



## **WILD WONDERS OUTDOOR THEATER ANIMAL SHOW RETURNS MAY 4-5**

*Plus, the return of Bugs Alive!*

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TACOMA, Wash.-- It stars a wizard, a zookeeper, and a brilliant dog. There are broomsticks and potions. It's the animal show at the Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater – and it probably sounds very familiar to Harry Potter fans. But "Extraordinary Creatures and How to Care for Them" isn't about magic. It's about how keepers care for animals – and how everyone else can, too.

Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater keepers are currently working with the animals on jumping, flying, running, and other athletic behaviors in preparation for the show's opening weekend at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium on May 4 and 5.

"Throughout the show, staff explain the animals' behaviors and teach about positive-reinforcement training," said Wild Wonders Curator Lacey Zeno. "Training the animals allows the keepers and veterinary team to easily give them wellness exams when needed, and ensures they live healthy, stimulating lives."

During the show, the live audience meets a wizard who cares for mythical creatures with a magical staff. The keepers teach the wizard how they train animals to participate in their own health care and how to provide daily enrichment to encourage natural behaviors. With help from the keepers and the wizard's mentor, Professor Dumbledog, she has a realization about the importance of caring for animals.

"Keepers teach the wizard that one way to care for dogs, like Professor Dumbledog, is by letting him stretch his legs and have a drink of water after a long trip," explained Zeno.

Not every animal will appear in every show, but the cast of more than a dozen includes an aardvark, beaver, king vulture, and lynx.

The show returns May 4 and runs daily at 11:30 a.m. Beginning June 17th, the show will run daily at 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

### **Bugs Alive!**

The same weekend (May 4-5), Bugs Alive! returns to the stage in the zoo's Nature Play Garden. Keepers host live bug presentations. Guests of all ages can meet bugs like a Chilean rose tarantula, tobacco

hornworm, or emperor scorpion and discover bugs' vital role in our daily lives. A large video monitor offers a magnified view of the bugs during presentations (1:15 p.m. daily).

### **American Sign Language**

New this year, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters will be present on select dates this summer to interpret the performances at the Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater and Bugs Alive! programs. This service provides a more complete experience for zoo guests who are deaf or hard of hearing. ASL interpreters will be located near the stage and designated seating will provide the best sight lines to follow the interpretation and the action on stage. Guests can also request printed scripts to read along with the show.

ASL interpreters will be present at the 11:30 a.m. & 2:30 p.m. Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater Shows and the 1:15 p.m. Bugs Alive! programs on the following dates:

- Saturday, May 18
- Sunday, June 9
- Thursday, June 20
- Saturday, July 13
- Wednesday, July 24
- Sunday, August 11
- Thursday, August 22
- Saturday, September 21

Admission to the zoo includes Bugs Alive! and the Wild Wonders show. To learn more about both programs, visit [pdza.org](http://pdza.org).

The Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater show is presented by Mary Bridge Children's Hospital. Bugs Alive! and the Nature Play Garden are presented by TAPCO Credit Union.

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