

Companion Guide for:  
*Giraffes... Duke and His Family Tree*

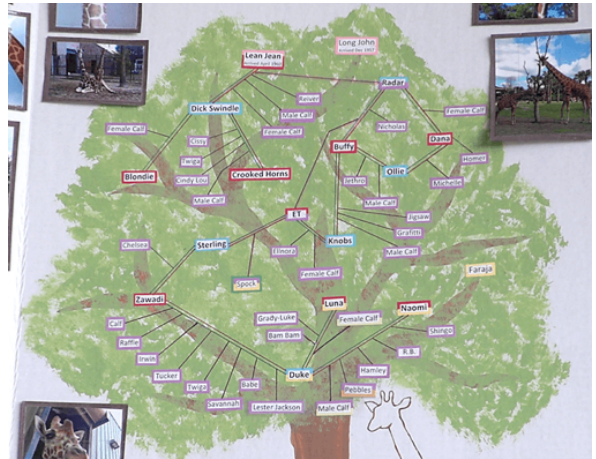


**REPRODUCTION**

- Female giraffes will cycle, or ovulate, about every 3 weeks. The male will sniff the urine of a female using its mouth, called a flehmen response, to detect any pheromones or hormones that indicate a female is cycling. If the female is cycling, they will attempt to mate.
- Gestation lasts between 400-460 days (about 13-15 months). The female gives birth standing up, and the calf will fall roughly 5 feet. The drop will jolt the young giraffe awake and stimulate the lungs to begin breathing. The calf is able to stand within 30 minutes of being born.
- A male giraffe's coloration will sometimes become darker as they age, and their ossicones become noticeably lumpier through calcification. This is very noticeable in Duke's coloration and ossicones.

## EXTENDED FAMILY TREE OF THE JACKSONVILLE ZOO AND GARDENS GIRAFFES

- Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has had giraffes since 1960, and currently has a herd of 7 giraffe.
  - Once a giraffe at the zoo reaches sexual maturity, it may be sent to another Zoo for a few reasons:
    - To ensure there is only one breeding male in the giraffe herd  
Only one male breeds at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in order to prevent fighting between males, and to be sure of the offspring's father.
    - The Species Survival Plan (SSP) will recommend that a giraffe may be sent to another zoo.  
These transfers ensure a genetically diverse and viable population of giraffes in accredited zoos across the country and prevent inbreeding within a single facility. SSPs were created in 1981 in order to create an assurance population for species' wild counterparts, to prevent inbreeding in zoos, and to ensure animals are not continually taken from the wild.
  - Currently, Duke's genes are underrepresented in the giraffe population within zoos in the United States. Under recommendation from the SSP, the Jacksonville and Gardens will send giraffes, once they are no longer dependent on their mother, to other AZA zoos in the U.S. Duke's offspring have gone to zoos and related facilities around the country in order to mate. Those zoos include:
    - Dallas Zoo in Dallas, Texas
    - Como Park Zoo in St. Paul, Minnesota
    - WhiteOakConservationCenter in Yulee, Florida
    - Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield, Missouri
    - Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City, Kansas
    - TheMarylandZoo in Baltimore, Maryland
    - Riverbanks Zoo and Garden in Columbia, South Carolina
- 



## SIGNS OF AGING

- Male giraffes can live to be about 25 years old, and females into their late 20s. When they begin reaching that age, they show signs of maturity. Male giraffes will sometimes become darker in coloration, their ossicones will become lumpier and calcified, and they may show signs of arthritis.
- Duke, Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' breeding male, is 19 years old, and as such, he has become darker in coloration, has calcified ossicones and is showing signs of arthritis when he walks. That hasn't stopped him from breeding though – Duke has fathered 16 of Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' 39 calves born in the facility since they've had giraffes.