

More monkeying around at the Zoo

Reminiscent of the ancient proverb see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil – keepers are celebrating the birth of three different types of monkey at Edinburgh Zoo, with babies being born into the goeldi's monkey, gelada baboon and squirrel monkey troops.

Goeldi's Monkey

☒ Only a few inches long, this tiny little blackish brown monkey entered the world on Hogmanay and lives in Edinburgh Zoo's "Magic Forest". Now nearly three months old, this monkey is small but has a big playful personality with a little bit of attitude thrown in. When first born the baby monkey was hard to spot on mum and often just looked like a bit of extra dark fur, as she cuddled her new born right into herself. Now leaping around and doing lots of exploring, this baby is a fully established member of its troop and older siblings often help mum out. A small South American New World species, in the wild the goeldi's monkey originates from the upper Amazon Basin region of Bolivia, Brazil, Columbia, Ecuador and Peru.

Gelada Baboon

☒ Edinburgh Zoo's troop of 17 gelada baboons often sees new additions, but the most recent are two little ones born in mid-February. One of the babies belongs to Belissa, the youngest breeding female in the group and a first time mum who is proving to be a natural. Geladas baboons have an interesting feature on their chest resembling a horizontal pink hourglass and are great communicators through vocalisations, eye lid flicking and lip movements. Curious, but also pretty laid back, when the baby gelada baboons are a little older visitors will be able to see them playing with each other and anything else they can get their hands on –

from grass to sticks – as well as rolling down hills . The gelada baboon is a species of Old World monkey only found in the Ethiopian Highlands, with large populations in the Semien Mountains. Like its close relatives, the baboons, they are largely terrestrial and spend most of their time foraging in grasslands.

☒ **Squirrel Monkeys**

The most monkey births however have been seen in the squirrel monkey enclosure at Edinburgh Zoo in the “Living Links to Human Evolution” Centre which is run by St Andrews university and RZSS. Between the end of October until the first few days of the New Year, 12 squirrel monkey babies were born – 9 male and 3 female. Two babies were even born on the same day to different mums. New World monkeys, in the wild the squirrel monkey lives in the tropical forests of Central and South America in the canopy layer. They have short and close olive coloured fur, with yellowish orange on their backs and extremities, and their throat and ears are white and mouths black.