

BIRTHS & HATCHINGS

AFRICAN WHITE RHINOCEROS BORN AT TAMPA'S LOWRY PARK ZOO

A southern white rhinoceros was born on 9 October 2013 to experienced mother Kidogo. The newest offspring marks the third successful southern white rhino birth and the sixth rhino born in the Zoo's history (three African, three Asian). The newest male calf has been named Khari, an African name meaning "king like."

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo in Tampa Bay, Fla., participates in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Rhino Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) which includes the southern white rhino Species Survival Plan® (SSP), designed to support conservation of select wildlife species at risk of extinction.

The Zoo is currently home to a herd of seven southern white rhinos: three adult females from the Phinda Reserve in Africa, one adult male, the second-born juvenile rhino Kande, and the newborn. Because white rhinos live in herds, Kidogo and Khari have begun introductions to the other rhinos and the Grevy's zebras that share the outdoor exhibit.

Native to eastern and southern Africa, the southern white rhinoceros species was recently reclassified to "threatened" status by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service due to increased poaching over the past two years. In 2012 in South Africa, 668 rhinos were killed by poachers, and it is estimated that as many as 1,000 rhinos could be lost this year.

Rhino poaching has reached a crisis point; at such rates, rhino deaths could overtake wild births in 2016-2018. The current poaching crisis is attributed to the growing demand for rhino horn in southeast Asia where horn, made out of keratin – the same material found in human hair and nails – is wrongly believed to have medicinal properties.

In addition to conservation efforts with this species here at home, Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo has supported acquiring additional land to increase protected areas for elephants in Africa, and anti-poaching programs and public education in Swaziland. Results to date include expansion of the Mkhaya Game Reserve by ten percent, to promote survival of elephants, rhinos and thousands of other animals protected there.

SHINGLEBACK SKINK BIRTHS AUDUBON ZOO

The Audubon Zoo in New Orleans, La., celebrated the first-ever births of shingleback skinks in late August. The large, heavy bodied lizards are fairly common in their native Australia, but are somewhat rare in the United States due to a lack of legal exports. Also known as pine cone skinks, the lizards

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