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Audubon Zoo Welcomes Newborn Barasingha Deer **First birth for the family of "swamp deer"**

(New Orleans, La.) - The small Barasingha deer herd that debuted last year in Asian Domain at Audubon Zoo recently got a special delivery: a male fawn that was born June 9.

This is the first birth for the family of so-called "swamp deer," and brings Audubon's Barasingha population to two males and four females.

"He is periodically very active and guests are able to watch him explore his surroundings and interact with the other deer," said Mandy Turnbull, Asia Domain Assistant Curator. "However, he still spends most of his day quietly curled up in different patches of vegetation around the yard."

Turnbull said the fawn's spotted coat acts as camouflage and makes him almost impossible to see from more than a couple of feet away. This coloring and behavior is a natural defense against predators which, in their native India and Nepal, includes tigers.

Barasingha are a medium-sized deer found in India and Nepal. The name means "12-tined," a reference to the fork-like, sharp points of an adult male's antlers.

The species currently is listed as vulnerable on list of threatened species because the estimated population in the wild stands at less than 6,000. Loss of habitat - even within protected areas - along with poaching for antlers and hide are considered the major threats facing Barasingha.

The Barasingha at Audubon Zoo are part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP) population. The goal of the SSP is to create a genetically sustainable zoo population through cooperative breeding programs

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