

Zoo mourns loss of otter pup

SEATTLE—Woodland Park Zoo is mourning the loss of one of its river otter pups, who passed this morning in a tragic accident.

Two otter pups, a male and a female, were born in late March to mom Valkyrie and dad Ziggy. The young male otter had recently been named Trout and his sister was named Dory. They received their names from longtime friends and supporters of the zoo.

As the pups recently learned to swim, they have access to both their publicly-visible habitat and pool, and an indoor holding area that is equipped with ramps and enrichment.

This morning, June 22, the male otter pup was climbing a ramp and became wedged between the ramp and a platform. Animal keepers responded in under five minutes and attempted to resuscitate the otter, but he could not be revived.

“Our animal keeper team and staff are absolutely devastated. The passing of a beloved animal is never easy, but a loss like this is particularly emotional because we couldn’t have stopped it and we wish there was something else we could have done to save Trout,” said Woodland Park Zoo Animal Curator Erin Sullivan, who leads Animal Care for the animals in the zoo’s Living Northwest Trail, including river otters. “The team was really remarkable this morning. They are in tears and grieving, but also still finding ways to show up for each other and all the other animals in their care.”

Animal keepers will provide extra attention and care to Valkyrie and Dory in the coming days to ensure their wellbeing as they adapt to this loss.

The ramp and platform have been used for years by numerous adult and young otters and have never resulted in any injuries prior to today. The space is being modified and reassessed immediately to evaluate for any other possible safety updates.

Woodland Park Zoo thanks the community for the kindness, support and care as we mourn the loss of Trout together.

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