

Woodland Park Zoo mourns passing of 26-year-old grizzly bear, Denali

SEATTLE — Woodland Park Zoo is sad to share that 26-year-old grizzly bear Denali was humanely euthanized this afternoon after age-related issues caused a severe decline in his health. Denali has been much-loved by Woodland Park Zoo's staff, members, visitors, donors and community members, and he will be greatly missed.



Animal care staff noticed Denali had been displaying mobility challenges for the past three weeks, including severe limitations to his mobility, activity routine and overall comfort, so he was immediately brought indoors where veterinarians and keepers could closely monitor him and adjust his care. However, Denali's health continued to decline.

Denali and his twin brother Keema were born January 15, 1994, and have captured the hearts of their community for 26 years. Male grizzly bears have a median life expectancy of 21 years in human care, and often less in the wild.

Keema and Denali have lived together their entire lives, but grizzly bears are usually solitary animals. The brothers were only able to get along because they have always been together and there are no female bears around.

"Denali lived a wonderful, long life. There are animal keepers at Woodland Park Zoo who have been caring for him for over two decades, and community members who have been visiting him for just as long. While our hearts are broken that he's gone, we also know how fortunate we are to have had so many great and healthy years with him," said Woodland Park Zoo Curator Kevin Murphy. "Keema's keepers are going to be giving him extra attention as he adjusts to life without his brother, and we are confident Keema will be able to handle the loss. Grizzly bears are so adaptive and Keema has always had an independent personality."

The brother bears came to Woodland Park Zoo as 10-month-old cubs. Their mother was a rescue from Yellowstone who couldn't be released back into the wild, so Washington State University gave her a home in their Bear Research, Education, and Conservation Center. It's the only program of its kind in the U.S. that focuses on bear conservation around the world.

Denali's legacy has inspired thousands of guests to take conservation actions and protect Pacific Northwest habitat. You can help protect species like grizzly bears by learning how to coexist peacefully with wildlife. Woodland Park Zoo's Living Northwest program aims to help people inhabiting urban, suburban, and rural areas better understand the needs and behaviors of local wildlife so that we can coexist safely and in harmony. Visit zoo.org/living_northwest to find out how you can help.

For more information about Woodland Park Zoo, visit www.zoo.org and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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