

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release | August 30, 2019  
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### **Sloth bear twins headed to new home at San Diego Zoo Help say goodbye to the adorable brothers this weekend!**

Woodland Park Zoo's sloth bear twins Deemak and Kartick are starting a new journey this weekend and the public is invited to help bid them farewell before they leave for their new home at San Diego Zoo. The bears are scheduled to leave the zoo Sunday, September 1.



The young twins were born in December 2017 to mom Tasha and dad Bhutan. Now that they are almost two years old, it's a natural time for them to move out of their birth family.

The boys will be housed together once they arrive at San Diego Zoo, and when they are fully mature, will be paired with females for breeding recommendations under the Sloth Bear Species Survival Plan. Accredited zoos across the world take part in this conservation breeding program to ensure a healthy and self-sustaining population of sloth bears.

Sloth bears range in the lower elevations of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. They are an endangered species with fewer than 10,000 remaining in the wild. Their survival is challenged by conflicts with humans and animals for space and food caused by deforestation, the bear parts trade for use in traditional Asian medicines and fragmented populations. For more than 400 years, sloth bears were targeted for human exploitation to perform as "dancing bears;" in 2009, the last dancing bear in India was released. Woodland Park Zoo participates in the Sloth Bear Species Survival Plan, which is developing a conservation program to help protect sloth bears in their forest habitat.

Woodland Park Zoo supports Wildlife SOS in their sloth bear maternal and day denning research project focused on sloth bears in the wild and in zoos. The project aims to learn more about day dens (used by sloth bears as a place to rest in safety during daylight hours), and the maternal dens used to give birth to and raise cubs.

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](http://www.zoo.org) and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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