



## TERRA THE TAMANDUA GIVES BIRTH TO SECOND PUP

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 29, 2021

TACOMA, Wash.-- Terra the Southern tamandua gave birth to a healthy female pup on Friday, April 23 behind the scenes at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium's Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater area. The pup, like all of its species, was born with very little fur, and with its eyes closed for the first day. It's Terra's second pup, and only the second tamandua ever born at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium. The pup weighed just over half a pound and can fit onto a human palm.



"Mom and baby are healthy and bonding well," said head veterinarian Dr. Karen Wolf, who gave the pup an exam after it was born.

Keepers and veterinary staff are monitoring the pair, to make sure they are nursing and bonding appropriately.

"The pup's weight has dropped a bit since birth, so we are doing supplemental feeding with

her while we wait to see if Terra's milk production will kick in," said Dr. Wolf. "The pup will be receiving extra care to help her grow and thrive. Despite the weight loss, she appears very bright and vigorous."

Keepers are doing everything they can to make them comfortable in their den, including adding extra straw padding and a heating pad. Gonzo, the father, will stay separate from them for now.

"Throughout Terra's pregnancy, our animal care and veterinary teams have done an incredible job of caring for her," said Natalie Davis, the zoo's curator of land animals.

That included multiple checkups and ultrasounds, with a [special treat of whipped cream](#) for Terra as she was patiently examined.



The pup will nurse for the first five to six months of its life, beginning to explore adult foods like insects and fruit around two to three months old. It will stay close by Terra for the first six months, clinging to her back as a pup would in the wild.

A type of anteater from South America, Southern tamanduas have a long, slender nose and a super-long tongue (16 inches!) that lets them scoop out termites and other insects. They are excellent climbers, using their long prehensile tail for balance and support. Terra and Gonzo both make unscheduled appearances with keepers throughout the zoo, demonstrating their long tongues and climbing abilities. The pup will make its public debut once it's strong and confident enough.

The pup was born under a recommendation for the tamandua Species Survival Plan® through the Association of Zoos & Aquariums – a program in which Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is a leader. Tamanduas are not endangered in the wild, but, as ambassador animals, Terra and Gonzo help public learning and appreciation of all wildlife and habitats.

Chiquita, the first pup from Terra and Gonzo, was born in August 2018. Chiquita moved to Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute in late 2020 after receiving a recommendation to breed with their zoo's male, Cayenne.

###

*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 (AMMPA).*

**Media Contacts**

Whitney DalBalcon: 253-278-6343 or [whitney.dalbalcon@pdza.org](mailto:whitney.dalbalcon@pdza.org)

Tessa LaVergne: 253-686-6927 or [tessa.lavergne@pdza.org](mailto:tessa.lavergne@pdza.org)