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## **Back for Seconds! Second Giraffe Birth at the Zoo This Week**

November 24, 2017-- *Jacksonville, FL* – Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) is delighted to welcome a new Reticulated giraffe to the family, the second born this week! The healthy female was born Friday, November 24 at 1:10 in the afternoon. Much to the amazement of Zoo guests, the calf was born on exhibit. Guests were able to see the delivery from the Giraffe Overlook.

This calf is the fourth for Luna and impressive 18<sup>th</sup> for sire, Duke. Our most recent addition marks the 41<sup>st</sup> giraffe calf born at the Zoo. As Luna was not in labor this morning and keepers felt so confident in Luna's previous birth experiences and her healthy pregnancy, she was encouraged to roam freely and comfortably with the rest of the herd. Knowing she was near the end of her pregnancy, keeper staff was closely monitoring her throughout the day.

When the calf's front hooves made an appearance around 12:30 p.m., keeper staff called most of the herd off exhibit to give Luna space. Another female, Spock, stayed with Luna, and though she gave her privacy for the birth, came over quickly to greet the youngster and even helped with the cleaning process. Spock has never had any offspring of her own but has been an excellent "auntie" figure to many calves over the years.

The calf was standing within 30 minutes to the cheers of guests watching from the Overlook. Zookeepers have observed the calf nursing well. Luna and the calf will be allowed to stay on exhibit for as long as they are comfortable. They will be joined by the male calf born on November 19, his mother Naomi, and auntie Spock until keepers feel it is time to introduce the entire herd to the newborn.

Both new calves are expected to be out with the herd this weekend assuming the two mothers are comfortable with the situation. This is the last weekend of Kids Free November, where children under 12 receive free admission with the purchase of an adult ticket.

The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens supports the Giraffe Conservation Foundation whose sole focus is on the conservation and management of giraffe in the wild and spearheaded the study that posits that there are actually four subspecies of giraffe instead of one, as previously believed.

Photo Credit: JJ Vitale and John Reed

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### **About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens**

For over 100 years, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has aimed to inspire the discovery and appreciation of wildlife through innovative experiences in a caring environment. Starting in 1914 with an animal collection of one red deer fawn, the Zoo now has more than 2,000 rare and exotic animals and 1,000 species of plants, boasting the largest botanical garden in Northeast Florida. The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit organization and a portion of every ticket sold goes to the over 45 conservation initiatives Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens supports around the world, and here in NE Florida. JZG is proud to be an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. For more information, visit [jacksonvillezoo.org](http://jacksonvillezoo.org).