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# **zoo**report

the magazine for friends of the Brno Zoo

## **BRNO**



special supplement

**ZOO REPORT PROFI**



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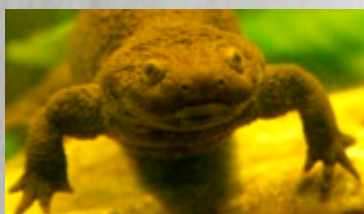
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### Zooreport

the magazine for friends of the Brno Zoo  
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Arctic Wolf (three months old whelp)

UNSALEABLE

## Beringia, the Biggest Investment in the History of the Brno Zoo

***I was very glad when the Statutory City of Brno succeeded with its application for allowance for the Beringia Project implementation in July this year.***

The European Rural Development Fund released CZK 45 million for our plan and Brno will add another CZK 31 million from its budget. It means, this year the constructional works may start within the biggest investment in the history of the Brno Zoo. After the successful breeding of the Polar bear twins born at the end of the previous year the Brno Zoo has another reason for joy. The city also applied for subsidies for other Brno projects and I believe this initiative in the gaining of money from the European Union will also be successful and will improve in future.

According to the project subsidized by the EU a new extensive exposition will be opened in the zoo which will show the countryside of Kamchatka and eastern Siberia to visitors. The construction shall be finished in 2010. The main bred species shall be Siberian Brown bear, which is – together with Kodiak bear – the biggest sub-species of the Brown bear. An adventurous nature trial will go through the exposition, where visitors will be acquainted with traditional ways of hunting bears and present methods of their preservation. The main idea of the scenario of the nature trial is a change of a man-hunter to a man-environmentalist.

The urban solution of the project tried to preserve the original forest character of the Mniší hora Hill and to strengthen it to imitate northern forests. An architect composed the nature trial so that it drags a visitor to the environment, where they feel as if they were in authentic wild countryside, where bears and other animals naturally move around. Visitors will find views of runs-out of bears and wolverines and then they appear in the centre of the exposition with a stylish



**Roman Onderka**

**Name and surname:** Roman Onderka

**Born on:** 11<sup>th</sup> November 1965 in Brno

**Education:** Complete secondary with the school-leaving examination

**Marital status:** Married

**Children:** 2

- The Mayor of the Statutory City of Brno
- A shadow minister of transport for ČSSD (the Czech Social Democratic Party)
- The member of the Board of ČSSD
- The first vice-chairman of the Municipal Executive Board of ČSSD Brno-town
- The member of the Government Council for Sustainable Development
- The member of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg

### Job profile

- For the electoral period 2006–2010 – released for the position of the Mayor of the Statutory City of Brno
- For the electoral period 2002–2006 – the member of the Investment Commission and the Transport Commission of the Council of the City of Brno
- For the electoral period 2002–2006 – the member of the Board of representatives of the City of Brno
- For the electoral period 2002–2006 – the member of the Board of Representatives of the Brno – Starý Lískovec town district
- Since 2002 – the chairman of the Club of ČSSD Representatives in the Board of Representatives of the City of Brno
- Railway Trade Union (OSŽ) – the territorial secretary for transport in the South-Moravian Region and the Highlands Region
- České dráhy, s. o. in Brno – a rolling-stock mechanic
- Adast Adamov – a mechanic
- Two-year military service

### Membership in companies with an ownership interest of the City of Brno:

- The member of the Board of Directors of TEZA a.s. – until November 2006
- The member of the Board of Directors of Teplárny Brno – until November 2006
- The member of the Board of Directors of DPMB – until November 2006
- The chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Veletrhy Brno a.s. – until June 2007

### Personal Information:

- No entry in the Criminal records of the Czech Republic
- Not registered as a person specified in Section 2, Sub-section 1a) or b) of Act No. 451/1991 Coll.

