

The Spotless Giraffe



What I did on my Summer Vacation: 2023 Edition

Have you heard about the spotless giraffe?

Yep, that's right. She was born a couple of months ago in Limestone, TN. She's already 6' tall of gorgeous. I was on my North Carolina mountain vacation when we heard about her. She made the NY Times, The Today Show, and about every other news outlet you can think of. She's big news.

This type of birth doesn't happen often. The last one was born in 1970 in Japan. She's the only one in the world.

The one born in Tennessee lives only about 80 miles from our vacation spot. So, we detoured a bit to introduce ourselves as we traveled home.

When we arrived, it was quite warm. High 80's. They let us know we'd be able to see her, but she'd be at a distance because she needed to be in the shade to stay cooler.

In reading about this kind of giraffe I learned that they have a harder time surviving in the wild. The reason is that she has no spots. Not having spots messes up her camouflage. On top of

that, on a spotted giraffe, there is a network of veins that run along the spots that work sort of like an air-conditioner. This allows the giraffe to be out in the hot sunshine more comfortably. Because she has no spots she has no network of those veins so she's at a disadvantage.

I highly recommend making a trip to Brights Zoo any time you're in northern Tennessee. It's a private facility. Family owned. We talked to Mr. Bright about all the publicity. He's a very busy man talking to all the news outlets. The Knoxville newspaper had been there that morning taking pictures as Mr. Bright greeted all the visitors.

There are a ton of other animals, too. This is not a teeny zoo. I sort of call it a half-day zoo. The paths to walk are wide and paved. There are many shade trees to keep you cool, and the animals, too. There's the requisite snack bar area and picnic tables. You can make a day of it if you'd be so inclined.

After she was born, they conducted a naming contest for her. The recommended names were all in Swahili. You can see the name they chose for her [HERE](#).

In the 40 years my husband and I have been together we sort of developed a hobby of "collecting" zoos. Anytime we travel to far-flung locations we put the zoo on our itinerary.

We visited the Berlin Zoo one year. That's the one that the singer Michael Jackson rented for an evening so he could tour without a crowd.

We've been to the zoo in New Zealand, Australia, Bermuda, and assorted states throughout the US. We also visited a few zoos in Central America. Those were more on the scale of monkey/butterfly compounds. I'm sure I'm forgetting a few.

Brights Zoo is one I will remember.

Cheers,