

**Zoo rescues a grizzly bear cub from Montana**  
***Cub is zoo's second rescued bear cub in three months***

SEATTLE—In mid-July, Woodland Park Zoo opened its home to a brown bear cub rescued in Anchorage, Alaska. Three months later, the zoo has welcomed another cub: a female grizzly that was orphaned in Montana due to conflicts between her mom and humans.

The cub currently weighs 95 pounds and arrived at the zoo October 3. She is currently in a 30-day quarantine at the zoo's hospital, which is among standard practices at the zoo for new arrivals to ensure the wellness of all its animals.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) had recently responded to a wave of bear conflicts stemming from a combination of human safety concerns, habituated bear behavior, unsecured attractants and other issues. On Sept. 20, FWP bear specialists captured an adult female grizzly bear—the mother of the cub—on private land in the Gardiner Basin. In the weeks prior to the capture, the bear had broken into a fenced compound, frequented a home that had no unsecured attractants or natural foods, and killed chickens secured by electric fencing. The bear was largely undeterred by hazing efforts, which included rubber bullets, paintballs, electric fencing and noise-making devices. The bear also had been captured and relocated twice in prior years because of similar conflicts.

Due to the recent conflicts and the bear's history, FWP consulted with the U.S. Fish Wildlife Service and euthanized the mother bear on Sept. 21.

"Unfortunately, human-bear conflicts are quite common. That's why being bear smart is critical to reduce these conflicts. Coexisting with large, dangerous carnivores is challenging and one must remain vigilant," said Kevin Murphy, interim senior director of Animal Management at Woodland Park Zoo. "Keeping garbage in secure containers and only putting it out on collection day, not feeding birds when one lives in bear habitat, and keeping pet food and other attractants in a secure building are simple precautions that people can take at home to keep bears, humans and other wildlife safe."

The new female cub, who has not been named yet, was born this past winter. She was too young to survive on her own. Bear cubs learn everything about being a bear directly from their mother including hunting, foraging and other skills to survive. In addition, brown bears are not rehabilitated. According to Murphy, becoming familiar with humans during a rehabilitation process creates an incredibly dangerous situation later in life. Bears are extremely smart and resourceful and can have more than a 2,000-mile home range. Even moving "problem" bears to a remote location is generally not successful in the long term, as was the experience for this cub's mother.

The brown bear cub that arrived at the zoo in July, named Juniper, is around the same age as the new cub. "It's very unfortunate this cub lost her mother, but we feel very fortunate that Woodland Park Zoo is in a good position with the expertise and facility to rescue another bear cub. We're very hopeful the two bears will enjoy one another's company—playing, swimming, eating—and be wonderful companions for years to come," said Murphy.

The zoo also has another brown bear, a 28-year-old, male grizzly named Keema. He and his brother, Denali, arrived in 1994 as 10-month-old cubs from Washington State University Bear Center. Denali passed away in December 2020 just weeks shy of his 27<sup>th</sup> birthday due to geriatric age-related issues.



Brown bears are an iconic species, and these new cubs are a symbol of hope to restore grizzlies in the North Cascades. Stay tuned for updates on both cubs at: [www.zoo.org/brownbear](http://www.zoo.org/brownbear).

Juniper is doing well and settling in at the zoo's Living Northwest Trail. She's currently rotating the public exhibit with Keema. After the new cub is moved to the bear habitat, she will go through behavioral training and get acquainted with her caretakers. Following this, the animal keepers will begin a series of introductions to the outdoor habitat and to Juniper.

The naturalistic setting for the brown bears in the Living Northwest Trail offers a wealth of enrichment including a braided, flowing stream; a bear-sized swimming pool with live fish; exhibit "furniture" such as rocks for basking in the sun; tree stumps that make great scratching posts; browse and novel scents; and a quiet cave for winter naps.

Brown bears and grizzly bears belong to the same species, *Ursus arctos*, although the common name, "brown bear," typically refers to a coastal bear, while "grizzly bear" usually refers to a (smaller) inland bear. Scientifically speaking, all grizzlies are brown bears, but not all brown bears are grizzlies. Meanwhile, American black bears are an entirely separate species (*Ursus americanus*), although some black bears do have brown fur!

Brown bears are generally solitary in nature but come together during mating season and in concentrated feeding areas such as at salmon spawning sites.

Visitors can discover brown bears, elk, wolves and other regional wildlife at the zoo's Living Northwest Trail where they can be inspired to discover, recover and coexist with local wildlife: #IAmLivingNorthwest.

Here in this region, Woodland Park Zoo is a proud member of the [Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Coalition](#). "Decades of effort and research make it clear that grizzlies—once a critical component of the North Cascades Ecosystem where they roamed for thousands of years—are now unable to recover without human assistance," said Robert Long, PhD, director of Woodland Park Zoo's Living Northwest Conservation Program and a carnivore research ecologist. "Grizzly recovery is not only logistically feasible and ecologically important but supported by most Washingtonians. It's time to bring the grizzly back to the North Cascades."

Woodland Park Zoo advocates for saving species and spaces around the Pacific Northwest through its [Living Northwest Program](#), including wolves, wolverines and many others. The recently reimagined Living Northwest Trail exhibit is home to the zoo's brown bears, wolves and other native wildlife. The exhibit and its companion website, "[We Are Living Northwest](#)," provide visitors with numerous conservation actions to take to help the species that share the region's iconic landscapes. Anyone can share how they are living Northwest using #IAmLivingNorthwest on social media—they may even be featured on the website!

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