

Rare Somali wild ass born in Chile zoo

July 18 2023



A Somali wild ass in the Buin Zoo in Santiago Chile, on July 17 2023.

A rare Somali wild ass has been born in a zoo in Chile, the fourth specimen of the critically endangered species to be born in the South American country, the zoo owner said.

The [foal](#), named Julieta, was born in a private zoo on June 19, said

Ignacio Idalsoaga, a veterinarian and founder of the zoo.

With white, striped legs similar to those of a zebra, the Somali wild ass is critically endangered in its native East Africa.

There are less than 200 left in the wild, and a similar number in captivity. Seven of the latter are in South America, all at the Buin Zoo in Santiago, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Hunting and crossbreeding with the common domestic donkey have reduced the populations of this animal to the point of placing it at a critical level of extinction, the last category on the IUCN register before extinction.

"In non-traditional medicine, their bones are used for soup that is said to improve rheumatism, tuberculosis, despite the fact that it has not been scientifically proven," said Idalsoaga, the zoo founder.

Females can only have young approximately every two years, and the ass can live for about 30 years and weigh about 250 kilos (550 lbs).

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