

A Jaguar Jubilee!

Zoo highlights conservation on International Jaguar Day

SEATTLE—Jaguars have long been known to roam throughout many parts of Central and South America as well as parts of Mexico, but did you know they once prowled throughout the American southwest, too? Today, on International Jaguar Day, take some time to learn about the ongoing conservation work to protect these big cats.



Woodland Park Zoo is home to two beautiful jaguars, Fitz—a 5-year-old male—and Nayla—a 17-year-old female. And every time you come visit them, you're helping their wild cousins! That's because a portion of your zoo ticket price or membership fee helps fund wildlife conservation organizations around the world and in the Pacific Northwest.

Over much of the last century jaguars have been vanishing throughout the Americas, especially in the U.S.-Mexico borderland. The reason? Jaguars were seen as a threat to humans and cattle in the southwest U.S., so bounties were paid to trap and kill them in states including Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. By the 1960s they were largely gone from the states. In Mexico, they are now listed as endangered and are a near threatened species throughout the rest of their range in the Americas, mostly due to habitat destruction, trophy hunting and conflict with humans.

Today, there is hope for these graceful cats thanks to organizations like The Northern Jaguar Project, one of Woodland Park Zoo's Wildlife Survival Program partners. The organization was formed in 2003 to preserve and recover the world's northernmost population of jaguars that live on and around the borderlands of the U.S. and Mexico. The Northern Jaguar Reserve—a 55,000-acre area run by the organization—lies just south of the border in the Mexican state of Sonora. Researchers there work to identify and protect jaguars and the corridors they use to travel throughout that habitat. The reservation also provides an umbrella of protection for all the species that live there, including other cats such as pumas, bobcats and ocelots—plus prey species like white-tailed deer and javelinas.

To protect jaguars that live or wander outside the reserve, the organization established the Viviendo con Felinos program (Living with Cats) to mitigate conflict between local ranchers and these native carnivores. The ranchers allow motion-detecting cameras onto their land and in turn they get paid every time a cat appears on camera. The ranchers also get help managing their cattle in ways that discourage any of the cats from preying on their livestock.

Data shows these conservation efforts are working. In their 2021 report, Northern Jaguar Project staff recorded 13 different jaguars moving across 270 square miles of habitat on the reserve and throughout the ranches that have joined the Viviendo con Felinos program. Highlights include known resident cats and some new arrivals, including two female jaguars with cubs!

The Northern Jaguar Project also works with local schools and youth groups, offering outdoor education, recreation and art projects to inspire the next generation of conservationists. You can learn more about this organization [here](#) and we invite you to enjoy a new short video that staff at the Northern Jaguar Project recently produced: [Welcome to the Northern Jaguar Reserve](#).

Another way you can help jaguars is by adopting your own digital version! The [ZooParent](#) program supports the zoo's animal care, education and wildlife conservation efforts in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

Zoo hours through January 22, 2023: Tuesday–Sunday 9:30 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.; Mondays 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Closed Christmas day.

Parking: \$6 first two hours, \$2 each additional hour, daily maximum of \$12, plus applicable state and local taxes.

Accessibility: Information about accessibility and resources, one-to-one aides, sighted guides, mobility equipment rentals, and a sensory map and tools can be found at www.zoo.org/access. For questions or to request disability accommodations for zoo programs or events, contact zooinfo@zoo.org.

For more information or to become a zoo member, visit www.zoo.org or call 206.548.2500. Follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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