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Subject: PRO/AH/EDR> COVID-19 update (538): USA, animal, zoo, snow leopard

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 UPDATE (538): USA, ANIMAL, ZOO, SNOW LEOPARD

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A ProMED-mail post

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Source: CNN [edited]

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/12/11/us/snow-leopard-positive-coronavirus-kentucky-zoo-trnd/index.html>

Another big cat species tested positive for coronavirus, this time a snow leopard. It's the 6th animal species confirmed to have been infected with the virus after human contact.

Three snow leopards, 2 males and a female, tested positive for the virus at the Louisville Zoo [Kentucky], the zoo and the US Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service confirmed Friday [11 Dec 2020].

The female's infection was confirmed first. All 3 leopards, whose symptoms are "mild" and include wheezes and dry coughs, are expected to fully recover, Louisville Zoo director John Walczak said in a filmed statement.

The leopards were likely infected by an asymptomatic staff member "despite precautions taken by the zoo," the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service said.

It's unlikely the leopards -- or other animals -- pose a significant risk in transmitting the virus to humans, as COVID-19 is primarily spread between people.

The snow leopards are one of at least 6 animal species to become infected with coronavirus after close contact with humans. The 1st was a Malayan tiger at the Bronx Zoo, who in April [2020] tested positive for coronavirus after showing symptoms of respiratory illness. By the end of the month [April 2020], 8 of the zoo's big cats, including 4 other tigers and 3 African lions, tested positive for the virus.

A small number of dogs and cats have been infected with the virus in the US, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In most animal cases, coronavirus isn't deadly, though coronavirus outbreaks at fur farms in the US and abroad have killed thousands of mink.

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[Infection by SARS-CoV-2 has been confirmed so far in carnivores of 3 families, canids (dogs and raccoon dogs), felids (cats, tigers, lions, puma/cougar, and snow leopard), and mustelids (ferrets and minks). Carnivores in general appear to be susceptible to infection. All prior infections detected were from animals held captive, except for the recent record of a wild mink captured and sampled in Utah. The susceptibility of carnivores warrants surveillance and research in wild populations, as introduction and possible establishment of SARS-CoV-2 in those populations might result in conservation problems and/or compartments in which the virus might evolve and remain with potential for future human exposures. - Mod.PMB

HealthMap/ProMED map:

