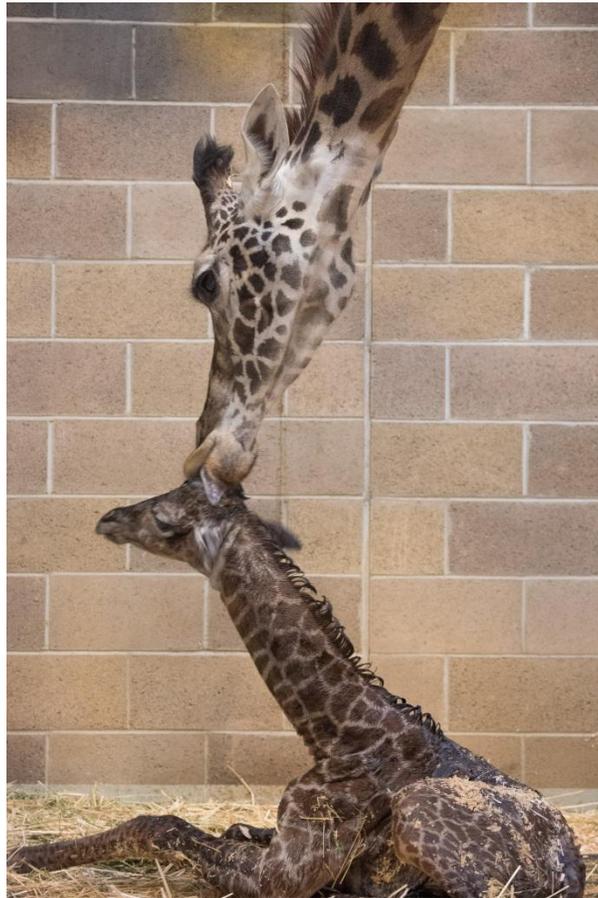


## Sacramento Zoo's Giraffe Herd Grows by Six Feet Giraffe Calf Birth

- WHAT'S HAPPENING:** The Sacramento Zoo is excited to announce the birth of a 163-pound male Masai Giraffe calf.
- WHERE:** Sacramento Zoo, at the corner of Land Park Dr. and Sutterville Rd. in William Land Park.
- WHEN:** The calf was born at 8:40 a.m. on Sunday, April 10, 2016 at the Sacramento Zoo.



Shani, a six-year-old female Masai Giraffe at the Sacramento Zoo, gave birth to a healthy 163-pound male calf at 8:40 a.m. on Sunday, April 10. Both are spending time bonding in the Zoo's giraffe barn and may have access to the public side yard periodically over the next few days. The Zoo's veterinarians have performed a routine neonatal health check on the calf that included weight and brief physical exam. Zookeepers were monitoring Shani around the clock prior to the birth and will continue to closely watch the mother and her calf.

"This is joyous occasion for the Sacramento Zoo," said Matt McKim, Animal Collection Director at the Sacramento Zoo. "The two are not currently visible to the public; we will take cues from dam and the calf as to when they are ready to make their public debut. We hope it will be in the coming weeks."

The Sacramento Zoo is now home to six giraffes: three female Reticulated Giraffes, one male Masai Giraffe (Chifu, the father), one female Masai Giraffe (Shani, the mother), and the calf. In 2010, the Zoo completed renovations on the giraffe exhibit that includes a state-of-the-art, heated barn. This is the 19<sup>th</sup> calf born at the Sacramento Zoo going back to 1964 when the species was first housed here.

The Masai Giraffe is the largest giraffe subspecies and is found in southern Kenya and Tanzania. In addition to a difference in size, Reticulated and Masai Giraffes have slightly different spot patterns- a Masai giraffe's spots are usually darker and irregular in shape. Gestation is 14 to 15 months with the female giving birth alone in a secluded spot away from predators. When a calf is born, it can be as tall as six feet and weigh 150 pounds. Within minutes, the baby is able to stand on its own.

The Sacramento Zoo is one of 32 facilities managing 120 Masai Giraffes in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) population. The Sacramento Zoo partners with the Wild Nature Institute, a field research group that is currently studying Masai Giraffe demographics and the African Savanna ecosystem with photo recognition software. Observation of giraffes in zoos is helping field researchers to recognize physical characteristics and social behaviors that they are seeing in the wild. The study, which includes more than 1,500 Masai Giraffes, will allow researchers to follow the giraffes' movements and reproduction habits in the wild in order to understand where and why their populations are declining.

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*Sacramento Zoo – Wildly Inspiring!*

Open since 1927, the Sacramento Zoo is home to more than 500 native, rare and endangered animals and is one of more than 200 accredited institutions of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Located near the corner of Land Park Drive and Sutterville Road in William Land Park, the Zoo is wholly managed by the non-profit Sacramento Zoological Society. This Sacramento treasure inspires conservation awareness through education and recreation. Daily admission is 9 am to 4 pm with the Zoo grounds closing at 5 pm. General admission is \$11.75; children ages 2-11 are \$7.75 and one and under are admitted free. Parking is free throughout the park or ride Regional Transit bus #6. For information, call 916.808.5888 or visit [saczoo.org](http://saczoo.org).

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