### Miscellaneous

- Hobbies: sport (football, football tennis, squash), music, theatre, literature

hunting settlement. The project of the exposition of Siberian bears and other species of the given area is the example of how we imagine a zoo of these days. After the implementation it will become part of the planned set of expositions of animals of both banks of the Bering Strait. According to the Strategic Development of the Brno Zoo the entire complex of Beringia will take the forested slope of the hill from the western edge of the zoo to the main trial. There will be 68 animal species, among which e.g. Polar bears, European reindeers, moose, Musk ox or Steller's sea-eagles.

The project supported by the European Union started in the year when we celebrate the 55<sup>th</sup> year of the Brno Zoo foundation. I hope the inhabitants of our town will be even prouder of their zoo, Beringia will make their life more pleasant and bring more quality to it and the zoo will become a welcome destination of visitors from the Czech Republic and foreign countries. I do not doubt the number of enthusiasts, for whom visits to the Brno Zoo several times a year will become a matter of fact, will increase.

Roman Onderka,  
Mayor of the City of Brno





Screech owls - female (right) and young ones



Barn owls

### **This Year's Breeding of Owls: Three Screech Owls and One Barn Owl**

Several species of owls have permanent home at the Brno Zoo. A visitor may see most of them in so called "Alley of Birds" - in aviaries on the round from a small train stop towards the pavilion of apes. This year we succeeded in breeding two owl species in the part of the alley near the office building: Screech owl (*Otus scops*) and Barn owl (*Tyto alba*). While we have managed to reproduce Screech owls for the first time, Barn owls already bred a young last year.

We gained the female of Screech owl by means of our Station for Handicapped Animals in 2004, the male was brought from the Rescue Station for Beasts of Prey in Bartošovice at Nový Jičín in 2007 and the couple has lived together since October 2007. The female sat on four eggs on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 and the male fed it. Young Screech owls hatched out from all the eggs and the female and the male took perfect care of them. After ten days we found one young, probably the weakest one, dead. The other successfully developed and at the beginning of August they gradually flew out from the nesting box. Parents still fed them but all of them permanently lived outside the box.

Screech owl, whose main food is big species of insects, occurs rarely in our countryside. Nesting has not been noticed in our country; the nearest place where it occurs is Slovakia. Screech owl is entered in the Red Book of the Czech Republic in the category of critically **endangered species**.

A couple of Barn owls we have been currently breeding in our zoo got to us from the Rescue Station in Bartošovice in 2000. It repeatedly tried to nest but egg-laying has remained non-fertilized or abandoned for several years. Barn owls successfully bred a young only in the second egg-laying in 2007. This year they started nesting as early as in February but both eggs remained non-fertilized. The second egg-laying followed in May and on 15<sup>th</sup> June a breeder heard calling of a young. Nesting continued without unnecessary



Male Screech owl

disturbance and on 4<sup>th</sup> August the young left the box. Barn owl is entered in the Red Book of the Czech Republic in the category of endangered species. The declining numbers are probably caused by several factors, e.g. the decrease of places suitable for nesting and the use of poisons for pest control. Food offer is also lower due to the outbreak of pine martens.

We feed beasts of prey and owls by excluded one-day cocks of laying breeds of Domestic fowl in our zoo - this component of food is very cheap and available for us. They also get laboratory mice and rats.

Visitors to the website of the Brno Zoo could watch another successful nesting of Barn owls, this time a wild couple - in their box a camera was installed (for more information on this breeding see the professional supplement of this issue of Zooreport).

Natural breeding of young of both the mentioned species is the result of permanent care of breeders in the section of beasts of prey and owls. I believe they will manage to repeat such a success next year again.

*Bc. Bohdana Bergmannová,*  
Breeder in the Children Zoo



## The Czech Switzerland – Home of Extinct Species Again

The Czech Switzerland is a romantic rocky countryside at the Czech-Saxon border. It forms a cross-border region with the neighbouring Saxon Switzerland which is characterized by many forests, a magic beauty of bizarre sandstone rocks and rock formations and picturesque valleys, where streams and small rivers flow for all-year round. All this goes with unique monuments of folk architecture and the remains of the remote history of human settlement.



