



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Giraffe born at Brevard Zoo; birth, first steps captured on video

MELBOURNE, Fla., March 19, 2018 — Animal care staff are rejoicing in the arrival of Brevard Zoo's newest giraffe calf, a male born to 16-year-old Milenna in the early evening hours of March 17 following a 13–15-month gestation period. His father is 19-year-old Rafiki, who has sired all 11 calves born at the Zoo. Both the newborn and his mother appear to be thriving.

Zoo staff captured the first moments of his life on video. Viewers will note a six-foot fall to the ground upon birth and the calf's first steps.

"Every birth is incredibly significant, but giraffe births are especially awe-inspiring," said Michelle Smurl, the Zoo's director of animal programs. "We're thrilled to share this moment with the world."

Weighing 148 pounds and measuring 6'3.5" tall, he is just a half-inch shorter than Greg, Milenna's previous calf, was upon birth in March 2016.

The as-yet-unnamed calf and his mother will remain behind the scenes for the next few weeks before joining the rest of the tower in the public viewing area.

Eight of the Zoo's nine giraffe belong to the Masai subspecies, which is native to Tanzania and southern Kenya. Habitat loss, poaching, disease and civil unrest pose the most significant threats to wild giraffe.

Photos and video:

<http://www.dropbox.com/sh/aag53hpagzt1ys0/AAA5aNrVQEGbSJIP7GKF3afVa>

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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.