



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 10, 2018

ALL DADS GET HALF-OFF GENERAL ADMISSION AT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO ON JUNE 17

And Father's Day is a great time to see superstar Magellanic penguin fathers Red and Orange and their chicks

Tacoma, Wash. – Take two superstar dads. Add in four (yes, four!) adorable Magellanic penguin chicks. Then think about an entire day of family fun, animal-watching and learning more about wildlife and wild places.



Add in half-price general admission for all fathers, and you have all the ingredients for a day that's sure to make Dad smile.

Sunday June 17 is not only Father's Day, it's Half-Price Dads' Day at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium. All dads can score a ticket for just \$8.98.

Each ticket to the zoo comes with the opportunity to see the live-action animal show, "The Wildest Show in the West," at the Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater; and touch stingrays and small sharks, plus view 16 large sharks in the South Pacific Aquarium.



Zoo guests also can get up close to majestic polar bears, massive walruses and playful sea otters in the Rocky Shores area; see an array of endangered animals such as Sumatran tigers and Malayan tapirs in the Asian Forest Sanctuary; and learn how simple human actions can benefit the environment and the animals with whom we share the earth.

Plus this year, visitors also can marvel at the humongous sand sculpture featuring sea creatures such as a hammerhead shark, leopard shark, spotted eagle ray, giant Pacific octopus and more – all carefully and artfully created in packed sand.

They look amazingly lifelike. The more-than-17-foot-tall sculpture is built to last and should withstand the weather for several weeks. International sand sculptor Sue McGrew, a

Tacoma native, will be at the zoo on weekends to give sand sculpting demonstrations. There also is a large sand box for kids to dig, sculpt and play in.



And, of course, zoo guests can try to catch glimpses of those four adorable penguin chicks.

Penguin father "Red" and his mate "Pink," and penguin father "Orange" and his mate "Yellow" are parents to four chicks hatched in May as a result of the zoo's participation in the Species Survival Plan® for Magellanic penguins. Each set of parents has two chicks. They take turns warming the little ones with the special "brood" patches on their abdomens.

The zoo's penguins aren't named but rather are known by the colors of the identification bands on their wings.

"Red and Orange are very attentive fathers, and the penguin chicks are all doing well," said staff biologist Amanda Shaffer, who is the lead keeper for the zoo's colony of Magellanic penguins. The veterinary staff and keepers are pleased with the chicks' progress, she added. A few days ago, the chicks hatched to parents Red and Pink weighed about 2.5 pounds and 1.5 pounds; the chicks hatched to parents Orange and Yellow were 1.8 pounds and just under 1 pound.

By Father's Day, the chicks will have grown quite a bit and should be more visible as they move about their burrow, Shaffer said. Keepers will conduct a special penguin feed and talk at 11 a.m. on that day.

Magellanic penguins are found in low forests and flat land along the southern coast of South America, including Argentina, Chile and the Falkland Islands. They are listed as a "near threatened" species on the IUCN Red List compiled by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The Magellanic penguins at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium serve as ambassadors for their species, inspiring guests to learn about the ways in which climate change and ocean pollution threaten penguins in the wild.

For more information, about the sand sculpture, go to www.pdza.org/baja-beach. For more information about Magellanic penguins, go to www.pdza.org/magellanic-penguin. For general information about visiting, go to www.pdza.org.

#

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo and aquarium, practices and 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.

Contacts

Kris Sherman: 253-226-6718; kris.sherman@pdza.org

Whitney DalBalcon: 253-404-3637, 253-278-6343 or whitney.dalbalacon@pdza.org

Photo credits: Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium

Photo captions:

- 1:** Magellanic penguin parents Red, left, and Pink with their chicks.
- 2:** One of Orange and Yellow's penguin chicks gets a physical from the zoo's veterinary staff.
- 3:** A father and son enjoy the humongous Baja Bay sand sculpture.