Photo by Václav Šojka



Pravčická brána – surely the best-known rock formation of the Czech Switzerland National Park

The Czech Switzerland National Park with the area of 79 km<sup>2</sup> borders with the German Saxon Switzerland National Park and towards inland it is rounded by two preserved landscape areas – the Labe Sandstones and the Lužické hory Mountains. The preserved areas at both sides of the border, called the Czech-Saxon Switzerland, cover the area of approximately 700 km<sup>2</sup>. The Czech Switzerland National Park was declared in 2000 to preserve and improve natural environment, protect unique geo-morphological values, wildly living plants and wild animals and to preserve the typical landscape appearance. Its purpose is not only to “conserve” the present state, but also to increase the species richness and renew natural processes which were usual in this territory before humans came. The total “return to prehistory” is impossible in the given conditions, therefore, we rather try to preserve and renew processes close to nature.

Biodiversity in the Czech Switzerland National Park and adjacent areas increases in two ways. The first of them is a spontaneous return of formerly extinct animal and plant species. This is how our biggest

songbird, Common raven (*Corvus corax*) returned to the Czech Switzerland and European beaver (*Castor fiber*) has come to the old homeland up the stream of the Labe. These returns are promoted especially by the improvement of the environment outside protected areas. Another way is a purposeful reintroduction of specific animal and plant species to the places of their original occurrence which is preceded by interventions improving life conditions for the given species.

Since the declaration of the national park, several reintroduction programmes have been in progress. We can give an example of return (initiated by the German side) of the Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), which was nearly extinct in the Czech Switzerland in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. 80 individuals coming from artificial breeding were released to free countryside and at present, the peregrine falcon is a stable part of the local fauna and spreads also to other locations in Bohemia and Germany. The goal of another programme called Salmon 2000 is to return the Atlantic salmon

(*Salmo salar*) to rivers in the Czech-Saxon Switzerland. This formerly numerous fish was completely extinct in the past due to the water pollution. The water quality in rivers has been improving and so called “fish crossings” are built on water works which enable regular migration of salmon. Therefore, it is possible to start the reintroduction of salmon to some rivers. Other projects are also prepared, e.g. focused on the return of the Brook minnow (*Phoxinus phoxinus*), Hazel grouse (*Bonasa bonasia*) or Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*).

A targeted management is necessary for the success of reintroduction programmes. Measures focused on the conversion of formerly economic forests to the form, in which they can be left to spontaneous development play an important role. Such biotopes will certainly become the refuge for diverse plant and animal species.

Tomáš Salov,

Press officer of the Department of the Czech Switzerland National Park

Photo by Václav Šojka



About 50,000 small fish of the Atlantic salmon have been released into the Kamenice river in 2008

Photo by Václav Šojka



The Peregrine falcon is a symbol of successful animal returns in the national park





The wolf-pack has increased by two arrivals



Young wolf



Three months old whelps

### Wolf-pack Takes Care of Young

Two whelps born in the family of Arctic wolves (*Canis lupus arctos* Pocock, 1935) in the Brno Zoo left the underground shelter on 7th June 2008 and showed to eager breeders for the first time and for a while also to surprised visitors. Approximately a month old young always reappeared only for a short moment, usually early in the morning and late in the afternoon. They always stayed near the entrance to the den.

We anxiously expected the birth of young, and therefore we wanted to create as good conditions for wolves as possible for reproduction: at the turn of January and February 2008 we made an artificial den for them. We selected a place approximately 60m far from the entrance gate for them under an overhang of artificial rocks covered from inquisitive sights of visitors. We had an opportunity to monitor the course of events in the surrounding by binoculars.

The pregnant female wolf did not like the prepared den and it settled in the underground shelter dug out by the former settlers – Timber wolves. It extended the

den with the help of the male and the second female and delivered and took care of the young there. It was obvious from the behaviour of wolves that they perfectly settled in in the spacious and densely planted exposition with numerous terrain waves and that they feel there like in the open countryside.

