

Check out our new web page  
just for zoo partners!!  
[www.peeltx.com/biobank/](http://www.peeltx.com/biobank/)  
Password: darwin



August 2025  
[www.peeltx.com](http://www.peeltx.com)

## **Bank on BioDiversity. Your sample matters!**

### **Darwin Biobank Monthly Newsletter**

#### **Comparative Genetics in the News**

Zebrafish genes may lead to hearing loss therapies. Zebrafish use two genes to guide regeneration of hair cells in their neuromasts, which are distributed in a line from head to tail and help detect water motion. This may have implications for regeneration of hair cells in the inner ear of mammals, including humans. Read more and find the original article in the link above!



#### **Get to Know Peel**

Lisa Abegglen, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the U. of Utah's Huntsman Cancer Institute, where she studies comparative oncology and mechanisms of cancer risk. Dr. Abegglen has worked closely with zoos over the last decade to receive and study zoo animal tissues and tumors. She brings this expertise to the Darwin Biobank as a Peel Consultant.



#### **Why Peel?**

*Peel Therapeutics combines evolutionary biology and comparative genetics to develop breakthrough therapies.*

**At our Darwin Biobank, Peel helps Zoo Partners ensure the genetic potential of their animals will be available for future conservation needs.**

*Peel is a commercial member of AZA and is committed to helping zoos fulfill their health and conservation missions.*

**Contact us with questions or about samples:**

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#### **The Legacy They Provide**



Houston Zoo said goodbye to 52-yr old orangutan, Cheyenne, on Feb 2, 2025, and her cells were preserved in the Darwin Biobank. Cheyenne was an integral member of the Houston Zoo Family for nearly three decades. She was an incredible foster mom to several young orangutans, and her strong maternal instincts made her an important part of the Species Survival Plan® (SSP) Program.

#### **Journal Club**

**Limited cell-autonomous anticancer mechanisms in long-lived bats.**

Nature Communications May 2025

Many species of bats have low cancer rates, with enhanced p53 activity likely contributing to bat cancer resistance. (similar to elephants!) The same immune adaptations which allow bats to tolerate increased temperatures and metabolism required for flight, reduce oxidative stress, and co-exist with deadly viruses, may also reduce cancer by recognizing and eliminating tumors.

**This Month's Taxa Call Out**  
**Calling all..... Bats!!**

This August and September, we are putting an emphasis on bats– please remember to submit samples on any bats you examine!

**\*\*\*we will still take any other taxa samples too!\*\*\***

#### **What's new with Peel?**

Dr. Lisa Abegglen will be presenting at the AAZV Conference in Kansas City on Friday 8/22, discussing the role of neutrophil extracellular traps in EEHV Hemorrhagic Disease. If you're attending the meeting, stick around for her talk!!!