

PRESS RELEASE

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Media download link for photos:

<https://zoo.resourcespace.com/?c=3497&k=b10edcce9a>

Zoo announces new penguin chicks on World Penguin Day!

SEATTLE—Today, April 25, is World Penguin Day and Woodland Park Zoo is commemorating the special day by announcing the hatching of three Humboldt penguins!

World Penguin Day pays tribute to one of the most unique and specialized bird families that live on the planet. There are 18 species of penguins, and all of their natural habitats are in the southern hemisphere.

Most penguins mate for life. 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.

Woodland Park Zoo has one of the most successful Humboldt penguin breeding programs in North America with its new hatchlings bringing the total number of successful hatchings to 77 since the zoo's first breeding season in 2010, a year after the new 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 routinely weigh them as they develop with minimal disturbance to the parents.

"The parents are taking excellent care of their young and the chicks are experiencing great weight gains," said Mark Myers, an animal curator at Woodland Park Zoo. "Our zoo visitors are naturally drawn to our charismatic penguins. It's one of our most dynamic exhibits where guests can see many natural penguin behaviors and smell the fine aromas of a seabird colony. We look forward to introducing our new chicks to the colony in the coming months so people become inspired to help ensure their survival into the future."

Before new chicks reach fledging age and go outdoors on exhibit, they are given round-the-clock access to a shallow pool where they can learn to swim in a more controlled and less crowded environment. New chicks join the colony in the outdoor habitat and spacious pool sometime in early summer.

The parents were paired under the Humboldt Penguin [Species Survival Plan](#), a cooperative, conservation breeding program across accredited zoos to help ensure a healthy, self-sustaining population of penguins.

Penguin points of interest

- Unlike their ice and snow-dwelling Antarctic cousins, Humboldt penguins live among the hot, dry coastlines of Peru and Chile.
- Penguins are playful by nature and also noisy. Their vocalizations sound much like a donkey braying!
- These birds are built to swim. Using their strong wings, they "fly" underwater, usually just below the surface, at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour, steering with their feet and tail.
- Humboldt penguins lose all their feathers each year and systematically replace them with new feathers in a process called molting, which can take up to a few weeks.

How to help penguins

- Penguins are environmental sentinels that can point to the health of the Earth's oceans and coasts. Humboldt penguins are a vulnerable species with approximately 30,000 to 35,000 currently surviving in their habitat range.



- Every visit to the zoo supports conservation of animals in the wild, including [Humboldt penguin conservation](#) in Punta San Juan, Peru, a marine reserve that protects habitat, educates local communities, provides safety with a protective wall, and conducts ongoing research to secure a future for Humboldt penguins and all the species that share its ecosystem.
- Make smart choices when eating seafood: Use the Seafood Watch program at <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/> and learn what seafood to pick and what to avoid.

Woodland Park Zoo offers a safe, outdoor experience for all. Zoo hours through April 30: 9:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m. daily; starting May 1, 9:30 a.m.—6:00 p.m. Go to www.zoo.org/visit to reserve timed entry tickets.

Accessibility admission: The zoo has reserved hours for those with a disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering. Learn more about these [reserved hours and accessibility](#) at the zoo.

For more information or to become a zoo member, visit www.zoo.org or call 206.548.2500.

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