The female later looked for the shelter for the young built by a man and accepted it even if it was quite a different place than the one prepared under the overhang. The entry to the den where the young were born was situated approximately 50 m from the visitors' view, which was constantly busy after the young appeared. The place was occupied mostly by journalists and no wonder the female lost patience after several days and took the young to the paddock – a lay-by yard, fully isolated from visitors. It hid the whelps there in a wooden kennel. The run-out consists of three paddocks serving for the separation of animals equipped with

mutually interconnected kennels with the floor area of 70, 60 and 20 m<sup>2</sup>.

We used the stay of the young in the paddock for their separation from adult wolves. The first time we managed to do so was on 17th June, when a vet could insert an identification chip under their skin and vaccinate them against distemper, parvovirus, leptospirosis and hepatitis. At the same time he found out the whelps are a female and a male. Adult wolves bored the handling with the young only with difficulties. They howled in chorus at the place approximately 10 m far from the fence of the paddock for the whole time of separation. They took the fact the young appeared behind a barrier and someone strange touched them as a betrayal. When people left, wolves immediately moved the young from the kennel to a hidden place in the run-out and did not let them go to the paddock. Their watchfulness decreased only after a month, so we managed to separate the young



Three months old whelps





Photo by Pavel Hrazdina



#### ◀ ▲ Vaccination of the little wolves

for the second time and revaccinate them on 17th July. Since then the young wolves have kept from the paddock and they have gone there only if a person could not be seen. Old wolves took meat which was served to the lay-by yard by breeders to the young to the run-out. The whelps usually stay at a protected place approximately in the middle of the exposition; the adult part of the pack regularly runs along the whole premises and guards, whether a danger is not coming. The young wolves have not been named yet. When breeders speak about them, they call them "kids"...

Grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) settled in a larger part of the North America, Europe and Asia but people pressed them to non-accessible areas. On such a large area with pretty various living conditions many subspecies that differ both in size and colour evolved. There are wolves with black, white, grey and red hair or a combination of these colours. The professional literature states as many as 35 subspecies of Grey wolves but many of them do not exist anymore. Some have been wiped out, some have crossed. Subspecies

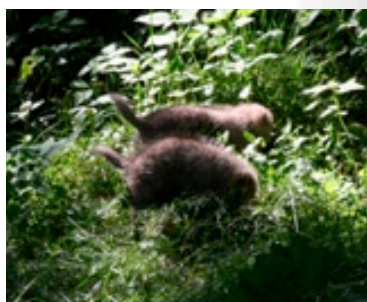
of wolves living at the High North are the biggest canids which sometimes reach the weight of 90 kg. On the other side, subspecies from the Southern border of the area of occurrence – e.g. from the Arab Peninsula or Mexico – are wolf-dwarves with their 10–19 kg.

Arctic wolves are characterized by white hair from youth, but they are born nearly black and the dark colour starts disappearing after a month of life. They live in the Arctic part of Alaska and Canada and in the northern Greenland at the sparsely populated desolate areas where temperature drops to -70°C. Thanks to this the original area of Arctic wolves decreased only a little (by approximately 5%). To be able to gain enough food in the icy barren land they need to have huge hunting territories, often bigger than 1,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Their kills include moose, Arctic hares, lemmings and birds. Big Musk oxes must be on the alert to defend their youngs.

The Brno exhibit, which was awarded the Exposition of the Year 2006 by the Czech Zoos civic society, was originally populated by Timber wolves (*Canis lupus occidentalis*). The present group of adult Arctic wolves is composed of Atila, a four years old male imported from the Sóstó Zoo in Nyíregyháza, Hungary, in December 2007 and two four years old females – Alex and Clair – which were imported to Brno from the Amnéville Zoo, France, in November 2006.

The reproduction of Arctic wolves is a big breeding success as it has only been managed in several few zoos in Europe. It has only succeeded in Brno in the Czech Republic. After the natural breeding of Polar bear twins the Brno Zoo has ranked first for the second time in the reproduction of northern beasts of prey in the Czech Republic.

Bc. Eduard Stuchlík



The whelps were still almost black in the first days after leaving the den



Mother with her young one





Photo: Brno Zoo archive

Founders and co-founders of Brno zoos in the Tyrš's Park and on the Mniší hora Hill on a photo from the end of the forties: Jan Šrubař, Antonín Bujnoch, JUDr. Osvald Brázda, Václav Olšaník. Ing. arch. Otto Eisler, Jan Hromek and Jaromír Kvapil (from left to right).

