

BIRTHS & HATCHINGS

ENDANGERED INDIAN RHINOCEROS AT TAMPA'S LOWRY PARK ZOO

One day before her own birthday, and three days before Mother's Day, an endangered Indian rhinoceros named Jamie gave birth to a male calf on 9 May 2013. The birth is the third for Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo, in Tampa Bay, Fla., in five years, and a significant conservation milestone for the species with fewer than 60 animals in the managed population. The new addition has been given the Indian name Jiyu, meaning compassionate friend, by the Zoo's Asian animal care team.

"This calf represents our third successful offspring in support of the Indian rhino management program in North America," noted Dr. Larry Killmar, vice president of animal science. "This tremendous achievement requires a great deal of hard work and dedication by the animal management staff."

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo participates in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Indian Rhinoceros Species Survival Plan® (SSP). Counting the new male calf, there are just 54 Indian rhinos in AZA-accredited institutions, with an estimated wild population of no more than 2,850.

The greater one-horned rhinoceros is one of five species of rhinos worldwide and one of three species found in Asia. It is native to the remote, swampy grasslands of India, Assam and Nepal. Weighing several thousand pounds on average, the rhino's most distinct feature is a single horn on the end of its muzzle (three species have two horns). The species has a unique upper lip, known as a prehensile lip, which acts as a hook to grasp onto plants and food in its herbivore diet (grass, twigs, bamboo shoots, water hyacinths and various produce). Indian rhinos have been described with "armor-like skin" due to the presence of skin folds; how-

ever, the skin is actually supple due to frequent wallowing in water and mud.

According to Save the Rhino International, an organization that works to conserve viable populations of critically endangered rhinos in Africa and Asia, drastic declines in population numbers have been fuelled by the illegal rhino horn trade, habitat loss and political conflict over the past few decades. Poaching of rhino horn to produce ornaments and traditional medicine in China, Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia is the greatest threat facing rhinos today.

BABY PATAS MONKEY BORN AT THE ROSAMOND GIFFORD ZOO

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, N.Y., announced the birth of a baby patas monkey. It is the first offspring for mother, Becca, and the fifth baby patas monkey born at the Zoo. The youngster was born in late April.

"Though she is a first time mother, Becca is doing a wonderful job taking care of her baby," said Ted Fox, curator at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. "Over the years, she has had the opportunity to observe as other females in the

group have reared their young, which has prepared her for motherhood."

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo is one of just 15 American zoos to house patas monkeys. They are part of the Species Survival Plan® (SSP). Patas monkeys are members of the Guenon family, a diverse group of African monkeys found from the rainforest of Western Africa through the savannahs of Kenya. With their slender bodies and long limbs, patas monkeys are better physically suited for a life on the ground rather than up in the trees. They are one of the fastest primates and are capable of reaching speeds upwards of 30 mph. Patas are recognized by a black brow ridge and nose, as well as by a distinctive white area surrounding their mouths that resembles a mustache.

In the wild, breeding typically occurs in the summer, which is the wet season, while births occur in the dry winter months. After an average gestation length of 167 days, the female gives birth to a single offspring. The nursing period extends for approximately six months.

CONTINUED, PAGE 38



© TAMPA'S LOWRY PARK ZOO