

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Geriatric siamang is euthanized over the weekend

SEATTLE—A 36-year-old, female siamang, named Briony (brye-o-nee), was humanely euthanized over the weekend following an examination to evaluate the gibbon's deteriorating condition and failure to respond to treatments.

Siamangs are the largest among the gibbon species (lesser ape) and are known to live up to 32 years in zoos and 25 to 30 in the wild.

The elderly siamang had been under veterinary care for declining food and water intake attributed to a diagnosis of diabetes made last year. An examination showed her condition was progressing and Briony continued to decline despite supportive care. "Unfortunately, she did not respond so we made the difficult and humane decision to euthanize her," said Dr. Kelly Helmick, Woodland Park Zoo's associate veterinarian.

As a standard procedure, the zoo's animal health team performed a necropsy (an animal autopsy).

"Although Briony hadn't lived at the zoo as long as some of our longtime primates, she found her way into the hearts of our staff, volunteers, members and guests," said Martin Ramirez, a mammal curator at Woodland Park Zoo. "She was a great partner for our previous male siamang, Simon, and a steadying influence for Sam, our newest male."

Briony arrived at Woodland Park Zoo in 2008 from Little Rock Zoo (Ark.). Sam is the zoo's sole remaining siamang. He arrived a year ago from Los Angeles Zoo as a new companion to replace Simon who died from age-related chronic illness. Visitors can see Sam and learn about siamangs at the zoo's award-winning Trail of Vines exhibit.

The zoo is working with the [Siamang Species Survival Plan](#) for options for Sam. Our keepers will give extra attention to Sam and provide him with an accelerated enrichment program to help keep him stimulated and active, said Ramirez.

[Siamangs](#) are native to the island of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula. They are endangered due to overpopulation, logging, agriculture, and other human activities that are rapidly destroying forest environments required by siamangs and other gibbon species for their survival. Woodland Park Zoo participates in the [Woodland Park Zoo & Panthera's Malayan Tiger Conservation Project](#), which focuses on saving tigers, their forest and all the animals that live there, including siamangs. Learn about making wise consumer choices of products that contain palm oil at [www.zoo.org/conservation/palmoil](http://www.zoo.org/conservation/palmoil).

Of all the gibbon species, siamangs form the closest social ties within the family unit. Siamangs are often referred to as "singing" apes, singing so loudly they can be heard for up to 3 miles. Singing communicates location between different family groups, establishes and maintains feeding area boundaries and is also for defensive posturing. It is believed that singing also helps form, maintain and further develop bonds between a mated pair.

For more information about Woodland Park Zoo or to become a member, visit [www.zoo.org](http://www.zoo.org) or call 206.548.2500.

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