

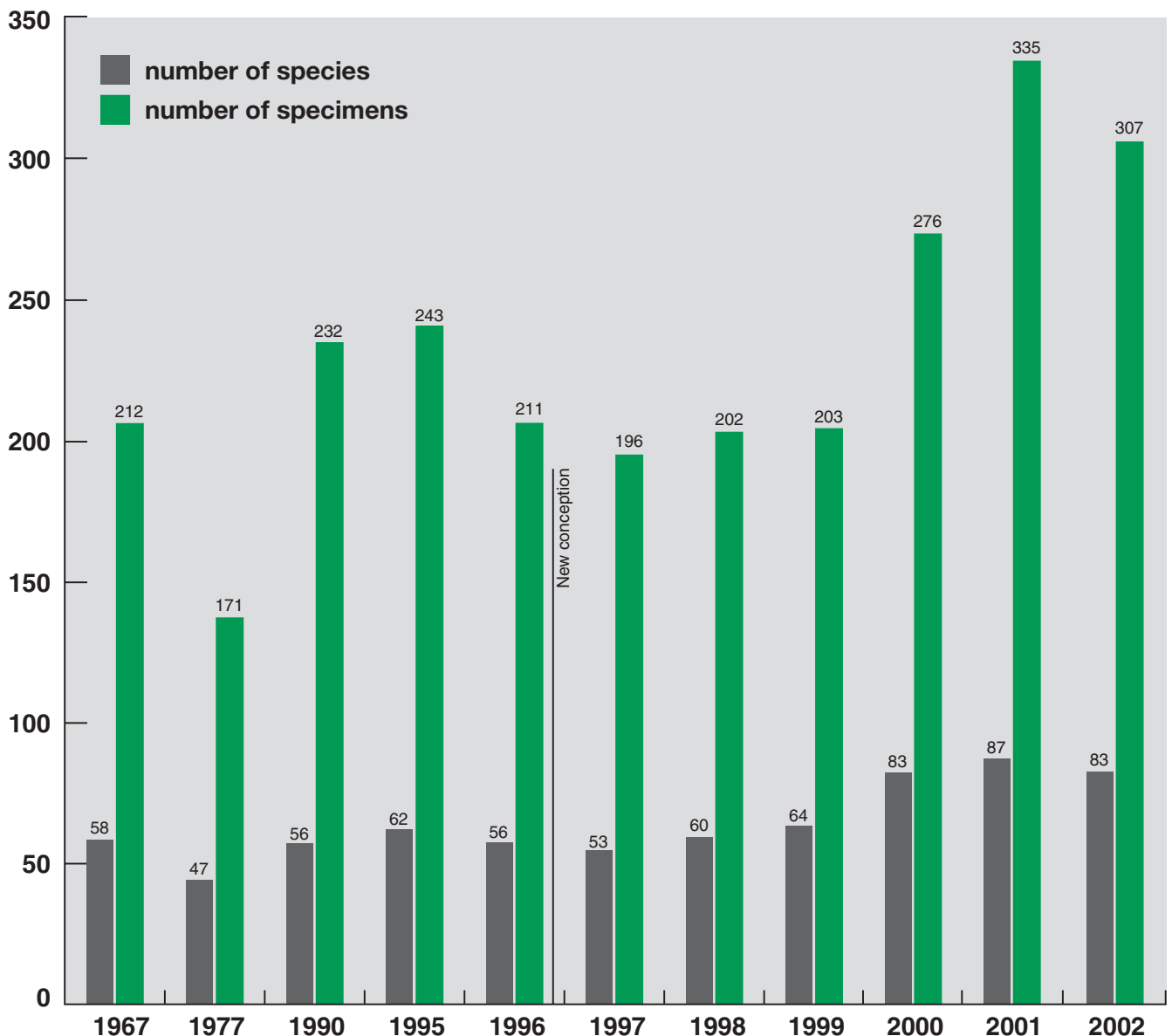
Development of the mammal collection at Zoo Brno

From a visitor's perspective, mammals belong completely and unequivocally among the most attrac-

tive animal species kept in zoological gardens.

Understandably, the Brno zoological garden has kept an array of mammal species already since the moment it was opened in 1953. For the most part, this has concerned practically the majority of generally kept species (for example North American Raccoon, Bactrian Camel, Llama, Common Porcupine); domestic fauna species (Brown Bear, Forest Badger, Forest Marten, Wildcat, Lynx, Common Fox or Common Squirrel); or domestic animal breeds (Caracool Sheep, Buck Sheep, Cameroon Goat, domestic Zebu and Yak). Rarer species of mammals was very modest. These included, for example, Marsh Lynx and European Wolverine. Animals were placed in very simple, for the most part temporary wooden fences or in small cages.

