

Hamadryas Baboons - The Great Rift Valley of Ethiopia at the Singapore Zoological Gardens

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Location

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Animals

Family	Species	Common Name	Number
Ciconiidae	<i>Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis</i>	Saddle bill storks	1.1
Procaviidae	<i>Procavia capensis</i>	Rock hyrax	6
Canidae	<i>Canis mesomelas</i>	Black-backed jackal	4
Herpestidae	<i>Mungos mungo</i>	Banded mongoose	30
Bovidae	<i>Capra nubiana</i>	Nubian ibex	12
Cercopithecidae	<i>Papio hamadryas</i>	Hamadryas baboon	70

Awards

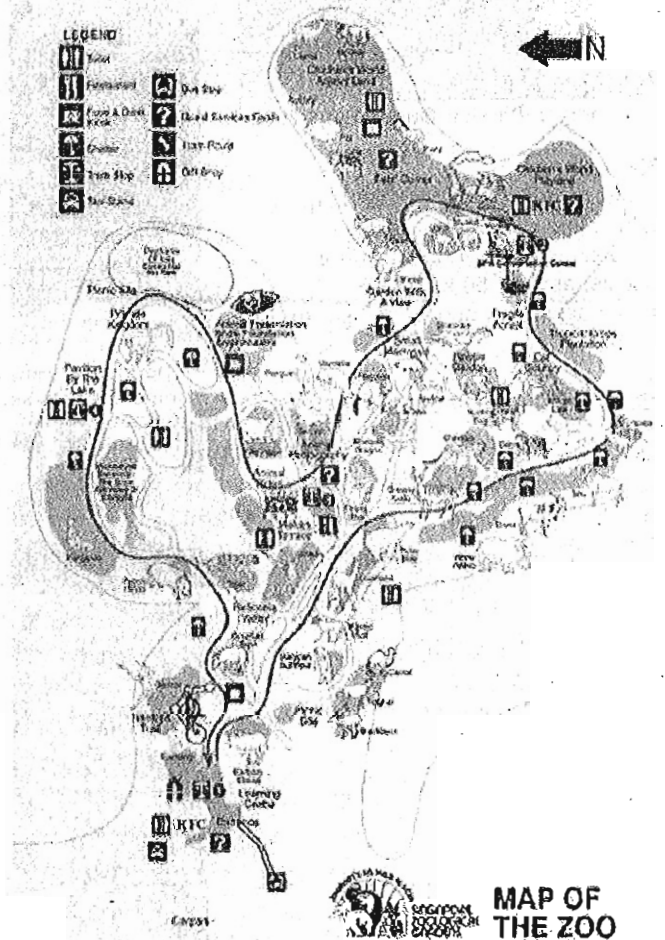
2002 ASEANTA Awards for Excellence for Best New Attraction in ASEAN 2002

2002 Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects

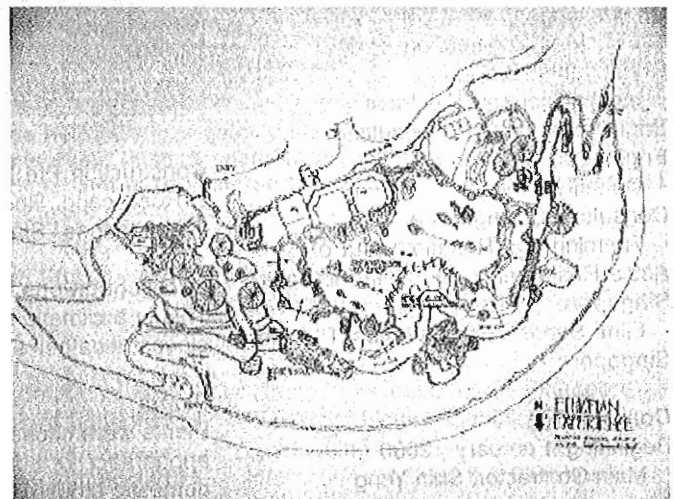
Description

Hamadryas Baboons - The Great Rift Valley is inspired by the dry savannah bioclimatic zone of Ethiopia. Based on total immersion and themed environment display technique, this exhibit serves to provide an ecological and cultural experience that bombards the senses. As visitors begin their walking journey, a view from an accurate replica of an Amharic bridge over the dramatic, rocky escarpments that provide a home for the baboon troop and a herd of ibexes comes into view. Entering a "cave", visitors are provided with a close-up view of the baboons through a glass panel, as well as a shady place to rest.

