

Greenville Zoo Names Baby Giraffe: Tatu

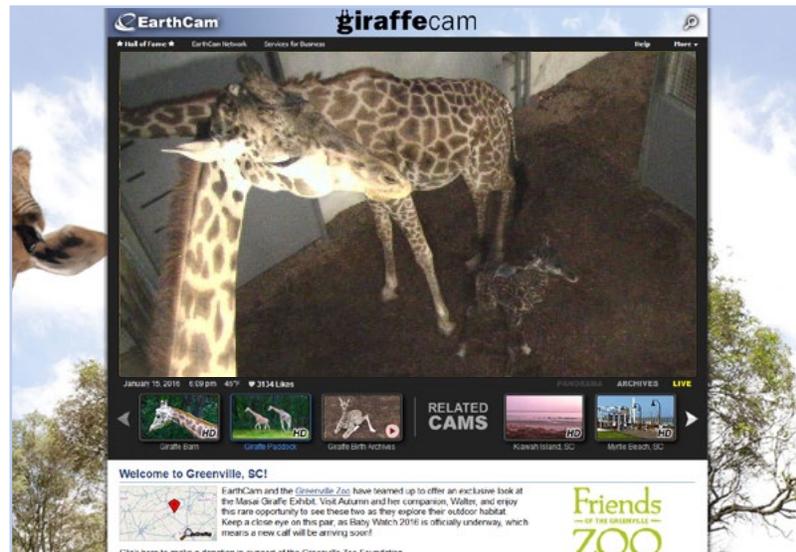
giraffe baby, one day old

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IT'S A BOY

(Greenville SC) The Greenville Zoo staff and representatives from the Greenville Zoo Foundation gathered this afternoon to introduce the newest member of the zoo family. From nearly 200 suggestions submitted by giraffe fans old and young, from the Upstate and beyond, zookeepers selected Tatu as the name of Autumn's and Walter's baby boy. The name means "third child," and its language of origin is African-Swahili. The name was actually submitted separately by three local residents - Chester Collins, Maria Bolan and Lori Nelson – two of whom were in attendance when the name was announced.

Thanks to [EarthCam](#), viewers from across the U.S. and around the world were able to watch as Autumn gave birth to Tatu on February 2 at 6:16 a.m. Within the first few hours, Tatu was walking and nursing, which are important achievements for baby giraffes. When the zoo's veterinary team and members of the animal care staff performed Tatu's neonatal exam on February 3, he weighed 157.8 pounds and was 6 feet, 1 inch tall. In comparison, Kiko weighed 118.4 pounds and was 5 feet, 11 inches tall when he was born.



"Anytime an animal is born and is healthy, it's a wonderful thing, not only for the community to celebrate, but also for the giraffe population and for all those who are working to preserve it," said Greenville Zoo administrator Jeff Bullock. "With the recent births of our siamang, red panda, ocelots and now Tatu, it has been an extraordinary time for the Species Survival Programs that we participate in."

Since the birth, Walter has been separated from Autumn and Tatu to allow time for mother and calf to bond without interruption, and for Tatu to gain strength. In the coming weeks, Autumn and Tatu will alternate exhibit time with Walter. Due to the time of year and the cold winter temperatures, Walter will be on exhibit most mornings and Autumn and Tatu will be out in the warmer afternoons. When Tatu is on exhibit, visitors can expect to see him doing what most babies do - nursing and sleeping. As he grows, he will become more active and very curious.

Dr. Nikolay "Nick" Kapustin, the Greenville Zoo's new deputy administrator and veterinarian, also made a debut at this afternoon's news conference, providing details about Tatu's birth and physical exam. Kapustin, who is a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, joined the zoo staff in January. Prior to coming to Greenville, Dr. Kapustin held positions at several zoos, most recently serving as senior veterinarian at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens. "I feel fortunate to be able to share in such a joyful experience – both for the Greenville Zoo and the Species Survival Program," said Dr. Kapustin. "I have been involved in some great conservation initiatives during my career, and I'm excited about my role as a lead in the Greenville Zoo conservation program."

The zoo will reopen tomorrow after being closed for maintenance for two weeks; however, due to forecasted temperatures, zoo officials stressed that Tatu's daily activities and time on exhibit will be determined by the weather conditions. The staff will provide regular updates on the zoo's Facebook page to let the public know the likelihood of Tatu being out on exhibit, so guests planning to visit the zoo specifically to see the calf are strongly encouraged to check the Facebook page ahead of time. For those times when he is not on exhibit, fans can still watch Tatu on the [Giraffe Cam](#).

The Greenville Zoo is open seven days a week, except on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Zoo entry ticket sales close at 4:15 p.m. Admission is \$9 for adults and \$5.75 for children ages 3 – 15. Children 2 and under are admitted free with an adult. For more information, call 864-467-4300, visit the zoo's website at <http://www.greenvillezoo.com/> or follow the zoo on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/greenvillezoo>.