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ZOO report

the magazine for friends of the Brno Zoo

BRNO

special supplement

ZOO REPORT PROFI

The Content

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Bald eagle

UNSALEABLE

The Zoological First Division

A quarter of a century ago, the then-director of Prague Zoo, Prof. Zdeněk Veselovský, stated that the zoological gardens in Czechoslovakia, as it was at that time, was visited by more people than First Division football.

Photo Tomáš Adamec

Miroslav Bobek with Przewalski's horses in Mongolian steppe

I looked at the statistics some time ago to check how it is these days. As the years passed, the curves for visitor numbers approached each other, and then intersected... and now they are moving away from each other once again - and these are the visitor numbers for all matches in the whole Czech First Division compared with the visitor numbers for just one zoo, the one in Prague! When we add up the figures for all the Czech zoological gardens in the Union of Czech and Slovak Zoological Gardens (UCSZOO), which is our "zoological First Division", football doesn't have the slightest chance.

Without the visitors who come to the zoo to relax and be entertained, who use it as a form of recreation, a zoological garden couldn't fulfil its other, let's say, more "noble" aims. Without support from the public, on which the support of the founders is dependent, zoos wouldn´t achieve more and more breeding successes.

However, the popularity of zoological gardens, the support of the public, and, to a greater or lesser degree, the support of politicians haven't always been here; and these things can't be counted on forever. The recent killing of a male giraffe and, subsequently, lions in Copenhagen has put this popularity to the test, and I am afraid that there will be more and more such tests. This isn't, by a long stretch, only about the management of animal populations in human care. The pressure of activists, some of whom might never have kept even a hamster but who believe they have the right to meddle in the way zoos should breed the most demanding animal species, is increasing constantly. More and more, the most radical of these are questioning the very existence of zoological gardens, supporting their arguments with the existence of menageries which resemble the old-fashioned ones of half a century ago, or of business ventures similar to the Prague dolphin show.

It is the constant explanation of the importance of zoological gardens, both to the public and to politicians, that I consider to be the main outward purpose of UCSZOO. If we should manage to prepare a project demonstrating the importance of zoological gardens at the same time - either of their educational nature or in the area of in situ activities - well, this is all the better.

The interest and support of the public gives us immense strength. We have to maintain it and reinforce it, if possible. Perhaps one day we will finally achieve what Prof. Veselovský desired so much: the perception of zoological gardens as an inseparable part of our national culture.

Miroslav Bobek,
President of UCSZOO and Director of Prague Zoo

Miroslav Bobek (*1967)

studied zoology in the Faculty of Science at Charles University, and was employed by Czech Radio from 1993 to 2009. He was involved in the popularization of science with the station right from the beginning. In 1994, he initiated and also organized the African Odyssey project, in which the migration of black storks from the Czech Republic to African wintering places was monitored using satellite and VHF telemetry. He led many expeditions, from which he made hundreds of live broadcasts. He was also a leader of the New Odyssey project, which was launched in 2002.

Later, he became the founder and head of the Revelation project, which was launched at Prague Zoo in the autumn of 2005. This was like a "somewhat different reality show" with gorillas. Czech Radio was awarded a "wild Oscar" for it at the prestigious Wildscreen festival in Bristol, and a Comenius EduMedia Seal in Berlin.

At the end of 2009, Miroslav Bobek was recruited for the position of Director of Prague Zoo, a post that he assumed on 1st January 2010. Under his management, the record yearly visitor rate has been exceeded and the level of economic self-sufficiency has increased. Breeding has been more successful, as have been the zoo's efforts to protect endangered species. Prague Zoo, in cooperation with the Czech army (among other bodies), has already organized four air transfers of Przewalski´s horses to Mongolia, and has become actively involved in the protection of western lowland gorillas in Africa (mainly via the Le Bus ambulant project).

Miroslav Bobek is a member of the EAZA Council (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria) and a member of the management of the International Takhi Group. In June 2014, he was elected president of the Union of Czech and Slovak Zoological Gardens (UCSZOO).