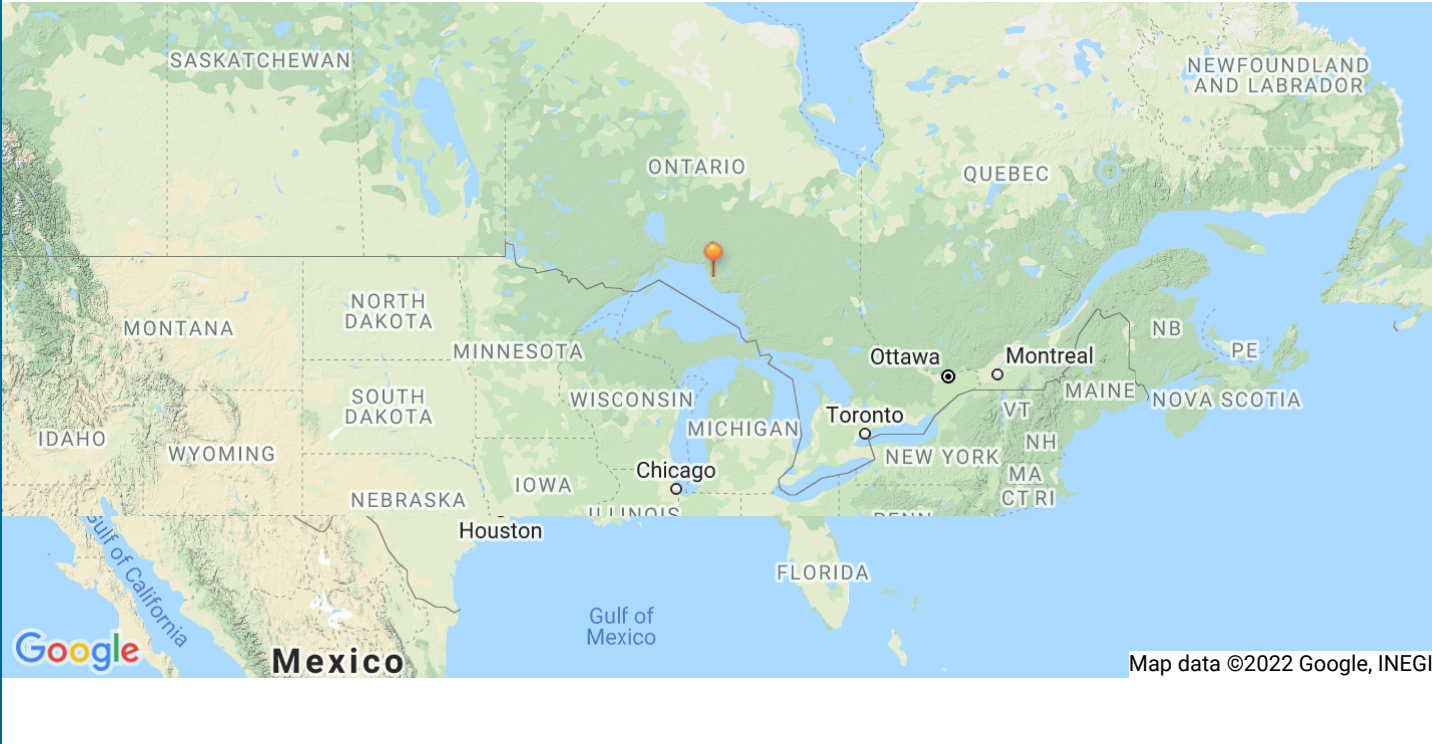
Louisville, Kentucky, United States: <https://promedmail.org/promed-post?place=8017000,7416>]

## See Also

COVID-19 update (536): animal, USA (UT) wild mink, 1st case 20201213.8015608  
COVID-19 update (525): Spain, animal, zoo, lion, human 20201208.8002466  
COVID-19 update (469): USA (TN) zoo, tiger 20201104.7915683  
COVID-19 update (356): South Africa (GT) animal, puma, zoo, OIE 20200813.7673666  
COVID-19 update (143): USA (NY) animal, zoo, tiger, lion, tests 20200430.7284183  
COVID-19 update (141): India, animal, wild tiger, susp, clarification, RFI 20200430.7281768  
COVID-19 update (138): India, animal, wild tiger, fatal 20200428.7275765  
COVID-19 update (135): Netherlands (NB) animal, farmed mink 20200427.7272289  
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COVID-19 update (84): USA, tigers 20200406.7191352  
COVID-19 update (76): China (HU) animal, cat, owned, stray, seropositive 20200403.7179946  
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COVID-19 update (70): China (Hong Kong) cat, pets & stock 20200402.7173286  
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COVID-19 update (57): global, re-using PPE, DR Congo, more countries, WHO 20200327.7149046  
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COVID-19 update (08): companion animals, RFI 20200218.7002276  
COVID-19 update (06): animal reservoir, intermediate hosts 20200217.6997782  
Novel coronavirus (42): China, global, COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, WHO 20200211.6979942  
Novel coronavirus (40): animal reservoir, pangolin poss intermediate host, RFI 20200210.6972104  
Novel coronavirus (28): China (HU) animal reservoir 20200201.6943858  
Novel coronavirus (22): reservoir suggested, bats 20200129.6930718  
Novel coronavirus (20): China, wildlife trade ban 20200127.6922060  
Novel coronavirus (18): China (HU) animal reservoir 20200125.6915411

Novel coronavirus (15): China (HU) wild animal sources 20200123.6909913  
Novel coronavirus (03): China (HU) animal reservoir suggested, RFI 20200114.6887480  
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