

Births and Hatchings

A female Northern white rhino (*Ceratotherium simum cottoni*) was born on 29 June 2000 at 2:30 a.m. in Dvur Kralove Zoo after a gestation period of 482 days. The birth was recorded by five cameras and could be observed live on Internet. The mother, 'Najin', was born in July 1989, also in Dvur Kralove. She is the first F1 Northern white rhino to reproduce in captivity. Although 'Najin' is a first-time mother she takes excellent care of her calf. The sire, 'Saut', was wild-born in 1972 in Sudan and arrived in September 1975 at Dvur Kralove. His first young was born in 1980 but since then he produced no more offspring until 2000. Between 1989 and 1998 'Saut' and two wild-caught female Northern white rhinos from Dvur Kralove were on breeding loan in San Diego Wild Animal Park (USA). However, this exchange did not result in any pregnancy. As 'Saut' was the only unrelated male in captivity for the young females 'Najin' and 'Nabire' he returned on 15 July 1998 to Dvur Kralove. There he was introduced to the group of females on 19 August and mated 'Najin' for the first time on 14 September. Further matings took place on 28 October, 28 November 1998 and on 5 March 1999. The last mating resulted in the pregnancy of 'Najin'. Recently, 'Saut' has concentrated on the other young female, 'Nabire', who was born in Dvur Kralove Zoo on 15 November 1983. Her hormonal cycle is continuously monitored by means of faecal metabolites. 'Saut' mated 'Nabire' on 26 June 2000 for the first time and hopes are high that this resulted in another pregnancy.

The Northern white rhino is one of the most endangered large mammals worldwide with about 30 specimens in the wild and 10 in captivity (at Dvur Kralove and San Diego). Dvur Kralove made zoo history when it achieved the world-first breeding success in June 1980. Since then four Northern white rhinos have been mother-reared at Dvur Kralove Zoo including the female calf of 2000. Dvur Kralove is thus the only zoo worldwide to have successfully bred four rhinoceros taxa: Indian, black, Southern white and Northern white rhinoceroses.

Sources: Dana Holeckova,

Kristina Tomasova

Notable births to the end of July 2000 have included the first birth in the UK of an as yet unsexed crowned lemur (*Eulemur coronatus*). The parents of this young originate from Mulhouse Zoo (France). Other primate births included one collared lemur (*Eulemur fulvus collaris*), one mongoose lemur (*Eulemur mongoz*), one black howler monkey (*Alouatta caraya*) and a Columbian spider monkey (*Ateles fusciceps robustus*).

Last year our pair of white-naped cranes (*Grus vipio*), both members of which are 11 years old and from Frankfurt Zoo, were temporarily moved to the empty cheetah paddock. The move appeared to agree with them and they produced two fertile eggs, which they failed to incubate. Meanwhile we took the opportunity to remove some of the tree cover in the crane enclosure, giving a more open view and we also made some adjustments to the diet. This year a chick was successfully parent-reared. We feel that the change in scenery helped stimulate successful breeding.

At present we are hand-rearing a crested screamer (*Chauna torquata*). The parents abandoned the nest only days before hatching was due. The Grevy's zebras (*Equus grevyi*) produced two male foals.

Source: Gary Batters

Northern white rhino one hour after birth

