CENTER FOR Zoonomics
BASED AT ZOO NEW ENGLAND

WELCOME TO ZOONOMICS NEWS!

This newsletter, compiled by the Center for Zoonomics based at Zoo New England, is your place to share and learn about the exciting work accredited zoos and aquariums are doing in genetics.

To keep this newsletter as dynamic and relevant as possible, **we'd love to hear from you!** Whether you're working on a new project, have a recent publication to share, or want to highlight upcoming events or activities, let us know. We're here to celebrate and share your contributions with the community.

Send your updates and questions to us at zoonomics@zoonewengland.org. We can't wait to hear from you!

NEWS AND UPDATES

Meet our New Postdoctoral Researcher

The Center for Zoonomics is thrilled to expand our team with the addition of Dr. Tahlia Perry, our new Postdoctoral Researcher. Originally from Australia, Tahlia brings a wealth of expertise in genetics research and science communication on unique species like the echidna. Tahlia will perform genomics research to investigate the genetic health of AZA and EAZA gorillas.

Metadata Working Group

The Center for Zoonomics has been busily creating and organizing a new Metadata Working Group that will create documents to help standardize how biological samples are collected and shared across AZA institutions for research. The Metadata Working Group will bring together 30 people representing 20 organizations, including several national organizations such as AZA, the AZA Biobanking Scientific Advisory Group, the Molecular Scientific Advisory Group, the EAZA Biobank, and the AZA Population Management Center. The first virtual

meeting will be held in April and held monthly thereafter.

ZooMu Cyber Infrastructure Workshop

The Zoo Museum (ZooMu) Network Cyber Infrastructure (CI) workshop, held at the Duke Lemur Center March 18-20, brought together experts from zoos, museums, collection systems, and biodiversity informaticists to address key challenges in data sharing, interoperability, and long-term accessibility. Participants played a vital role in shaping discussions on aligning data standards, improving institutional collaboration, and increasing the discoverability and usability of biological data. Key outcomes included advancing the adoption of FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles, determining standardized identifiers to improve cross-institutional data tracking, and leveraging platforms like GBIF and MorphoSource for broader data integration. To learn more about ZooMu, visit https://zoomunetwork.org/

UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

Zoonomics Webinar Series

The Center for Zoonomics will soon begin hosting a webinar series on all things genetics, including both scientific talks and discussions of topics surrounding genetics (e.g., intellectual property, bioethics). Please suggest topics and speakers you'd like to see, or sign up as a speaker, by e-mailing zoonomics@zoonewengland.org.

Small Population Management Advisory Group (SPMAG) Meeting: June 3-5, 2025

The AZA Small Population Management Advisory Group (SPMAG) will hold a meeting on June 3-5, 2025 at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago, IL. There is no registration fee, but attendance is capped. On the first day of the meeting, the Molecular Scientific Advisory Group plans to lead a hands-on workshop aimed at population biologists that goes through the steps of integrating molecular kinships into management (from sampling design through using PMx software). The two-day SPMAG portion of the agenda is currently in development. If you have any questions or are interested in attending all or part of the meeting, please email Kristine Schad Eebes (kschad@lpzoo.org) and Andrea Putnam (asputnam@gmail.com).

Frozen Zoo® Cell Culture Training Workshop hosted by IUCN SSC Center for Species Survival-Biodiversity Banking and San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance: September 8-13, 2025

This workshop will take place at the Frozen Zoo® located in the Beckman Center on the campus of the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in Escondido, CA. This workshop is geared towards professionals with near term goals of culturing cells from wildlife for conservation purposes. Ideally, these participants would be the members of their team who would be playing some role in culturing of samples in the laboratory or, minimally, conducting hands-on sampling of biobanking material for the eventual purpose of cell culture. Space is limited and an application is required. Please reach out to Katie Heineman (kheineman@sdzwa.org) with questions or to receive the application. The deadline to apply is **March 31st, 2025.**

PUBLICATIONS

Accredited zoos and aquariums are making great contributions to genetics research, and we're eager to keep you informed about this progress. If you have a recent publication, please e-mail us at zoonomics@zoonewengland.org so we can include it in our next newsletter.

Danica Wolfe, Project Coordinator

zoonomics@zoonewengland.org

617-714-7263

Sent to: zoonomics@zoonewengland.org