



Image by Christian Sperka

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## Zoo Weathers Storms, Sees the Arrival of Two Births

Nashville Zoo sustained minor damage during last weekend's storms thanks to staff who worked through the weekend. During the storms, animal care staff were also closely monitoring the births of two animals.

A creek that flows through the property flooded some areas of the Zoo on Sunday causing minor damage to a small library in the Zoo's Croft center and new construction at a planned flamingo habitat. Rains also caused some damage to a stork exhibit, some public restrooms and utilities areas.

"Several trees were down and there was some damage to our pathways," says Zoo President Rick Schwartz. "Our staff worked diligently throughout the storm, sandbagging around animal enclosures to keep animals safe. As a result, most of our critical areas were saved."

Nashville Zoo was closed to the public on Sunday while crews worked to secure the park. The Zoo was able to re-open to the public by Monday morning.

During the cleanup and sandbagging on Sunday, the Zoo's female Baird's tapir gave birth to a male aptly name "Noah". The mother (Houston) and father (Romeo) arrived at the Zoo from Central America last summer as part of a



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collaborative breeding program with the Houston Zoo to introduce a new genetic line into the United States. Both Noah and Houston are doing very well and the Zoo plans to introduce the tapir to the public when their exhibit is ready in a few weeks.

On Saturday afternoon, the Zoo's female Eurasian lynx gave birth to a single male. The unnamed kitten is being hand-raised by animal care staff and will be part of "Wildlife on Wheels": the Zoo's educational outreach program that takes animals to schools, senior centers, hospitals and other community areas.

"We've been anxiously waiting for these two births," says Schwartz. "I really think the barometric pressure change from the storms had a lot to do with both arriving at the same time."

Baird's tapirs are one of four species of tapirs and are native to Mexico, Central America and the northeastern coast of Columbia. A relative of both the horse and the rhino, tapirs are the largest land animal in Central and South America.

Eurasian lynx are the largest of the lynx species and are native to Central Asian, European and Siberian forests. While not listed as endangered, Eurasian lynx are rarely seen in some parts of its home range.

Nashville Zoo is accredited by the prestigious Association of Zoos and Aquariums, assuring the highest standards of animal care and husbandry. The Zoo is a nonprofit organization located at 3777 Nolensville Road and is open every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The mission of Nashville Zoo is to inspire a culture of understanding and discovery of our natural world through conservation, innovation and leadership. For more information about Nashville Zoo, call 615-833-1534 or visit [www.nashvillezoo.org](http://www.nashvillezoo.org).

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