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## **Fort Wayne Children's Zoo Sumatran Tigers Tested for COVID-19**

Friday evening at 6 pm the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo Staff Veterinarian received confirmation that both Sumatran tigers have tested positive for COVID 19.

On Feb.1, 2021, the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo animal care staff reported one of the Sumatran tigers showing mild symptoms consistent with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

Fecal samples for both tigers, Bugara and Indah, were collected for testing, which does not require the animals to be placed under anesthesia. The testing of these cats is being performed in veterinary laboratories.

"Bugara, the male Sumatran tiger, has been experiencing a dry cough, and Indah, the female Sumatran tiger, has not shown symptoms at this time" reports Dr. Kami Fox, Staff Veterinarian. "Both tigers are being watched for any additional clinical signs and remain together in their enclosure."

The source of infection is not yet known and we are working with the Allen County Department of Health and the State Board of Animal Health to identify potential sources.

For the safety of the tigers and our Zoo team, we are implementing extra precautions in addition to following guidelines set by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and recommendations by the AZA Species Survival Plan, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Restricted access to the tiger holding area
- Increased PPE to include a face shield in addition to a N95 mask, scrubs worn over clothing, disposable shoe coverings or designated footwear to be worn only in the tiger holding area, and two pairs of disposable gloves to be worn at all times
- Daily fecal samples collected from each tiger are being submitted to Zoo veterinary staff.

All Zoo team members will continue to follow COVID-19 safety protocols recommended by the CDC and Indiana Department of Health.

Because COVID-19 remains a reportable disease, the Indiana Board of Animal Health (BOAH) decides if testing should be performed on additional animals. No other Zoo animals have been tested at this time.

“The safety of the Zoo animals and our team members are our first priority right now,” says Zoo Director Rick Schuiteman, “We will continue to tirelessly protect our team and the animals that call this Zoo home.”

We are grateful for the cooperation and support of BOAH, the University of Illinois, USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory where confirmatory testing was conducted.

We will provide additional information as available.

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**About the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo:** The Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo is northeast Indiana’s largest tourist attraction, hosting more than 600,000 guests annually. The Zoo was voted Indiana’s #1 “Gotta-Do Summer Attraction” and is consistently named one of the nation’s **Top Ten Zoos for Kids** by national media outlets.

The Zoo is a conservation leader, contributing annually to local, regional, and international efforts to protect wild animals and habitats. The Zoo cares for more than 1400 animals and participates in 63 cooperative species survival plans.

As a self-supporting facility, the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo receives no tax dollars for operations. The Zoo’s operations are funded entirely by earned revenue and donations.