

# NEWS RELEASE



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## OOH BABY, BABY!

NORFOLK, Va. – The Virginia Zoo is excited to announce the birth of a healthy male giraffe calf.

Giraffe parents, 11-year-old mother Imara and father Billy welcomed their new baby Thursday, June 6. At birth, the calf weighed in at 150 pounds and measured 6'4" tall. This is the third offspring for Imara and an exciting new addition to the Zoo's giraffe herd.

"We are ecstatic about this new baby," said Greg Bockheim, the Zoo's executive director. "Zookeepers knew she was pregnant but pinning down an exact date is very difficult because pregnant giraffe are masters at hiding their pregnancy because in the wild they need to protect themselves from what becomes a compromising condition at delivery."

Masai giraffe are the largest subspecies of giraffe and the tallest land mammal on Earth. They are native to Kenya and Tanzania and are characterized by their jagged spots. Males reach heights of up to 18 feet tall and females grow to 14 feet tall. Giraffes may bear one offspring after a 15 month gestation period. When a giraffe baby is born, it comes into the world front feet first, followed by the head, neck, and shoulders. Newborn giraffe can stand and walk within one hour of birth. They can also eat leaves at the age of four months, but continue to nurse until they are 6 to 9 months old.

The new baby has been given a preliminary check up by the Zoo's veterinarian and appears to be very healthy. Under the watchful eye of mother Imara, the baby giraffe will begin to explore his surroundings in the upcoming weeks. Mom and baby can be viewed by Zoo visitors at the indoor giraffe exhibit in Africa.

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*An accredited Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) facility, the Virginia Zoo exhibits more than 400 animals on 53 beautifully landscaped acres. For more than a century, the Virginia Zoo has demonstrated a commitment to education and conservation, and offered a fun-filled day for visitors of any age. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and located at 3500 Granby Street in Norfolk. Daily admission prices are \$11 for adults, \$10 for seniors (age 62 and over) and \$9 for children ages 2-11. Visit [www.virginiazoo.org](http://www.virginiazoo.org) or call (757) 441-2374 for more information.*

## BABY, GIRAFFE 2 OF 2



Baby giraffe born at the Virginia Zoo June 6, 2013 (Virginia Zoo photo by Wyn Hall).



Baby giraffe measured for the first time at the Virginia Zoo (Virginia Zoo photo).

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