



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Aug. 28. 2012

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### **6-DAY-OLD SUMATRAN TIGER CUB NOW BEING HAND-REARED BY ZOO STAFF**

*Bottle feeding should help 3-pound cub gain weight; he was not getting enough milk*

TACOMA, Wash: Veterinarians and zoological staff at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium decided to hand-rear a 6-day-old Sumatran tiger cub today after health checks showed he was losing a bit of weight and not getting enough milk.

“It’s in his best interest so he can receive round-the-clock feedings with special formula,” head veterinarian Dr. Karen Wolf said.



Wolf made the decision to move him from the den box in which his mother, Jaya, gave birth and put him in the zoo’s Animal Health Care clinic after she consulted with zoological staff in the Asian Forest Sanctuary.

Several staff members have extensive experience with tiger and clouded leopard cub births and the subsequent hand-rearing of many of the animals.

Jaya was not as attentive to this cub as she was to those in a litter she had two years ago, staff said. She was frequently leaving the den box, and the new cub was not getting adequate nursing opportunities.

The cub, born Aug. 22, was not gaining weight, was a bit dehydrated, and his temperature was low, Wolf said.

Separating him from his mother so he can be bottle fed every four hours should help him thrive and boost his weight, she added. But she also cautioned that the first several days “will be critical” to his well-being.

The cub weighs about 3 pounds.

It’s not unusual for zoo staff to hand-rear a cub when they believe it’s the best way to ensure that the cub flourishes, Wolf said.

“He is very vocal and is off to a good start,” she said. “So far he is showing a positive response to bottle feeding.” Sumatran tigers are a critically endangered species. The newborn cub at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium makes 74 in North American zoos. He is the sixth cub born in the Species Survival Plan this year.

About 200 Sumatran tigers live in zoos around the world. They are native only to the island of Sumatra. There are an estimated 300 in the wild.

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*Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo and aquarium, promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. The zoo, a division of Metro Parks Tacoma, is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).*