



PO Box 50220
Idaho Falls, ID 83405

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of Idaho Falls Contact

Kerry Hammon
Public Information Officer
Work: (208) 612-8122
Cell: (208) 821-6321
khammon@idahofallsidaho.gov

Rare Gibbon Baby Born at Idaho Falls Zoo

Idaho Falls, ID - Until recently, there were only 15 Mueller's grey gibbons living in zoos across the United States. The Idaho Falls Zoo is thrilled to announce the birth of the 16th!

The Mueller's grey gibbon couple – mother Shannon and father Sterling – became first-time parents on April 30, 2017 to a little boy. He has been named Sid by zoo staff.

Because of complications with his care, he will not be on public display immediately. "Sid was born with some sharp teeth which is rare for baby gibbons," stated Zoo Veterinarian Dr. Rhonda Aliah. "As a result, his mother would not let him nurse."

Zoo staff and volunteers are currently hand raising the infant until he is old enough to be reintroduced to his parents. "Hand raising a gibbon is an extremely complicated and time-intensive process," explains Zoo Operations Manager Linda Beard. "He needs 24-hour-a-day attention just like a human infant."

A select number of zoo volunteers received very specialized training to assist zoo staff with the effort. "It is exciting to be able to include some of our volunteers in helping raise this wonderful little gibbon baby," stated Primate Keeper Aaron Young. "Everyone has fallen in love with cute little Sid!"

Although the public will not be able to view Sid right now, members of the Tautphaus Park Zoological Society will get a sneak peek of the little primate at a special members-only "Baby Shower" at the zoo this Thursday evening from 6:00-7:30 p.m. The event is to highlight the surprising number of babies born at the Idaho Falls Zoo from high visibility species this year and is exclusive to zoo members. In addition, attendees to the Baby Shower will be able to donate cash to vote on a name for the zoo's new lion cub. Zoo memberships to the Society are available at www.tpzs.info or at the zoo gift shop.

Gibbons are included in a group known as lesser apes. They are part of the primate group that includes chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans (*Hominoidea*). The Mueller's grey gibbon is native to the rainforests of Borneo and one of 18 species of gibbon. They spend most of their day foraging in trees so they have very long arms and thumbs, and a ball and



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socket joint in the shoulder that allows them to swing rapidly between branches in a motion known as brachiation.

Please note that the Idaho Falls Zoo will open an hour later than usually (10:00 a.m.) on Thursday, June 29. The later opening is to allow zoo staff to attend a required employee meeting for the City of Idaho Falls Division of Parks and Recreation.

[Plan your visit](#) now to see all the new babies at the Idaho Falls Zoo!

Media Note: For more information or to schedule an interview with zoo staff, contact Public Information Officer, Kerry Hammon.

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About Idaho Falls Zoo at Tautphaus Park: *With more than 330 individual animals representing 130 species from all around the globe, the Idaho Falls Zoo has the largest collection of animals in the state of Idaho and is considered the “Best Little Zoo in the West.” Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the zoo participates in 44 national Species Survival Plans. Learn more on our [website](#).*