

Two by two: London Zoo counts its many inhabitants

January 2 2014



Kumbuka, a male silverback gorilla inspects the keeper's chalk board in his enclosure at London Zoo, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. Home to more than 850 different species, zoo keepers welcomed in the New Year armed with clipboards as they made a note of every single animal. The compulsory annual count is required as part of ZSL London Zoo's zoo license, and every creature, from the tiny leaf cutter ants to the huge silverback gorilla is duly noted and accounted for. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

(AP)—From aardvarks to zebras, the residents of London Zoo are coming forth to be counted.

Dozens of zookeepers—brandishing both clipboards and snacks to coax out reluctant creatures—are recording every mammal, bird, fish, invertebrate, reptile and amphibian as part of the [zoo](#)'s annual animal census.

The zoo is home to 19,000 animals of more than 850 species, from 400-pound (185-kilogram) silverback gorillas to insects such as the tiny leaf-cutter ant.

New arrivals this year include a baby Malayan tapir, two flamingo chicks and the first spiny-headed lizards born in Britain.



A penguin pecks a keeper's clipboard during a stock take at London Zoo,

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A penguin swims past as a keeper counts the birds during a stock take at London Zoo, Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. Home to more than 850 different species, zoo keepers welcomed in the New Year armed with clipboards as they made a note of every single animal. The compulsory annual count is required as part of ZSL London Zoo's zoo license, and every creature, from the tiny leaf cutter ants to the huge silverback gorillas is duly noted and accounted for. (AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth)

The head count, which began Thursday, is required under the license

terms for all British zoos. The data goes into an international database and is used to plan zoo management and breeding programs for endangered animals.

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