

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Brevard Zoo Welcomes First Giraffe Calf in 6 Years

MELBOURNE, Fla., Sept. 16, 2026 — A nearly 6-foot-tall bundle of joy has arrived at Brevard Zoo! An 119-pound female giraffe calf was born to 12-year-old mother, Kumi, and 6-year-old father, Mapenzi.

This little one is the first giraffe born at Brevard Zoo since Mapenzi's birth in 2020. Zoo supporters Mark and Nancy Tomassone are proud to name the calf "Gail" in honor of Nancy's mother.

The birth took place in the Zoo's behind-the-scenes Africa Barn. The rest of the giraffe herd was able to be nearby, and the Zoo's other female giraffes, Tisa (who is also pregnant) and Aurora, were able to be in an adjacent stall to Kumi.

Gail stood for the first time at 9:32 a.m., just 30 minutes after birth. Our animal care team has been preparing for this momentous birth by doing overnight checks on Kumi and putting extra bedding in her birthing stall.

The little one was examined by the Zoo's veterinary team and appears to be doing well. Both mom and baby are remaining in the behind-the-scenes Africa Barn for the time being to bond.

The comfort of Kumi and Gail will guide introductions to the rest of the giraffe herd and to the Zoo's public-facing giraffe habitat.

Kumi and Mapenzi were paired up according to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Species Survival Plan for Masai giraffes. This program ensures there is a healthy, genetically diverse safeguard population in AZA-accredited organizations.

Gail's arrival is good news for the Masai giraffe subspecies, which is considered endangered and is threatened by habitat loss, poaching, disease and more in Tanzania and Kenya.

Please visit [this Dropbox link](#) for initial photos and videos of Gail.

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Brevard Zoo is home to more than 700 animals representing 170 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 BrevardZoo.org.