

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release | August 17, 2024
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Photo credit: Jeremy Dwyer-Lindgren/Woodland Park Zoo

Zoo's only tapir departing for Raisin Capital of the World *Last day to see her: August 27*

SEATTLE—At the end of the month, Woodland Park Zoo will say goodbye to its last remaining Malayan tapir, Ulan (OO-lawn, like Mulan). The 12-year-old female will head to Fresno Chaffee Zoo located in the Raisin Capital of the World, Fresno, Calif. The last day to show Ulan some love will be August 27 in the Trail of Vines habitat.

Tapirs are among the most primitive large mammals in the world, changing little in appearance for millions of years. These prehistoric-looking animals are long and similar to the weight of a light horse. They have a short, prehensile nose which they use to pluck leaves and fruit. Tapirs are excellent swimmers and use their snouts as snorkels! Because they have an odd number of toes (four toes on each front foot, three on each back foot), their closest relatives are horses and rhinos.

Ulan arrived at Woodland Park Zoo from Zoo Tampa in 2013. She became the zoo's sole tapir after her 4-year-old daughter, Sempurna, moved in the spring to Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo and her companion, Bintang—Sempurna's dad—passed away last year of age-related decline.

The Malayan Tapir [Species Survival Plan](#) made the recommendation to move Ulan to Fresno Chaffee Zoo where she will live in its Kingdoms of Asia mixed-species habitat with their male tapir, Willium, and eventually a pair of babirusa in a beautiful river habitat.

"For a decade, Ulan has inspired fascination among our visitors, partly due to their interestingly odd appearance. As a smart and amenable animal, Ulan participated in her own pre-natal care, including ultrasounds during her pregnancy. She smoothly stepped into the role of motherhood to her daughter. We're going to miss her, but we're excited for her new adventures ahead," said Erin Sullivan, an animal curator at Woodland Park Zoo.

Once Ulan moves, Woodland Park Zoo's tapir exhibit will be closed for several months while upgrades are made to improve the welfare, increase exhibit sustainability and enhance the visitor experience. "Since the tapir exhibit opened nearly three decades ago, the husbandry for these animals has changed and modifications to the tapir exhibit are necessary to ensure it evolves and matches the current state-of-the-art care for the species," said Sullivan.

Upgrades will include removal of the existing concrete floor in the tapir barn and creation of a concrete basin with woodchips as substrate to allow softer flooring when walking and better weight distribution, grading and drainage improvements, substrate improvements to the exterior habitat, fencing and additional shotcrete rock features. Recently, the zoo's tapir keepers and exhibits team designed a new training panel that will provide various access ports to safely allow for radiographs,



ultrasounds, blood draws, laser/massage therapy, and other health and husbandry interactions. A movable panel that can be swung closed to allow access to the hind end of tapirs was also incorporated into the design.

The zoo plans on bringing in a pair of new tapirs next spring when the upgraded exhibit reopens.

Malayan tapirs are endangered, with fewer than 2,500 remaining in the wild; they range in Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia, Sumatra and Myanmar. Woodland Park Zoo partners with conservation projects in [Peninsular Malaysia](#) and Sumatra, where tapirs are found. One of the greatest threats to tapirs is loss of habitat. By protecting land for tigers, orangutans and hornbills, the zoo is also protecting land for tapirs.

At home, protect tapirs, native wildlife and the forests they live in by making informed purchasing decisions such as buying products with certified [sustainable palm oil](#) and choosing [Forest Stewardship Council](#) (FSC) certified paper and wood products.

Summer zoo hours: 9:30 a.m.–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](#), [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#).

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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