

PRESS RELEASE

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Zoo welcomes two new elk *New male helps round out the herd*

SEATTLE—Woodland Park Zoo's herd of elk just got bigger with the addition of a new male, Huckleberry, and female, Holly. Both elk, who are half-siblings, were born at Dakota Zoo in Bismarck, N.D. Both will turn 2 years old this summer.

The new elk bring the herd to a total of five individuals. In addition to Huckleberry and Holly, the zoo is home to females Lily, Willow and Buttons.

Last summer, the zoo mourned the loss of its only male elk, Goodwyn (good-win), who died at 20 years old due to geriatric-related issues.

"We're very fortunate to grow our herd so visitors to Woodland Park Zoo can learn about natural elk behavior and see how they socialize. After losing our sole male, Goodwyn, last summer, we're back to a natural grouping with the addition of a new male," said Pat Owen, an animal care manager at Woodland Park Zoo. "Huckleberry and Holly appear calm and confident. Although the male is young, Huckleberry is already presenting behavior like a bull both in his posture and attempts to dominate the cows, that is until they put him in his place."

The expansive elk meadow in the zoo's Living Northwest Trail is designed to offer visitors an opportunity to view wolves in the foreground to help teach visitors about the critical predator-prey relationship between elk and wolves in their natural habitat.

Two subspecies of elk range in Washington state: Roosevelt elk, which are primarily on the west side of the Cascades, and Rocky Mountain elk, which are primarily on the east side. Huckleberry, Holly, and Buttons are Rocky Mountain and Lily and Willow are Roosevelt.

Buttons came to Woodland Park Zoo from the wild after gaining notoriety several years ago in the area between Ellensburg and Cle Elum where residents—believing she was orphaned—began feeding her, petting her and even putting kids onto her back. For her safety and the community, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists tried relocating Buttons to a more remote area, but she wasn't able to integrate with the wild elk herds; in 2019 Woodland Park Zoo became her new home. Her story is a great reminder of the need to coexist safely with wildlife and to let wild animals remain wild.

Woodland Park Zoo advocates for and saves species and spaces around the Pacific Northwest through its [Living Northwest Program](#), including western pond turtles, wolves, wolverines and many others. The recently reimagined Living Northwest Trail exhibit is home to the zoo's elk, Canada lynx, brown bears, snowy owls and other native wildlife. The exhibit and its companion website, ["We Are Living Northwest,"](#) provide visitors with numerous conservation actions 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!

Visit the new elk during regular zoo hours: 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. 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](#).

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.

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