

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release | August 1, 2017  
Media contact: Gigi Allanic, Alissa Wolken  
206.548.2550 | [woodlandparkzoo@zoo.org](mailto:woodlandparkzoo@zoo.org)

For photos and video, visit the zoo's blog: <http://blog.zoo.org/2017/08/baby-giraffe-lulu-takes-first-steps-on.html>

### Baby girl giraffe, Lulu, takes her first steps on the savanna

SEATTLE—Today marked a new milestone for Lulu, Woodland Park Zoo's baby girl giraffe. For the first time, the 1½-month-old giraffe ventured onto the vast African Savanna exhibit with mom Tufani (too-faw-nee) and the herd.



"Lulu's adventurous spirit and self-confidence were on full display during her first introduction on the savanna. She crossed out to the savanna cautiously, but once she was out there, she explored, galloped, and met our gazelle, guinea fowl and a few ducks," said Katie Ahl, a lead keeper at Woodland Park Zoo. "Lulu is very independent but you could tell mom and Lulu were keeping an eye on each other and it was good to see them check in with each other throughout the introduction."

Lulu's aunt Olivia and dad Dave also joined Lulu on the savanna, their first time since the birth of the giraffe.

Lulu's time on the African Savanna will be limited for the first week as introductions continue. Currently, she has outdoor access in the corrals for guests to enjoy her from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. "Lulu and her mom also have access to the barn, which is not viewable to our guests, so she may choose to go in the barn to nurse or nap," said Ahl.

Like human parents do at home for their own babies, the zoo closely inspected the African Savanna and took steps to baby proof the exhibit before introducing Lulu. "Baby proofing the exhibit is a standard protocol when baby animals at the zoo go into an exhibit, and it is part of ensuring good animal welfare," said Martin Ramirez, mammal curator at Woodland Park Zoo. "Giraffe-style baby bumpers were added to the exhibit in the form of branches and logs laid along steeper slopes. We also closed up any gaps where she could potentially wedge herself. The baby bumpers and the watchful eyes of her mom and aunt are a great safety net as she explores her new surroundings."

Seattle's tallest baby, Lulu, was born June 20 to first-time parents, 9-year-old giraffe Tufani and 4-year-old Dave. Born at a height of 5'9", Lulu currently stands at 7'6" tall and weighs 267 pounds. The birth marked the second viable birth of a giraffe at the zoo since 2013 and the third in 20 years.

Giraffe fans can get updates by visiting [zoo.org/tallestbaby](http://zoo.org/tallestbaby) and following #tallestbaby on the zoo's [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

Dave and Tufani were paired under a breeding recommendation made by the Giraffe Species Survival Plan (SSP), a conservation breeding program across accredited zoos to help ensure a healthy, self-sustaining population of giraffes in North American zoos. In addition to Tufani, Dave and Lulu, the other giraffe at the zoo is Tufani's sister, 10-year-old Olivia.

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](http://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.

Summer zoo hours: 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. For more information or to become a zoo member, visit [www.zoo.org](http://www.zoo.org) or call 206.548.2500.

Woodland Park Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums and certified by the rigorous American Humane Conservation program. The Humane Certified™ seal of approval is another important validation of the zoo's long-standing tradition of meeting the highest standards in animal welfare. Woodland Park Zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats through more than 35 field projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. By inspiring people to care and act, Woodland Park Zoo is making a difference in our planet's future ecological health and sustainability.

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