



NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK AND POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM ANNOUNCE SUMMER EVENTS LINEUP

Zoos announce summer slate featuring Pride events, Slug Fest, animal encounters and new after-hours experiences

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EATONVILLE/TACOMA, Wash. — This summer, Northwest Trek Wildlife Park and Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium invite guests to celebrate wildlife, community, and unforgettable outdoor experiences with a vibrant lineup of events and activities.

“Summer at Northwest Trek and Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is all about bringing people together through shared experiences with wildlife, nature and community,” said Parks Tacoma’s Park Board President Matt Mauer. “From Pride celebrations and Slug Fest to immersive wildlife adventures and family-friendly programs, these events create meaningful opportunities for guests of all ages to connect with the natural world and make lasting memories.”

PRIDE CELEBRATIONS AT BOTH ZOOS

Kick off [Pride Month](#) surrounded by nature at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, June 6–7 (9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.). Animals throughout the park will enjoy rainbow-themed enrichment, from colorful ice treats to fruit skewers, while habitats are decorated with banners, paper chains and tissue accents representing the many communities within the LGBTQ+ spectrum.

Later in the month, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium continues the celebration June 20–21 (9 a.m.–4 p.m.) with a lively [Pride weekend of its own](#). Guests are invited to join the zoo’s Pride Parade (held at 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. each day) by dressing in their Pride best and marching together through the zoo. Supplies will be available to decorate wagons and strollers before the parade begins at the Picnic Pavilion, ending with a festive photo opportunity in the plaza. Throughout the weekend, keep an eye out for rainbow-themed animal enrichments popping up across the zoo.

SLUG FEST RETURNS—SLIMIER THAN EVER

Northwest Trek’s slimiest event of the year is back June 27–28 (9:30 a.m.–5 p.m.) for its 43rd year.

[Slug Fest](#) invites guests to embrace their inner slug with hands-on activities and unforgettable fun. Craft your own set of slug tentacles, learn how these fascinating creatures help sustain Northwest forest ecosystems, and even see the world from a slug’s perspective.

The highlight of the event? The legendary human slug races, where participants slip, slide and compete for glory at 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. each day. Registration opens 15 minutes before each race at the Picnic Pavilion.

NORTHWEST TREK SUMMER EXPERIENCES

All summer long, Northwest Trek offers immersive ways to connect with wildlife and the natural world:

- Let kids splash and play at the nature-inspired [Kids' Trek playground](#), complete with a flowing stream
- Journey through the [435-acre Free-Roaming Area](#) on a Discovery Tram Tour (included with admission) or an added-cost Wild Drive or Keeper Adventure Tour
- Spot iconic Northwest animals, from the rescued grizzly bears cooling off in their pool to agile cougar cubs climbing high above and eagles calling overhead in the award-winning Eagle Passage
- Bring your four-legged friend along on [select Dog Days](#) (June 6, 16, 22, 30, July 6, 13, 20, 31, August 6, 12, 18, 24)

Stay overnight in the wild

For those looking to turn a day trip into a truly unforgettable getaway, Northwest Trek's expanded [Lakeside Lodging](#) offers a rare opportunity to sleep within the wildlife park itself. Guests can choose from three adults-only accommodations nestled beneath towering Douglas fir trees and overlooking the peaceful waters of Horseshoe Lake. With wildlife like bison, elk, deer and mountain goats roaming freely nearby, each stay offers breathtaking views and a deeper connection to nature. Overnight guests also enjoy exclusive perks, including deeply discounted access to the popular Keeper Adventure Tour.

POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

Explore the zoo in the evening, see daily shows, play and a spin on the carousel:

- NEW: [Dog Nights of Summer](#): For the first time, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is inviting adults 18 and older to enjoy a relaxed after-hours zoo experience alongside their canine companions on select evenings: June 26, July 31, Aug. 28 (5:30–8 p.m.)
- The [Wild Wonders Outdoor Theater](#) show (11:30 a.m. daily; plus at 2:30 p.m. weekends) brings animals and storytelling together in a lively, engaging performance featuring everything from soaring birds to a laid-back sloth
- [Bugs Alive: Bugs at Work!](#) (1:15 p.m. daily through June 28, 10:15 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. daily June 29–Sept. 7) offers a close-up look at the tiny critters that play big roles in our ecosystem
- The [Kids' Zone Playground](#) invites young explorers to climb, crawl and move like animals, plus meet and feed goats up close
- Guests can hop aboard the zoo's vintage [Paul Titus Carousel](#). What will you ride—a rearing horse, a zebra, a tiger or even a Pacific Northwest slug? Carousel rides are available during zoo hours for \$4 per ride (\$2 for zoo members)

- The zoo is also home to a stunning botanical collection. On the first Sunday of each month, guests can join [guided garden tours](#), free with admission, led by expert horticulturalists, showcasing everything from native Northwest plants to exotic blooms that help create naturalistic habitats for animals
- Guests can upgrade their visit with [immersive experiences](#), including shark diving, an early morning zoo tour, a behind-the-scenes tour of the Pacific Seas Aquarium, or an up-close goat encounter

For those eager to explore beyond the zoo's gates, the [Explore the Shore](#) program offers beach walks at Owen Beach on June 17, July 14 and Aug. 12. Guests can discover the fascinating marine life of Puget Sound, from tiny crabs to other shoreline creatures, during these interactive, low-tide adventures. Free, and no registration required!

About Northwest Trek Wildlife Park

Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, located in Eatonville, Washington, is a 725-acre wildlife park dedicated to conservation, education and connecting people with native Northwest wildlife. The wildlife park is home to more than 40 species, including bison, elk, gray wolves and grizzly bears, many of which can be seen roaming freely in the expansive Free-Roaming Area. Through immersive experiences and conservation programs, Northwest Trek inspires guests to care for wildlife and wild places.

About Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, located in Tacoma, Washington, is the only combined zoo and aquarium in the Pacific Northwest. The zoo is home to nearly 300 animal species and features award-winning exhibits, conservation programs and educational experiences focused on protecting wildlife locally and around the world.

Parking is always FREE at both Northwest Trek Wildlife Park and Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium. For tickets, event details and reservations, visit nwtrek.org and pdza.org.

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