



News Release

Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services

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Meerkat Manor? No, Meerkat Hollow!

Happy Hollow Zoo Welcomes Two Additions to their Meerkat Mob

San José, CA - It's great news for Happy Hollow Park & Zoo's fall visitors. Visitors have been surprised and delighted to see the newest members of the resident meerkat mob, two new meerkat pups, expanding the Happy Hollow family to seven. Born on October 13th, the pups have been underground and in their nest boxes for the last three weeks and have just made their public debut!

"These animals are very popular with our visitors. They are always busy foraging, basking in the sun and grooming," explains Valerie Riegel, Zoo Curator. "I think what fascinates many folks is the idea of a guard, the one member of the mob that acts as a sentinel, keeping watch for predators and alerting the group in case of danger." The Zoo's enclosure has a six foot high 'termite mound' in the center and the meerkats can be seen perched on the top searching for potential predators.

This desert-dwelling species, native to Southern Africa and the Kalahari Desert, became well recognized with the introduction of the character "Timone" in Disney's *The Lion King* and their popularity has soared again with the popular series *Meerkat Manor* on the Animal Planet. They are extremely helpful animals and other adults will baby sit the youngsters while the mother feeds.

Visitors can visit the meerkat mob daily from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., but best time for seeing the new additions, and the never-ending antics of the family, is after the sun comes out and the cold mornings warm up. Photos of the meerkat family are available upon request.

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