### Memory of Mr. Eisler, the Architect, One of the Founders of the Brno Zoo

This year it has been 40 years since the death of Otto Eisler. The important member of the Brno interwar avant-garde was a designer of the main expositions built at the Mniší hora Hill in the first two decades after opening of the zoo in 1953. In 1959 a run-out for bears and in 1966 two pavilions for apes were finished according to his designs. These constructions belonged, at their time, among the top breeding facilities which serve until these days. Eisler is also the author of the first general plan for the construction of the Brno Zoo.

Ing. arch. Otto Eisler takes the first position in the chronological list of directors of the Brno Zoo published at the website. However not as a director, but as a chairman of the Co-op for the Zoo Foundation which was in charge of the management of works at the construction of the new zoo from 1950 to 1953. Eisler became the chairman of the Co-op on the basis of his work in the Association for the Brno Zoo Foundation. Antonín Bujnoch, the founder and the after-war restorer of the Association states in the manuscript of *The Foundation and Development of the Brno Zoo until 1952* that Eisler was active as a member of the commission for the determination of positioning conditions in 1950.

Otto Eisler was born in Bystřice nad Pernštejnem on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1893 and died in Brno on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1968. Names of his colleagues – e.g. Bohuslav Fuchs, Jiří Kroha, Arnošt Wiesner or Josef Kranz – remind us of the periods, when the Czech architecture, for the last time in its history, kept the pace with Europe. Unfortunately, Eisler's name is often missing in the awareness of the public in this regard. It has been unjustly forgotten after the architect's fate was marked by the Fascist holocaust, the communist anti-Semitism and a holy ideology of the class struggle. The Eisler's heritage has been better at the employees and promoters of the Brno Zoo who usually know only the final stage of his architectural work.

The present generation of the Brno architects and art historians has retrieved Eisler as an artist-designer. We can find comprehensive studies about his work e.g. in *Famous Brno Villas (Slavné brněnské vily)* published by Foibos in 2006. Eisler appears only rarely in common journalism. The reminder of the life and work of this important native brought by the *Noviny Bystřicka* (11./2006) newspaper is a worthy example. Ladislav Pokorný, the author, states there, among others, that Otto was the youngest of five sons of Theodor Eisler who owned a small farm in Bystřice. When the boy was three, his father died and his mother moved with children to Brno. Otto graduated from a Czech elementary and gram-

mar school in Brno and then he studied architecture at the German Technical University. At first, he designed gardens to new constructions of architect Arnošt Wiesner, later he designed family, residential and commercial houses for the developer company of Otto's brothers, Artur and Mořic. The firm significantly contributed to the high architectural culture of interwar Brno – it built, among others, the villa of the Tugendhats. As an architect, Eisler preferred a simple appearance, refused ornateness, emphasized comfort of living and co-created the style called rational purism. He designed the Double-house in this style which was built at Lipová Street No. 39 and 41 in 1927 and which ensured prestige for him in professional circles as early as at the beginning of this career. Otto Eisler loved nature, worked in the garden, grew cactuses and bred exotic animals. He lived in the House for Two Bachelors which he designed for him and his brother Mořic and built at Neumann Street No. 10.

Otto and his three brothers were arrested by Gestapo for the alleged offence to "Führer" in 1939 and they were imprisoned at Špilberk for six weeks. After their release they had to daily present themselves at Gestapo. Otto and Hugo with families managed to escape to Norway. There, Otto found a job in a designing office. After the occupation of Norway by the German Army he tried to escape to Sweden but he was wounded by a shot, returned to Oslo and deported to Oswiecim, where he met his brother Mořic. They underwent the death march to Buchenwald together where they were liberated by the US Army on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1945. In June of the same year they returned to Brno. Their brothers, Leo, Hugo and Artur died during the war. Mořic renewed the company, where Otto substituted the deceased Hugo. Otto's work culminated in 1947–1948 when he designed nearly twenty residential houses. After the nationalisation of the Mořic's firm in 1948 Otto worked independently at first and since 1950 he worked as an external employee of the Botanical Garden of the Masaryk University and designed pavilions and expositions of the Brno Zoo...