Weaving through hilly outcrops, the visitor next encounters a group of banded mongooses. Two replicas of Konso and Amharic villages powerfully convey the cultural elements of Ethiopia. In addition to dwelling huts with dirt floors and stone walls, a raised grain storage hut, a cloth-weaving loom, chicken coops, goat corrals, authentic tools and clothing, a replica of a coffee-ceremony hut, carved statues, a viewing hut looking into a rock hyrax exhibit and a black-backed jackal exhibit are displayed. The journey through the Great Rift Valley ends with the archeological site of the Lucy discovery. Visitors are encouraged to act as archeologists and help uncover the fossils. The goal of the Great Rift Valley experience is to highlight the beauty of Ethiopia and emphasize to visitors the intricate interrelationships among animals, humans, and the environment.



The Hamadryas exhibit is situated on the left of the site map. ©Singapore Zoological Gardens, 2002



Site plan ©Singapore Zoological Gardens, 1999



Hamadryas Baboon ©Hans Fiby, 2002

Size

Animal areas are approx. 860 sq. m. exhibit and 120 sq. m. dens for baboons, approx. 160 sq. m. for jackals, approx. 50 sq. m. for mongooses, and approx. 50 sq. m. for hyraxes.

Space allocation in square meters:

use	Indoors	outdoors	total
			exhibit
	accessible total	accessible total	
animals			
visitors			
others			
total			8,000

Costs

Singapore Dollar 4,200,000 including 15 % for design.
4.2 million S\$ corresponds to about 2.4 US\$.

Opening Date:

August, 2001

Design

Beginning: 1999

- Architecture: Consultant Incorporated Architects and Planners, Singapore
- Landscape Architecture: Studio Steed, Singapore
- Structural Engineering: PKP Consultants, Singapore
- Mechanical and Electrical Engineering: M & P Consulting Engineers, Singapore
- Quantity Surveying: ES Tang Consultants, Singapore
- Theming and Research: out of Africa Restaurants and Safari Lodges, Singapore
- Film: Sunrise Entertainment Pte Ltd, Singapore

Construction

- Beginning: February, 2000
- Main Contractor: Shin Yong



The visitor trail leading into the exhibit doesn't allow any view into what is to come - It just sets the mood for the upcoming experience. ©Monika Fiby, 2002



The large size of the baboon group (50 individuals) allows for a natural social life for the animals. ©Hans Fiby, 2002

Construction Pte Ltd, Singapore
· Rockscape: Rock and Waterscapes, Singapore

Local conditions

This is a climatic diagram for the closest weather station.

Plants

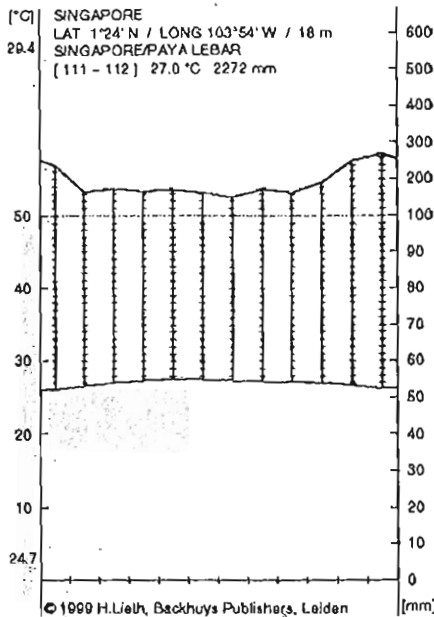
Plants were chosen to give an arid appearance or educate about domestic crops. Existing trees on the

site were preserved for shade. Grass is protected by hotwire.

The plant list in the website specifies the Latin names of the plants used for this exhibit.

Features dedicated to animals

The large size of the baboon troop offers a living situation similar to that of wild baboons. Drinking spouts in the enclosure are hidden in rocks and fed by plumbing.



