

End of Summer Splash



Dive into Labor Day Weekend fun
Watch walrus splash,
harbor seals dash (through the water),
and a California sea lion dazzle the crowds

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Aug. 23, 2016

TACOMA, Wash. – *Labor Day Weekend* is coming up fast, and there's no better place to mark the unofficial last days of summer than at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, where the schedule is jam-packed with events and activities for animal lovers all day, every day.

The zoo's End of Summer Splash is scheduled Saturday, Sept. 3, through Monday, Sept. 5. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

With a zoo bustling with things to do and see, the event will be more fun than watching a ton of walrus haul out of the water.



Each day of End of Summer Splash will include:

- **Penguin Feed, 11:00 a.m.**
- **Polar bear keeper talk with enrichment toys for the bears, 11:30 a.m.**
- **Seabird enrichment, Noon**
- **Sea Lion enrichment with feeder toys for Chinook, 12:30 p.m.**
- **Polar bear keeper talk with ice treats for the bears, 2:30 p.m.**
- **Marine mammal talk, 3 p.m.**

The three-day event also is a last chance for visitors to see some of the zoo's favorite residents for a few weeks.

Walruses Joan and Basilla and California sea lion Chinook will take a temporary behind-the-scenes break during some construction work on their Rocky Shores exhibit home. They should be back for above-water viewing by the end of September.

Other Rocky Shores residents, like harbor seals, sea otters, puffins and common murres, will remain off exhibit until early 2017. The harbor seal pool will be reconstructed to also hold three energetic California sea lions. At the same time, other improvements to the Rocky Shores visitor experience will be made.

So besides animals that go splish and splash and bring waves of smiles to the faces of visitors in the Rocky Shores area, what else is on the Labor Day Weekend menu at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium?

Well, holy leapin' cats, those 4-month-old clouded leopard cubs Saffron, Coriander and Masala are not only getting big, they're growing more agile every day, climbing and leaping from log to log in the exercise yard behind the Cats of the Canopy Exhibit. They can be viewed from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

And across the zoo in the small muskox yard, 4-month-old Hudson is amazing guests with just how fast he can move on those short, stubby legs that look like white socks at the hooves.



Here's the schedule each day, except as noted:

- **Peering at Plankton,** 10:15 a.m.
- **Aquarium feed,** 11 a.m.
- **Clouded leopard cubs on exhibit,** 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Live animal show, "Indiana Bones and the Golden Treasure,"** Noon
- **Asian Forest Sanctuary keeper talk,** 12:30 p.m.
- **Elephant keeper talk,** 1 p.m.
- **Stingray feed,** 1 p.m.
- **Bugs Alive!,** 1 p.m.

- **Watershed Wonders Activity in the Marine Discovery Center, 1:30 p.m.**
- **Touch an Animal Ambassador, 1:30 p.m.**
- **Jelly Talk, 2 p.m. (Sunday only)**
- **Red wolf keeper talk, 2 p.m.**
- **Live animal show, “Indian Jones and the Golden Treasure,” 3:30 p.m.**
- **Muskox keeper talk, 3:30 p.m.**
- **Animal training session in the Asian Forest Sanctuary, 4 p.m.**

And if all that’s not enough, zoo visitors can get hands on with marine animals, stingrays and small sharks; groom goats; and feed small, colorful parakeets called budgies.

In every part of Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, there is much to see and a lot for visitors to learn about endangered species, conservation and little lifestyle changes that can help care for the world’s precious resources.

For more information, go to www.pdza.org.

###

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).

Contacts

Kris Sherman, 253-404-3800; 253-226-6718 or kris.sherman@pdza.org

Whitney DalBalcon, 253-404-3637 or whitney.dalbalcon@pdza.org

Photo cutlines:

1: Joan, a Pacific Walrus, makes a splash at the main pool in the Rocky Shores area of Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.

2: California sea lion Chinook is trained to raise his flippers as part of regular health-care inspections by zookeepers at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.

3: Four-month-old clouded leopard cubs Coriander, Saffron and Masala sometimes just like to hang around on the branches in their outdoor exercise yard behind the Cats of the Canopy exhibit at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.

4: Four-month-old muskox calf Hudson has been delighting zoo visitors since he arrived earlier this summer. He’s on exhibit daily in the zoo’s Arctic Tundra area.

Photo credits: Ingrid Barrentine/Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium