance conservation. This can pose “first-time” circumstances such as this birth.

The greater one-horned rhino has its native habitat in Nepal and northeastern India. It was almost hunted to extinction in the early 19th century, but has recovered to a population of around 2,400 today. They are still threatened by loss of their natural habitat to farmland and by humans who believe their horn has healing powers.

The Wilds serves as a leader in captive rhinoceros programs around the world and is a member of the International Rhino Foundation (IRF). The Director of the Wilds, Dr. Evan Blumer, serves on the IRF Board of Directors that supports both *in-situ* and *ex-situ* programs for all rhino species and is chairman of the AZA Rhino Taxon Advisory Group (TAG).

Both mother and calf are doing fine and are a positive step in the captive breeding of Indian rhinos. There are a total of 56 Indian rhinos in North American zoological programs. An additional concern for rhinos in captivity is the gender ratio of the newest generation, which is heavily skewed towards males, making this birth a very important event.

WESTERN LOWLAND GORILLA TWINS BORN AT ZOO ATLANTA

Zoo Atlanta, a leader in the study of gorilla behavior, announced that Kuchi, a 21 year-old female western lowland gorilla, gave birth

CONTINUED, PAGE 38

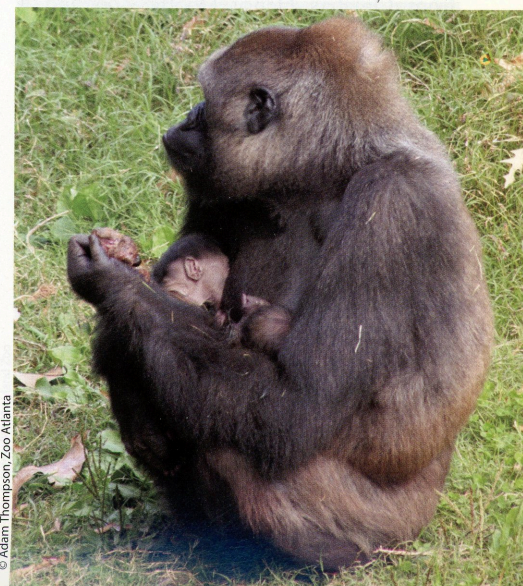
ASIAN GREATER ONE-HORNED RHINO BORN AT THE WILDS

The Wilds announced that on 25 October an Asian greater one-horned rhinoceros, (also known as Indian rhino) listed on the World Conservation Union's Red List of Threatened Animals, gave birth to a female calf. This is



the first Indian rhino birth at the Wilds and there have been only three other surviving births of this species in North America during 2005. The delivery, on a day with sudden unseasonably cold weather, proved to be a challenge for the Wilds' Animal management, maintenance, and conservation medicine staff.

The birth initiated a concerted team effort by the staff to rescue the hypothermic baby and bring it into the barn to be gradually warmed. When the veterinary group supplemented the nutrition of the calf for the first three hours and started a 24-hour monitoring, she was able to stand and attempt to nurse. After some effort, the mother was reunited with her young calf in



© Adam Thompson, Zoo Atlanta