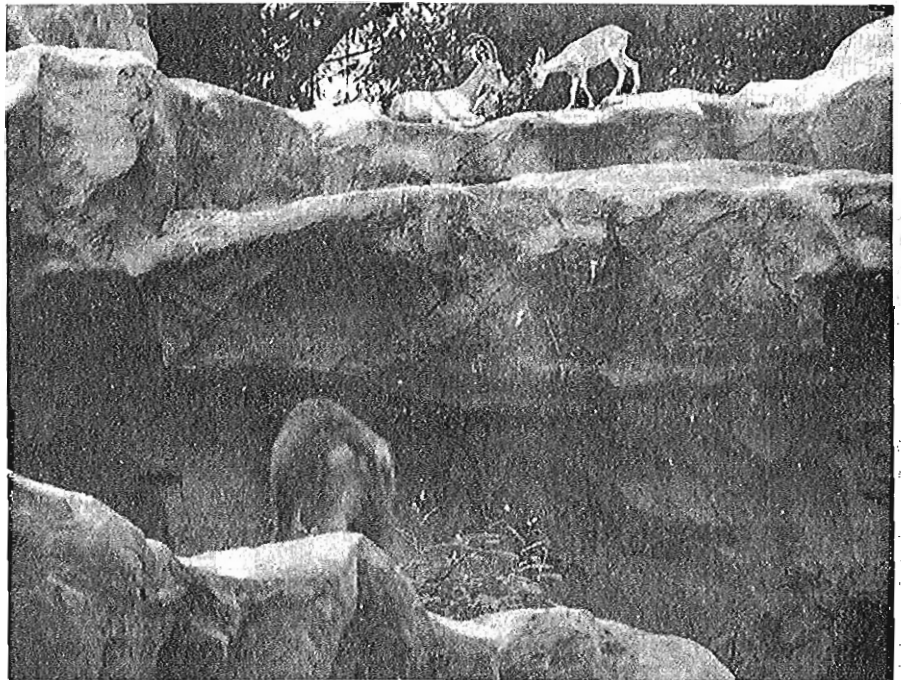
Climatic diagram

Features dedicated to visitors

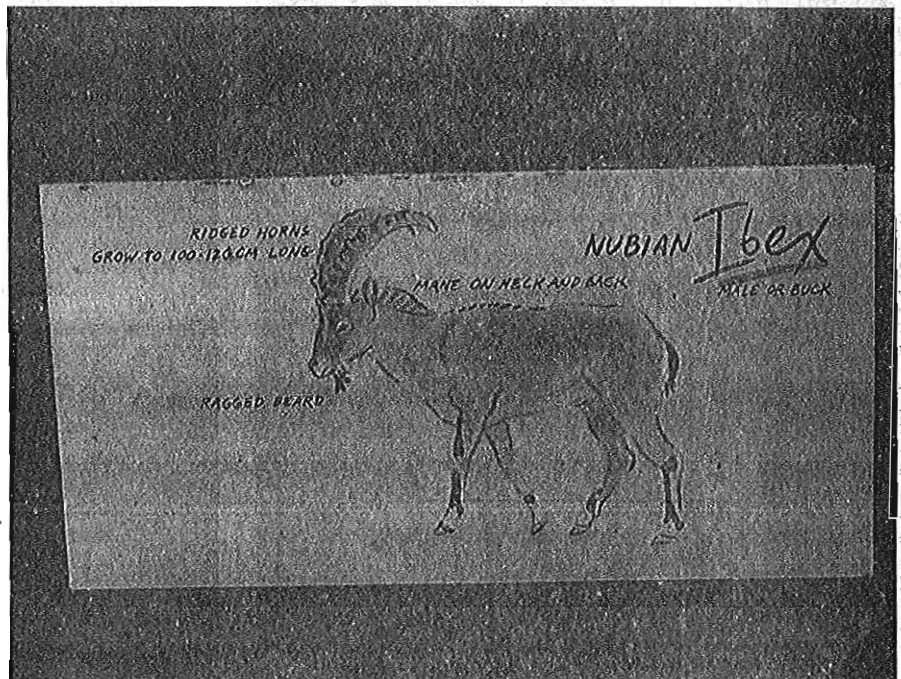
The large size of the baboon troop means that there is almost always interesting and natural behaviors and interactions for the visitor to observe. Along the way, visitors encounter Kaffe Konso, which serves coffee (first discovered in Ethiopia) along with Ethiopian-inspired snacks.

