

New gorilla at Audubon Zoo may stay indoors for a little bit

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New Orleans' Audubon Zoo has a new gorilla, but she may be spending more time indoors than on view for a while.

The western lowland gorilla's name is Tumani, Swahili for "Hope"—and zookeepers hope the 10-year-old from the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo and the Audubon Zoo's current female, Praline, attract a male expected later.

First, they have to make friends with each other, and then with a third female. Then a male can join them, zoo spokesman Frank Donze said Tuesday.

He said each newcomer starts indoors, able to see and spend time with the others, but not to touch them. Praline can go in and out, but may be spending much of her [time](#) indoors, getting acquainted with Tumani.

Praline is the last gorilla born at the zoo. She's 21-years-old.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature says a few hundred-thousand western lowland [gorillas](#) may exist in the wild, but they're critically endangered because poaching, disease and [habitat loss](#) have reduced their numbers more than 80 percent over three generations.

The Audubon Zoo's previous male, Casey, was moved to the Louisville Zoo in Kentucky because he'd failed to father babies with four females over 15 years at Audubon.

Tumani came from Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Donze said Audubon officials know where the second new female and the male will be coming from. But all of the zoos are waiting until transfer plans are final to say anything, he said.

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums has species survival plans for endangered animals in its members' collections. The people in charge of each animal's plan use genetics to decide matches.

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