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Happy Hollow welcomes new jaguar Zoo helps species survival for big cats

Media kit with photos, facts, and B-ROLL available here: <http://bit.ly/hhpzjaguars>



A new jaguar is entering the limelight at Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. Happy Hollow welcomes Kianto, a 12-year-old male Goldman's Jaguar from Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago, Illinois. Kianto joins the iconic Sophia, who is 14-years-old, and has enthralled Happy Hollow visitors since 2005.

Kianto's arrival is part of an Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP) recommendation. SSP programs focus on animals that are in danger of extinction in the wild, and ensure the survival of selected species in zoos and aquariums.

"Our animal ambassadors represent threatened and endangered species from all corners of the world," says Shannon Heimer, Happy Hollow Park Manager. "We're here to connect all people to nature and conservation through play."

Jaguars are the largest cat species in the Americas, and are sexually dimorphic, meaning they display noticeable differences in males and females. For example, Kianto's head is much larger than Sophia's. He also weighs in around 130 pounds, while Sophia is closer to 90. Both are elusive ambush predators with excellent climbing abilities. Often mistaken for leopards, jaguars are characterized by tiny black spots inside their eye-catching rosette markings.

Sophia and Kianto are not a genetic match for breeding, but providing the cats with safe and stimulating habitats is a key component of SSP programs. "Our zookeepers and staff are excited to work with both a male and female jaguar, and to help the SSP," says Kevin Hertell, Zoo Manager at Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. "While it's not a breeding recommendation, it does help the SSP as far as providing housing for additional animals." As solitary animals, the two spotted felines will live in separate enclosures.





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While caring for big cats like Kianto and Sophia has its challenges, Happy Hollow animal care staff provides careful monitoring and interesting enrichment activities for every animal in the Zoo on a daily basis. Physical and mental stimulation encourages natural behaviors and is fun for guests to observe.

Guests are often eager to engage with the animals, but Zoo staff remind visitors to stay in public areas of the Zoo and to be respectful to all animals and other guests. While there are many places to go wild at Happy Hollow, the best ways to learn about the animals is through calm, quiet observation, attending the daily animal meet-and-greets, and sharing questions with Zoo staff.

For Kianto's health and safety, he will be given as much time and space as he needs to acclimate to his new habitat, so guests may or may not see him out on exhibit as he settles in.

["Discover Conservation"](#) and learn more about jaguars at Happy Hollow on Thursday, June 14 with conservation expert, Anthony Giordano. The event will take place in front of the Happy Hollow jaguar exhibit, and guests will learn about the Chaco Jaguar Conservation Project and "jaguar free beef," as this organization works with cattle barons to prevent and/or mitigate human-jaguar conflict.

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Happy Hollow Park & Zoo (HHPZ) is a division of the City of San Jose [Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services](#). Supported by the [Happy Hollow Foundation](#), the mission of Happy Hollow is connecting people to nature through play. HHPZ provides a variety of outdoor play experiences for all ages, including an AZA accredited Zoo; rides and nature-themed amusement; celebrations and private events; as well a robust animal education and wildlife conservation program. Visit www.hhpz.org for more information.