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GIRAFFES AT THE FOREST EDGE EXHIBIT

Julie

Known officially as “Giraffe SB #409,” Julie is the second-oldest living giraffe in captivity at 32—as of March 2009. Records vary, but she is either the fifth or sixth oldest giraffe historically with a known birth date and the 10th or 11th (again, records vary) oldest giraffe historically in captivity.

Julie is second oldest to a 34-year-old female, Clara, at the Bronx Zoo in New York. Julie came to the North Carolina Zoo in the summer of 1979 from Busch Gardens in Tampa.

Turbo

Turbo, an 18-month-old male, arrived at the N.C. Zoo in the fall of 2008 from the Denver Zoo. According to his keepers, he is easily identifiable by small markings on his neck that they describe as “vampire bites.” Turbo and Tafari (see below) arrived at the N.C. Zoo together.

Tafari

An 18-month-old male, Tafari arrived in the fall of 2008 from Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs, Col. Tafari and the younger Asha (see below) both had the same father at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.

Asha

One of the two newest giraffe arrivals at the N.C. Zoo (along with Jitu), one-year-old Asha arrived in March 2009 from Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.

Asha and Jitu were both named in May 2009 by Lexy Labrador, a high school student in Climax, N.C., through an N.C. Zoo naming contest open to the public. According to Lexy, Asha means “life” in the African Simwali dialect. “...in my opinion, all new animals are a gift of life,” she said about the name.

Asha is the half-sister to Tafari, both having had the same father at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo.

Jitu

Jitu, a 1-year-old male, also arrived at the N.C. Zoo in March 2009 with Asha. He came from Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield, Mo.

Jitu means “giant” in the African dialect of Simwali, according to Lexy Labrador, winner of the N.C. Zoo’s naming contest announced in May. “I chose (Jitu) because giraffes are the giants among the lands,” she said.

Jitu is the N.C. Zoo’s only “breeder” male.