

Telegraph the 'zonkey' born at Crimean zoo

August 7 2014



A hybrid (R) of zebra and a donkey plays with his mother at the Taigan zoo park outside Simferopol on August 5, 2014. The 'zonkey' has been named 'Telegraph' by his keepers.

A zoo in the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea has welcomed its latest arrival—a "zebroid", or "zonkey", which was born after a lonesome zebra got intimate with a donkey.

Named Telegraph by keepers at the Taigan [zoo](#) park in southern Crimea,

the foal's head and body are the solid brown of a [donkey](#) but his legs have the characteristic black stripes of a zebra.

Born last week, "Telegraph is very popular with visitors" who can watch him romping around with his mother, according to zoo director Oleg Zubkov.

Cross-breeding between zebras and other members of the equine family is not unheard of, although it is rare that the zebra is the mother.

But the breeding of zonkeys or other hybrids is normally frowned upon by the zoo community.

"Such things don't happen in civilised zoos, but can occur at private zoos or on farms," said Anna Kachurovskaya, a spokeswoman for Moscow Zoo.

"This sort of marketing is not justified or scientific... zoos are for preserving wild species, that is one of their most important goals."

Zubkov said Telegraph's mother, who had not had a mate for a long time, was lonely and uncomfortable in her enclosure at the private zoo founded two years ago about 30 kilometres (20 miles) from Crimea's main city Simferopol.

"So on the advice of a zoologist we moved her in with several other hooved animals and she really liked the donkey. As a result of their affection for one another we've gotten Telegraph," Zubkov said in an email to AFP.

Telegraph was named after a local newspaper which recently celebrated its fifth anniversary.

Russia seized the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea in March in a move hotly contested by Kiev and the international community.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Telegraph the 'zonkey' born at Crimean zoo (2014, August 7) retrieved 19 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-08-telegraph-zonkey-born-crimean-zoo.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.