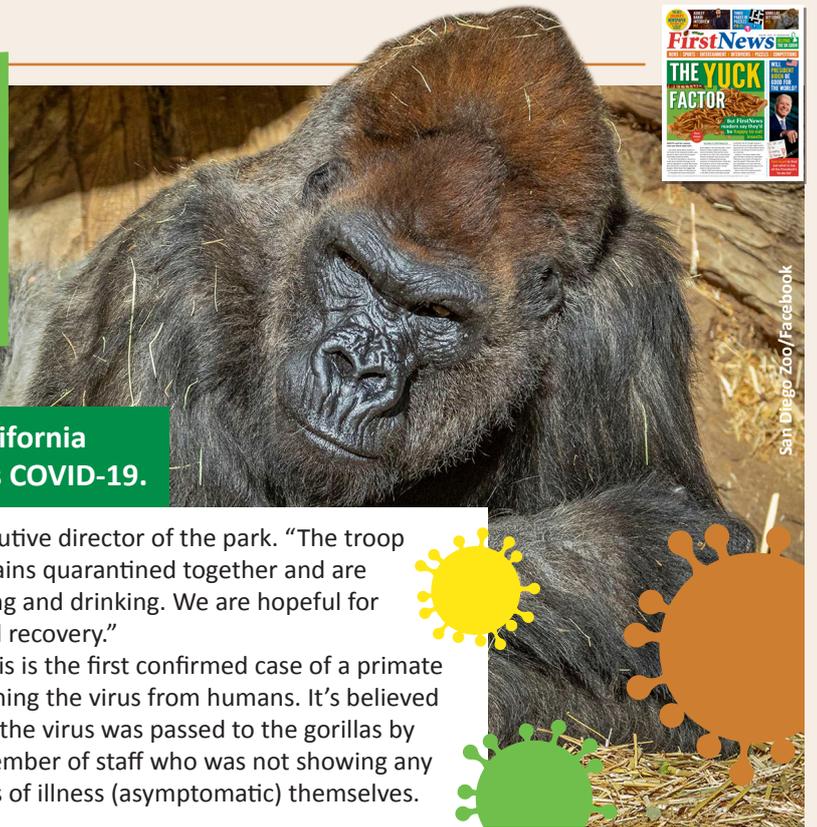


ANIMAL NEWS

GORILLAS GET COVID-19



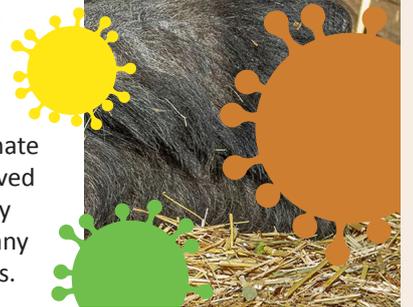
GORILLAS at San Diego Zoo Safari Park in California have tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19.

Keepers at the zoo tested the poo of the gorilla troop at the park after noticing two of the gorillas were coughing. The results showed they were carrying the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19. Experts think that the rest of the animals in the troop may have the virus without showing any symptoms.

“Aside from some congestion and coughing, the gorillas are doing well,” said Lisa Peterson,

executive director of the park. “The troop remains quarantined together and are eating and drinking. We are hopeful for a full recovery.”

This is the first confirmed case of a primate catching the virus from humans. It’s believed that the virus was passed to the gorillas by a member of staff who was not showing any signs of illness (asymptomatic) themselves.



INDONESIA

Monkeys go for riches

Researchers have found that the thieving monkeys who live in Bali’s Uluwatu Temple can spot high-value items. The macaques in the ancient Hindu site will pinch possessions from tourists, refusing to return them until they’re offered food as payment. Scientists at the University of Lethbridge in Canada say the macaques will target mobile phones and wallets – and demand more food for them. The lead author of the study says that the behaviour has been “maintained across generations of monkeys for at least 30 years”.



GOODBYE QUEEN

One of the Tower of London’s beloved ravens is believed to have died. Keepers say ‘queen’ raven Merlina went missing just before Christmas and has not been seen since, leading them to think she has passed away. There is a legend that if the ravens ever leave the tower, the kingdom will fall. Thankfully, there are still six ravens left at the Tower.



SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING

SCIENTISTS at Harvard University have created robot fish that can realistically recreate the movements of a school of fish.

Seven robotic fish, known as Bluebots, have been created. They have cameras in their eyes and LED lights to sense direction and distance.

It took about a year of testing in water tanks to get the Bluebots to perform various actions successfully. For instance, they can swim around in circles without crashing into each other, or scatter to the edges of the tank as if a predator has appeared.

Florian Berlinger, who is the lead author of the research published in *Science Robotics*, says the Bluebots could be useful for search operations and monitoring underwater environments.



Self-organizing Systems Research Group

ANIMAL NEWS



GLOSSARY

COVID-19 – The name of the disease caused by the coronavirus currently circulating in the human population
quarantined – To be kept apart from other people or animals for a certain period of time, to prevent disease being passed on
primate – Monkeys, apes and humans

Tower of London – A castle in London founded by William the Conqueror in the 1070s. It was famously used by kings and queens to imprison and torture their enemies
synchronised – When things are planned to happen at the same time

1. Name the animals in the news and where they live, or 'live'.

The animal	Location

■ Look at the article about the gorillas

2. What prompted the zookeepers to test the gorillas for COVID-19, and how did they test the animals?
3. Some gorillas and a member of staff are thought to be 'asymptomatic'. It's a word that is in the news a lot at the moment. Can you explain what it means?

■ Look at the article from Indonesia

4. Monkeys at the Uluwatu Temple are famous for what criminal activity?
5. Can you explain how this research demonstrates the monkeys' intelligence and ability to learn?

■ Look at the article 'Synchronised swimming'

6. What was the aim of this engineering project?

- to make robots that mimic the movements of a group of fish
- to make a robot that can be used to monitor underwater environments
- to make a life-like robotic fish that can swim and react

7. Find the details of the project.

Number of fish created	
Technology built into the fish body	
Time taken to develop	
How do we know about this American university project?	

8. What movements have the fish been programmed to do that mimic fish behaviour?

■ Consider all the news

9. A collective noun is the name for a particular group of animals or things. Two are used in the articles.

What is the collective noun for a group of gorillas? a _____

What is the collective noun for a group of fish? a _____

10. Which of these stories do you predict will be back in the news in the future? Explain why it might appear in the news again.

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