

## PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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### Media link for photos:

<https://zoo.resourcespace.com/?c=3807&k=624fbee42>

## Zoo celebrates World Penguin Day with new chicks *Press is invited to meet the chicks*

**WHAT:** April 25 is World Penguin Day, a special day to celebrate all 18 species of penguins on the planet! As a tribute to penguins large and small, the press is invited behind the scenes for an exclusive look at Woodland Park Zoo's new Humboldt penguin chicks of the season.

Two chicks, both females, hatched March 1 and March 17 to two different sets of parents. Incubation for penguins takes 39 to 41 days, with both parents sharing incubation duties in the nest and day-to-day care for their chicks.

The parents of the oldest chick are mother Merlin and father Groucho. This is Merlin's first chick while Groucho has had several offspring with his previous mate, now deceased. The parents of the second chick are mother Rosalita and father Leonardo; this prolific pair has had 13 chicks together since 2014. Most penguins mate for life.

The chicks are off exhibit in nesting burrows where they are under the care of their parents. To ensure they are achieving growth milestones, staff routinely weigh the chicks as they develop with minimal disturbance to the parents. The chicks will join the colony in the outdoor habitat sometime in early summer.

Woodland Park Zoo has one of the most successful Humboldt penguin breeding programs in North America. The new hatchlings bring the total number of successful hatchings to 90 since the zoo's first breeding season in 2010, a year after the new penguin habitat opened. The zoo's colony currently consists of 44 penguins, including the new chicks.

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

**WHEN:** **World Penguin Day on Tuesday, April 25, 11:00–11:45 a.m.**

A maximum of two to three media reps will be permitted in the kitchen on a rotational basis. To minimize stress levels for the chicks and parents, press can only be accommodated during this timeframe.

**WHERE:** Behind the scenes at the penguin habitat. Meet PR staff at the West Entrance on Phinney Ave. N. between N. 55<sup>th</sup> & N. 56<sup>th</sup> Sts. Park in the Penguin or Otter Lots.

**VISUALS:** Flash is permitted, but no flood lights

**INFO:** Before new chicks reach fledging age and go outdoors in the habitat, they are removed from the nest so penguin keepers can condition the birds to approach them for hand feeding and other animal care activities. The chicks



also are given round-the-clock access to a shallow pool where they can swim in a more controlled and less crowded environment.

To learn more about penguins, starting May 1, check out the zoo's penguin snack time 10:30 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays, and live trout feeding 11:00 a.m. Fridays (free with zoo admission).

### **Not from a land of ice, but from a desert by the sea**

- People do not usually think of penguins as a desert-dwelling species. However, unlike their ice and snow-dwelling Antarctic cousins, Humboldt penguins inhabit hot, dry coastlines in Peru and Chile.
- They live on rocky mainland shores, especially near cliffs, or on coastal islands.
- Humboldt penguins have a body made to swim. Using their strong wings, they “fly” underwater, usually just below the surface, at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour. They steer with their feet and tail.

### **Saving Humboldt penguins**

- A vulnerable species, approximately 23,800 Humboldt penguins survive in their natural range.
- Woodland Park Zoo is committed to conserving Humboldt penguins by supporting the [Center for Conservation of the Humboldt Penguin](#) in Punta San Juan, Peru; breeding the birds through the Species Survival Plan; and encouraging visitors to choose sustainable seafood options as directed by Monterey Bay Aquarium's [Seafood Watch](#) program. Punta San Juan is home to 5,000 Humboldt penguins, the largest colony in Peru.
- Show love and support for the new chicks with a digital ZooParent adoption! The [ZooParent](#) program supports the zoo's animal care, education, and wildlife conservation in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

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

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