Eva, a female sand cat, with kittens born in March 2014

Breeding of sand cats in Brno Zoo still among the best in Europe

Three sand cat kittens (*Felis margarita harissoni*), all males, were born in Brno Zoo on March 29, 2014. Since 2009, our pair have bred ten pups in six litters, which can be considered as a breeding success of European importance.

We gained our first experience with breeding sand cats in 1998, when two males from the Wuppertal Zoo in Germany arrived in Brno. We managed to acquire two females about two years later, in February 2000, from the Berlin Zoo. We placed one couple in the exhibition in the lower section of the zoo; the other found a home in the old terrarium building adjacent to the Tropical Kingdom pavilion. In this building, in the internal exposure quarters, Brno Zoo's first sand kitten was born on July 16, 2000. With the male of this couple permanently present, the female successfully bred four kittens (two males and two females), and gave birth to two more cubs on March 13, 2001; but unfortunately both of these died two days later. The couple living in the lower section of the Zoo produced three kittens on March 16, 2001, but they lived for only twelve days.

The second stage of Brno Zoo's sand cat breeding began at the end of 2008. We created a breeding facility for precisely this type of cat in the inner courtyard connecting the Tropical Kingdom with the old terrarium building. Male Osiris (born 2002 in Bristol Zoo) and female Eva (born in 2007 in Krakow Zoo) became the first inhabitants of the new space in January 2009. The female from this breeding pair gave birth six times between 2009 and 2014 to a total of seventeen kittens. Ten of them survived - eight males and two females - so she had a 59% success rate in raising her young. Most often (four times), she gave birth to three kittens; once to just one; and her biggest litter, once, contained four kittens.

In April 2012, I launched a series of lectures in the Expert Commission for Small Cats, which falls under the Union of Czech and Slovak Zoos, giving a presentation on the breeding of sand cats in our zoo. After this, zoologist Jiří Novák from the Ostrava Zoo, coordinator of the Commission for Small Cats, praised the successful and long breeding of this cat in our zoo, saying that we keep afloat the breeding of sand cats in the Union of Czech and Slovak Zoos, and that this is a major asset on the European stage.

The International Sand Cat Stock Book is maintained by Grégory Breton from Le Parc des Félins in Nesles in northern France. He is also a coordinator of the European breeding program for sand cats. In response to our report of the kittens born in Brno in 2014, Breton spared no words of praise, appreciating our role in the European breeding program.

You will find a more general discussion of the biology and conservation of sand cats in the special supplement to this issue.

Michal Balcar,
Breeder

Eva

Kittens born March 2014

The Lusatian Mountains: small, but attractive

The Protected Landscape Area (PLA) Lusatian Mountains is situated in north Bohemia, on the border with Germany . Established in 1976, it has an area of 264 km2 and lies between Krásná Lípa, Česká Kamenice, and Jítrava, neighboring with the Czech Switzerland National Park and the protected landscape areas of Czech Central Mountains and Elbe Sandstones. The protected area of Zittau Gebirge (Zittau Mountains) is within the Lusatian Mountains and extends into German territory. The highest peak on the Czech-German border, Luž (Lausche), reaches a height of 793 m above sea level; and along the ridges of the Lusatian Mountains lies the principal watershed of the northern Europe and the Baltic Sea. The reason for the protection of this small, but for many reasons attractive, territory (nearly two-thirds covered with forests) is its unique natural, cultural, and historical value.

The Lusatian Mountains are characterized by a highly dynamic surface with many neo-volcanic peaks of Tertiary origin (e.g., Luž, Klíč, Jedlová, Studenec, and others) extending from the Mesozoic sandstone tables. The northernmost part of the Lusatian Mountains near Krásná Lípa and Jiřetín pod Jedlovou is formed by Palaeozoic granites, and is separated by a significant geological fault, known as the Lausitz fault. There is an important geological site right on this geological fault, the Vápenka Nature Reserve, with Jurassic limestone, which is very rare in Bohemia. In the Quaternary period, the continental glacier extended into the eastern part of the Lusatian Mountains from the north. Gravel and sand deposited by the glacier are preserved near Jítrava.

