

## PRESS RELEASE

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Media contact: Gigi Allianic, Meghan Sawyer  
[woodlandparkzoopr@zoo.org](mailto:woodlandparkzoopr@zoo.org)

### Media download link for photos and video:

<https://zoo.resourcespace.com/?c=3468&k=aa0cb4d05d>

password: gorilla

See more on the zoo's blog: <http://bit.ly/hellosweetness>

### **Woodland Park Zoo's gorilla mom has given birth to her second baby** ***Newborn gorilla is currently under human care***



SEATTLE—The baby boom continues at Woodland Park Zoo with the birth of a western lowland gorilla and it's a girl! The mom, Nadiri (naw-DEER-ee), gave birth Friday, January 29, at 10:25 a.m. (PST). The gestation period for gorillas is eight to nine months.

Shortly after birth, zoo gorilla and veterinary staff had to step in and place the baby under round-the-clock care in the gorilla building because Nadiri had not picked up her baby to nurse or keep her warm enough the first day. Staff are nourishing the baby by bottle feeding her human infant formula, keeping her warm and providing her with short visits with her mother; the baby is doing well.

The first 72 hours of life are the most critical for a newborn gorilla. "We will continue to provide hands-on care while keeping the baby in close proximity to Nadiri 24/7 and attempting to reintroduce her to mom," said Martin Ramirez, mammal curator at Woodland Park Zoo. Nadiri has visual, auditory and olfactory contact with her baby. "We will continue to introduce Nadiri to her baby. She is staying close and has picked up her baby for short periods over the weekend, but has not shown any interest in nursing her. By doing short introduction sessions frequently throughout each day, we hope her maternal instinct will soon kick in."

The newborn is the second baby for 24-year-old Nadiri and the first between her and dad, 21-year-old Kwame (KWA-may).

In 2015, Nadiri gave birth to her first offspring, Yola, who was sired by Vip. Because Nadiri was partially human-raised as an infant and had no experience as a mom, she did not know what to do when she gave birth. Therefore, Yola spent the first several months of her life under round-the-clock care by gorilla keepers and veterinary staff while having daily interactions with her mom. The new mom's maternal instincts eventually engaged and Yola was reunited with her mom and the other members of her family.

"We had worked with Nadiri to prepare for this moment and were optimistic this time around that Nadiri would pick up her baby and show maternal care. However, while Nadiri periodically touched her baby just after giving birth, she never picked up her newborn the first day," said Ramirez.

Gorilla keepers and veterinary staff closely monitored the birth and post-birth while trying to encourage Nadiri to pick up her baby. "However, an hour later, it was necessary for us to intervene for the baby's well-being," added Ramirez.

The zoo's animal health team performed a neonatal exam about an hour after birth. "The baby's vital signs are good and she's healthy and physically normal," said Dr. Darin Collins, director of animal health at Woodland Park Zoo. "The newborn weighs 4.9 pounds. The average weight for a gorilla at birth is 4 pounds, so she's within the norm."

Following the exam, the baby was returned to her mom while gorilla care staff continued to encourage maternal behaviors in Nadiri. "We prepared for every possible scenario including

having to bottle feed and provide round-the-clock care for the baby until Nadiri shows interest,” said Ramirez. While she has held her baby since then, she has not yet nursed her.

The new mom and her group will remain in the off-view dens so mom can remain with her family, including daughter Yola. There may be days when other members of the group rotate in the public outdoor habitat.

Woodland Park Zoo is renowned for its successful gorilla breeding program, including its expertise in day-to-day care and specialized care for newborn and geriatric gorillas. The new baby is the 15<sup>th</sup> gorilla born at Woodland Park Zoo.

The last birth of gorillas at the zoo was Kitoko (ki-TOE-koh), a male who was born in March 2020 during the pandemic. Kitoko continues to thrive with mom Uzumma and their family.

“Bringing a baby gorilla into the world is always exciting not only for us here at the zoo, but also the community as a whole. Each new gorilla is a symbol of hope for their cousins in the wild, for the forests they live in and for our planet,” said Ramirez. “Growing our gorilla family of different generations and ages creates more opportunities for the zoo to engage the community in taking important action to preserve gorillas into the future.”

Stay tuned to updates and milestones by visiting [zoo.org/growingupgorilla](https://www.zoo.org/growingupgorilla) and following the zoo’s Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. #GrowingUpGorilla

Two groups of gorillas currently live at the zoo. Group one: Kwame, Nadiri, Yola, Uzumma, Kitoko and Akenji. Group two: Vip and Jumoke.

Nadiri and Kwame were paired under the Gorilla [Species Survival Plan](#), which is a cooperative, conservation breeding program across accredited zoos to help ensure a healthy, self-sustaining population of gorillas.

### **How to help gorillas**

Every visit to Woodland Park Zoo supports conservation of animals in the wild. Join the zoo by recycling old cell phones and other used handheld electronics through [ECO-CELL](#) to help preserve gorilla habitat. Reclaiming the minerals in electronics and diverting them from landfills help reduce demand for mining in gorilla habitat. Drop off used handheld electronics including cell phones, smartphones, iPods, iPads, tablets, adapters, chargers, MP3 players, handheld gaming systems and their accessories at drop boxes located at both zoo entrances or the gorilla overlook. Funds generated from ECO-CELL support the [Mondika Gorilla Project](#) and [Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund](#).

### **Gorillas: the largest ape in the world**

- Gorillas in the wild typically live in groups of 5 to 10, composed of a dominant silverback (adult male), several adult females, adolescents, juveniles and babies. Sometimes groups can consist of two to more than 50 family members.
- Gorillas belong to the family of great apes: gorilla, chimpanzee, bonobo and orangutan. Apes are found in Africa and Asia only.
- Gorillas are muscular and very powerful. Adult males weigh between 350 and 600 pounds. Adult females weigh between 150 and 300 pounds.
- Gorillas are primarily vegetarian. They eat leaves, other vegetation and fruits. Occasionally they’ll even snack on termites and ants!
- The estimated population of western lowland gorillas in the wild is about 300,000.

Zoo hours through April 30: 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m. daily. Save 30% off summer admission rates now through March 31: [www.zoo.org/visit](https://www.zoo.org/visit).

Accessibility admission: The zoo has reserved hours for those with a disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering. Learn more about these [reserved hours and accessibility](#) at the zoo.

For more information or to become a zoo member, visit [www.zoo.org](http://www.zoo.org) or call 206.548.2500.

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