



# ZOOLIGHTS 2016



*Holiday nights will glow with the magic and wonder of the season as zoo animals, whimsical scenes and landmarks spring to life in 600,000 colorful LEDs*

TACOMA, Wash. - Hearts are aglow during the holidays – and so are the nights at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium in Tacoma, Wash., where animals, local landmarks and lush landscapes spring to life nightly in more than 600,000 crisply colorful LEDs.

Over here is a walrus, shimmering in the darkness, complete with its long tusks.

Over there hammerhead sharks and sea turtles, brought to life as tree ornaments, shine in a sea of trees. Elsewhere, a Sumatran tiger cub, chases an elusive butterfly. Down yonder, the green-and purple Flame Tree shines with more than 30,000 LEDs.



All around the Zoo, light and color fuse into a landscape of whimsical animal scenes, iconic endangered animals, and local landmarks guaranteed to bring smiles to the faces of visitors from 1 to 100.

Zoolights at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is the oldest and best loved holiday lights display in Washington.

## Zoolights 2016

**What:** Washington's oldest and most loved holiday lights display with zoo animals, whimsical scenes and local landmarks portrayed in more than 600,000 colorful LEDs.

**Dates:** Nov. 25-Jan 1 nightly (with a one night-closure on Dec. 24)

**Times:** 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**Where:** Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, 5400 N. Pearl St., Tacoma, WA

**Admission:** \$10 general admission; \$5 per member (discounted tickets available at South Sound Fred Meyer stores beginning Nov. 1)

**Parking:** Free

Right up until the first switch is thrown at 5 p.m. Nov. 25, Zoolights crews will be building, refining, checking and rechecking each piece of magic.

They've spent much of the summer and fall working on new displays.

And they've devised a location plan that will bring back old favorites in, well, a new light. There will be some switching up of familiar displays for 2016 – the 29<sup>th</sup> edition of Zoolights.

In some ways, it will be a bit of a treasure hunt, with visitors seeking out their favorite displays, which have been moved from their previous locations.

Before visitors even enter the Zoo, they'll encounter an octopus shimmering in four rotating colors atop the Main Entrance. And that 100-foot-long Giant pacific octopus from the past few years will still shine – also in changing colors - atop the North Pacific Aquarium.

Glaciers glisten on the flanks of a huge, detailed replica of Mount Rainier. Eagles chase after leaping salmon. Sea lions hunt fish in the sea.

A polar bear family stands regally in the snow, reminding visitors of the bears' need for a cold climate in their Arctic habitat. A gibbon reaches for a vine to grab a snack.



A red rock crab, so camouflaged in the wild, waves its orange and white claws in the night, beckoning visitors to come closer.

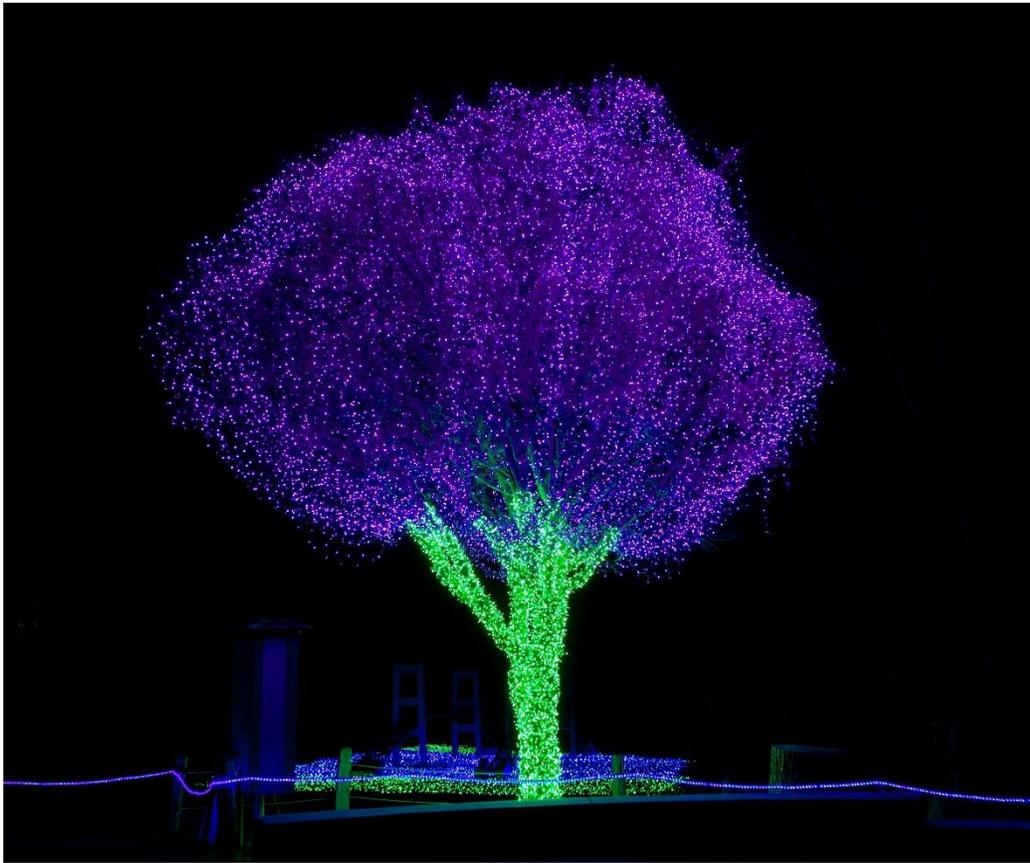
A 17-foot tall, imposing face of a Sumatran tiger, mouth open wide, stares at visitors through glowing green eyes.

Blue elephants stalk through the grass, a golden baby elephant tagging alongside.

Everywhere Zoolights-goers look, the never-ending colors twinkle, surprising them with a rainbow of trees and shrubs and the sparkle of even the tiniest creatures—spiders, flies and ants. Even an insect-eating cactus.

And let's not forget the highly popular 12<sup>th</sup> Man Tree in the green-and-blue Seahawks' Zone tribute to the Puget Sound's favorite pro football team.

Over near the camel rides, real reindeer will appear to be pulling a sleigh in the perfect family photo op.



And if Zoolights is a feast for the eyes, it also presents gastronomical delights of another kind.

This year, adult visitors can relax with a glass of beer or wine in the Plaza Café. And of course, the Zoolights favorite hot chocolate also remains on the menu.

And there will be a cart serving up gourmet hot dogs outdoors. Mmmmmmm.

Imagine the tasty smells now.

And because Zoolights is part of the fabric of an accredited zoo, there are real animals to see, too.

Visitors can warm up in the steamy South Pacific Aquarium, where they will get a look at more than a dozen massive sharks and other fish.

Kids can feed the goats, check out the meerkats and see a variety of other small animals in the zoo's popular Kids' Zone area.





It's all happenin' at Zoolights.

A trip to this annual holiday light festival is a Family Night, a Couples' Night, a Date Night, a Teen Get-together Night.

"We're proud and pleased to present Puget Sound's first and most endearing holiday lights display," Zoo Deputy Director

John Houck said.

"Representing wildlife with the colors of the holidays is our gift to the community," he added. "Zoolights is not only a festive way to enjoy this time of year, but it's also honors our mission to protect the environment."

Zoolights is presented by Fred Meyer and has support from KING 5.

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*Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo & 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).*

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