

First baby giraffe born at Lake Mbuoro National Park

By Gerald Tenywa

A new baby often brings joy to the parents and close relatives. This was the case for conservationists when a calf was born last week among the giraffes of Lake Mbuoro National Park in western Uganda.

"We have registered the first baby giraffe in Lake Mbuoro National Park," said Dr Robert Aruho, a wildlife vet at Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). "This is the first giraffe born in this park in almost 200 years." Uganda has a population of 1,200 giraffes.

The newborn brings to 16 the number of giraffes in the park. The mother and father of the giraffe are part of the group of 15 giraffes that were translocated from Murchison Falls National Park to Lake Mbuoro in 2015.

"I am blessed to have been part of this team," said Aruho, adding that this has started a new chapter in the conservation of giraffes at the park.

Describing it as a healthy and energetic baby, Aruho said just days after birth, the calf had already started exploring the park. It is occasionally seen playing and running around the main herd roaming the plains.

UWA, with the support of Africa Wildlife Foundation



The newborn calf exploring Lake Mbuoro park

moved the giraffes to Mbuoro in order to restock the park. They say Mbuoro had for a long time lacked giraffes, yet they existed in the park many years ago.

In the group of 15 giraffes, eight are female and seven bulls, but it takes 15 months for a pregnant giraffe to produce a baby. This, according to Aruho, was the reason that there have been no newborn giraffes in

Mbuoro.

After spending three years without the giraffes reproducing, worries were creeping into the tourism sector and the birth has brought a huge relief.

The expansion of the population of giraffes could also help to tame weeds such as acacia hockii which were growing and threatening to take over the park.