

12th May Rearing of Barbary Lions

Our both females had cubs in 2018, so there were two christening events in the year. As four new lion cubs were reared, our lion group grew to a record 8 members in July. The first born cub Amira was sent to the Austrian zoo Tierwelt Herberstein in February.

29th May the Morocco Aviary

The large aviary went through a thorough reconstruction and it got new inhabitants as well. It was built in 1984 and its cylinder shape and placement in a slope at the African run made it one of the zoo dominants. It is 13 meters high and its almost circular diameter has around 20 meters. The mesh was newly placed inside, so that the kept birds may not sit on the aviary construction. All the surfaces had to be newly painted.

At present, it is devoted to the Atlas Range in Morocco. Apart from Griffon Vultures, our visitors may see again Egyptian Vultures (coming from Zlín and Prague). Nine rare Northern Bald Ibises, which are kept in Pilsen for the first time, are dominant of the cage. We show there also smaller species such as ducks, pigeons, kestrels and oystercatchers. The reconstructed aviary was opened by the deputy mayor Ing. Petr Náhlík, the zoo director Ing. Jiří Trávníček, Václav Klaus from the building company Stavos and Ing. Tomáš Peš the curator of birds in the Pilsen zoo. The reconstruction cost was 2,6 mil.CZK.

29th June Aviary of Penguins

The exhibit of penguins was changed to a walk-through aviary in 2018. Such bird exhibit may be seen here for the first time. One reason for this reconstruction was also separating penguins from free living birds to protect our animals from diseases. We have kept penguins there since 1997. They reproduce very well and still belong among most popular species in our zoo. The space for visitors has separated entrance and exit chambers. There are also various species of ducks and Black-necked Swans there and we plan to add other species in the near future. The newly reconstructed aviary was opened by the mayor deputy Ing. Pavel Kotas along with the zoo director Ing. Jiří Trávníček.

4th September the Lüftnerka farm playground

The loft of the higher situated farm building originating in 1829 was rebuilt to a new large playground. It is a unique in the whole Czech Republic as it is indoor and all made of wood. The reconstruction took four months and it cost almost 5 mil. CZK. Children can enjoy a few bridges in various height or ride down through a toboggan to the farm courtyard. To enter the playground, children may crawl through a special tunnel – pigsty. As they crawl through this place, they are greeted by authentic grunting.

This loft had originally served as an exhibit of rural tools and owls. The playground was opened by the mayor of Pilsen Martin Zrzavecký, his economist deputy Ing. Pavel Kotas and children.

8th September We have a new general partner of the zoo – Vodárna Plzeň a.s.

We officially started cooperation with Vodárna Plzeň (a water company) on Saturday 8th September 2018 by a program for children called “With Vodárna to the Zoo”. Children could take part in educational quiz about water, oceans and water animals. The speaker of the zoo, Mgr. Martin Vobruba, took over a check for 500 000 CZK from the general partner representative Mgr. Pavel Šindelář, symbolically at the “Czech River” exhibit. Vodárna also became the benefactor of our male Otter Bonifác.

28th September A visit of Andrej Babiš

During the past 30 years, we welcomed top members of the Senate, Chamber of Deputies and Government of the Czech Republic or a wife of the president Mrs. Ivana Zemanova. However, it was probably the first time, when the zoo was officially visited by the being chairman. The Chairman of the Government of the Czech Republic Mr. Andrej Babiš came to our zoo to christen our lioness Luisa.

5th November – an Exhibit “the Philippines with Butterflies”

Opening “the Philippines” exhibit was the most significant even of 2018. It was financed by the Pilsen town municipality and the building cost was 16 mil. CZK. It was opened on 5th November by Pilsen town representatives Mgr. Martin Baxa and Ing. Pavel Kotas. Visitors can newly see Philippine Crocodiles, Mangrove Snakes, Mindanao Monitors, Philippine Sailfin Lizards, geckos, water turtles, Philippine invertebrates and of course beautiful butterflies. This exhibit resembles a greenhouse and it is full of tropical plants. Freely flying butterflies became the main attraction for visitors.

December – new taxa

Towards the end of 2018, our collection of animals was enriched by a few special species. All of them are endangered and rarely kept animals. For example, we offered our visitors a new exhibit with a colony of Naked Mole-rats. It can be found in the rhino pavilion. At present, they can be seen only in our zoo. Behind the door, visitors may also newly watch rarely-kept humming birds. Further, we brought two males of the endemic and rare New Caledonian Kagu.

31st December A record in visitors number

Our lion cubs, the Philippine exhibit, special activities, the new farm playground and other novelties brought us record 481 773 visitors. We overcame a seven years old record, when we had almost 461 000 visitors in 2011. As for the weather, 2018 had a very hot August, but the spring and autumn were pleasant, which also may have contributed to the record number.