This is the end of the memory of Ladislav Pokorný. Architect Eisler was a sought after and highly appreciated designer before and shortly after WWII. His fallback was certainly caused by the era which made class enemies of successful businessmen and suspicious elements of the members of the Jewish community. Eisler's buildings have shaped the appearance of Brno and its zoo until the present.

Jan Kameník



## Young Polar Bears Will Stay in Brno Longer

Polar bear twins, born in November 2007, were to stay at our zoo presumably till this year's autumn. We have changed this variant, because the young ones would profit from staying longer with their mother. At the turn of March their father Umca will have to return from the Prague Zoo where he covered local female - birth of their whelps is expected with winter coming. Before Umca occurs in his home zoo again, fifteen months old twins will leave Brno. One will go to the Prague Zoo and the second one probably to the Gelsenkirchen Zoo, North Germany. However, there is also a third variant. If we manage to place Umca temporarily at some other zoo, the whelps could stay with their mother till the age of two years. A zoo that will take care of Umca for about half a year can get one of the twins as a "reward". (red)

## Great Curassows and Both Steller's Sea-eagles Created Pairs

Female of Steller's sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus pelagicus*) came to our zoo from the Tallinn Zoo, Estonia, on 10th July. Thus our male experienced a partner in the aviary of eagles which is situated above the Polar bears' exhibit. He had lived in the aviary with a Bald eagle so far, but we moved this one to the Jihlava Zoo. Steller's sea-eagle is the biggest kind of eagle with wing-spread of 2,5 m. It lives only on the Okhotsk seashore. The Brno Zoo participates in the Steller's sea-eagle genetic analysis which is a part of international protection project for this species.



Steller's sea-eagle

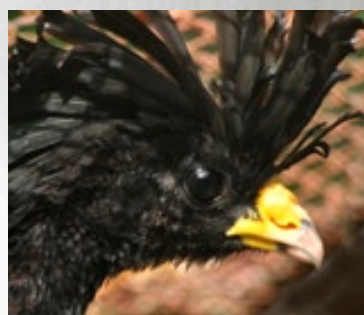


Polar bears in September 2008

We managed to create another bird pair on 20<sup>th</sup> August, when we brought a Great curassow (*Crax rubra*) male from the Ústí nad Labem Zoo. Female that has been alone in an exposition near the administration building so far got a new partner. Visitors can now admire the South American species of a gallinaceous bird that shows distinctive sexual differences. Males are black and females are from brown to red. Curassows live in primeval forests from South Mexico to West Ecuador. (red)



Great curassow - female



Great curassow - male

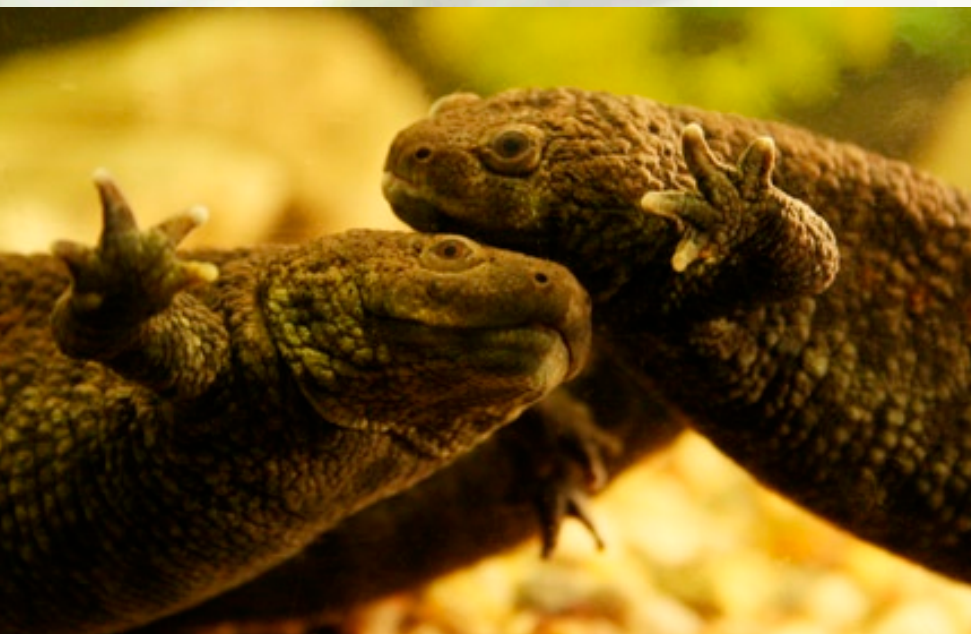
## Saker Falcons Repeated Last Year's Success

