



Audubon Zoo
A Facility of Audubon Nature Institute

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JANUARY 21, 2020

Audubon Zoo Welcomes Lion Cubs to the Pride

This is an Important Conservation Milestone for the Association of Zoos and Aquarium
Lion Species Survival Plan

(New Orleans, La.) - There's a lot to roar about this week at Audubon Zoo with the arrival of African lion cubs. The cubs, whose sexes have yet to be determined, were born on Saturday, January 11 to mom Kali, 4, and dad Arnold, 4. Kali gave birth to three cubs, but sadly, as sometimes happens, one did not make it. Animal care staff say mom and the remaining two cubs, who are behind the scenes bonding, are healthy and active.

"The cubs' birth is a huge success for the [Lion Species Survival Plan](#), which ensures healthy, genetically diverse populations of lions within Association of Zoos and Aquariums institutions. Half of Africa's lions have disappeared in the past 25 years, and the species faces growing threats from poaching, loss of prey, and habitat destruction," says Vice President & Managing Director of Audubon Zoo and Audubon Park Steve Marshall.

"I could not be more excited to be a part of such an important conservation milestone for this dwindling species," says Marshall.

Audubon proudly opened the new lion habitat to the public on May 18, 2019 thanks to a generous donation from philanthropists Joy and Boysie Bollinger. "We are overjoyed to hear the news of two new cubs at Audubon Zoo," says Bollinger. "To see local conservation efforts work so successfully with this vulnerable animal is wonderful. We can't wait for everyone to meet the expanded pride."

African lions are an [AZA SAFE Species](#), and as part of that distinction, AZA institutions are partnering with organizations in Africa to mitigate conflict between farmers and lions, increase monitoring of the lion population's numbers, and address habitat loss.

In July of 2019, Audubon Zoo joined other [AZA](#) facilities in collaborating [with Disney and the Lion Recovery Fund](#) to stop the lion crisis. In support of Disney's The Lion King Protect the Pride campaign, Audubon Zoo contributed \$10,000 to the Wildlife

Conservation Network's (WCN) [Lion Recovery Fund](#) (LRF) to help double the number of lions in the wild by 2050.

Audubon hopes having the cubs at the Zoo will help connect visitors to this important species and instill in guests the need to protect them and save them from extinction.

"The birth of the cubs is the culmination of hard work by a team of people and a success for everyone in New Orleans," says Curator of Large Mammals Joe Forys. "The lion cubs are now a part of New Orleans and watching them grow will be an amazing experience for every guest who comes to see them."

Kali and the cubs will stay behind the scenes for now to give them time to bond, receive vaccinations, and be gradually introduced to the rest of the pride. The cubs will primarily stay in their den, and Kali will have access to other areas behind the scenes, where the addition of the den box gives her a sense of security for her and her cubs. Although the cubs won't make their debut for at least twelve weeks, Audubon supporters can check Audubon social media for regular updates, photos and videos.

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