



NEWS RELEASE

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TWICE THE TIARAS, TWICE THE FUN! **PRINCESSES DAY IS NOW 2-DAY "PRINCESS WEEKEND"** **SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MARCH 11 & 12**

- Princess Costumes Encouraged; Cowboys and Pirates Also Welcome
- Activities & Photos with Costumed Princesses like Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, and Other Fairy Tale Characters
- Annual Event Highlights the Crisis Facing World's Amphibians
- Make-Overs by Santa Barbara City College Cosmetology Academy
- Event Replicated by Other Zoos Nationwide

Santa Barbara, CA, February 23, 2016 – The Santa Barbara Zoo's annual Princess Day has been such a hit with budding royalty that it is now a two-day affair, dubbed Princess Weekend. Young female members of royal families are invited to don tiaras, step into their glass slippers, and wear their finest sparkly ball gowns to this celebration of all-things-princess.



Princess Weekend at the Santa Barbara Zoo is Saturday and Sunday, March 11 and 12 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Santa Barbara Zoo members only are allowed early admission at 9 a.m.). The event is free with Zoo admission: \$17 adults, \$13 seniors aged 65 and up, \$10 children 2-12, and free for children under age 2. Parking is \$7. For more info, visit www.sbzoo.org.

But it's not all dress-up: the event is also a fun and festive excuse to garner attention for many of the world's frogs, toads, and other amphibians, that face possible extinction. Frog kissing is not required, but there are live animal encounters and keeper talks about several of the Zoo's amphibians including Colorado River toad, milky frog, marine toad, aquatic box turtle, blue tongue skink, bearded dragon, and others.

Real live princesses like Snow White and Sleeping Beauty, along with mermaids, fairies, and other fairytale characters will be present for photos and chat. Costumes are encouraged, and boys are also welcome, be they dressed as knights, princes, cowboys, pirates or astronauts.

Princess Weekend also features a “Kiss a Frog” booth, plus face painting, animal encounters, a bounce house, games, crafts and more, all with a princess theme. DJ Hetick is spinning tunes for a dance party, and makeovers are available for the young princesses from the Santa Barbara City College Cosmetology Academy.



“The world’s amphibians are in trouble, and there are no easy answers to stem the shocking drop in their populations,” says Santa Barbara Zoo CEO Rich Block. “If only there was a Fairy Godmother with a magic wand to fix the problems they face. In the absence of that, accredited zoos and aquariums are working to address the issues in the wild, and are creating temporary captive ‘lifeboats’ of some of the most threatened species.”

Since Princess Day debuted at the Santa Barbara Zoo in 2009, other zoos have picked up the “scepter” for amphibian conservation. Variations of the Princess Day have been staged at the Georgia Aquarium, Houston Zoo, Calgary Zoo, Oregon Zoo and Knoxville Zoo, among others.

What Do Glittery Crowns Have to Do with Frogs?

Estimates are that at least one-third of known amphibian species are threatened with extinction, a rate higher than that for birds or mammals. While the major culprits historically have been habitat loss and degradation, the main challenge today is the rapidly dispersing infectious fungal disease *chytridiomycosis*, which is causing population and species extinctions at an alarming rate. Managed populations and “lifeboats” of amphibians may become the only conservation hope for many species faced with imminent extinction.

Zoos and aquariums accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) are committed to ensuring the survival of all amphibian species and are already an active force in amphibian conservation. For more information, visit www.aza.org/amphibian-conservation/.

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It 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.

It is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) whose accredited zoos and aquariums are helping to preserve thousands of animals regionally and around the world through unequalled wildlife conservation programs. Visit www.sbzoo.org.

