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THERE WILL BE MORE FUN THAN A TIGER HAS STRIPES DURING TIGER CONSERVATION WEEKEND AT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM, BUT THERE'S A MESSAGE ABOUT SAVING THEM, TOO

Zoo will raise money from the public to support conservation efforts in Southeast Asia

TACOMA, Wash. – Saving wild tigers is so important, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium set aside two days – July 27 and 28 – to celebrate the species, provide fun activities for the public and launch a month-long fundraiser.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is blessed to have six tigers on grounds, and all of them will be on exhibit during the weekend.



“Tigers’ numbers are rapidly declining in the wild, and without our help, they may vanish from the earth in our lifetime,” said zoo general curator Karen Goodrowe Beck, who chairs the North American Species Survival Plan® for Sumatran tigers.

Jaya is the mother of Bima, Dumai and Kali.

“Every tiger is precious. Residents of the Puget Sound region are fortunate that they can view and learn about these magnificent ambassadors for the species right here at home.”

Zoological and education staff members created a slate of weekend activities packed with fun for the public. The tigers get special attention, too, with enrichments of food treats and toys to stimulate their senses and encourage physical activity.

The superstars of the weekend are Sumatran tigers Malosi, 4; Jaya, 10; Bima, 3; Dumai, 11 months; and Kali, 3 months. And Malayan tiger Berani, 11 months.



There are only 72 Sumatran, 26 Malayan and 150 Amur tigers at Association of Zoos & Aquariums facilities.

Only three zoos in North America have more tigers than Point Defiance Zoo. Five other zoos also have six.

Malosi is the father of Dumai and Kali.

Members of the public will play an important role during Tiger Conservation Weekend, too. There will be opportunities to learn about actions zoo visitors in their everyday lives (through products they choose to buy, for example) to help wild tigers.

Donations at several stations on grounds and through the zoo website (www.pdza.org) will aid anti-poaching and illegal habitat loss efforts to help wild tigers in Southeast Asia. The fundraiser will run through August. And a highlight of zoo activities next month is a party to celebrate the first birthdays of Berani and Dumai.

A few of the planned activities are:

- **Tiger and You Photo Op:** Well, it will be a stuffed, tiger. But it's about 5 feet long and 3 feet tall. Volunteers will have special outfits, like junior zookeeper clothes or tiger field biologist wear, which kids can put on when they stand next to the tiger. Visitors bring their cameras, the zoo supplies the tiger.
- **How Much Can A Tiger Eat?** Visitors can view an array of artificial steaks on a table to guess how much food a tiger might eat at one sitting.
- **Tiger Take Out:** A test of strength by dragging a tire in just the same way a tiger would carry off its prey for safe keeping.
- **Fun with Fur:** Check out photographs of animal fur and identify tigers, clouded leopards and other big cats.
- **Tigers of the World:** Map the home of tigers living today.
- **Web of Life:** Build a web and see how people are connected to tigers of the world.



Sumatran tiger cub Kali, 3 months.

And here's a little-known fact: Tigers are among nature's most excellent swimmers and can easily cross rivers and lakes five miles wide.

To promote water safety among humans, representatives from MultiCare Mary Bridge Children's Hospital & Health Center, will be at the zoo with a life jacket try-on station and a kids' fishing activity with plastic fish. MultiCare Mary Bridge is the presenting sponsor of Tiger Conservation Weekend.

Fewer than 300 Sumatran tigers remain in the wild on the Indonesian island of Sumatra; only an estimated 500 Malayan tigers remain in their native habitat of peninsular Malaysia.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium long has worked on behalf of wild tigers through associations with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Association of Zoos & Aquariums' Tiger Conservation Campaign.

Last year, zoo visitors raised \$5,000 to aid in anti-poaching, education and other efforts to save tigers in Sumatra. The Zoo Society and Conservation Committee donations matched the amount, making Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium one of the major AZA donors to tiger conservation.

"Saving the tigers is a race we must win," Goodrowe Beck said. "I simply cannot imagine a world in which tigers do not exist – our legacy to our children and grandchildren should be to ensure this never happens."

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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).