

Woodland Park Zoo has a prickly announcement *Zoo welcomes baby porcupine, press invited to meet the baby*

WHAT: Woodland Park Zoo welcomed a prickly little critter on May 7 with the birth of a North American porcupine. The press is invited behind the scenes to meet the newborn.

The baby porcupine, known as a *porcupette*, marks the fourth birth for parents Molly and Oliver, both 5 years old. At 1 week old, the porcupette weighed just 750 grams (about the size of a chubby pineapple). The gender is still unknown because of difficulty determining the gender of newborn porcupines.

Mom and her porcupette currently spend most of their time in an off-view den in the award-winning Northern Trail exhibit with access to the public exhibit. As it grows more comfortable with crawling, climbing and exploring, it will make its official debut in its Northern Trail home. In the wild, female porcupines leave their babies during the day and usually nurse them once in the evening.

Porcupettes become active quickly and, as natural tree dwellers, their climbing instincts take hold within weeks of birth. Climbing makes foraging easier on the young, a skill set they exercise early in their development as they wean themselves from mom and transition to an herbivorous diet of leaves, twigs and bark. Zoo guests will begin seeing the porcupette more frequently on exhibit as it becomes more active and curious.

WHEN: Thursday, May 26, 11:30 a.m. to noon

WHERE: Behind the scenes at the Northern Trail exhibit. Meet PR staff at the West Entrance at Phinney Ave. N. between N. 55th & N. 56th Sts. Park in the Penguin Lot at N. 55th St. & Phinney Ave. N. or Otter Lot off N. 59th St. & Phinney Ave. N. Escort to the maternity den is required.

INFO: Porcupettes are born with full coats and opened eyes, unlike many of their rodent counterparts. Within hours of birth their soft coat of quills begins to harden, immediately preparing them for protection from predators. They become active quickly and, as natural tree dwellers, their climbing instincts take hold within weeks of delivery.

Female porcupine, Skyáana, born in 2014 at Woodland Park Zoo, did a star turn in the zoo's most viewed video of 2014. See "Tubby Baby Porcupette Chews on Sticks at Woodland Park Zoo":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMzCiOn8Drs>. She is currently one of the zoo's ambassador animals and can be seen taking part in the zoo's Ambassador Animal program which takes place every day at 1:00 p.m. through September 30 at the new Alvord Broadleaf Theater behind Zoomazium.

Admission fees through September 30: Adult (13-64) \$19.95; Child (3-12) \$12.25; Free for children 2 and under year round. Active, retired, and veteran U.S. military and their families, seniors and people with disabilities are



eligible to receive a discount and zoo members receive free zoo admission year round. Parking: \$6.

Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, award-winning Woodland Park Zoo is famed for pioneering naturalistic exhibits and setting international standards for zoos in animal care, conservation and education programs. Woodland Park Zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. By inspiring people to care and act, Woodland Park Zoo is making a difference in our planet's future. For more information, visit www.zoo.org.

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