

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Furry potatoes” born at Brevard Zoo

MELBOURNE, Fla., April 23, 2018 — Brevard Zoo’s animal care staff are celebrating the April 11 birth of two rock hyrax pups. Keepers named the male Gnocchi and female Hashbrown for their potato-like appearance.

This is the first shared litter for mother Buffy and father Fangs. Gestation lasted six to eight months, a particularly long time for such a small animal. Biologists believe this reflects the rock hyrax’s evolutionary relation to elephants and manatees, which also have lengthy pregnancies.

The pups were born in a behind-the-scenes area and will likely remain there for the foreseeable future as the Zoo’s public-facing rock hyrax habitat was damaged by Hurricane Irma last fall.

These tiny mammals, which weigh roughly half a pound at birth, are found in dry habitats throughout Africa and the Arabian Peninsula and use rock crevices and vegetation as shelter. They live in colonies with a dominant male and several females. Human hunting has led to population declines in some areas.

Photos: www.dropbox.com/sh/e1i3d1b5u4xmi56/AABgi8M_QlreefjyLqDKNcP-a

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Brevard Zoo is home to more than 900 animals representing 195 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education and conservation. More information is available at www.brevardzoo.org.

Treetop Trek features five aerial obstacle courses that whisk guests above parts of the Zoo and through lush Florida landscapes. More information is available at www.treetoptrek.com.