

# Giraffe

by

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The giraffe's scientific name is *Giraffa Camelopardalis*. Giraffes are mammals. They live in both open savannah areas and wooded grasslands. The male adult giraffe is 15 to 18 feet tall and females are shorter, they are 13 - 16 feet tall. Males weigh between 1,764 - 4,255 pounds and the female only weighs 1,213 - 2,601 pounds. In the wild the giraffe eats from acacias. These are flowering trees. They also feed from leaves of other kinds of trees but they are selective. At the zoo they eat pellets, carrots, apples, bananas. When giraffes are young they are prey to hyenas, leopards, and wild dogs. Once they get older they are prey to lions and humans. Baby giraffes are called calves. The mother giraffe has one baby while standing up. Calves weigh 104 - 154 pounds and stand 72 -76 inches tall when they are born. Baby giraffes can walk after one hour of being born and can run

within 24 hours. The mother giraffe feeds for up to a year but they sample leaves from bushes just a few weeks after birth. When the calves are 15 - 18 months old they are ready to leave the protection of their mother. Giraffes are prevalent throughout Africa, and currently their status in the wild is not endangered, but threatened. For all giraffes, their status on the threatened list is due to hunting and poaching. Local tribes kill giraffes for their hair, horns, skin, and meat. Habitat loss and human development have also played significant roles in eliminating the giraffe's territory. To ensure their continued survival, giraffes need suitable and stable habitat in order to flourish.



#### Facts:

1. The giraffe has the same number of vertebrae in its neck that most other mammals have.
2. Oxpecker birds like to help giraffe's by eating bugs off their backs.
3. Giraffes can drink 12 gallons of water in one setting.
4. Every step an adult giraffe takes is 15 feet long.
5. A giraffe's neck and head weigh 550 pounds.
6. A giraffe's tongue is 18 inches long.
7. Giraffe's are fast and can reach speeds up to 35 miles per hour.
8. Newborn giraffes begin their lives by falling 6 feet to the ground.
9. A giraffe's heart can pump 16 gallons of blood in one minute.
10. Giraffes have the largest eyes of any land mammal.