

Zoo welcomes rare newborn Somali wild ass

April 27 2008

The first Somali wild ass to be born at the St. Louis Zoo arrived earlier this month.

The animal, a wild horse, is very rare, with only 1,000 believed to be surviving in the wild, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported. They are threatened by political unrest and hunting in North Africa and must compete with domestic animals for grazing.

The St. Louis Zoo has seven wild asses with another 20 living in other zoos in North America. The new foal's dam Fataki and sire Abai are both in St. Louis.

The foal, a female, has a gray body, black stripes on the legs and a white belly. When she is full-grown, she will stand about 4 feet high and weigh 600 pounds.

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