

SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS IN CONSERVATION

BLACK RHINO BORN AT CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO

Standing next to her 2,900-pound mom, the baby rhino at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo looked tiny. But looks can be deceiving, as the new arrival weighed a sturdy 60 pounds at birth and will gain at least 30 pounds a month as she grows.

The female black rhino calf was born in the early morning hours of 11 July, at the Zoo's Rhino Building. Her arrival is a major success in the Zoo's ongoing breeding and conservation efforts to save the critically endangered black rhino from extinction. The new calf is the third born at the Zoo since 2001, and one of just a few born this year nationwide.

The yet-to-be-named rhino baby is significant because she is the first offspring ever sired by male rhino Jimma, who came to the Zoo in 2005 from Potter Park Zoo in Lansing, Mich.

The rhino baby's mother is Inge, who was born in the wilds of South Africa and came to the Zoo in 1997 from Addo Elephant National Park in South Africa. Inge gave birth to all three of the rhinos born at the Zoo, including Kibibi, who was born in 2003 and now tips the scales at about 2,200 pounds. Inge's first offspring, female Azizi, was born in 2000 and now resides at the Pittsburgh Zoo.

The Zoo's effort to breed black rhinos is a top priority because the species is critically endangered in the wild and additional births will serve to perpetuate the species for generations to come. Native to the African savanna, black rhinos were nearly wiped out in recent decades because hunters were killing them for their horns, which are used in traditional Chinese medicine and as status symbols in the Middle East. While more than 65,000 black rhinos roamed the savanna in the 1970s, just 3,600 remain in the wild today.

The baby rhino at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is not yet on public

display, as she is continuing to bond with her mother. You can see video footage of her on the Zoo's Web site, www.clemetzoo.com, where a video podcast of the baby rhino can be downloaded to iPods.

CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN ZOO SEES GIRAFFE CALF BORN AS HERD'S BULL PASSES

On 20 June, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo's staff were firsthand participants in the circle of life as the birth of a giraffe was followed shortly by the euthanizing of the giraffe herd's famed bull.

The birth, from mother Uhura, took place in the Zoo's African Rift Valley giraffe building. The Zoo's giraffe keepers observed that the young female giraffe stood up a little more than an hour after birth, looked to be in excellent health and vigorously nursed off her mother within the hour. The female calf received a thorough neo-natal exam in the late afternoon of 21 June.

The neo-natal examination, which is done 24 hours after the birth, includes a physical exam to look for any birth defects, determine gender, weigh the calf, check vital signs, sterilize the umbilicus and provide a tetanus vaccination. The exam also included micro chipping the young giraffe and taking blood samples. These blood samples are essential as they are the prime indicator that the newborn giraffe has received colostrum, essential antibodies from its mother's milk. These antibodies are needed to build the baby giraffe's immune system.

The newborn weighed in at 179 pounds while standing at 6'2" tall. The new calf is the ninth off-

spring for 17-year-old mother Uhura (u-HER-uh) and the thirty-fifth sired by the Zoo's giraffe bull, Laikipia (la-KEEP-e-uh).

As the happiness of the new giraffe birth was filtering among Zoo staff, the solemn knowledge was also faced by staff that the calf's father, Laikipia, was to be euthanized within hours. The euthanization had been scheduled after animal department supervisors, the Zoo's general curator and the Zoo's veterinary staff conferred on the failing health of the bull.

During his nearly 25 years at the Zoo, Laikipia sired 35 calves, including the calf born to Uhura on 20 June. Laikipia's thirty-sixth sired calf is due to be born by 26-year-old Becky.

Laikipia, named after Africa's 1,900-foot-high Laikipia Escarpment found in the Rift Valley, was the iconic leader of the Zoo's reticulated giraffe herd. Known to Zoo visitors for his size and stature, Laikipia commanded

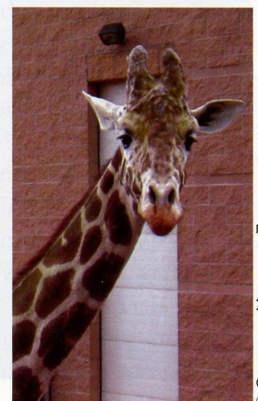
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