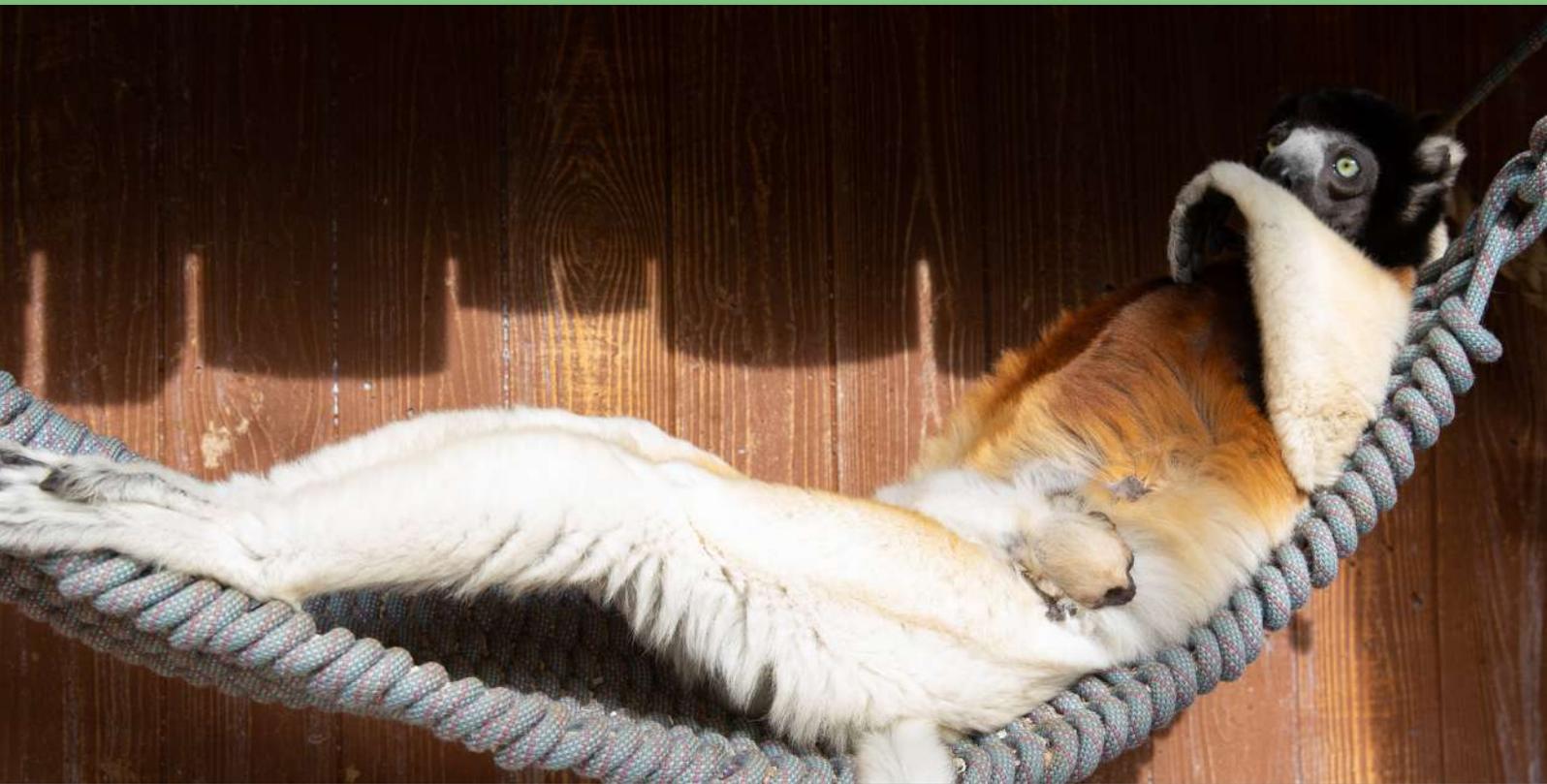


ZOOLOGICAL & BOTANICAL PARK OF MULHOUSE

Press release 19 February 2020

The baby season is in full swing!



