

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Brevard Zoo Provides Temporary Home to Confiscated Spider Monkey Babies**

MELBOURNE, Fla., January 18, 2024 — Two confiscated black-handed spider monkey infants are now calling Brevard Zoo home.

The male and female monkeys were illegally brought into Florida and found in the illegal possession of someone who didn't have necessary permits to own this species, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Their origins and the location of their parents are unknown at this time.

Permitted to work with this species, Brevard Zoo was asked to care for them because of our unique and flexible three-habitat spider monkey complex and experience caring for young monkeys separated from their parents. Two members of our current troop, [Mateo](#) and [J](#), came to us at a young age as wildlife trafficking victims.

The male monkey, named Finn by his quarantine keepers, is estimated to be about 6 months old. The female monkey, named Marceline also by her quarantine keepers, is estimated to be about 3 months old. They are too young to be returned to their natural range.

Neither had any critical medical issues when they first came to us in mid-December besides some parasites they're being treated for, according to director of animal programs Lauren Hinson. They are underweight but eating well – and getting used to vegetables.

Marceline and Finn are living in a separate habitat near the rest of our spider monkey troop. While they seem attached to people, this attachment is reduced by having each other and living near the troop.

The eventual plan is for Finn and Marceline to move to another zoo, but this could take months or years. The Zoo's animal care team is fully prepared to acclimate them into our

troop, Hinson said. Their quarantine keepers have started training them in behaviors to help with their care at the Zoo and their eventual home, like voluntarily climbing onto a weight scale.

As a facility accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the Zoo has let the Species Survival Plan (SSP) program know these two young monkeys are in need of placement. SSPs ensure healthy, genetically diverse populations of animals in AZA zoos.

Unfortunately, there are a number of confiscated young spider monkey in zoos across the U.S.

While the exact circumstances that brought Finn and Marceline to our state are still being investigated, the Zoo wants to note that vulnerable wildlife is trafficked every day around the world - including here in Florida - for the illegal pet trade.

Black-handed spider monkeys do not make good pets, but there are some important things to consider before choosing any animal for a pet. Be sure to understand where the pet came from and never take an animal from its natural home. If you don't know where the pet came from, find another source to ensure we work together to stop the illegal pet trade of the animals we all love.

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*Brevard Zoo is home to more than 900 animals representing 195 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education and conservation. More information is available at [www.brevardzoo.org](http://www.brevardzoo.org).*