

Mountain gorilla twins born in Rwanda

June 3 2011



A juvenile mountain gorilla leans on the shoulder of an adult male in the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2008. A mountain gorilla in northern Rwanda has given birth to twins, a rare occurrence for an endangered species whose numbers have dwindled to less than 800, officials said Friday.

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"The two babies, one male and one female, were born May 27," said Rica Rwigamba, head of tourism and conservation at the [Rwanda Development Board](#).

"The two new-borns and their mother Ruvumu are well," she said.

It is only the seventh time in the last 40 years that a gorilla has given birth to twins. Twin gorillas were last born in February.

Twenty-two baby mountain gorillas will be "baptised" in a name-giving ceremony on June 18 in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park.

The twins born in February will be among those baptised but the latest two will only be named at next year's ceremony.

According to a 2010 census, the total number of [mountain gorillas](#) has increased by a quarter over the past seven years to reach more than 780 individuals.

Two-thirds of them are found in the Virunga chain that straddles Rwanda, [Uganda](#) and the Democratic [Republic of Congo](#). They were brought to the attention of the outside world by the renowned US primatologist, the late Dian Fossey.

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