Photo Martin Waldhauser

A ground beetle, *Leistus montanus*

Photo Martin Waldhauser

A view of the town of Jablonné v Podještědí. In the background are the tops of the Lusatian Mountains.

Rocks are often found on the volcanic peaks of the these mountains (the sixty-meter rock wall at Klíč is the highest), as well as smaller stones and scree fields. The wall was created by frost weathering in the ice ages. Smaller scree fields are found on almost every hill, but the large, massive fields on Suchý Hill (which has an ice cave in the scree) and at Studenec and Klíč are especially unique. The scree fields contain cell systems, accumulating cold air in the winter. Ice is preserved in the lower parts of the scree until late summer. This unique microclimate hosts unique associations, particularly bryophytes and boreoalpine and boreal species of invertebrates. The Lusatian Mountains are the home to the Acantholycosa norvegica spider, Leistus montanus or Pterostichus negligens ground beetles, and other beetles. We must also mention another frequent visitor to the scree, the chamois, imported in several stages from the Alps in the early 20th century and released around Jetřichovice. Peregrine falcon have been nesting again in the rocky peaks of the Lusatian Mountains since 2007.

The Lusatian Mountains have been permanently inhabited since the early 13th century, although occasional traces of human presence date back as early as the Neolithic period. The basic residential structure was formed in the Middle Ages. Large groups of timbered houses of the North Bohemian type have been preserved in some villages, the oldest of them dating from the eighteenth century, most from the nineteenth century. They are an essential part of this beautiful corner of the country.

Mgr. Martin Waldhauser,
Zoologist at the Lusatian Mountains
PLA administration

Photo Martin Waldhauser

A young black stork

A group of Bactrian camels in the enclosure before the second calf was born this year

Fatima didn't give Stella milk from her udder until the tenth day after the birth; but from then on, she took good care of her

The story of Stella, a little female camel

Bactrian camels are common in zoos. Without them, the mammal collection would not be complete and the popular ship of the desert would be missed by visitors. Even though they are domestic animals, their propagation in central Europe is not easy: Current statistics indicate that only 66 % of babies born in the Union of Czech and Slovak Zoos are viable and survive to adulthood.

Brno Zoo has bred Bactrian camels since 1963. Their present exposition is located in the vicinity of the top turn of the tourist train, and has an area of 2,700 square meters. The camels have a stable, a separate area which serves as a birthing box inside the barn. The stable is connected to the stabling yard, also known as the paddock. Our current herd consists of four individuals. Romeo, a male born in 1998 in the Olomouc Zoo, came to Brno in 2011, without yet having produced any descendants. The oldest member of the group is Sulika, a female born in our zoo in 1992. She has already bred eight babies. Maida (a female) came from the Bratislava Zoo in 2004, where she was born in 2003. Maida bore a baby in 2010, and another one, born on June 17 this year, is alive and kicking. Fatima (another female) was born in 2006 in the Ostrava Zoo. She joined us in 2008.

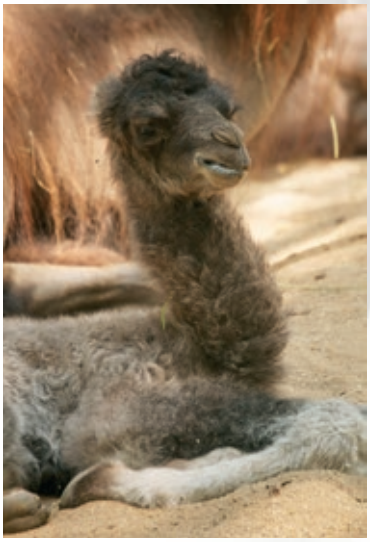
Fatima gave birth for the first time in July 2012, but showed no interest in the baby, which died six days later. The second time she gave birth, on March 5, 2014, the baby (a female) was weak and it seemed again that the mother's maternal instincts were still not fully developed. Zoologists decided to intervene actively. Thanks to their intensive care, in which they administered replacement nutrition from a feeding bottle, the baby survived. The taking of a sample of the baby's blood played an important role in saving her: The blood was analyzed and the baby was treated with antibiotics. The artificial rearing lasted for twelve days, after which the mother learned to care for her baby by herself.