Pair of Saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*) repeated their last year's successful breeding of one little bird. This year's young one hatched on 28<sup>th</sup> May and after it had been fed up by its parents it left the nest on 13<sup>th</sup> July. Aviaries of birds of prey are on the left side of the road that goes from seals to Polar bears. The Saker falcon is in the Czech Red Book in the category of critically endangered species; it nests in our nature only rarely. However, falconers commonly reproduce it and often produce crossbreeds with the Peregrine falcon using artificial insemination. Sausliks are the main food of the falcons in wild. Using falcons for hunting was and here and then still is widespread. Aristocracy was breeding them to hunt storks and herons and they still help to hunt bustards in the Middle East. (berg)



Saker falcon





Ocellaris clownfish



Ocellaris clownfish

### Newts at the Permanent Aquarium Exhibition

Reservoirs with sea and fresh water fish are supplemented with the exposition of amphibians at the Permanent Aquarium Exhibition. We breed Sharp-ribbed newts (*Pleurodeles waltli*) of the salamandrine family (*Salamandridae*) in one of them.

These robust grey-green salamanders with dark spots on the roughly wrinkled skin live in fresh waters in Morocco, Tunis, Algeria and on the Pyrenean peninsula. They grow to the length of 30 cm (less in Africa). They have orange-red nipples on the sides of the body to which tips of ribs reach – these formations serve as a protection against predators. The tail fin facilitates the movement of newts in

water. Males are slimmer with a longer tail. Newts cast their skin and its remains can often be seen in the reservoir. They live to be twenty years.

In wild nature they copulate in autumn. A male keeps a female on its back with front legs, while inner fertilisation occurs. Females keep alive sperm cells until the spring. Then they lay fertilized eggs, there may be even 800 of them, in sticky shells on stones, sand and plants. Approximately 8mm larvae emerge in one or two weeks. They breathe through outer fruticulose gill and in a week, when they reach the length of 1 cm, they change for the food from the outside environment. The transformation of a larva to an adult salamander occurs within five months; newts sexually mature in one or two years. In dry seasons they probably hide underground or in mud on the bottom of drying-out pools. Sharp-ribbed newts are strongly bound to water, much more than other salamanders. They are most active at nights. As all amphibians, they sensitively respond to chemi-

cals. They eat worms, molluscs, small fish, tadpoles, insects and their larvae. Cannibalism sometimes manifests with young individuals.

We have been currently breeding five Sharp-ribbed newts at the Permanent Aquarium Exhibition. They are situated in the water at common room temperature of approximately 23 °C (in summer the temperature may be little bit higher) in the reservoir with the volume of approximately 90l and the water column of 30cm. In winter it is suitable to decrease the temperature to 8°C, but it is not necessary – we have not seen any signs of strain when we leave the room temperature of water for the whole year. The bottom of the reservoir is covered with rough sand with stones and the environment is completed by aquatic plants. Newts, which breathe through lungs in adulthood, may swim to the water level to breathe air at any time. Therefore we did not arrange for an aquarium with a part of dry land. We feed them by small defrosted sea fish every other day. As soon as we put them to the reservoir, newts quickly go to breathe and then they ingest. Every week, or often, we change 1/5 or 1/4 of water for fresh water. We add salt to the water (a teaspoon per 50l) due to a common zoological prevention. The water filtration and circulation is ensured by an internal filter with a small rotor which is commonly available in the shops with aquarium aids. After the replacement of part of the water we found roes in the reservoir but they did not develop further.

