



J. Ryan McMahon, II
County Executive

Media Release

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County Executive Ryan McMahon Announces Baby Sichuan takin born at Rosamond Gifford Zoo

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – County Executive J. Ryan McMahon, II announced the birth of a baby Sichuan takin calf at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in Syracuse, New York, on Saturday, March 9.

The calf, born to female takin Jaio, age 6, and male takin Bo, 5, represents the zoo's first birth of this unique species of hoofed mammal native to the mountains of China.

The birth is part of the zoo's participation in the Species Survival Plan for Sichuan takin overseen by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). Takin were rated as "vulnerable" when last assessed in 2008 and have been declining since. The zoo joined the takin SSP in 2016, when it acquired Bo from the Albuquerque BioPark, and takin sisters Jaio and Ling from The Wilds in Cumberland, OH.

County Executive McMahon said, "This is exciting news for our community! I am happy to report that the mom and baby are doing great and once again the staff at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo have done a fantastic job." McMahon continued, "Congratulations to everyone at the zoo on another successful birth and I encourage everyone to come check out the newest addition to our great zoo!"

Zoo Director Ted Fox said that first-time mom Jaio gave birth about 8 a.m. Saturday, March 9, and everything went perfectly.

"The calf was born on exhibit and within a day it was scampering around and jumping on the boulders," Fox said. "The baby is very healthy and active, and Jaio is proving to be an excellent mother."

The baby has short dark hair that contrasts with the long, golden hair of the adults. When not exploring the cliffs of the exhibit, it spends a lot of time nursing or curled up near its mom. Fox said that because they come from a mountainous region, even a newborn takin can be outside in snow.

“Takin can tolerate our winter weather very well because they’re native to cold, mountainous regions of Asia and used to high elevations,” he said.

Takin resemble a cross between antelope and oxen, and have thick, curved horns, long coats, large bulbous noses and, it has been said, ears that seem upside-down. Their hardy build and strong, flexible hooves enable them to easily traverse steep cliffs and rocky terrain.

Takin share the same habitats as giant pandas and benefit from the same conservation programs aimed at protecting wildlife and restoring deforested areas in their range.

The takin exhibit is located on the left fork of zoo’s Wildlife Trail. Mom and baby are usually on exhibit during zoo hours, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily – although sometimes Jaio will “hide” her calf in the top boulders of the exhibit while she is foraging.

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