



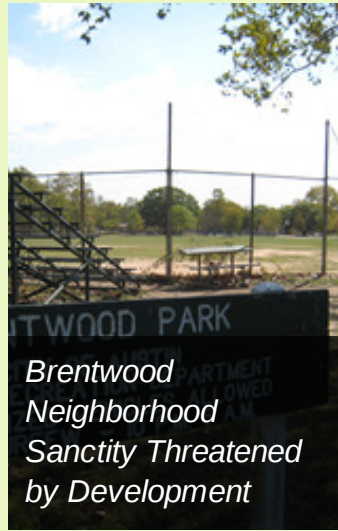
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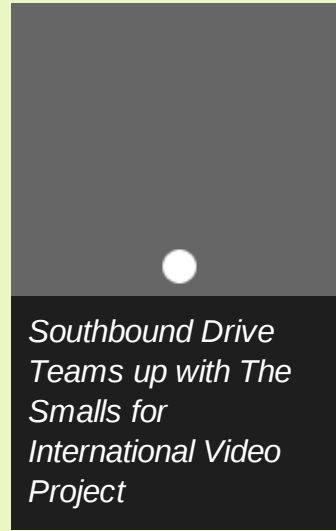
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Naked Mole Rat "Action" At The Houston Zoo





(FYI: This is not a picture of a human penis that has sprouted eyes. It's a naked mole rat. Photo: [Houston Zoo](#))


Zoos have a lot of things: they have feeding times, cute baby animals and lots of stylish creatures sporting always fashionable cheetah, giraffe, leopard and zebra prints!

Yet as nearly anyone who has ever been to the zoo knows, practically the most exciting thing that can happen during your zoo visit is catching two animals in the process of making more animals. That means anytime you head to the zoo and find a crowd assembled—what you've often stumbled across is two beasts making the beast with two backs.

Why does this matter? Because pretty soon visitors to the Houston Zoo are going to be able to visit a new and improved enclosure in the zoo's Natural Encounters habitat for their colonies of damara and naked mole-rats.

According to the official [Houston Zoo blog](#)

One problem with the old exhibit was that only the chambers were visible; the tunnels were behind the scenes where much of the great digging, tunneling and social interactions were happening. The new exhibits will have the tunnels and chambers visible to the public.

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We've been to clubs. We know what kinds of "social interactions" happen in dark spots behind the scenes. (Keep your eyes open for telltale [hindfoot drumming!](#))

These mole rats are [eusocial mammals](#)—meaning that they live in colonies like bees, with the queen in charge. In the Houston Zoo blog, keeper Kamryn Suttinger described how things go down with these [rodents](#):

It is nearly impossible to tell male and female Damara mole-rats apart, says Suttinger, and not long ago we were met with a big surprise as a result. One of the "males" was quarreling with the queen of the colony, and to keep the peace keepers separated "him" out with a few other males into a bachelor colony. To their surprise this colony produced a litter of pups!

Fun Fact: Turns out that naked mole rats can [live to be 28](#)—about the same life span as [rock stars who often perish at the age of 27](#).

Can't get enough of these creatures? Watch some episodes of [Kim Possible \(with Rufus\)](#) or listen to the "Naked Mole Rap" below.

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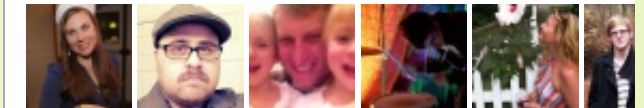
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