

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Cutie agouti pups born at the zoo

SEATTLE—A pair of red-rumped agoutis (uh-GOO-tees) were born March 18 at Woodland Park Zoo to 2-year-old mom Nutella and 3-year-old dad John Agouti. The new pups mark the first viable birth of the species at the zoo. Agoutis are members of the rodent family.

“We will determine the sex of the pups when they are 1 month old, when we do a complete physical exam to assess their health and ensure they are growing well,” said Dr. Tim Storms, an associate veterinarian at Woodland Park Zoo.

Newborn agoutis can see immediately after birth. “The pups will nurse for up to 20 weeks and are also eating solid food such as leafy greens and a pelleted rodent diet,” said Erin Sullivan, an animal care manager at Woodland Park Zoo.

Agoutis resemble guinea pigs but are larger in size and have longer legs and shorter hair; they weigh between 4½ and 13 pounds, and grow to between 19 and 27 inches. The species is native to South America, living mainly in forested environments.

Nutella and John Agouti were paired under the Species Survival Plan for agoutis. Species Survival Plans are cooperative, conservation breeding programs across accredited zoos to help ensure healthy, self-sustaining populations of various species.

Woodland Park Zoo participates in 111 Species Survival Plans, overseen by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. Led by experts in husbandry, nutrition, veterinary care, behavior, and genetics, these plans also involve a variety of other collaborative conservation activities such as research, public education, reintroduction and field projects.

#### Where to find the agoutis

Woodland Park Zoo is temporarily closed following state recommendations to slow the spread of the coronavirus. When the zoo reopens, the agoutis can be found during regular zoo hours at the Tropical Rain Forest.

While the zoo is closed to the public during these unprecedented times, the exceptional animal care and veterinary teams, and other staff continue to work to provide dedicated care to more than 900 animals. As a non-profit organization, the zoo is relying on the community now more than ever to help these wonderful animals continue to thrive. Contributions, both big and small, will help creatures of all sizes.

Please visit [www.zoo.org/relief](http://www.zoo.org/relief) to help support the animals at Woodland Park Zoo.

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