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**ZOO, ZOO, ZOOM! TWO NEW ZIP LINE/CHALLENGE COURSES TO DEBUT
AT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM DURING 25TH ANNUAL ZOOLIGHTS**

They will test physical agility and mental toughness for ages 5 and up – and they're wildly fun

Tacoma, Wash. - Zoolights will soar to new heights this year. Literally.

Two new zip line/challenge courses will debut at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium during the 25th annual edition of the beloved holiday event.



They'll bring a new dimension of excitement to Zoolights for kids as young as 5, with appeal for a range of ages, including adventure-craving adults.

The courses also will be open during daytime hours on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays during the Zoolights run, which begins Nov. 23 and ends on Jan. 1.

And once the twinkling lights are gone, the new attraction – called ZOOM – will remain for year-round fun.

ZOOM features two courses: A Super Kid version that's relatively low to the ground and a higher Discovery circuit that rises 30 feet into the trees.

The two circuits are cousins to popular zip line/challenge courses that opened at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park during the summer. There are some family resemblances, but the courses at

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium are quite different than those at Northwest Trek.



They're laid out differently, the challenges vary and the overall experience is distinctive.

The Super Kid version of ZOOM is sized for kids 5 and up. The more challenging

Discovery course is for ages 8 and up. It's not strictly kid stuff; adults will enjoy it, too.

Each requires some degree of agility and tests participants' mental and physical toughness.

Conquering one of them leaves the rider with thrilling memories and a great sense of accomplishment. Not to mention the "I want to do it again!" cries that will be instantly heard around zoo grounds.

Here's a quick look at each:

SUPER KID

Ages 5 and up. Minimum height for riders is 3 feet, 3 inches. This is a relatively low-to-the-ground circuit with a combination of zip lines and 15 challenges. It's about 5.5 feet high. It has two pieces of zip line separated by a number of challenges. Kids will scale a short wall, clamber through a net, navigate a slatted wooden tunnel and conquer a number of other challenges.

Cost is \$19.95 per person, plus zoo admission or membership.

DISCOVERY

Ages 8 and up. Minimum height for riders is 4 feet. It begins with a 20-foot high climbing wall that participants must scale to get on to the course, which rises as high as 30 feet over zoo grounds. Cost is \$29.95 per person, plus zoo admission or membership.

Along the way, riders will climb through a fishermen's net, negotiate a swinging, slatted bridge, walk between aerial platforms on a series of logs, and navigate a high wire, among other challenges.

One of the more interesting obstacles is a series of zig-zag steps, each suspended from ropes. Riders also will zip over the fence that encloses the main zoo grounds. They then must conquer a horizontal climbing net between two high-in-the-trees platforms before zipping back.

"These are far more than zip lines," said Donna Powell, the zoo's business and administrative services manager. "They're challenging, and the obstacles along the way are designed to test participants and provide a sense of exhilaration and adventure."

"They also encourage people, particularly kids, to get outside and enjoy nature, which is one of our key goals here at the zoo," she added.

Participants must be in good health, and there is a 275-pound weight limit in addition to the height restrictions.

Closed-toed shoes are required on ZOOM; long pants are recommended. Dangling jewelry is not permitted and hair must be tied back.

Zoo members will receive introductory discounts of \$3 on the Super Kid course and \$5 on the Discovery course on Mondays through Thursdays only through Dec. 13.

Zoom will be open during these hours through December:

Nov. 23 to Dec. 14

- **Fridays through Mondays:** 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (closed 4 to 5 p.m.)
- **Tuesdays through Thursdays:** 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Dec. 15 to Dec. 23

- **Daily** 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (closed 4 to 5 p.m.)

Monday, Dec. 24

- Daily 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 25

- 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Dec. 26-Jan. 1

- **Daily** 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (closed 4 to 5pm)

After that, ZOOM will generally operate during regular zoo hours, with the first runs of the day starting a short time after the gates open and the last run taking off about an hour before zoo closing time.

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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).