General Session

September 15th, 2025



BEAR
TAXON ADVISORY GROUP

Bear TAG Steering Committee



| Name | Institution | Role | Name | Institution | Role |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Nikki Smith | Columbus Zoo and Aquarium | Chair | Rachel Sides | Oklahoma City Zoo | Steering Committee |
| Vacant | | Vice-Chair | Tricia Gunther | Buffalo Zoo | Steering Committee |
| Liz Larsen | Utah's Hogle Zoo | Treasurer | Joel Locke | Great Plains Zoo | Steering Committee |
| Sandy Huang Falconer | San Francisco Zoo | Secretary | Heather Baker | Zoo Atlanta | Steering Committee |
| Erin Curry | Cincinnati Zoo | Steering Committee | Julie Hartell- DeNardo | St. Louis Zoo | Steering Committee |
| Angela Gibson | Oakland Zoo | Steering Committee | Eric Albers | Akron Zoo | Steering Committee |
| Flo Yates | Detroit Zoo | Steering Committee | Mindy Babitz | Smithsonian's National Zoo | Steering Committee |

Bear TAG Program Leaders



| Program Name | Scope | Program Type | Leader | Organization |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Bear Andean Bear SSP and Studbook | Regional | Species Survival Plan | Sara Colandrea | Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute |
| Bear Black Studbook | Regional | Studbook | Rachel Sides | Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden |
| Bear Polar Studbook | Regional | Studbook | Allison Jungheim | Como Park Zoo and Conservatory |
| Bear Sloth SSP | Regional | Species Survival Plan | Debbie Thompson | Little Rock Zoo |
| Bear Sloth Studbook | Regional | Studbook | Travis Vineyard | Cleveland Metroparks Zoo |
| Bear Sun Studbook | International | Studbook | Mindy Babitz | Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute |
| SAFE Sloth Bear | SAFE program | Jared Bixby | Laura Bernstein-Kurtycz | St. Louis Zoo, Little Rock Zoo |
| SAFE Andean Bear | SAFE program | Kym Gopp | Sara Colandrea | Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, National Zoo |
| Brown Bear Registry | N/A | Registry | Gail Karr | Memphis Zoo |



SCAN ME

We Have Merch!

Visit Us! www.beartag.org

Bear TAG Education Team!

Lisa Lidgus
Bear TAG Education Advisor
Saint Louis Zoo
lidgus@stlzoo.org



Amanda Brunson-Cruz Bear TAG Education Specialist Potawatomi Zoo

<u>abrunsoncruz@potawatomizoo.org</u>



Social Media Update

Facebook: 629 followers

- Up 231 followers since 2024
- Views increased 10.8% in the last month

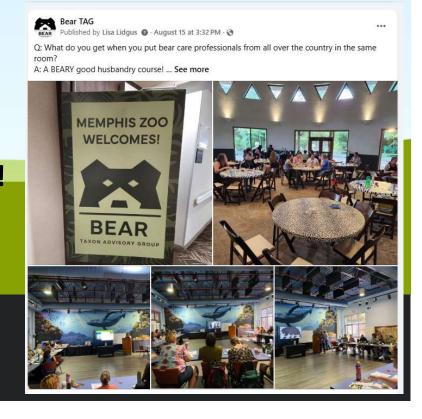
Most impactful post of 2025 thus far:

Bear TAG Husbandry Course!

- 4685 views
- 118 Interactions

Instagram: 185 followers

- Up 27 followers from 2024



Social Media Update

If you or your institution would like anything boosted by the Bear TAG socials, just let us know!