In the wee hours of March 5, the camel gave birth in the exhibit. Because the baby was lying on the ground and could not get up to drink, we moved her into the birthing box and Fatima followed her in. The vet treated her small umbilicus, administered Kolostran (lyophilized goat colostrum) through oral gavage, and injected long-acting antibiotics, Frankfurt cocktail multivitamin, Selevit medicine against muscle dystrophy, and 40% glucose solution. ***On day two*** *(March 6), the mother again received 250 ml of goat colostrum by gavage. Fatima was nervous and did not care about the baby, shook it from her udder, driving it away, and was surly with the breeder. When we found that the baby had a good sucking reflex and received colostrum, we started transferring her to the neighboring booth four times a day (at 09, 13, 16, and 19.30 hours) to bottle-feed her.* ***On day three*** *(March 7), we diluted the colostrum 1:1 with water and added 10 ml of glucose to each of the four doses. The baby drank a total of 1,400 ml of artificial nutrition on that day. Because she did not excrete meconium sufficiently, the vet introduced an enema (paraffin oil), drew blood for analysis, and injected Hepagen. During the day we put the baby to the teat, but she did not suck. In the evening, the behavior of the mother changed. She started taking an interest in her progeny and directed it to her udder. From* ***day four*** *(March 8), we diluted the substitute diet at a ratio of one part water to three parts colostrum, adding glucose to*

Photo Šárka Nevesela

The breeder fed little Stella with goat milk from a bottle

each dose again. The baby drank a total of 1,720 ml, but was again affected by constipation. On the ***day five*** *(March 9), the baby received an enema injection and Hepagen was injected, with her daily ration remaining the same as on March 8. On* ***day six*** *(March 10), the mother guarded her little one and would not let anyone come close. We fed the youngster by pushing the bottle through the bars of the birthing box. We started to feed her five times a day (09, 11, 13, 15:45, and 18:30 hours), insisting that the baby come to drink by herself. In order to encourage her to come to the bottle, we started to call her "Stella". On day six, she drank 2,165 ml of the replacement diet. On* ***day seven*** *(March 11), we switched to feeding her goat milk with added glucose, and Stella drank 2,510 ml. On* ***day eight*** *(March 12), she appeared in the paddock with her mother for the first time, for about twenty minutes. Other members of the herd sniffed her through the fence. She drank 2,350 ml of goat milk with glucose.* ***Day nine*** *(March 13) brought a brief, fortunately transitional, crisis: Stella spent most of the day lying down. We forced her to get up to feed through the birth box rails. The mother did not allow us to put the baby to the teat, and was very nervous and aggressive. The vet administered higher doses of sedatives. Then the camel laid down. Putting the baby to the teat was still impossible, and Stella was very tired. She was given an injection of selenium. She drank 1,940 ml of goat milk with glucose. On* ***day ten*** *(March 14),*



The latest addition to the herd of Bactrian camels, a female born on June 17, 2014

Stella and Fatima

the situation reversed dramatically for the better. Stella sucked her mother's teats. Although she still was not drinking, she obviously knew where she could get breast milk. She did not lie down, walked in the box, and again received milk from the bottle (1,630 ml total), to which we added, in addition to glucose, 0.5 ml of Kombisol E (containing, among other things, vitamin E and selenium). The little camel then weighed 36 kg. At noon came another pleasant surprise – the first time we saw Stella drink from her mother's udder. On ***day eleven*** *(March 15), Stella drank only 200 ml of goat milk in the morning (again with glucose and Kombisol), wanted no more, and was no longer interested in the bottle. She was not hungry but was very agile. On the* ***twelfth day*** *(March 16), we quit the artificial feeding and saw Stella several times drinking from her mother.*

Laboratory analysis of blood collected from Stella on March 14 found an excess of leukocytes, and the small female began taking antibiotics on March 17. She finished taking antibiotics on March 21, when she ventured for the first time in the paddock with the other camels.

