

Kala, rare Sumatran tiger cub, makes her debut in Rome

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Visitors watching through the glass barrier expressed delight as the cub Kala explored her pen with her parents.

A run around and a cuddle with dad—Rome zoo's new Sumatran tiger cub made her public debut Thursday, three months after her birth

boosted the critically endangered species.

Visitors watching through the glass barrier expressed delight as the cub Kala explored her outdoor pen with her mother Tila and father Kasih—spending quite some time sitting on the latter's large, furry head.

"I didn't realize it would be so small, it's the size of our dog—it's magnificent!" said Arnaud Champalle, a French tourist visiting the Bioparco zoo.

Sumatran tigers, named after the Indonesian island where they live, are the smallest species of tigers—and the rarest.

"There are about 500 of them left in the wild," said Paola Palanza, president of the Bioparco foundation.

"Therefore it's very important that zoos contribute to conservation strategies, maintaining a [gene pool](#) within zoos, so that we have a reserve of the species should we need to repopulate."

Tila was born in 2011 in Chester Zoo in England, while Kasih was born in 2014 in Beauval zoo in France.

Their cub was born in January and spent her first three months in a protected area where, according to the zoo, she "plays all day without interruption, alone and with both parents".

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