

Vets at Zoo Atlanta inseminate snake

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Veterinarians at Zoo Atlanta have performed what is believed to be the first artificial insemination of a snake.

The zoo was hoping that two eastern indigo snakes would reproduce by doing what comes naturally. But Blu, who was born at the zoo in 1988, just did not have what it takes to make partner, a snake on loan from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, a mom.

Blu also suffers from a low sperm count.

The unnamed female was anaesthetized during the insemination, stretched out to her full 6 feet 2 inches on a gurney. Veterinarians say they will not know for about two months if the procedure took and she is indeed expecting.

Eastern indigo snakes are a non-venomous species and the longest snake in North America. In earlier days, the snakes were popular with carnival snake charmers.

Their numbers have been reduced because of habitat loss and the snake's own slow movements.

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