

# White Rhino Gives Mother's Day Special Meaning at Disney's Animal Kingdom

**LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., May 9, 2012** – Mother's Day may be a little more memorable this year for a Disney "mom" that recently gave birth to a white rhino calf at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

After a 16-month gestation period, Kendi delivered her fourth calf Friday, May 4. The healthy male, which has not yet been named, is the ninth white rhino born at Disney's Animal Kingdom; his mother, 13-year-old, Kendi, was the first.

"The birth of a white rhino calf is certainly something to celebrate since the population of this species is endangered in the wild," said Jackie Ogden, Ph.D., vice president of Animals, Science and Environment for Disney Parks. "It's encouraging that with protection and careful management, the global population of white rhinos continues to grow."

The calf and mother doing well and are currently off the savannah bonding at Disney's Animal Kingdom. Guests will be able to see them when they return to the herd in the coming weeks.

Disney's Animal Kingdom participates in a white rhino breeding program coordinated by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The program focuses on sustaining the white rhino population in North America.

At Disney's Animal Kingdom, the success of the rhino breeding program has directly contributed to the conservation of other white rhinos in the wild. In 2006 two rhinos born at Disney's Animal Kingdom, Nande and Hasani, joined four others at Ziwa Sanctuary to help reestablish a white rhino population in Uganda. So far, Nande has been responsible for two offspring — a male calf born in 2009 was the first rhino born in Uganda since the 1980s followed by a female white rhino born in 2011.

Disney's commitment to conservation and rhinos goes beyond breeding. The Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund and the Disney Foundation have provided more than \$1 million in support to programs in Africa and Asia to protect the last five remaining species of rhino. For more information on the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund visit [www.waltdisneyworld.com/about](http://www.waltdisneyworld.com/about).

## **White rhino fun facts:**

- White rhinos are named not for their color, which is gray, but for the shape of their mouths. The word "weit" in Afrikaans means wide.
- The white rhino is among the world's largest land mammals, second only to the elephant. A male rhino can grow to more than 5,000 pounds as an adult.
- A rhino can move its ears independently to pick up sounds but it depends most on smell.
- The receptors responsible for the rhino's sense of smell are larger than the animal's entire brain.
- The white rhinoceros has the widest set of nostrils of any land based animal.