FROM EXTINCTIO

ANDEAN BEAR



Andean Bear Day Storytime



Published by Lisa Lidgus ② - June 4 - ③

Bear in Mind

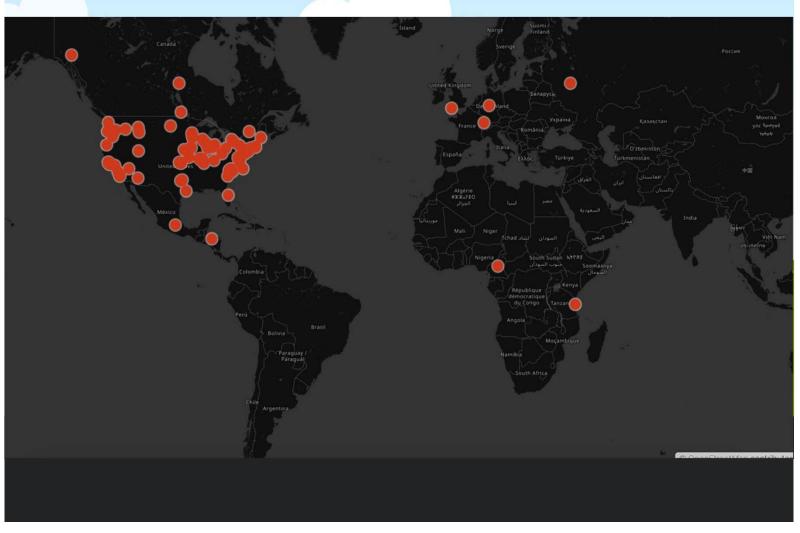
- 2 Seasons
 - Season 1 (2023): What is an AZA Animal Program?
 - Season 2 (2024): Bear Husbandry Stories

Season 3

- Field Conservation!
- Thank you for your patience ©
- Recordings done by end of 2025



Bear in Mind has been downloaded by listeners in 10 different countries!







Bear in Mind on Spotify



Bear in Mind on Apple Podcasts

Reminders

- We are always looking for photos for the website and social media

 all you have to do is fill out a simple photo release form if your institution doesn't have one yet.
- If you have any documents or updates that you'd like on the website, please let Lisa know so we can keep the website as updated as possible.





Please don't hesitate to reach out!

lidgus@stlzoo.org abrunsoncruz@potawatomizoo.org









Camera traps to Cali Zoo for Andean bear monitoring in **National Parks** Colombia





Bears & Birds Bird-friendly coffee from target farms awaiting final certification in Villa Rica, Peru

National Natural Parks Colombia celebrated Bear Conservation Day with video highlighting Andean Bear SAFE project and partnership



More than 75% of information gathered for Andean Bear Range-wide Conservation Priority Setting Project with 300+ stakeholders participating. • Andean Bear Occupancy Modeling underway in Tatama NP (Colombia) and San-Matias 025

- San-Carlos Forest (Peru). • Successful Andean Bear Day & Burritos for Bears events held
- Pilot Bears & Birds coffee outreach kit being developed





GET INVOLVED!

Here are just a few opportunities for zoos to help raise awareness and support for Andean bear conservation. Questions? Ideas? Don't hesitate to reach out!

BURRITOS FOR BEARS

Eat a burrito, help Andean bears. Need we say more?
This fundraiser is easy to coordinate and has become a perennial favorite.

Contact: Adriana Broering at avd@clevelandmetroparks.com







ANDEAN BEAR DAY - JULY 21

Host an Andean Bear Day celebration at your zoo, or spread the good word via social media. Find ideas and resources in our toolkit.

Contact: Lisa Lidgus at lidgus@stlzoo.org

ANDEAN BEAR PLUSH

Sell our special edition Andean bear plush at your zoo's gift shop or at a zoo or AAZK event - 100% of proceeds support SAFE Andean bear habitat restoration efforts!





GET INVOLVED!

SALVAJE HONEY MEAD

Treat yourself to a bottle of Hilltop Winery & Meadery's Salvaje honey mead - a portion of the proceeds goes to Andean Bear SAFE conservation projects.









