



December 6, 2023

COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO AND SENECA PARK ZOO ANNOUNCE BIRTH OF MASAI GIRAFFE

December 6, 2023 – County Executive Adam Bello and the Seneca Park Zoo today announced that Kipenzi, one of Seneca Park Zoo’s female Masai giraffes, gave birth to a calf early this morning. This is the third Masai giraffe born at Seneca Park Zoo, and is the offspring of Kipenzi and Parker, who died earlier this year. The gender of the calf is not yet known.

““This is outstanding news. Kipenzi is a remarkable giraffe and is a great mother,” said County Executive Bello. “I am proud and thankful for both the Animal Care team and the Zoo’s Veterinary Health team for their caring and diligent work this morning.”

Zoo Veterinarian Dr. Chris McKinney says, “The calf appears to be nursing well, is walking normally, and is energetic. We will perform the full “new calf” evaluation once mom and calf have had some time to bond.” McKinney continues, “It is important to remember that these first weeks are a delicate time for the calf so we will be monitoring baby and mom closely.”

Kipenzi and Parker were a very valuable genetic pair, making their offspring incredibly important to not only Seneca Park Zoo, but to all AZA-accredited zoos. As announced earlier this year, Kipenzi has a squamous cell carcinoma growth on her jaw. Kipenzi continues to eat well, behave normally, and allow Animal Care teams to treat the area. Animal Health continues to monitor Kipenzi closely.

Giraffe gestation periods range from 13-15 months making it difficult to predict a delivery date. The Zoo’s other female Masai giraffe, Iggy, is also pregnant and in her delivery window.

“So far things are going smoothly with both baby and mother.” says Seneca Park Zoo Director Steve Lacy. “As always, the Animal Care Team and zoo staff are providing comprehensive care for the new calf. We can determine the sex of the new calf once we are able to get a closer look at the baby.”

The Animals of the Savanna building will be closed for the next few days so that Kipenzi and her calf may continue to bond. Seneca Park Zoo will continue to provide additional updates on the health of the new giraffe as they are available.

Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.

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