Not even caravans were lacking, two having been acquired from the Kludský Circus. A pair of bears was placed in one of the vehicles and four mammal species were originally kept in the second, but only three of these original species could be traced. They were Forest Badger and probably Common Fox and European Wolverine. About one year later, this caravan was modified for two more, Wild Boar and Spotted Hyena. Runs and cages were located only in the vicinity of the then gamekeepers' cottage (now the new House of Services stands here) and on the site of the current building of the veterinary treatment centre. Still in this watershed year, a wooden loghouse was built with a small external cage (now part of the exhibition for Syrian Brown Bears) for a pair of lions. Over the course of later years of Zoo con-



The survey of number of specimens and species of mammals reared at Brno Zoo



Photo: Miloš Budík

During the opening of Zoo Brno in 1953, located among the exhibitions were two caravans from the Kludský Circus. There was a pair of bears in one and the second, shown in our photo, was divided up into four living spaces. These species each took one section: European Ground Squirrel, Common Fox. The inhabitants of the fourth space could not be determined.

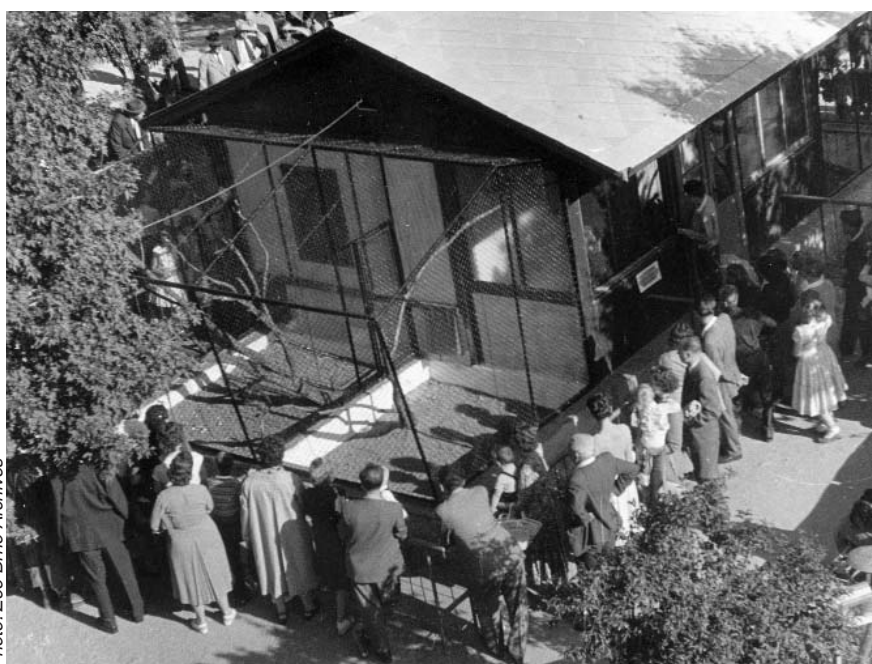


Photo: Zoo Brno Archives

First monkey house. The Zoo bought a cottage in 1960 and adapted it for keeping monkeys and baboons.

struction, the number of individuals and species increased. In the provisional terrarium building, opened in 1956, even some species of smaller mammals were kept, for example Golden Hamster as well as Six-Banded Armadillo and Small Loris.

In 1955, on a rocky promontory beyond the current cage for porcupines, three cages were built for Lynx and European Wolverine. Somewhat beyond these, the then largest run for bears in Czechoslovakia was opened in 1959, build according to a design by ing. arch. O. Eisler. The run still served today. Into it were relocated both bears from the caravans, to which two more female bears were added from the Prague Zoo. In 1964, Zoo Brno acquired the first pair of polar bears, which shared this new run for bears together with the brown bears, when they alternated with them in using the large outdoor run. In 1965, they were relocated to Zoo

Bratislava. In place of them, a new young pair from the then Soviet Union was transported here in 1966. This was located in an expanded exhibition for lions. One offspring was born here in 1976, which was successfully reared artificially. It was the 4th artificial rearing of a polar bear in the world and the 1st in Czechoslovakia. The polar bears lived in these quarters until 1987. After them, the pair of Syrian Brown Bears have been living there to the present.

