



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Press Contacts:**

Dean Noble, 805 962-5339, [dnoble@sbzoo.org](mailto:dnable@sbzoo.org)  
Julia McHugh 805 569-3303, [jmchugh@sbzoo.org](mailto:jmchugh@sbzoo.org)

## **SANTA BARBARA ZOO REOPENS WITH DEBUTS: ROWDY ASIAN SMALL-CLAWED OTTER PUPS, GIANT ANTEATER BABY WHO RIDES ON MOM'S BACK, AND “PETITE” FEMALE MASAI GIRAFFE**

- Thomas Fire Evacuation Orders Lifted; Regular Hours and Admissions
- 11-Week-Old Otter Pups Taking First Swims; May Not Always be on View
- Giant Anteater Pup is 4 Weeks Old; Her Twin was Evacuated to Fresno Zoo
- Adia Joins Giraffe Herd as Part of Cooperative Breeding Program
- Indoor Activities for Kids in Discovery Pavilion Continue Friday Only
- Donations to Emergency Fund can be Made Online

Santa Barbara, CA, December 22, 2017 – Three rambunctious Asian small-clawed otter pups, less than three months old, are taking their first swims on view to the public at the Santa Barbara Zoo, which has reopened with regular hours and admission following closure due to the Thomas Fire. Also making their public debuts: a four-week-old giant anteater pup who can be sighted clinging to her mother’s back, and a female Masai giraffe fresh out of quarantine after arriving from the Cleveland Zoo.



With a few exceptions, all the animals are back on view at the Zoo (see below) now that evacuation orders due to the fire have been lifted in Santa Barbara County. Those looking to support the Santa Barbara Zoo are encouraged to visit, purchase a membership, or donate to the Emergency Fund online at [www.sbzoo.pivvit.com/zoo-emergency-fund](http://www.sbzoo.pivvit.com/zoo-emergency-fund).

“We’ve carefully cleaned both public and exhibit spaces, and our air quality is good,” said Zoo CEO Rich Block. “The animals appear to be happy back outdoors, and the staff certainly is. We’re ready and excited to welcome guests with normal operations, and are open every day, even on the holidays.”

### **Now Open: Zoo Train, Giraffe Feeding, Restaurant, Gift Store, and More**

The Zoo Train runs every 30 minutes, and the Giraffe Feeding Deck and Climb for Condors rock wall have reopened. Santa Claus is available for photos and gift requests. The Ridley-Tree

House Restaurant and Zoo Gift Shop are open, with standard prices. Check the entry sign for a schedule of other activities held throughout the day.

Zoo Camp will take place next week as scheduled (see below). The Zoo is open Christmas Eve and Day (December 24 and 25) from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and has regular hours on both New Year's Eve and Day. Details are on the Zoo's website ([www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/santabarbarazoo](http://www.facebook.com/santabarbarazoo)).

### Most Animals on View

The Zoo moved less than 25 of 500 animal residents (see below) and all are back on view with these exceptions: golden lion tamarins remain off exhibit to allow for reintroductions; titi monkeys are providing companionship for a new male in quarantine; and the California condors (highly endangered), Ruppell's griffon vultures, and turkey vulture evacuated to the Los Angeles Zoo will return early next week.

The Zoo's churro sheep, San Clemente goats, and Guinea hogs have returned from evacuation to the Earl Warren Showgrounds and are now on view and available for guests to feed. The two reindeer on loan to the Zoo for the holiday season were temporarily evacuated to the Showgrounds and have returned to Windswept Ranch near Tehachapi, California.

### Debuts by Otter and Anteater Babies, New Giraffe

On October 7, the first litter of pups were born to the Zoo's **Asian small-clawed otters** Gail and Peeta. As in the wild, where the parents keep their young in a den, the two females and one male pup stayed in their holding area until they were old enough to safely swim and had grown teeth to eat solid food. The otter family now has access to both their outdoor exhibit and their holding area, so they may not be on view at all times.

**Giant anteater** Anara (ah-NAR-ah), who gave birth to rare twins on November 21, now has access to her outdoor area and may be seen with her young female pup clinging to her back. Female



giant anteaters are not physically able to care for more than one offspring at a time, so the smaller of the two was being hand-reared by keepers. During the Thomas Fire emergency, it was moved to the Fresno Zoo, where Anara was born and also hand-raised.

Adia (ah-DEE-ah) is a three-year-old female **Masai giraffe** who was born at the Cleveland Zoo in Ohio. She was brought to Santa Barbara as a potential mate for Michael, the Zoo's genetically valuable male who has sired six calves since he

arrived here from Parc Safari in Quebec, Canada in December 2011. Adia is small by species standards, with slender legs, shoulders, neck, and head. She is just barely taller than Parker, the Zoo's 14-month-old male calf.

### **Indoor Activities on Friday Only in Discovery Pavilion**

The popular indoor activities for kids in the Zoo's Discovery Pavilion, which were held last week, continue today (Friday, December 22) only and include a bounce house, seasonal arts and crafts, holiday music and movies, and Story Time with Turtle. Ride-on animals and falling "snow" are in the courtyard. Activities are free. Children must be accompanied by an adult; no drop-off is available.

###

*The Santa Barbara Zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; general admission is \$17 for adults, \$10 for children 2-12, \$13 for seniors 65+, and free for children under 2. Parking is \$7.*

*Visit [www.sbzoo.org](http://www.sbzoo.org).*

*Known as one of the world's most beautiful zoos, the Santa Barbara Zoo is located on 30 acres of botanic gardens and is home to nearly 500 individual animals in open, naturalistic habitats. It is accredited by the [Association of Zoos & Aquariums](http://www.aazoo.org) (AZA), representing the highest level of animal care, and participates in AZA endangered species programs for Asian elephant, California condor, Channel Island fox, and Western lowland gorilla, among others. A private 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, the Santa Barbara Zoo depends on community support, not tax dollars, for operations and improvements.*