

## **Information to Captive Wildlife Licensees on COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)**

SARS-CoV-2 is a recently emerged zoonotic pathogen (coronavirus) that can be transmitted from human-to-human.

It is not currently known whether the SARS-CoV-2 virus has the potential to infect native North American wildlife.

Disease and wildlife experts with the U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other organizations are currently working to assess these risks. As more becomes known, experts from these agencies will release further guidance.

On April 3, 2020, a Malayan tiger with respiratory signs living at the Wildlife Conservation Society Bronx Zoo in New York tested positive for COVID-19.

You can read more about the case in both of the below links:

<https://www.wildlifedisease.org/wda/Portals/0/Covid-19%20Information/WCS%20Bronx%20Zoo%20Veterinary%20update%20about%20SARS-CoV-2%20in%20tiger%20and%20lion,%206%20April%202020.pdf>

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/newsroom/news/sa\\_by\\_date/sa-2020/ny-zoo-covid-19](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/newsroom/news/sa_by_date/sa-2020/ny-zoo-covid-19)

Some research has demonstrated that felids and mustelids (e.g., ferrets) can be highly susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection under experimental conditions. Some species of fruit bats may also be susceptible to infection. See: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post/?id=7196506>

The Feline Taxon Advisory Group of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums has put out the following statement: <https://www.wildlifedisease.org/wda/Portals/0/Covid-19%20Information/Felid%20Taxon%20Advisory%20Group%20COVID-19%20recommendations%20for%20participating%20institutions.pdf>

Until more is known about the potential for humans to transfer the virus to animals (“reverse zoonosis”), or animals to transfer the virus to humans, FWC recommends following the attached CDC guidelines regarding the use of personal protective equipment when handling or working in close proximity to captive wildlife.

FWC recommends taking extra precautions against virus transmission when working with non-human primates, bats and all animals in the families Felidae and Mustelidae.

More information regarding animals and COVID-19 can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID-19-and-Animals>