

## World Tapir Day (April 27) & Mountain Tapir Conservation Updates

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Please join us in celebrating World Tapir Day this Thursday, April 27, 2023. Our animal care community can help raise awareness and support for the charismatic but poorly understood tapir by sharing social media posts and creating events for tapir at your institution. #WorldTapirDay #TeamTapir



To help celebrate, Smithsonian is hosting a FREE online event to virtually meet some tapir in zoos and to share stories of mountain tapir conservation fieldwork from earlier this month in the mountains of Ecuador. This will be on April 27 at 2 PM EST/11 AM PT. To register, please go to <https://smithsonian.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlIduGsqlikqGNbjoUKDbnaGTqjTzJD1LcQZ>

### Why Get Involved?

Raising awareness for tapir conservation is important as all four species of tapir are endangered or vulnerable to extinction. The zoo and animal care community is critical for raising awareness and support for the conservation of these species.

Species	Range	IUCN Red List Status
Baird's tapir	From Mexico to Colombia; S America	Vulnerable
Lowland tapir	S America	Endangered
Malayan tapir	Malaysia & Sumatra, SE Asia	Endangered
Mountain tapir	Ecuador, Colombia, Peru; S America	Endangered

### Mountain Tapir Conservation Fieldwork Update

The mountain tapir is the rarest and smallest of all the tapir species. Native to the Andes mountains of Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, there are fewer than 2,500 adult tapir remaining in the wild and only six individuals remaining in zoos worldwide (Cali Zoo, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, and Los Angeles Zoo).

In early April 2023, four mountain tapir in Ecuador were captured for GPS collaring and health assessments. This included a pregnant female named "Jordan," who was the first wild female to have her pregnancy confirmed by ultrasound in the field. Data from these animals will help our community better understand this illusive species and what is needed to help protect them. The project is led by the Andean Bear Foundation in partnership with INIBIO Ecuador and multiple US zoos and includes a team of zoo veterinarians and biologists who have been working together since 2016 to study and protect mountain tapir in Ecuador. This work is supported by multiple institutions including the Segre Foundation and the IUCN Tapir Specialist Group.



As part of this project, the team is working with local communities to raise awareness and pride for mountain tapir. This includes partnering with schools and soccer clubs and commissioning murals of mountain tapir in local communities. As a next step, we are organizing a national strategy meeting to create a 5 year action plan for mountain tapir conservation in Ecuador.



### How to Get Involved?

Please consider participating in World Tapir Day activities

- Celebrate tapir on your social media and with your zoo guests on April 27
- Engage kids of all ages and school groups in tapir activities like coloring sheets
- Share the Smithsonian link for the World Tapir Day ZOOM event (link above)
- Donate to support mountain tapir conservation at Longneck Manor (please specify donation is for tapir): <https://longneckmanor.com/donate-to-longneck-manor/>
- Consider supporting mountain tapir conservation with the Animals Anonymous Apparel special edition World Tapir Day shirts and gear (<https://animalsanonymousapparel.com>)

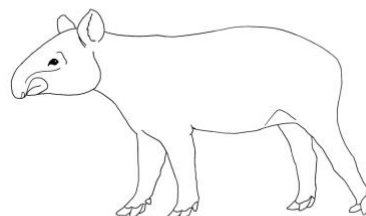
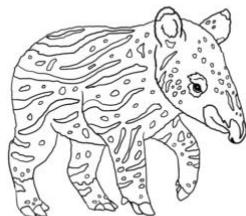


### World Tapir Day Messages & Toolkit

- Tapir are related to horses & rhinos, but have four toes on their front feet and three toes on each hind foot
- Tapir calves look like “striped watermelons” but grow out of their stripes as they grow up
- When tapir swim, they use their nose like a snorkel
- All four species of tapir are endangered or vulnerable to extinction
- Tapir are important for dispersing seeds in rainforests
- Mountain tapir are endangered, with fewer than 2,500 individuals remaining. They are found in the high Andes mountains of Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru
- The zoo community is partnering with the frontlines of conservation to help ensure a future for tapir in the wild



Sample Coloring Sheets (mountain tapir drawings by the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo team)



Please contact [lizadadone@giraffevet.org](mailto:lizadadone@giraffevet.org) & [pukazhentiB@si.edu](mailto:pukazhentiB@si.edu) with questions. Thank you!