Interpretation

Heavy use of theming brings the visitor into a new culture. In addition to the animal exhibits, there are many displays of man-made items and cultural artifacts. In a little theater, a 3-



The ibexes share the exhibit space of the baboons. They can use their climbing skills to retreat to the top of the rock cliffs. ©Hans Fiby, 2002



A simple, color picture helps visitors quickly identify the animals in the exhibit and learn a few facts about them. Signage in the exhibit is minimal, as the exhibit's main educational aim is to immerse the visitor in the environment and culture of the area. ©Hans Fiby, 2002



Eye-catching, colorful cartoons explain baboon behavior in a simple way. ©Hans Fiby, 2002

4 minute video runs on Ethiopia and its wildlife.

Management

Two large communal dens can each house the entire group of baboons which is brought indoors each night. Erosion is combated by introducing small natural rocks to form a scree.

Research

A study to record visual identities of all baboons was completed and a manual was produced about "Hamadryas baboons in Singapore Zoo: Brief history, identification and cataloguing manual". Data on the interactions among the baboons were observed and recorded by staff.

Conservation

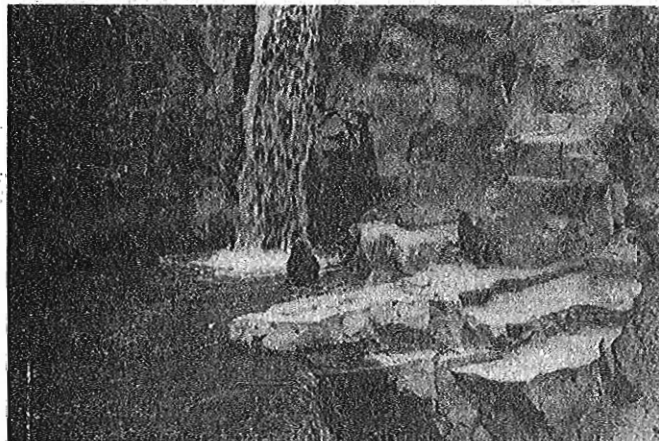
A cultural cooperation with the Ethiopian Government which was involved in the opening also helped to buy all the artefacts directly from villagers, not from commercial sources. Thatched roofs were built by South African thatchers with South African grass.

Local resources

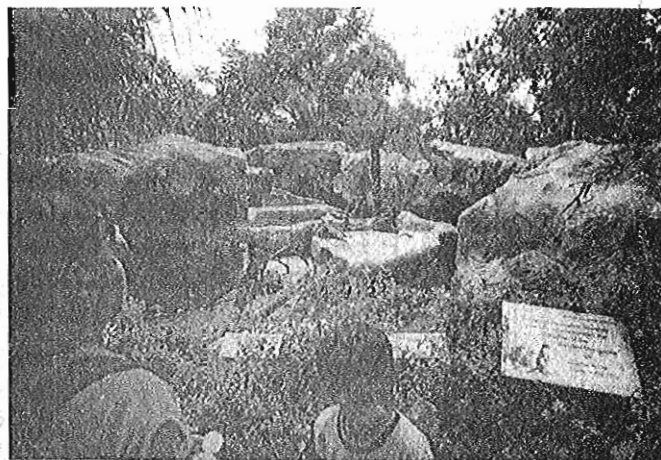
The timber used to create the defensive wall around the Konso village is acacia wood from Malaysia. Building materials were locally obtained (except for cultural artefacts). The zoo hired local contractors for construction (except for the thatched roofs).



The cave offers visitors a shady place to rest while enjoying a panorama of the animals interacting in their rocky habitat. ©Monika Fiby, 2002



Hot wire across the top of the secondary waterfall prevents baboons and ibexes from using the shallow water here to cross. ©Monika Fiby, 2002



Opposite the baboon and ibex viewing cave is an open exhibit of banded mongooses. ©Monika Fiby, 2002



Mongoose trio ©Hans Fiby, 2002



This rustic gate serves as an entry point to the Konso Village, modeled after those found in southern Ethiopia. Among the various wood huts, visitors find the rock hyrax exhibit, a cloth weaving loom, and food service. ©Singapore Zoological Gardens, 2001

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