WITH OVER TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY BIRTHS IN 2019, THE ZOOLOGICAL & BOTANICAL PARK OF MULHOUSE IS A VERITABLE NURSERY WHICH HELPS PRESERVE ENDANGERED SPECIES. IN FEBRUARY, SEVERAL YOUNGSTERS WILL BE TAKING THEIR FIRST STEPS ALONGSIDE THEIR OLDER SIBLINGS, AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS OR MONTHS SPENT WITH THEIR PARENTS, AND, IN SOME CASES, IN SPECIAL MATERNITY ACCOMMODATION.

Great news: the family of silky sifacas is getting even bigger!

Just a year ago, a very unusual baby was born at the Zoological & Botanical Park of Mulhouse: Jao, a young crowned sifaka (*Propithecus coronatus*), born on 12 February 2019. It was unusual in several respects: in its natural environment in Madagascar, the crowned sifaka is in particular danger from human development (slash-and-burn agriculture) and the number of animals of

reproductive age decreases every year; now there are only seven zoos in the world able to ensure the reproduction of this species *ex situ* and in 2019, there were only four young born in the whole world; that shows how important the birth of Jao is for the conservation of this primate. It was also exceptional because the mother, Poppy, immediately began to care for her baby... which was highly unusual. *“This baby crowned sifaka is the third to be born in Europe, and the only one whose mother took care of her baby from the start. This is excellent news for the breeding programme, as we know we have a female at Mulhouse who can regularly give birth to young and will look after them,”* said Benoît Quintard, vet and Deputy Director of the Zoological and Botanical Park of Mulhouse.

Jao’s parents, Poppy, born in 2013, and Manao, born in 2007, seem to be enjoying themselves: they had another baby on 22 January this year. It was called Toky, which means poise and confidence. As with Jao, there was no need for human involvement in bringing up the baby, as its mother took care of that, so the keepers have been keeping out of the way and don’t yet know the sex of the new-born. This birth also has a lot of hope riding on it; the genetic heritage of the species is seriously endangered. In Madagascar, the number of mature individuals is continually declining according to the IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, and European zoos have only nineteen individuals of reproductive age. It is a founding member of the AEECL, the Association Européenne pour l’Etude et la Conservation des Lémuriens, a consortium of some thirty zoological gardens and universities in Europe who have joined forces to carry out conservation and research projects for the most endangered species of lemurs in Madagascar.

The Zoological Park also works on site in Madagascar, to raise the awareness of the local population regarding sustainable development. In Alsace, the Park has several endangered species of Malagasy lemurs such as the blue-eyed black lemur, the crowned lemur and the red-bellied lemur. There are regular births seen among these.



Walking on their long legs, the three maned wolf cubs leave their den

Another species whose numbers continue to fall in the wild, in its natural home in South America, is the maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*), currently classed as ‘near threatened’ by the IUCN. Three young cubs, two males and a female, were born in the middle of December, at the Zoological & Botanical Park in Mulhouse, as part of the European Endangered Species Programme (EEP) focusing on this species. Mum is four-year-old Sera, who arrived at Mulhouse on 11 April 2017, and Dad is ten-year-old Satan, here since 30 September 2010. This litter of three cubs is the second one the couple have produced.

The maned wolf belongs to the family of Canidae, and owes its common name to the long black hair on its neck and shoulders. The long, delicate legs of the maned wolf are particularly well adapted to its habitat, the cerrado, essentially made up of high grass.

