

PRESS RELEASE

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Birth watch underway for pregnant giraffe Seattle's tallest baby arriving soon!

SEATTLE—Signs of impending birth have prompted Woodland Park Zoo to ramp up its birth watch for its pregnant giraffe, 8-year-old Tufani (too-fawn-ee). Stay tuned to updates on Seattle's tallest baby by visiting www.zoo.org/tallestbaby and following #tallestbaby on the zoo's [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).



The birth window for the first-time, expectant mom began in mid-May and continues to early July. The gestation period for giraffes is 14 to 15 months.

According to Katie Ahl, a lead zookeeper at Woodland Park Zoo, Tufani began showing small changes in her behavior early this week. "Tufani has been given daily opportunities to cross from the corral to the African Savanna exhibit with the other two giraffes, but has chosen to stay behind in the corral and barn. In addition, we've observed changes in her udder, a reduced appetite and restlessness, which lead us to believe she's approaching labor," said Ahl. "All of these indicators mean Tufani could give birth within the next few days to a week, but predicting giraffe births is not an exact science, especially with the long birth window. We'll continue monitoring Tufani closely. We are very excited for this new baby giraffe to join our herd!"

Giraffes give birth while standing, and the calf drops 5 feet from the ground as it is born. About 6 foot tall at birth, infants usually stand within half an hour after birth and can run around with their moms several hours later.

The father is 4-year-old Dave, who [arrived at the zoo in June 2014](#). This will be the first baby for both parents who were paired under a breeding recommendation made by the Giraffe Species Survival Plan (SSP), a cooperative, conservation breeding program to ensure genetic diversity and demographic stability in North American zoos. To learn more about the expectant parents, visit the zoo's [blog](#).

See the zoo's latest video for updates on Tufani and her pregnancy [here](#).

Help provide top notch care for Tufani, and other African Savanna animals, by purchasing items from Woodland Park Zoo's "baby shower" gift registry on Amazon: www.zoo.org/registry.

In addition to Tufani and Dave, the other giraffe at the zoo is 10-year-old Olivia, Tufani's sister. Olivia gave birth to the zoo's last viable giraffe, Misawa, in 2013. In September 2015, Misawa moved to Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville, Texas to begin his own family.

Widespread across southern and eastern Africa, with smaller isolated populations in west and central Africa, new population surveys estimate an overall 36 to 40 percent decline in the giraffe population, from approximately 151,702 to 163,452 in 1985, to 97,562 in 2015. Of the currently recognized subspecies of giraffe, five have decreasing populations, while three are increasing and one is stable.

Giraffe fans can help support conservation efforts by visiting Woodland Park Zoo and supporting Wildlife Survival Fund projects, including the [Giraffe Conservation Foundation](#), which seeks to provide the first long-term ecological monitoring effort of the Angolan giraffe—an important desert-dwelling giraffe subspecies in northwestern Namibia. Visit

www.zoo.org/conservation to learn more about the zoo's conservation partnerships taking place in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

Woodland Park Zoo participates in 108 SSPs, overseen by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. Led by experts in husbandry, nutrition, veterinary care, behavior, and genetics, SSPs manage populations in North America to maximize their genetic and demographic diversity with the goal of ensuring their long-term survival. SSPs also involve a variety of other collaborative conservation activities such as research, public education, reintroduction and field projects.

Woodland Park Zoo opens 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily through September 30. For information and to become a zoo member, visit www.zoo.org.

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