



Contacts:

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

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

BEARS ARE THE TEACHERS DURING BEAR CAMP WEEKEND AT NORTHWEST TREK WILDLIFE PARK

Special slate of activities will help people learn how to have summer camping fun – and live in harmony with bears

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EATONVILLE, Wash. – Bears of many kinds will share the spotlight at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park this weekend.

Seven-year-old black bear siblings Benton and Fern will get the run of a mock camp site, and grizzly bear Denali will tackle some food containers - all to show visitors how to camp safely in areas that are home to these large land predators.



An unsecured camping cooler with food is no match for a curious – and hungry – grizzly bear. Bear Camp at Northwest Trek Wildlife Park will provide visitors with information on how to camp safely in bear country.

Bear Camp weekend is Saturday, May 16, and Sunday, May 17, at Northwest Trek, and even teddy bears will play a role. Kids are invited to bring their favorite stuffed friends with them for “checkups.”

But the real bears are the stars.

Keepers will talk about what it's like to care for some of the most powerful mammals in North America.

And, with camping season here, demonstrations will show visitors how easily a strong animal with sharp claws can raid a campground. It's a valuable lesson in how to keep food safe and out of harm's way.

Here's the schedule of events:

Saturday

- **1 p.m.** Watch black bears interact with a mock campsite.
- **2 p.m.** See Denali the grizzly bear receive a special treat.
- **Throughout the day:** Bear-themed crafts.
- **Throughout the day:** Teddy bear "checkups."

Sunday

- **1 p.m.** Find out if "bear-proof" containers will stand up to a grizzly bear.
- **2 p.m.** Watch black bears Benton and Fern get one of their favorite treats – peanut butter and jelly.
- **Throughout the day:** Bear-themed crafts.
- **Throughout the day:** Teddy bear "checkups."

Plus, it's baby animal season at Northwest Trek, and there is a newborn bison calf and two new bighorn sheep lambs in the Free-Roaming Area. Visitors can keep a lookout for them while touring the 435-acre Free-Roaming Area aboard comfortable trams.

The 50-minute narrated tours give visitors a great opportunity to see herds of American bison and Roosevelt elk, plus bighorn sheep, moose, deer and other animals.

The tram ride and all activities are free with admission or membership to Northwest Trek.

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

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Northwest Trek, accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, is a 725-acre zoological park dedicated to conservation, education and recreation by displaying, interpreting and researching native Northwest wildlife and their natural habitats. The wildlife park, a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma, is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015. It's located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.