

**Media Release from
Caribbean Gardens: The ZOO in Naples**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Zoo's New Year Baby In Like a Lamb, But Will Grow Up to Take Out a Lion

At just a couple months of age, the zoo's newest baby looks furry and cuddly. When she grows up, however, even Africa's toughest predators will think twice before taking her on. She's Africa's sable antelope and she can currently be seen nursing and grazing with her already dangerous mom and dad at Caribbean Gardens: The ZOO in Naples.

Although born eight weeks ago, her birth is just being announced because of the young sable's defense strategy against predators. Zoo guests rarely see the calf early on because sable calves hide in the grass in the zoo, just like in the wild.

Their defense strategy is quite effective. After mom gives birth, she cleans up the calf and moves away from the baby. While the baby hides from carnivores for these first weeks, the mother stays in the locale where the calf is hidden and stands guard. Adult sables have a scent gland in their feet that predators can track, so when its time to nurse, the calf comes out to meet mom. The youngsters have not yet developed these scent glands and so do not leave a scent trail. If the calf doesn't appear, the mother lets out a piercing whistle reminiscent of a birdcall. After nursing and being cleaned, the calf returns to a new hiding place so its overall scent doesn't build up in any one spot.

At birth and when still young, the sable fears death from a number of predators. Hyenas, leopards, lions, wild dogs, and crocodiles will gladly make a meal of one of them. When fully mature, however, things change. A female will top the scales at over 400 pounds while males have been

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known to exceed 650 pounds. But it's not just the size of their body that predators are wary of. A sable's horns are shaped like a scimitar and can be just as deadly. Their horns curve back anywhere between three and five feet and have successfully gored would-be attackers to death – including lions!

At Caribbean Gardens, the zoo's professional keeper staff takes additional precautions around this species. Keepers do not enter the exhibit with the sable as they do with many other antelope species. To allow for the daily cleaning, the keepers have trained the sables to enter a secure paddock area where the antelope enjoy one of their daily meals. Afterwards, the antelope family returns to the larger exhibit.

Guests can now enjoy seeing the whole sable family as they graze on the hillside next to Lake Victoria in the zoo. Nearby, passengers on the Primate Expedition Cruise can also see a few more of the zoo's recent births. The black and white colobus monkeys, also from Africa, have added three babies to their troop in the past year.

Caribbean Gardens: The ZOO in Naples welcomes guests into a 52-acre zoo and botanical garden. A variety of innovative presentations and activities are offered all day. Small troops of lemurs, apes, and monkeys live in natural habitats on the islands visited by guided catamarans on the Primate Expedition Cruise. In addition to the historical plantings dating back to 1919, the garden features a variety of animals from apes to zebras and is the only zoo in Florida to feature all four of Africa's top predators including the endangered African wild dogs as well as the rarest variety of tigers in America. Caribbean Gardens is nationally accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association and is located in the heart of Naples at 1590 Goodlette-Frank Road across from Coastland Center, the zoo is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Daily admission is \$15.95 for adults and \$9.95 for children ages 4 to 15 and includes entrance to all shows and the cruise. For more info, call the Caribbean Gardens ZooLine at (239) 262-5409 or click www.NaplesZoo.com.

MEDIA:

To arrange a reporter and/or camera person, please contact Tim Tetzlaff at 888.520.3756

Digital images of the sable calf are available via e-mail.

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