

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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Zoo's penguin breeding season closes with two hatchings Press is invited for weigh-in session

WHAT: Woodland Park Zoo's breeding season for Humboldt penguins has closed with the successful hatching of two chicks. The press is invited behind the scenes to a weigh-in and visual checkup session for the chicks.

Incubation for penguins takes 40 to 42 days, with both parents sharing incubation duties in the nest and day-to-day care for their chicks.

The new hatchlings bring the total number of successful hatchings of the species at the zoo to 70 since the zoo's first breeding season in 2010, a year after the penguin habitat opened. The sex of the chicks is unknown until DNA testing can be conducted.

The chicks are off exhibit in nesting burrows where they are under the care of the parents. To ensure they are achieving growth milestones, staff weigh them as they develop with minimal intervention to allow the parents to raise their chicks and gain parental experience.

The first chick hatched April 5 to mom Claudia and dad Cortez; it is the third offspring for the parents. The second chick hatched May 1 and was placed under the care of foster parents Mateo and Mini; the biological parents were moved to an aquarium under a breeding recommendation made by the Humboldt Penguin [Species Survival Plan](#), a cooperative, conservation breeding program across accredited zoos to help ensure a healthy, self-sustaining population of penguins.

WHEN: **Friday, May 10, 11:30 a.m.–noon**

A maximum of two to three media reps will be permitted in the kitchen on a rotational basis. To minimize stress levels for the chick and parents, press can only be accommodated during this timeframe.

WHERE: Behind the scenes at the penguin habitat. Meet PR staff at the West Entrance on Phinney Ave. N. between N. 55th & N. 56th Sts. Park in the Penguin or Otter Lots.

VISUALS: Flash is permitted, but not flood lights

INFO: Before new chicks reach fledging age and go outdoors on exhibit, they are removed from the nest so animal keepers can condition the birds to approach them for hand feeding and other animal care activities. The chicks also are given round-the-clock access to a shallow pool where they can swim in a more controlled and less crowded environment. New chicks join the colony in the outdoor habitat sometime in early summer.

People do not usually think of penguins as a desert-dwelling species. Unlike their ice and snow-dwelling Antarctic cousins, Humboldt penguins inhabit hot, dry coastlines in Peru and Chile. They live on rocky mainland shores, especially near cliffs, or on coastal islands. Humboldt penguins have a body made to swim. Using their strong wings, they "fly" underwater, usually just below the surface, at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour. They steer with their feet and tail.



A vulnerable species, approximately 30,000 to 35,000 Humboldt penguins survive in their natural range. Woodland Park Zoo is committed to conserving Humboldt penguins by supporting the [Humboldt Penguin Conservation Center](#) at Punta San Juan, Peru, breeding the birds through the Species Survival Plan, and encouraging visitors to choose sustainable seafood options as directed by Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program. Punta San Juan is home to 5,000 Humboldt penguins, the largest colony in Peru.

Spring/summer zoo hours are 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. For more information or to become a zoo member, visit www.zoo.org or call 206.548.2500.

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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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