CHILDREN'S BOOK

Learn about Andean bears with the littles in your life through reading together! Is There a Bear Over There? is available now, and 100% of proceeds support Andean Bear SAFE conservation projects.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ANDEAN BEAR ADVENTURE

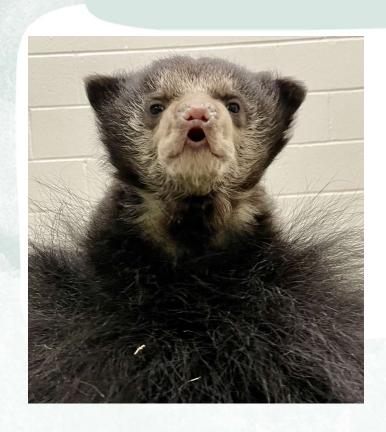
Come up with a unique idea for your own Andean bear themed event or fundraiser – and let us know how we can help!



Anyone can donate to support Andean Bear SAFE conservation projects! 100% of donated funds support habitat restoration in target Andean bear conservation areas of National Natural Parks Colombia. Contact Kym Gopp at kag@clevelandmetroparks.com



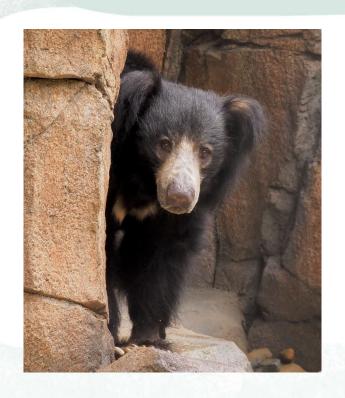




5 @ 4 Institutions1.3.1



Transfers



5 involving 4 different institutions thank you!



Diet



MAZURI® EXPERIMENTAL SLOTH BEAR DIET FEED FOR BEARS GUARANTE D ANALYSIS

| Crude Protein (Min) | 19.00 % |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Crude Fat (Min) | 19.00 % |
| Crude Fiber (Max) | .00 % |
| Moisture (Max) | 2.00 % |
| Ash (Max) | |
| Sodium (Na) (Max) | 60.0/ |
| Total Microorganisms (Min) | 270000 |
| thermophilum, Enterococcus fa | Conscilling casol Disidohanta |
| *Contains a source of Mi | (viable) naturally occurring |

Linseed Meal, Soybean Oil, Ground Com, D. of Black Soldier Fly Larvae Meal, Ground Oats, Porcine Animal Fat Press, ed with BHA and Citric cid, Feeding Oat Meal, Chicken Meal, Dried Plain that Pullp, Rice Fle Ground Flaxseed, Cellulose, Dried Apple Pomace, Control Phosphate, Dicalcium Phosphate, Celcium Carbonate, Taurine, Preserved with Mixed Tocopherols, Dried Lactobacillus acidophilus Fermentation roduct, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride, Dried Lactobacillus casei Fermentation roduct, Choline Chloride, d-Alpha Tocopheryl Acetate (Vitamin E), Dried Brifidobacterium, thermophilum Fermentation Product. Cholecalciferol Bifidobacterium thermophilum Fermentation Product, Cholecalciferol /itamin D3), Citric Acid (a Preservativa), Dried Enterococcus faecium emnetation Product, Calcium Cantothenate, Zinc Amino Acid Complex a), Dried Enterococcus faecium nate, Zinc Amino Acid Complex, xide, Vitamin A Acetate, Copper anganese Amino Acid Complex.
mino Acid Complex. Salt. Coh







Sloth Bear Diet

Mazuri® Sloth Bear Diet is a diet designed to be fed to all life stages of sloth bear under the direction of a nutritionist.

Features and Benefits

- Lower protein, higher fat More closely resembles the protein to energy ratio of wild bear diets.
- Contains probiotics Supports GI tract health.
- Contains chelated, organic trace minerals For enhanced mineral absorption.
- Extruded feed Optimizes digestibility of the diet.

