


## In the News

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Wednesday, Apr 24, 2019

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### Omaha's Zoo and Aquarium Welcomes Giraffe Calf

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Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium welcomed a female giraffe calf on April 16 at 8:45 a.m. This is the third calf to mother Dottie, a 19-year-old female giraffe, and Jawara, a 10-year-old male. The last giraffe calf born at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium was Penelope in November 2017.

The calf weighed 152 pounds and was measured around six feet tall 24 hours after birth. Dottie and the calf are viewable to Zoo guests in the Syd and Betty Cate Giraffe Herd Rooms in a separate area before they will be introduced to the rest of the herd in the upcoming weeks. There are currently eleven giraffe at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium – one male and ten females, including the calf.

The gestation period for a giraffe is 15 months. Giraffe give birth while standing and the calf is born feet first. The calf will nurse for about four months, then it will begin consuming solid food such as hay and pelleted grain. Giraffe calves grow at a rapid rate during their first year of life, gaining about three and a half to four pounds per day.

Reticulated giraffe are currently listed as endangered on the International Union of Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. Habitat loss has been a major factor in the population decline, which has been approximately 80 percent in the last thirty years for the reticulated giraffe species. Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium supports field conservation efforts of the Giraffe Conservation Foundation, an organization that focuses on understanding the range and distribution of giraffe in Africa and habitat management.

As of January 29, 2018, there were 431 giraffe at 88 reporting Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited institutions and four non-AZA institutions.

The public is invited to help name the calf by submitting name suggestions through a Facebook contest that will begin on Friday, April 26. Submissions will be accepted through Friday,

May 10. The winning name will be announced on Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium's Facebook page on Friday, May 17, which is also Endangered Species Day. The winner will also receive a prize package with items from the Zoo's Gift Shop.