Lions have been kept by the garden continuously up to today, while the most majestic representatives of large predator cats were already on Mniší hora in 1953. In later years, leopards and jaguars were added to the king of beasts, and in 1973, Zoo Brno displayed its first young tiger. This individual soon died, however, from chronic intestinal catarrh. Another tiger did not appear for three years, in 1976 the Zoo arranged for an Indian sub-species and currently keeps a Sumatran tiger. For the pair of cheetahs, acquired in 1974, a spacious run with quarters was built about a year later in the upper section of the garden.

Except for the cheetah, Zoo Brno has successfully increased their number of all large predator cats. Frequently, however, the young have not been accepted by their mothers and so keepers have had to take her place. In the years 1962-1972, the garden reared eleven lions, from 1976-1985 twenty six tigers, from 1971-1973 three leopards and from 1968-1979 five jaguars. At the same time, pumas were successfully bred, even the run for these largest of the small predator cats was not and is still



Bear cage building from 1958 to 1959.

Photo: Zoo Brno Archives

not so large as we would like. Monkey breeding in Zoo Brno began to develop at the end of the 1950s. In the space below the current aviary for Great Curassow, a cage was initially place for Javan Macaque and in 1960, a recreational cottage was rebuilt for keeping monkeys (monkeys and macaques) and Red Baboon. In 1962, a living space was added to the provisional terrarium for our first pair of chimpanzees with a small run, the foundations of which can be seen today in the run for American puma. In the years 1964 and 1965, two very modern monkey pavilions were gradually built. Located here, in addition to a series of smaller species of monkeys, were Lara Gibbon and chimpanzees, which moved here from unsuitable quarters in the provisional terrarium. Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, a second composition of monkeys was gradually formed, as a visitor can see today.

Only in 1981, we provided storage space from Zoo Dvůr Králové for a group of seven orangutans, which stayed here until 1984. At that time, the majority of the animals returned to their original owner and only one pair remained in Zoo Brno. However, there was a miscarriage and both parents had dies by 1986.

Over the course of the years 1975-1980, the garden built a new run, which was named Safari. Over an area of one hectare, representatives of fauna from Sub-Saharan savannah acquired common space: Rothschild Giraffes, White oryx, Addax, Böhm and Chapman Zebras, Blue Wildebeest and Lechwe. This composition has been changed in such a way that the animals do not mutually attack one another. Also released into the run were winged cranes and Nile Geese. It has not been proven that the cranes were reduced the Chapman Zebras and the geese fell prey to wild foxes from the surrounding forests.

In 1980, Zoo Brno acquired Roan antelope, which were placed in the current run for Addax. About five years later, a pair of cheetahs was added, which inhabited the spacious grassy run, today reserved for South American species – Maned Wolves, Capybaras, Maras and Great Rheas.

Currently, with the construction of the terrarium (1966-1970) on the southern summit of Mniší hora, a pool was built in close proximity, which has only served through one year for its original purpose - an exhibition of Dusky Seals. Only utility water was available on the hill, which proved unsuitable for the seals from a health perspective. The filled in pool, however, became an ideal space for



Exhibition one of three cages for Lynx and Wolverine. The cages from 1955 no longer exist today.