Un Another particularly fertile couple: pied tamarins Sandia and Obi



Poppy and Manao are not the only primates who have been particularly fertile in recent years. Twelve-year-old Sandia and Obi, aged eleven, are pied tamarins (*Saguinus bicolor*) who between them have had twenty-three sets of young between 2014 and now, including five with each other. The most recent are the male and female born in May 2019 and two more babies, their sex so far unknown, which appeared on 15 December 2019. Classified as 'endangered' by the IUCN, the pied tamarin lives in the forests in the North of Brazil, and is particularly threatened by intensive farming. An interesting feature of the species is that the female pied tamarin always gives birth to one or more pairs of twins. Faced with these multiple births, the males play an important role in transporting and teaching the young, as the females could not manage so many babies by themselves.

A baby 'flying monkey'



The latest star baby of the February half-term holidays at the Zoological & Botanical Park of Mulhouse, a young white-faced saki (*Pithecia pithecia*), was born on 24 December 2019. This was a first baby for each parent, eleven-year-old Balio, and Dej, aged thirteen. He also

came from South America, where the white-face saki is also known as the 'flying monkey' because it can jump from one tree to another very fast, thanks to having back legs longer than the front ones. As with the other primates born at the Zoological & Botanical Park of Mulhouse, allowing the young to be raised naturally by the parents is favoured over hand-rearing by humans. So the young saki has not yet had any contact with the keepers and its sex is as yet unknown.

All these youngsters will soon be taking their first steps in the outdoor enclosures; the doors of the maternity accommodation will be opened and the parents will decide whether (or not) to show their babies off to the public in the park. Just watch the six primates on the backs of their parents!

But remember, these animals are still young and vulnerable and their appearances will depend on the weather.



About the Zoological and Botanical Park of Mulhouse

A unique Park leading the way

CREATED IN 1868 AND MANAGED BY VETS FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS, THE ZOOLOGICAL & BOTANICAL PARK OF MULHOUSE IS CELEBRATING ITS 152ND ANNIVERSARY IN 2020.

The conurbation of Mulhouse Alsace, known in French as Mulhouse Alsace Agglomération (m2A), manages this outstanding location of 25 hectares, now the premier tourist site of Haut-Rhin and the third in Alsace, and which welcomed 325,537 visitors in 2019. Both its heritage and the quality of its landscape have led to the site being certified an 'Outstanding Garden', reinforcing the attractiveness and influence of m2A in general and Mulhouse in particular.

Over recent years, m2A has undertaken the construction of many infrastructures and new enclosures which respect the environment (BBC standards for the majority of new projects). Since 2015, over 10 million euros have been devoted to these renovations and new constructions, including:

- the Asian lions' park
- the renovation of the monkey house
- the Grévy's zebra park
- the Canadian wolves' park
- the redevelopment of the lemur islands
- the meerkats' building
- the hatching House
- the Great North Space
- the Asian Enclosure
- the Garden of giant plants
- the Seminar room
- Little Amazonia
- the okapi enclosure

In 2021, the Zoological & Botanical Park of Mulhouse will open a new area of over one hectare, where African species already in the Park will live alongside new species. This is Horizon Africa (total investment: 8.5 million euros including tax).

All this investment has helped develop the reputation of Mulhouse and reinforce the pride felt by local people for their Park.

Of the 170 species now living at the park, 87 are the subject of an EEP, and it also supports 20 conservation projects *in situ*. This deliberate choice places the Park as a leader in conservation. The diversity of the species represented includes animals that are very rare in zoos such as the blue-eyed black lemur, the Cape parrot, the blue-throated parrot, the Visayan spotted deer, the Amur leopard, and more.

Practical Information

Opening times: the Zoological and Botanical Park of Mulhouse is open every day from 9am to 5pm in March, October and November, from 9am to 6pm in April and September, from 9am to 7pm from May to August and de 10am to 4pm from December to February.

Admission rates:

€10 for adults from 1 January to 20 March and from 1 November to 31 December 2020.

€16 for adults from 21 March to 31 October 2020.

€10 for children from 4 to 16-years-old all year long.

Free for 4 under-year-olds accompanied by an adult.