

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Baby giraffe is here—Olivia gives birth today It's a boy!**

SEATTLE—*Woodland Park Zoo has a new baby giraffe!* Olivia, 12 years old, gave birth today on May 2 at 4:56 a.m. And it's a boy!

The baby giraffe marks the first offspring between Olivia and the father, 6-year-old Dave. Olivia had her first baby in 2013 at Woodland Park Zoo with a different mate.

The unnamed calf and mother are off view in the barn to allow a quiet environment for maternal bonding and nursing.

"The baby was on his feet within an hour after he was born, which is what we want to see," said Katie Ahl, a lead keeper at Woodland Park Zoo. "The first 24 to 72 hours are critical for newborn giraffes. A healthy infant should begin nursing shortly after birth and be able to run around with its mom several hours later. Olivia is an experienced mother and she's showing good maternal behavior toward her second baby."

While the baby is standing and nursing, he's not walking normally on his rear legs, noted Dr. Tim Storms, associate veterinarian at Woodland Park Zoo. "This condition could resolve itself as the baby gains more strength and walks around more. We'll keep a close eye on him and, if necessary, take measures such as wrapping to ensure the legs are stabilized."

Giraffes have a gestation period of 14 to 15 months. The tall animals give birth standing up and the calf drops 5 feet to the ground as it is born. Baby giraffes are typically born at 6 feet tall and stand within an hour after birth. When fully grown, giraffes reach a height of 16 feet tall for females and 18 feet tall for males.

The last giraffe birth at the zoo was a female, Lulu, born in 2017 to mom Tufani—Olivia's younger sister—and dad Dave. In addition to the baby, Olivia, Dave and Tufani make up the current herd of giraffes at the zoo.

In the following days, the zoo will launch a community naming contest and a live barn cam. Giraffe fans will have an exciting opportunity to see Olivia and her baby as they bond in the barn and to watch the baby grow. Viewers can access the barn cam once it goes live and see updates by visiting [www.zoo.org/giraffe](http://www.zoo.org/giraffe) and following the zoo's [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

"We're so excited to share another baby giraffe with our guests and community," said Martin Ramirez, mammal curator at Woodland Park Zoo. "Baby giraffes have a magical way of touching the hearts and minds of people, no matter how old you are. We hope everyone connects again with this new baby and comes to care about saving giraffes in their natural ranges in Africa. We want everyone to care about giraffes as much as we do."

According to Ahl, the baby giraffe is expected to follow mom in the next several days to the outdoor corral where guests can see him with mom. "Viewing will be sporadic since the family can choose to spend time in the off-view barn too. It should be a few months before we begin introducing the baby to the African Savanna habitat," said Ahl.

The expectant parents, Olivia and Dave, were paired under a breeding recommendation made by the Giraffe Species Survival Plan, a cooperative, conservation breeding program across accredited zoos to help ensure a healthy, self-sustaining population of giraffes.



Woodland Park Zoo participates in 111 Species Survival Plans, overseen by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. Led by experts in husbandry, nutrition, veterinary care, behavior, and genetics, these plans also involve a variety of other collaborative conservation activities such as research, public education, reintroduction and field projects.

Giraffes are widespread across southern and eastern Africa, with smaller isolated populations in west and central Africa. New population surveys estimate an overall 40 percent decline in the giraffe population; fewer than 100,000 exist today. Of the currently recognized subspecies of giraffe, five have decreasing populations, while three are increasing and one is stable.

Giraffe enthusiasts can stick their necks out for giraffes and help support conservation efforts by visiting Woodland Park Zoo and supporting the Wildlife Survival Program, which includes the Giraffe Conservation Foundation. The Foundation seeks to provide the first long-term ecological monitoring effort of the Angolan giraffe—an important desert-dwelling giraffe subspecies in north-western Namibia. Visit <http://www.zoo.org/conservation> to learn more about the zoo's conservation partnerships taking place in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

Spring/summer zoo hours are 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.

Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo engages more than a million visitors of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and walks of life in extraordinary experiences with animals, inspiring them to make conservation a priority in their lives. The zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats in the wild through more than 35 wildlife conservation projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. 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. Visit [www.zoo.org](http://www.zoo.org) and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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