We are glad to note that the last addition to the camel herd, a female born on June 17, 2014 has been cared for intensively from the beginning by her mother, Maida, and the baby is developing well.

Stella and Fatima

Šárka Neveselá and *Zuzana Švejdová*,
Breeders

A few bright orange clown fish live in the immediate vicinity of a burly specimen of magnificent sea anemone.

Hey, dad, it's Nemo!

In the inner court shared by the Tropical Kingdom pavilion and the adjacent older terrarium building, there is a new marine aquarium exhibition, with four tanks – two of 700 liters, one of 1,000 liters, and another of of 2,000 liters – built into the wall separating the exhibition from the technical facilities. It will take a few more weeks to finish the tanks, but visitors can already admire numerous species of invertebrates and fish. These include, for example, probably the most common fish in marine aquariums, well known from the animated film *Finding Nemo* – the clown fish (*Amphiprion ocellaris* Cuvier, 1830).

Together with fish, corals and anemones represent the most attractive marine tank species. These invertebrates mainly belong to the Anthozoa class of corals and the Cnidarians (*Cnidaria*) tribe. The existence of the so-called hard corals largely depends on their cohabitation with photosynthesizing unicellular algae (zooxantelae), which act as intermediaries in obtaining nutrients from the sun and in the formation of hard calcium skeletons. Zooxantelae reside in the coral body, which provides them with shelter as well as with nutrients in the form of products of its own metabolism. (Coral reefs can grow precisely because of this symbiosis.) In Brno Zoo, the hard corals we can admire include bowl dendrophyllia (*Turbinaria*) and brain coral (*Lobophyllia*).

One of most conspicuous corals building only soft, leathery shells is true soft coral (*Sinularia, Lobophytum, Sarcophytum*), which looks like a sponge or brush. Another is the beautiful green tree coral (*Pinnigorgia*), which resembles a waving fan. The absence of a hard shell allows them to change their body shape. Most soft corals do not host zooxantelae, but depend on the flow of sea water to bring food particles.

While corals consist of many living polyps that live in colonies and that often build a common skeleton, the sea anemone is a separate living organism. It can move using its foot disc, and is a predator which uses its tentacles, which are equipped with stinging cells, to catch small fish.

A few bright orange clown fish live in the immediate vicinity of a burly specimen of magnificent sea anemone (*Heteractis magnifica*) in one of our marine tanks. These small fish, which grow to a length of 8–11 cm, are usually light orange in color with three white vertical stripes which are framed in black, to which it owes its name. They live in coastal waters of the western Pacific and eastern Indian Ocean coral reefs. Their widely distributed territory results in color variability, so that they can be almost red or black. They live symbiotically with four species of sea anemones (*Heteractis crispa, H. magnifica, Stichodactyla gigantea, and S. mertensii*), whose tentacles provide the clown fish with welcome protection from predators, while the anemone grabs bites that are too big for the fish, which feed on plankton and algae. While not immune against the stinging system of the anemones, clown fish can fool the anemones by means of chemical signals. They carefully rub against the stinging tentacles to cover their bodies with anemone slime, and the anemones then cease to regard them as prey.

"Hey, dad, it's Nemo!" We often heard this joyous cry of children walking around a tank containing sea fish. Lately, we have been hearing such exclamations in Brno Zoo as well...

Mgr. Petr Šrámek,
Curator of reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates

The azure damselfish (on the right) swims around these true soft corals: in the foreground, *Lobophytum sp.*; in the background, *Sinularia dura*.

Photo contest winner – Michaela Dvořáková

There were 244 people enrolled in our photo contest entitled "Through the Lens of the Visitor", which focused on the animals in Brno Zoo. The jury awarded first prize to Michaela Dvořáková for her image of the Australian green tree frog crawling on the front glass of the terrarium in the Tropical Kingdom pavilion. An exhibition of the best works was shown in the courtyard of the downtown Wanniek shopping gallery from June 3 to June 16, 2014.

