

ZOOS

of

INDIA

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 केन्द्रीय चिडियाघर प्राधिकरण
Central Zoo Authority

(STATUTORY BODY UNDER THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS, GOVT. OF INDIA)

ZOOS FOR ALL SEASONS

***T**here are 180 captive wildlife facilities in India at present comprising of 15 large zoos, 17 medium size zoos, 27 small and 121 mini zoos. While a comprehensive treatise on all the captive wildlife facilities is beyond the scope of this publication, it attempts to provide glimpses of some representative zoos in the country.*

National Zoological Park, New Delhi

On the recommendations of the Indian Board for Wildlife in 1952, the Government of India set-up a zoological park in the capital with the purpose of conserving and breeding rare fauna, and providing education and recreation to the people. The location selected for the park was a stretch of land between the 16th century Old Fort and the 'Humayun' Tomb, the last resting-place of the second Mughal Emperor. The layout plan of the zoo was prepared in consultation with Major Weinman, the then Director of the Zoological Garden, Colombo (Srilanka) and Carl Hagenbeck of Germany. It was given the status of National Zoological Park in 1980, and is the only zoological park being managed by the Central Government through the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Developed in accordance with the modern concepts of zoo



Lion-tailed macaques on an island

A female one-horned Indian rhinoceros with her calf



The population of the brow-antlered deer (or Sangai) in the zoo has stemmed from a pair received in 1962 as gift from Manipur state. Since then, over a hundred births have been recorded in the zoo. Encouraged by this success, it was decided to establish more breeding units for the Sangai in different zoos around the country. Accordingly, young pairs of this deer were distributed to zoos at Kanpur, Bhubaneshwar, Jaipur, Lucknow, Imphal, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Mysore. Most of these zoos have also been successful in breeding the species.

The zoo has also been successful in establishing a colony of lion-tailed macaque on an island. A four year old pair of this species, received as a gift in 1959, formed the nucleus of the colony, and so far nearly forty-five births have been recorded. Surplus animals have been distributed to different zoos in the country. Similarly, a pair of white tiger brought from Rewa (Madhya Pradesh) were successfully bred in captivity at the park. At one time, this zoo had the largest number of white tigers at any one place in the world.

The zoo has a rare distinction of establishing a natural herony in the midst of a bustling metropolis. In 1959, a few water birds were released in a four-acre water exhibit area named the Indian swamp. The exhibit covers two shallow ponds punctuated with

Kanpur Zoological Park, Kanpur

During the colonial period, a small patch of forest alongside river Ganga belonged to Sir George Berney Allen, an English industrialist of Kanpur. He was also a philanthropist and a nature lover and had constructed a building by the lake in the forest



which was his favourite haunt. The State Forest Department acquired the ravenous land covering 300.19 acres and afforested it during the period 1913-1918. It acted as a timber producing forest up to 1943 after which it was managed as an ornamental park meant for the recreation of the city dwellers. After independence, a large part of this forest was encroached by the expanding city.



Zoological Gardens, Thiruvananthapuram

This zoo started as an adjunct to the Government Museum in 1857. In 1859, animals belonging to the Maharaja of Travancore were transferred to it, and a formal scheme was drawn up for the zoo in 1865.

The important feature of the zoo is its landscape and terraced layout. The area excavated to raise the terrace was converted into a lake for boating and for developing it as a water bird sanctuary. The antiquity of the zoological garden can be seen in the design of the cages from the Victorian era. This may, however, soon become a problem as the cages of primates, carnivores and birds are quite old, and some are in dilapidated condition. The preponderance of lions of some obscure origin has resulted in shortage of accommodation.

The zoo has been successful in breeding the nilgiri langur, nilgiri tahr, lion-tailed macaque, hippopotamus and zebra. Basic veterinary facilities such as a hospital and qualified staff are available. The park, along with the museum, is controlled by the State



New moated enclosures for rhinoceros and elephant

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