Product Form & Packaging

Catalog #300288 | Extruded Particle | 3/8" x 5/8" | 40 lb. (18.14 kg) net weight paper w/poly bag

Guaranteed Analysis

| Crude protein not less than19.00% | Moisture not more than 12.00% |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Crude fat not less than21.00% | Ash not more than 8.90% |
| Crude fiber not more than7.00% | Sodium not more than |







Contact Information

Debbie Thompson

dthompson@littlerock.gov

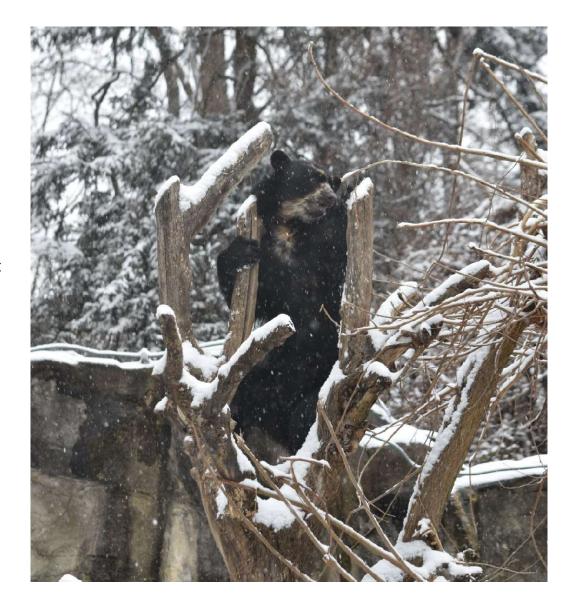
Christine Verador

Christine.Verador@Zoo.org

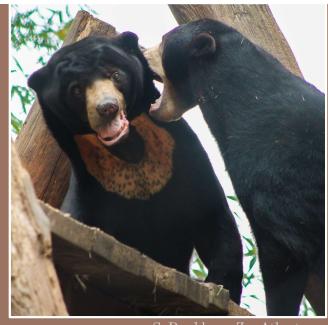


- New vice program leader Jami Richard from Potawatomi Zoo in Indiana.
- Zoo Miami came on board as a holding institution
- Cleveland Zoo is successfully housing 2 unrelated males together and it is going fabulously. Hopefully more institutions will be willing to try this, making more room.
- We now have 18 AZA institutions with 2 that are still participating but working on accreditation. Plus 1 that is currently under construction but will be coming back on board once they are finished.
- That gives us 30 bears (19.11.0) in AZA
- ❖ Always looking for more institutions if anyone is interested in holding this amazing species that is out year-round, please reach out (yes shameless plug there ☺)

Sara Colandrea Colandreas@si.edu



AZA Sun Bear Population 2025



S. Dankberg, Zoo Atlanta

- Status 9 (4.5) total bears at 7 AZA Institutions
- AZA Studbook (phase-out species)

Contact: Mindy Babitz - babitzm@si.edu Smithsonian National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute

Bornean 2.4

| Institution | Bear | Age |
|-------------|---------|-----|
| Audubon | 0.1 670 | 28 |
| Honolulu | 1.0 664 | 29 |
| Oakland | 0.1 687 | 16 |
| | 0.1 684 | 18 |
| San Diego | 0.1 665 | 29 |
| St. Louis | 1.0 669 | 27 |



Malayan 2.1

| Institution | Bear | Age |
|-------------|---------|-----|
| Atlanta | 1.0 661 | 25 |
| | 0.1 659 | 27 |
| Lowry Park | 1.0 678 | 23 |



Call for zoos to get involved in ex-situ sun bear research

Contact Mindy Babitz babitzm@si.edu for more info!

https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/00 15/8135/0959/files/Ex Situ Sun B ear Conservation Research Pros pectus_May2020.pdf?v=15909754 <u>12</u>







