

Woodland Park Zoo Earns Meritorious AZA Accreditation, the gold standard of animal care

Silver Spring, Maryland (September 19, 2025) – The Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) has announced that Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle was granted accreditation by AZA's independent Accreditation Commission. Woodland Park Zoo is proud to have held the meritorious distinction as an accredited AZA member since 1982.



"An accreditation credential is only as valuable as the process and organization behind it," said Dan Ashe, president and CEO of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. "AZA accreditation, the global gold standard for modern aquariums and zoos, reflects decades of progress through science, experience, and a persistent commitment to fostering environments where animals thrive, visitors benefit, and wildlife and wild spaces are conserved. We applaud the dedicated leadership and staff at each of these facilities, as they represent some of the best zoos and aquariums around the globe."

To be accredited, Woodland Park Zoo underwent a thorough review to make certain it has and will continue to meet ever-rising standards in categories which include animal care and welfare, veterinary programs, conservation, education, safety and other areas of focus. AZA requires zoos and aquariums to successfully complete this rigorous accreditation process every five years in order to be members of the Association.

The accreditation process includes a detailed application and a meticulous on-site inspection by a team of trained zoo and aquarium professionals. The inspecting team observes all aspects of the facility's operation, including animal care and welfare; training; safety for visitors, staff and animals; educational programs; conservation efforts; veterinary programs; financial stability; risk management; visitor services; and more. Zoo executive leadership is then interviewed at a formal hearing of AZA's independent Accreditation Commission, after which accreditation is granted, tabled or denied.

Among many achievements mentioned by the Accreditation Committee, Woodland Park Zoo was credited for its beautiful and natural facilities, where both native plants and managed horticulture contribute to an immersive experience for guests; good support for staff professional development and a robust DEAL program driven by metrics; and animals in good health with habitats and exhibitry that support natural behavior and care needs.

“Our incredible staff and supportive community are the foundation of Woodland Park Zoo and it’s their dedication to the animals in our care that makes the imperative wildlife conservation work we do possible. Earning this accreditation affirms that we are holding ourselves to the high standards we have established,” said Woodland Park Zoo President and CEO Alejandro Grajal. “The zoo’s staff and community are truly at the heart of our successes, and their amazing achievements are the reason Woodland Park Zoo continues to be a leader in animal care and wildlife conservation.”

About AZA

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, animal welfare, education, science, and recreation. AZA is the accrediting body for the top zoos and aquariums in the United States and eleven other countries. Look for the AZA accreditation logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. The AZA is a leader in saving species and your link to helping animals all over the world. To learn more, visit www.aza.org.

About Woodland Park Zoo

Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo engages more than a million visitors of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and walks of life in extraordinary experiences with animals, inspiring them to make conservation a priority in their lives. The zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats in the wild through more than 30 wildlife conservation projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. Woodland Park Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums and certified by the rigorous American Humane Conservation program. The Humane Certified™ seal of approval is another important validation of the zoo’s long-standing tradition of meeting the highest standards in animal welfare. Visit www.zoo.org and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [BlueSky](#) and [Instagram](#).

To support Woodland Park Zoo’s outstanding animal care and welfare, please consider joining Woodland Park Zoo for **All for Animals Giving Day on September 30, 2025** to protect wildlife, inspire future generations and care for animals. Visit zoo.org/givingday to make your gift and make a difference.

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