Photo Michaela Dvořáková

An Australian green tree frog crawling on the front glass of the terrarium in the Tropical Kingdom pavilion

Science Day

After last year's successful premiere, when students from the Secondary School of Chemistry and their teachers held a Science Day in Brno Zoo, the same event took place for the second time. This year, it was on the first day of May. In the Zoo, the students prepared thirteen sites on which they showed the public various visually attractive natural science phenomena. Visitors had the opportunity to see an active volcano model and a mineral collection at the geology station; to taste herbal teas, to identify poisonous plants and to experience the magic of photosynthesis in the botany section; and to produce a silver mirror or demonstrate the presence of blood stains in the chemistry section. In physics, they watched the production of static electricity; in zoology, they had a chance to hold and weigh natural objects; while in genetics, they saw a cast of a Neanderthal skull. At other stations, visitors could see various animals being fed - tigers, chimpanzees, sea lions, lemurs, and a monitor lizard, all being done with commentary. Almost four thousand people came to the Zoo on this year's Science Day.

Photo Jana Galová

The chemistry station on Science Day

Breeding pair of pandas to be put together soon

A two-year-old female red panda born in Kristiansad Zoo in Norway arrived in Brno on October 25, 2013, and she had her partner after approimately six months. Our Zoo received the male on June 20, 2014 from the zoo in Linz, Austria. We placed the animals separately in neighboring aviaries in the former bird house, where they have sufficient olfactory and visual contact, and the breeders plan to allow them their first direct contact after about a month. Brno Zoo intends to build a new exhibit for the red panda pair and hopes to have them breed in the near future.

On the Pole-to-Pole path you lose something, but you gain something

In early 2014, Brno Zoo educators charted a fourteen-station Pole-to-Pole competition trail in the Zoo. Along the trail, participants learn about the situation in the polar regions, get tips on how each of us can contribute to slowing climate change, and are tested on their knowledge in the field. The trail is used by lower- and upper-primary school classes and by secondary school students. They take a test at each station and submit them to their teachers at the end. The teacher is given the trail test results at the Zoo ticket office, as well information on the European Zoo Association Pole-to-Pole campaign, and on polar animals. The trail covers a distance of 1,930 m, including a 90 m climb. Walking the trail reduces the energy stored in the person's subcutaneous fat by 104 calories. During the first half of 2014, there were 1,100 students using the trail. Zoo educators developed a training program on the campaign theme, and they are offering it throughout the school year 2014/15.

The male red panda

The female polar bear with a cub, by seven-year-old Terezka Benešová. This was the winner of the Pole-to-Pole art competition

Pull the Plug!

Campaigns to promote nature conservation have been announced by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) since 2000. Members of the Association, including Brno Zoo, are doing their best to popularize the importance and content of the campaigns among the general public. These may relate to one animal species (such as the Tiger Campaign), a group of species (Frogs are Sounding the Alarm Campaign), or selected areas of importance for biodiversity (e.g., Southeast Asia). The authors of the current campaign, which is already the eleventh, focus on the entire planet and called it "Pole to Pole 2013–2015". The theme of this campaign is global warming as a result of human activity, which is currently most evident in the Arctic and Antarctic. The subtitle of the campaign – Pull the Plug! – indicates options to reduce or stop this trend.

A team of students from the Faculty of Economics at Mendel University in Brno, who have worked with us before at other public events held in the Zoo, has significantly helped us to spread the campaign ideas, especially among children. Earlier this year, they organized a children's literary/art competition entitled – like the EAZA campaign – Pole to Pole. We received twenty-three works of art and twenty-one stories or fairy tales, and we rewarded the winners on April 26 in Brno Zoo, in celebration of Earth Day.

The celebration went hand-in-hand with the campaign issue – climate change caused by greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere, mainly by the production of electricity. If the energy consumption of the human population continues to rise, it is likely that polar bears, the symbol of the campaign, will become extinct in the wild in fifty years. Their number is currently estimated at 20,000 individuals.