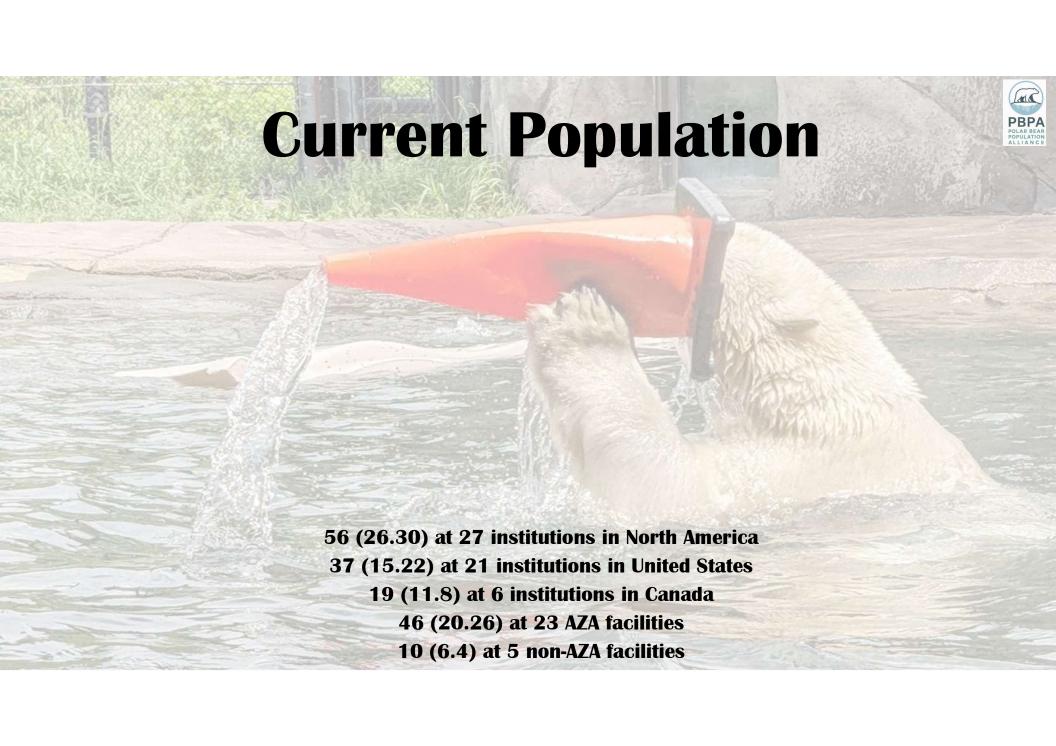














Breeding Recommendations

No successful births in 2024

2025 - 7 pairs recommended

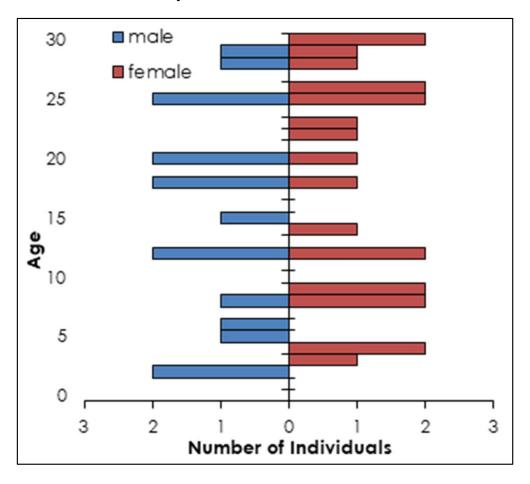
Pre-Denning call occurred 11 September

Another denning meeting to be scheduled for October





Polar Bear Population Overview



- 37 Polar Bears (15.22)
- 21 US facilities



PBPA
POLAR BEAR
POPULATION
ALLIANCE

- AZA Studbook (most recent publication 2025)
- Polar Bear Population Alliance established
 - Facility Representative onboarding in the works.
 - ACM update in the works.



Questions? Want to get involved?

Nikki Smith
Nikki.smith@columbuszoo.org



BEAR TAXON ADVISORY GROUP





We Have Merch!

Visit Us! www.beartag.org