We would like to recommend Sharp-ribbed newts to all breeders interested in amphibians. The care for them is not demanding but reproduction and successful breeding require certain portion of skill and experience.

Ing. Vladimír Spurný,

Foreman at the Permanent Aquarium Exhibition



Ocellaris clownfish





New backbone road

### Ceremonial Opening of the Main Backbone Road

Roman Onderka, the Mayor of the City of Brno, handed over for use a reconstructed main backbone road to the public at the annual meeting of adoptive parents and sponsors which was held in the Brno Zoo on Saturday, 30th August.

He cut the band together with Martin Hovorka, the director of the Brno Zoo, at the ceremonial act and appreciated the quality and speed of the work in a short speech. The Mayor and the director touched the glasses with Champaign and offered the delicious drink to ten brave men who decided to step as the first ones on the new road and to walk to the inside of the premises along it. After several minutes, a locomotive drawing three trailers with the load of other happy visitors including many adoptive parents or sponsors set off along the new route for the first time.

The objective of the reconstruction was to increase safety on the main visit route leading from "At the Tiger" Restaurant to the pavilion of exotic birds and further to the upper turn of the small train. The pavement had to be separated from the road where the tourist train and vehicles supplying breeding areas and stalls with refreshment move. A constructional company widened the 600m long road from 4 to 6m and covered by concrete paving which fits well with its colour and shape to the natural framework. Several resting places appeared along the new pavement. The route of the train is longer now and the body of

the upper turn moved higher from the pavilion of birds to the crossing to buffalos.

Inženýrské stavby Brno, the supplier of the reconstruction, finished all modifications two months before the planned term. The investor was the City of Brno which earmarked CZK 12.6 million from its budget. The Mayor promised the City of Brno will further pay more attention to its zoo in future years.

The reconstruction will be continued by the stage of establishment of new expositions so that the backbone road offers a view of animals along its all route. New exhibits of Patagonian cavies, meerkats, Lamas guanaco and other species will be gradually added to the existing runs-out of Jacob sheep and Lamas glama.

A set of artistic performances expected adoptive parents and sponsors as usual at the "At the Camel" stage. They were pleasantly surprised right in the beginning. Lad'a Kerndl, a swing singer, who is one of the most favourite promoters and sponsors of the zoo, sang a song from his repertoire as one of the first and in addition to the prepared programme. After the Moravian Sinatra the stage was taken over by Zimour, a country band, the Abanico, a dance group and the Absolute Theatre with the story by P. Chekhov. The mix of culture was substituted by the cuisine art: adoptive parents and sponsors grilled sausages over the fire among several Indian tee-pees.

Adoptive parents and sponsors have contributed to the zoo operation for ten years. The sum of financial and material gifts has been about CZK 1.5 million in recent years. Their meeting was held



Photo by Zdeněk Kolářik

The Mayor Roman Onderka (right) and the zoo director Martin Hovorka cutting the band during the ceremonial opening of the backbone road



Toast of the visitors during the opening of the backbone road

for the eighth time this year. They always meet on the last August Saturday when the zoo celebrates the anniversary of its opening to the public.

Bc. Eduard Stuchlík



Sausages bake





**Restaurant "At the Tiger"** is located right in the centre of the Brno Zoo in a building where the Centre of Services is situated

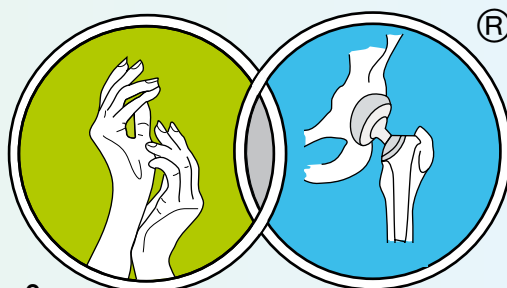
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