



NEWS RELEASE

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80 TONS OF SNOW, SLEDDING, AND...REINDEER? **SANTA BARBARA ZOO'S SNOW LEOPARD FESTIVAL IS** **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.**

- Sledding for Kids, Snow Play Area, Snow Painting, Climbing Wall, and More
- Snow and Icy Treats Given to Snow Leopards and Other Animals
- Male Everett is Oldest Male Snow Leopard in AZA Zoo
- Live Reindeer at the Zoo from November 22 to January 1

Santa Barbara, CA, November 13, 2017 – A rare blizzard hits the Central Coast on Sunday, December 3 when 80 tons of snow is delivered for the Santa Barbara Zoo's annual "Snow Leopard Festival," held on Sunday, December 3, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (9 a.m. early admission for SB Zoo members only).

The snow will be shaped into sledding runs for kids (sleds provided), deposited in a snow play area, and provided as enrichment to many of the Zoo's animal residents, including the highly endangered big cats honored at this festival.



At age 19, the Zoo's male snow leopard Everett is the oldest snow leopard living in a zoo accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). The Zoo's female Zoe is aged 14. The two are not a breeding pair, but they often are seen on exhibit together, which is rare among this solitary species.



With the holidays not far away, guests are also encouraged to visit the Zoo's temporary exhibit of reindeer, where Santa is available for photos and gift requests (Wednesdays through Sundays only, starting November 22). Two male reindeer, named Lightning and Holiday, are on view from Wednesday, November 22, 2017 through Tuesday, January 1, 2018.

Sledding tickets are \$3 and are sold at Zoo's front gate and at the snow area. No advance sales. Regular admission is required to enter the Zoo. Sledding is for children aged 4 to 12 only. No adult sledding. Sleds are provided—no personal sleds. Snow play area is open to children 12 and under. For more information call 962-5339 or visit www.sbzoo.org.

Snowy Fun



There are six sledding runs, including two bunny slopes for younger children. The snow play area has snowman-making supplies, a place to “paint” in the snow using watercolors, a holiday card craft area, and more snow fun. A snow leopard-related craft is part of the Explore Store’s “Explorer Fundays.” There’s also face painting and climbing on the 25-foot tall “Mount Everest” climbing wall.

Snow leopard-related toys and books are available for sale, as are wool products made by the native people who live near snow leopard habitat, as part of a program of the Snow Leopard Trust (www.snowleopard.org). The Zoo supports the Snow Leopard Trust, and proceeds from sales of these items direct benefit snow leopard conservation.

About Snow Leopards

Snow leopards are critically endangered and currently number between an estimated 3,900 and 6,400 in the wild. They have long been prized as hunter’s trophies, destroyed as predators of domestic flocks, and sought as a source of valuable fur. Adapted for the extreme weather, snow leopards have been viewed at elevations as high as 19,600 feet in summer. Their furry feet help them to stay on top of the snow by providing a greater surface area—like snow shoes—and their fur keeps their paws warm and dry, providing traction as well. Unlike most big cats, snow leopards don’t roar, but they do make vocalizations.

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The Santa Barbara Zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; general admission is \$17 for adults, \$13 for seniors aged 65+, \$10 for children 2-12, and children under 2 are free. Parking is \$7 weekdays, \$10 on Saturdays and Sundays. The Santa Barbara Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Visit www.sbzoo.org.

AZA zoos are dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great visitor experience, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and is the public’s link to helping animals in their native habitats.

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