

ZOO ZÜRICH – CONSERVATION CENTRE

Up above the city of Zurich, spanning a surface of approx. 27 hectares, is Switzerland's largest and most frequently visited cultural and educational institution: Zoo Zurich. The popular nationwide excursion destination wants people to connect to animals and encourage them to play an active role in conservation and the protection of species.

When it was inaugurated in 1929, Zoo Zurich was a «living museum» that exhibited as many exotic animals as possible for visitors to observe up close. Today, Zoo Zurich is a centre of conservation and the preservation of species. As such it strives to inform and educate its visitors and prompt them to take action. It aims to act as an intermediary, creating a relationship between humans and animals, following its motto: «People who know animals will protect them».

Exemplary Masoala Rainforest

As a conservation centre, Zoo Zurich focuses on the protection of ecosystems and species. Within the scope of various in-situ projects, it is committed to preserve the natural habitats of the animals it keeps at the zoo, e.g. those of Asiatic elephants in Thailand and orangutans in Indonesia. The Masoala Rainforest, a unique partnership between Zoo Zurich and the Masoala National Park to preserve the biodiversity on Madagascar, is recognised by experts as exemplary.

Worldwide networking for the preservation of species

In order to contribute to the preservation of species, Zoo Zurich is involved in international breeding programmes such as the European Endangered Species Programme EEP. It keeps the breeding records on Galapagos giant tortoises, amongst other species. Zoo Zurich has built up an international network thanks to its membership of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums WAZA, its European counterpart EAZA, the German Federation of Zoological Gardens VdZ, and its partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society WCS. At a national level, Zoo Zurich is a member of Zooschweiz and works closely with Zurich University.

Exhibitions and animal presentations

Zoo Zurich is home to exhibitions on various conservation topics. These exhibitions provide cultural, historical and zoological background information and comprise

interactive features for a hands-on visitor experience. Commented animal presentations not only help to inform visitors about the various animal species and how they are kept in the zoo, but also explain the threats that exist to them in the wild and why.

The zoo – a cultural investment

Zoo Zurich regards itself as a cultural institution, designed by people for people. Its ideal objectives are nature conservation and the protection of species. It pursues its vision according to a master plan. The South-American mountainous cloud forest for spectacled bears and ring tailed coati opened in 1995 was the first in a long line of new developments and extensions implemented in order to put the zoo's vision into practice. It was followed by the Himalayan high-mountain exhibit for snow leopards, Amur tigers and Mongolian wolves (2001); the Zoolino petting zoo (2002); the Masoala Rainforest (2003); the Gir dry forest for Indian lions (2006/2007); the Semien mountain exhibit for Gelada baboons (2008), the Pantanal South-American wetland area for anteaters and tapirs (2012), the Kaeng Krachan Elephant Park (2014), the Mongolian steppe for yaks, Bactrian camels and Cashmere goats (2015), the modernisation of the aquariums (2016), and the Australia exhibit featuring Koalas, Perentie and Wallabies (2018). Next milestone is African Lewa savanna for giraffes and rhinoceros, linked to a conservation project in Kenya (opening April 2020).

Around the world in a day

If, in the past, you travelled «around the world in 80 days», today, one day at Zoo Zurich is enough. Thanks to the division of the zoo into continental regions, its grounds replicate the globe: from the Arctic to Central and East Asia via South America, Africa and Europe.

Broad-based support

Zoo Zurich is a non-profit corporation with more than 14,000 shareholders. The zoo is supported by a foundation and a friends' association (TGZ) that boasts over 40,000 members. In addition, a team of over 300 volunteers carry out a variety of tasks to help bring the animals even closer to zoo visitors.

Visitors' centre, restaurants, shops

The visitors' centre at the main entrance represents the first stop for visitors to Zoo Zurich. It not only provides all the information people might need for their visit, but also answers any other questions they may have, e.g. about sponsorships or events at the Zoo. Food and drink is available from the Zoocafé and the restaurants Altes Klösterli, Masoala and Pantanal, not forgetting various catering stands and kiosks. Visitors will find the perfect spot to rest and/or let off steam at various picnic areas and playgrounds located around the zoo. A range of selected products is available from the zoo shops. Two percent of the overall turnover from the zoo restaurants and zoo shops goes towards nature conservation projects.

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