

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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Zoo introduces elk Buttons to outdoor habitat Partially-tamed elk is meeting other members of her species

WHAT: Buttons, a female elk who arrived last month at Woodland Park Zoo, is being introduced to her new outdoor habitat at Northern Trail. The press is invited to see the new elk explore her habitat and for interviews with animal care staff.

Through a careful, deliberate process, Buttons has been going through introductions with the zoo's other elk: 17-year-old male Goodwyn and 20-year-old females Sarah and Jessie. Buttons is believed to be approximately 7 years old.

At a young age, Buttons began visiting rural homes and ranches in Cle Elum, Wash. According to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) officials, she became used to human interaction, prying through people's belongings, backyards and boats searching for food. Residents would hand feed and pet her and even put kids on her back. As a result, Buttons became habituated to humans and gained celebrity status as a "pet" to several neighbors and an occasional pest to others.

Despite efforts by WDFW to relocate Buttons to live with approximately 700 other elk in an area far less populous with humans, the attempt to successfully integrate her with wild elk failed—Buttons ignored the herd and, instead, favored moving toward human settlements and potential trouble that prompted the move. Five weeks later, she was moved to Woodland Park Zoo where she has been in standard quarantine at the zoo's hospital.

WHEN: **Thursday, April 18, 10:00–11:00 a.m.**

WHERE: Northern Trail at Woodland Park Zoo. 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.

INFO: People need to leave fawns, elk calves, otter and sea lion pups, birds and other wildlife alone if found in the wild. Oftentimes, the mother is off feeding and the animal is not orphaned; taming is never a good option for the animal. WDFW recommends contacting a regional WDFW office at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regional-offices> or a licensed wildlife rehabilitation expert at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/injured-wildlife/rehabilitation/find>

Don't miss Woodland Park Zoo's annual **Bear Affair: Living Northwest Conservation Day presented by Brown Bear Car Wash on Saturday, June 8**. Learn about the survival of bears, wolves, turtles, raptors, and other wildlife in the Pacific Northwest and what these animals need to survive in the wild, how to help keep them safe and how to peacefully coexist. Stay tuned to www.zoo.org/events for more information.

In addition to elk, the award-winning Northern Trail habitat is home to grizzlies, North American river otters, gray wolves, mountain goats and



Steller's sea eagles. The Northern Trail will be reimagined through the lens of the Pacific Northwest's exceptional ecosystem and will open in 2020 as Living Northwest. Funds raised through the Living Northwest Initiative will create a new exhibit experience that will be a revitalization of the Northern Trail and will become a hub for engaging zoo guests and community members around discovery, species recovery, human-wildlife coexistence, and saving the wildlife and ecosystems right here at home for the benefit of every species. To donate to the Living Northwest Initiative, visit www.zoo.org/donate.

Zoo hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily through April 30. For more information or to become a zoo member, visit www.zoo.org or call 206.548.2500.

Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo engages more than a million visitors of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and walks of life in extraordinary experiences with animals, inspiring them to make conservation a priority in their lives. The zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats in the wild through more than 35 wildlife conservation projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. Woodland Park Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums and certified by the rigorous American Humane Conservation program. The Humane Certified™ seal of approval is another important validation of the zoo's long-standing tradition of meeting the highest standards in animal welfare. Visit www.zoo.org and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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