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Press release

2023: Things are looking up!

Outlook for Zoo and Tierpark Berlin | Visitor numbers almost back to pre-Covid times

After three years of challenges and a few bumps in the road, Zoo and Tierpark Berlin are looking ahead to a year full of literal “high” lights. Several long-term projects are now reaching completion and they all have one thing in common: their impressive height!

Rhino Pagoda standing tall in the heart of the city

The golden tip of the **Rhino Pagoda**’s 25-metre tower can be seen gleaming far beyond the gates of Zoo Berlin. In spring 2023 this new habitat for Indian rhinoceroses will open to visitors. Across approx. 13,000 m² of space, Zoo visitors will not only discover the swampy habitat of Indian rhinos, tapirs and Visayan warty pigs, but can also learn more about the issue of animal extinction inside this towering monument to species conservation. What are the consequences of the loss of biodiversity? What are some of the success stories, and how can you become a conservationist yourself? In addition to Betty, who already lives in Berlin, more rhinos will be moving into the new habitat – the first to allow visitors to watch the two-tonne heavyweights bathing underwater!

A close encounter with prehistoric giants!

Dinosaurs are the most famous examples of extinct animal species. Now, some 66 million years after they disappeared off the face of our planet, **dinosaurs** are highly relevant once again, as we are currently experiencing the sixth major species extinction in Earth’s history. In an exciting new exhibition, Tierpark Berlin delves into the fascinating abilities and features that evolved in prehistoric times and draws surprising parallels to animals alive today. Life-size replicas of some of the extinct Mesozoic giants will be on display to visitors from April 2023. In addition to the famous predator *Tyrannosaurus rex*, the 20-metre-long *Brachiosaurus* and the three-pronged *Triceratops*, the exhibition will include many other full-size dinosaur models – some of which have never been seen before in Germany. The new dino experience will be included in the entrance fee for Tierpark Berlin, including for annual pass holders.

Eye to eye with the world’s tallest mammal

Measuring up to six metres in height, giraffes are the tallest animals on the planet. Visitors to Tierpark Berlin will soon be able to come face-to-face with the most elegant inhabitants of the African savannah and learn more about these fascinating creatures on the Tierpark’s wooden **giraffe walkway**. The raised path is around 120 metres long and leads visitors through an area of woodland and past a 2.2-metre-high platform that affords wonderful views over the savannah landscape. In a separate area, visitors will even have the opportunity to

get up close and personal with the Tierpark's giraffes. At certain times and under supervision, they will be able to feed the graceful giants and marvel at their 50-centimetre-long tongues. The walk through the giraffe's unique habitat ends at a small "research camp" for giraffe conservation. The topping-out ceremony for the giraffe walkway is imminent and the new area at Tierpark Berlin should be open to visitors before the summer.

2022 in review: A year shaped by extraordinary circumstances

"Working closely with animals shows us that we are only a small part in the great cycle of nature," says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem, explaining the motivation behind his work. "Protecting our fellow creatures and their habitats is a goal that deserves our full commitment and passion." Knieriem also expressed his gratitude to the many people who have supported Zoo and Tierpark Berlin, helping them to develop into the modern facilities they are today. The success of this work is reflected in visitor numbers, with almost as many people coming to enjoy Zoo and Tierpark Berlin in 2022 as before the pandemic. After a slight increase from 2020 to 2021 following the most difficult period of pandemic restrictions, a new post-Covid record has now been achieved: with around **5.2 million** visitors, numbers are almost exactly back to pre-pandemic times – despite restrictions in the first quarter of 2022, bird flu at the Zoo, inflation, and a general reluctance to spend.

	2022	2021	2020	2019
Zoo Berlin	3,636,430	2,344,236	2,267,398	3,729,999
Tierpark Berlin	1,606,220	1,265,569	1,220,166	1,726,143
Total Zoo + TP	5,242,650	3,609,805	3,487,564	5,456,142

Looking back on last year, many unusual circumstances dominated everyday life at Zoo and Tierpark Berlin. After the outbreak of war, a difficult time began for our colleagues in **Ukraine** and the animals in their care – a state of emergency that continues to this day. Throughout the year, Zoo and Tierpark Berlin remained in contact with other zoos, environmental charities and animal protection initiatives and – thanks to numerous supporters – were able to collect over €400,000 in donations for Ukraine. Various aid deliveries of animal feed and other urgently required materials were sent from Berlin to Ukraine. The most recent delivery of feed and much-needed power generators was sent to Kiev Zoo at the end of January this year.

In late 2022, Zoo Berlin successfully averted a potential catastrophe of its own. After a bird that had died at the Zoo tested positive for **bird flu** on 18 November, the Zoo's gates had to close for five weeks as a precautionary quarantine measure. Fortunately, after several rounds of testing, no further cases emerged and the killing of the entire bird population was avoided. This was only possible thanks to the dedicated efforts of all involved.

Zoo and Tierpark also developed internally last year: their newly founded Department for Wildlife Health, Animal Welfare and Research was also called upon by external parties who required the competence and knowledge of its experts. Around 200 fish that survived the

dramatic bursting of the **AquaDom** close to Berlin's Alexanderplatz were taken in and provided with veterinary care at Aquarium Berlin, in consultation with the relevant authorities. The animals received included cichlids and surgeonfish as well as species like common clownfish, lagoon triggerfish, silver moonyfish and batfish.

Together, Berlin's zoological facilities care for almost 30,000 animals representing around 1,500 different species. That means they remain the zoological institution with the greatest number of species in the world.

The numbers at a glance

Zoo Berlin (incl. Aquarium Berlin)

Visitors: 3,636,430 (2021: 2,344,236)

Animals: 19,583 (2021: 19,444)

Species: 1,063 (2021: 1,074)

Tierpark Berlin:

Visitors: 1,606,220 (2021: 1,265,569)

Animals: 8,055 (2021: 6,380)

Species: 639 (2021: 645)