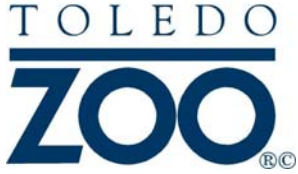




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Primate Births and Death Demonstrate Circle of Life at Zoo

Toledo, Ohio—The Toledo Zoo is pleased to announce the births of a baby gibbon and a colobus monkey, a joy that is made bittersweet with the passing of the colobus baby's mother on Tuesday. Although female colobus mother Sara was stricken by illness following the birth of her baby, the Zoo's animal care staff was encouraged by the inspiring level of maternal care she still provided to the little one.

Following the birth of baby Asante in late November, Sara experienced serious difficulties in moving around. Although she would occasionally respond to various treatments, she was frequently incapacitated and at times became partially paralyzed.

Despite these health issues, Sara seemed to be making every effort to be a good mother to Asante, nursing frequently and generally demonstrating maternal behaviors to the best of her ability. An MRI performed at the Animal Neurology and MRI Center in Commerce, Michigan, revealed inflammation of Sara's spinal cord, although the specific cause of the inflammation could not be identified. It is believed that, despite treatment to reduce the inflammation, she died due to complications arising from it. A necropsy to determine the specific cause of Sara's death is being performed today at Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health. Histopathology results will be available in four to six weeks.

According to Dr. Wynona Shellabarger, the Zoo's Chief Veterinarian, "Animal care staff did an excellent job of making her comfortable and providing supportive care during her treatment, and they enabled her to continue to care for her baby well during her protracted illness."

Baby Asante (whose name means "thanks" and was given to her by keepers in honor of her Thanksgiving birth), is being hand-reared by the Zoo's animal care staff and continues to thrive. She has just begun the weaning stage, is taking some solid foods, and is housed next to her family group as she is being cared for by animal care staff. The Zoo is currently working with other zoos in an attempt to find a female to be a surrogate mother for Asante and the other two sons and a mate for father Mateko.

Not long after the birth of the colobus monkey, a male gibbon was born on December 15 to mother Hue and father Batu. This baby, whose name is yet to be determined, is their second offspring. The baby's two-year-old brother Jin is still with the group. Animal care staff is currently monitoring the mother and baby to ensure proper maternal care. Gibbons are known to be nervous mothers, so they will be off-exhibit until a successful bond has been established and Hue seems secure with the changes in her environment.

The Toledo Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is building North America's largest wildlife conservation movement.

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