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Ressort: Mixed News

Royal Burgers' Zoo, Arnhem

Arnhem,NL, 11.08.2019 [ENA]

Summer Sun Brings Out The Bears

After living behind the scenes for more than 2.5 months, two sun bear cubs show themselves to Burgers' Zoo visitors for the first time

Arnhem, 25 July 2019 – In the early morning of 7 May 2019, two sun bears saw the light of day at Royal Burgers' Zoo, a first in the Netherlands. Like all bear species, sun bears are born naked, blind and helpless, which is why the new additions to the

zoo spent the first months of their lives behind the scenes in the nursery with their mother. On Friday 26 July 2019 the two cubs will be visible in the indoor enclosure for the first time.

High spirits in Europe

Only 40 sun bears live in the European zoos affiliated with EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria)—twelve boars, twenty-six sows and the two cubs in Arnhem whose gender is yet to be determined. Breeding is additionally difficult because of the surplus of sows, the ageing of the zoo population and the shortage of fertile boars. The birth of the two cubs was received with jubilation in Europe.

An international affair

On 30 November 2018, a sun bear boar was transported from Edinburgh Zoo in Scotland to Arnhem.

The chemistry between the new arrival and the two sows was immediately visible, and mating took place soon after the extremely polite initial introduction. The sow with the highest chance of fertility—according to research carried out by the German Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IZW)—started showing behaviour that indicated pregnancy. The sow sought the privacy of the nursery where she gave birth to the two cubs in the early hours of Tuesday 7 May 2019.

Remote camera surveillance

A safe, secluded environment where mother and her cubs are not disturbed is essential for the survival of newborn animals in the first critical stages of life. Thanks to a pre-installed camera, zookeepers and biologists could remotely monitor

Redaktioneller Programmdienst: European News Agency

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the animals. Patience is rewarded, and on Friday, 26 July 2019, the long-awaited moment will be there: the bear cubs will finally show themselves to the visitors and employees of the Arnhem zoo.

In the early morning of Friday 26th July 2019, two Malayan sun bear cubs entered for the very first time the indoor enclosure in front of the scenes at Royal Burgers' Zoo, Arnhem, the Netherlands. The twins were born on 7th May 2019 (being the first birth of Malayan sun bears in Holland) and spent together with their mother more than 2.5 months in the nursery behind the scenes. In all European zoos only 40 Malayan sun bears are found: moreover, the zoo population is ageing, only 12 males are counted and not all of the bear boars are fertile.

The gender of the two newly born Arnhem bear cubs is still to be determined: they have not been touched by human hands so far.

A first discovery of the indoor enclosure in front of the scenes

In the early morning of Friday 26th July 2019, the two Malayan sun bear cubs finally defeated their fear of the unknown and entered the brand new indoor enclosure. Soon, however, the curious cubs explored the new living space in full and even tried to climb some poles as well. When they have grown further in the near future, they will be introduced to the vast, large outdoor enclosure, while mother is keeping an eye on her offspring. The gender of the two cubs has yet to be determined.

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https://www.european-news-agency.de/mixed_news/royal_burgers_zoo_arnhem-75481/

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:

V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDStV: Roman Baumann

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