Photo: Zoo Brno Archives

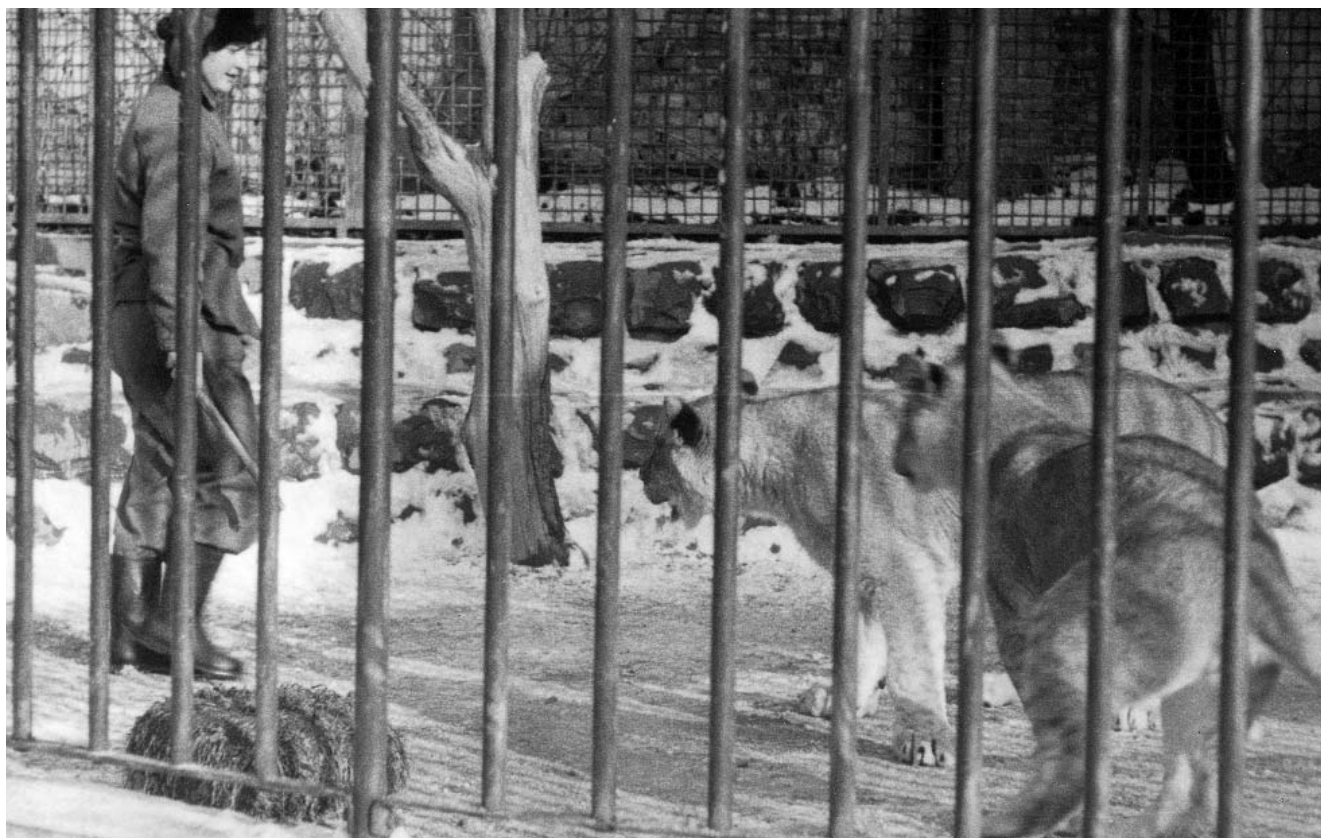


Photo: Zoo Brno Archives

In the 1960s, the lion run was located in the spaces of the current Tygří skaly (Tiger Rocks).

today's run for American Prairie Dogs – the rodents do not have the chance to dig out of here. In 1971, the seals were moved to a pool next to the constructed veterinary treatment centre on the western slopes of the hill, on sites where once stood a corral for hoofed animals. Later, a second change occurred to the Maned Seals and not in this space we keep South African Seals.

At the veterinary treatment centre was next to the seal pool also built

still one of the same large runs with a small pond, which served as a lion house. During construction of the Tygří skaly exhibition (1998–2000), a tiger refuge was found there, and the lions were located into the territory of the zoo. Insofar as the tigers could move to a new, free space at the treatment centre, we offered it to young polar bears, imported from Alma-Ata and Leningrad.. This pair lived in the above mentioned run to this day.

Of significant rearing efforts in Zoo Brno can be noted 22 Caracal young from the years 1966–1972, which was unique at the time in Europe; three young Servals from 1987, the garden has reared more than thirty Siberian Ibex during its existence, on Mniší hora even twin Mandrills have been born.

The relatively spacious run acquired in 1977 Canadian Wolves and next to it also Dingo. In the area where the modern wolf area is under construction, in 1989 three runs were added, which houses a new species of canine predators – Hyenas.

Over time, the majority of quarters and runs have proven to be insufficient, individual exhibitions have been rebuilt to keep step with new ideas about the lives of animals still living in the wild and some buildings are directly dilapidated. Construction efforts signal a happier period in the development of the zoo, which began after 1997 and the results of which are the display exhibition Tropical Kingdom from the following year, Tiger Rocks from 2000 and this year in August the anticipated wolf area with a beaver dam. Other pavilions will then be linked to these in the near future, just as the new wolf area has been built according to new exhibition concepts.

Emil Štiss, RNDr. Bohumil Král, CSc.



Photo: Zoo Brno Archives

The farmstead buildings belong to the hunting lodge from the 19th century, where the zoo had operations spaces (status since 1960). The Tiger Rocks now occupy this space.