

PRESS RELEASE

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Asian and Oceania forest exhibit will showcase new reptiles and amphibians *Adaptations Building closed until September 2024*

SEATTLE—New species of snakes, lizards, amphibians and other reptiles will make Woodland Park Zoo their new home in fall 2024. The zoo's Adaptations Building is currently closed until a major refresh is made to bring in and share these new animals with zoo guests.



The Adaptations Building will be transformed into a new Indo-Pacific Islands forest and will showcase endangered and threatened species that range from the forest floors to the verdant treetops of Southeast Asia and Oceania. In addition, the new gallery of exhibits will offer a more complete story about the biodiversity in Southeast Asia's and Oceania's tropical conservation hotspots. The exhibit will feature a diversity of species including Asian box turtle and rhinoceros ratsnake.

The new reptile and amphibian exhibit will take visitors through the diverse habitats of Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific islands, inviting them to come face to face with endangered and threatened reptiles and amphibians. Visitors will experience firsthand how reptiles and amphibians adapt to survive, finding heat, water and places to hide. What do they do when habitat is lost? What does climate change mean for their survival? Learn more about reptile and amphibian care and conservation, including what everyone can do to help these important indicator species.

Visitor-favorite Komodo dragons, the largest lizards on the planet, will be a highlight of this new destination that reimagines the former Adaptations Building by introducing even more amphibians and reptiles in response to high visitor demand. Two male Komodo dragons, Nakal and Berani, currently live at the zoo.

"Zoo-goers will be fascinated by the unique adaptations of these tropical animals, their challenges to survive in a changing global climate and how everyone can help," said Alejandro Grajal, President and CEO at Woodland Park Zoo.

Construction will begin in November 2023 and the new exhibit is scheduled to open in late September 2024. The existing Komodo dragon area will remain open to visitors through most of the construction. This exhibit was recently updated for enhanced sustainability, animal well-being and visitor experience as part of the zoo's ongoing Forests for All comprehensive campaign. That project was made possible with generous support from Seattle voters, the Seattle Park District, The Sunderland Foundation, and John and Sarah Cook.

The kea exhibit, which is a part of the Adaptations Building, may be affected by construction intermittently. Animal keepers will closely monitor the birds and adjust their environment or viewing hours if needed.

The new forest amphibians and reptiles exhibit will connect the three other zones of the zoo's Tropical Asia biome—Banyan Wilds, Trail of Vines and Assam Rhino Reserve—and enhance the biodiversity of this iconic area of Woodland Park Zoo.

This new exhibit was conceived at a moment of transition for this space at the zoo. The zoo's colony of flying foxes (fruit bats) will soon be relocated to another accredited conservation zoo. With the re-location of the flying foxes, there will no longer be bats at the zoo for the near future.

After debuting a related meerkat mob in the Adaptations Building in 2010, the zoo focused on providing extraordinary care for the individuals in the group but did not have a breeding program for the species, so the mob did not expand with multiple generations. The geriatric, male meerkat who remains has been retired to receive attentive care behind the scenes from his devoted animal keepers. There have been short-term and intermittent residents in the former Adaptations Building over the years, all of which have been relocated to other areas of the zoo or to other accredited conservation zoos.

To support the care of the animals and the sustainable building upgrades that will help them thrive in their new home, please make a gift to the Forests for All campaign today at www.zoo.org/forestsforall/donate

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