A polar bear, which is a carnivore specialising in seal hunting, eats 43 seals per year on average, so the polar bear population needs approximately one million seals per year to survive. This is dependent upon a certain ice area from which to hunt the seals; yet the Arctic ice is disappearing.

It is clear, however, that people are unable to live as they used to a million years ago, without electricity and other comforts. But all of us can think about reducing our power consumption with simple actions, such as unplugging an appliance when it is not in use instead of leaving it in standby mode, when it does not do anything but silently steal power: It consumes energy and we are paying for nothing. Research by experts of the International Energy Agency (IEA) confirmed that using the stand-by mode accounts for a tenth of the total electricity consumption in an average household.

The Earth Day program was held in the Zoo from 12 noon to 5 p.m., once again directed by the students of the aforementioned faculty. The students entertained and educated visitors at three sites. At the first, near the exposition of Kamchatka bears, children painted pictures and masks, and folded origami penguins or polar foxes. At the second site, near the Exotarium house, they were tested on their knowledge of waste separation. The well-behaved children selected various items from trash cans and chose into which of three labeled containers to throw them. As a reward, they were allowed to touch the skull or hair of a bear. The third site, near the Tropical Kingdom, tested their physical fitness. At the "monkey runway", the children jumped from floe to floe. After the 158 contestants successfully completed all tasks on the three sites, we rewarded them with small gifts. Two thousand visitors came to the Zoo on Earth Day.

So do not forget to save and Pull the Plug!

Mgr. Jana Galová,
Educational Department of the Brno Zoo

The EAZA campaign Pole-to-Pole logo

A unique eagle aviary is opened in Brno Zoo

One of the largest eagle aviaries in any Czech zoo, finished recently on the western slope of Monk Hill, was opened to the public on Saturday, July 5, 2014 in the presence of Roman Onderka, the Mayor of Brno.

Along with the aviary, which houses a couple of bald eagles, the zoo managed to finish additional exhibits for striped skunks, Canadian porcupines, and chipmunks (of the genus *Tamias* and *Eutamias*). The new collection is part of the North American section of the Beringia exhibit complex.

As the aviary is built on a slope, its height varies, ranging between 11 and 15.5 metres. The supporting structure has a diameter of 30 metres, and consists of sixteen steel columns which are fastened together at the top with a steel ring. The flat ceiling and the curved walls are covered with a nylon net with a mesh of 50×50 cm. Steel rods and ropes in the ceiling and walls serve both as reinforcement (wind bracing) and as a means of affixing the net. The ground plan of the aviary is elliptical, with dimensions of 32×22 m. The supporting columns are anchored to the ground at different angles, and are never perpendicular. The aviary has the shape of an inverted truncated cone, extending upwards, so these predators have plenty of space to fly.

Access to the new bald eagle aviary

The statically sophisticated, self-supporting structure has no anchoring ropes outside the ground plan, and is completely original, unlike any other. It and the additional exhibits were designed by experts from the architectural office ADN Prague from a request by the Directorate of the Brno Zoo.

Eduard Stuchlík

The tour route passes through the aviary, which has a lookout under an artificial overhang.

A view into the aviary from under the overhang

Eagles spend most of their time in trees, but sometimes they bathe in the lake at the bottom of the aviary

A bald eagle on a fallen tree trunk

Setkání adoptivních rodičů a sponzorů

se uskuteční v Zoo Brno v sobotu 30. srpna 2014.

Bohatý kulturní program včetně divadelní pohádky proběhne na pódiu u Dětské zoo od 14 do 18 hod. Kromě komentovaného krmení zvířat budou v areálu zoo připraveny výtvarné dílny pro děti, stanoviště pro malování na obličej, jízdy na koních a další atrakce.
Významnou součástí výročního setkání bude slavnostní otevření nového průchozího výběhu klokanů s dobrodružnou stezkou a skalními kresbami původních obyvatel Austrálie.