

Bears and Wolves Together : Mixed species exhibit at Zoo Schwerin

from Zoo Lex Web Site <http://www.zoolex.org/zoolexcgi/view.py?id=387>

The exhibit featured this month is the brown bear and wolf mixed species exhibit at the Zoo Schwerin, Germany. This information was extracted from the Zoo Lex Web Site <http://www.zoolex.org/zoolexcgi/view.py?id=387>. We highly recommend that you check it out on the web yourself and see the beautiful colour pictures of the enclosure.

Also Zoo Lex wants to display some good exhibits from India. There are some wonderful examples at different zoos from this country. We will help you organise this if you are interested in displaying your own zoos' exhibits, or email directly to Zoo Lex. The concerned person is Dr. Monika Fibey. <zoolex@zoolex.org>.

LOCATION:

Waldschulweg 1, 19061 Schwerin, Germany
Phone: +49-385-39551-0
Fax: 3955130
URL: <http://http://www.zoo-schwerin.de>

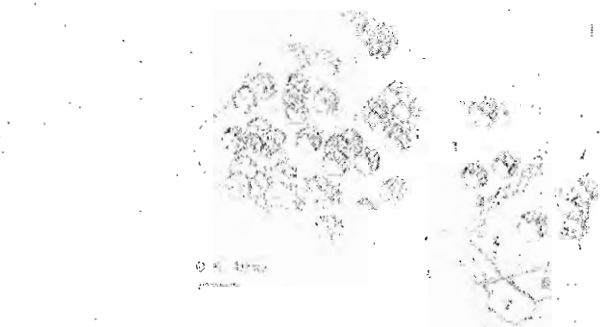
ANIMALS:

<i>Canis lupus</i>	Wolf	6
<i>Ursus arctos</i>	Brown bear	4

DESCRIPTION:

The brown bear and wolf enclosure was established according to the zoo master plan, on a site designated for the zoo extension. It replaces the old bear facility built in 1961. Brown bears have been kept in Schwerin since 1958.

The new enclosure is used for accommodating three female and two male brown bears. Wolves inhabit the outdoor enclosure throughout the year, that is, also while the bears are hibernating during the winter. Such arrangement enhances the activities in the enclosure and also provides diversity for animals and visitors alike. Those animals introduced initially sought playful contact to each other and -- using different strategies-- they competed with variable success during their search for food and while feeding. About one-fourth of the entire area of the outdoor enclosure is partitioned off by a fence and a sliding door that



Site Plan ©Mikolajczyk, Kessler, Kirsten Arbeitsgemeinschaft Freier Architekten, 1994



Brown bear in its enclosure



Between the building and the outdoor enclosure here is an entrance enclosure with sliding doors to all boxes and an entrance for keepers

permits only the wolves to pass through and so give them access to a resting area. The facility is located in a richly structured forest area that offers a near-natural environment for the animals. Apart from a stand of tall trees, a hill also provides open pathways, as well as overgrown bush land with sunny areas. Because of the sloping landscape the animals are readily visible, in spite of the size of enclosure. A water moat between visitor path and outdoor enclosure permits unrestricted visual access. With a height of 3.5 m and a width of 5 m it prevents the animals from escaping. The other sides of the enclosure are bordered by a green metal fence, 3.5 m high and with a 0.8 m wide 45 degree overhang, as well as with two separate electrified wires at a height of 4 m. Because of its soft contour lines and the greenish brown colouration, the fence remains an inconspicuous part of the enclosure background.

Between indoor accommodation and outdoor section, the entrance enclosure has been designed with sliding gates to all dens and for keeper access. This design facilitates the transfer and isolation of individual animals, and -- if need be -- it can be partitioned off. The indoor accommodation is laid out into three bear dens with vertical double slides between

them, a separate den with entrance area for females with litters, as well as a maintenance area. The bottom of each box consists of poured concrete and the walls are covered with timber planks.

SIZE:

The outdoor enclosure covers an area of 2,900 m²; it can be subdivided into two sections of 2,300 m² and 600 m². An additional small outdoor enclosure measures 100 m². There are two boxes of 7.7 m² each and two of 9.1 m², of which is suitable for littering. Covered sleeping dens of 2 m² (that can be enlarged) for wolves are located in the outdoor enclosure area.

COSTS:

DM 1,100,000 including 14.4% for design.

LOCAL CONDITIONS:

See climatic diagram on next page.

FEATURES DEDICATED TO ANIMALS:

The diversely structured enclosure offers bears the opportunity to practice many of their behaviours. They climb in to the trees to a height of up to 20 m, dig holes of considerable depth and bury food. Additional opportunities for activity diversification are provided by climbing trees, large rock piles, tree stumps, sand pits, water ditch and an artificial creek with shallow water basin. Twigs and branches are piled up in irregular intervals. Four boxes have been set up for the bears, of which one is a sound-insulated littering box and is located in a part of the building away from keeper traffic. The bears can have their nightly rest inside the building and also hibernate there from November / December onward.

The walls and sleeping platforms of the boxes are covered with timber planks to assure maximum comfort. The animals build their own beds from straw provided. The resting area is equipped with sleeping boards or wooden boxes, respectively that assure a dry bed. Each box also contains scratching trees. After the boxes are cleaned off, the floors of the boxes dry out quickly because of floor heating; however, floor heating - providing gentle heat -- covers only 2/3 of the box floor, in order to give the animals a choice. The adjustable sleeping den for the hardy wolves have been set up half open in the outdoor enclosure.

FEATURES DEDICATED TO KEEPERS:

The bars on the indoor boxes for the bears have a large barred gate along side the service area for keeper access to each box.

FEATURES DEDICATED TO VISITORS:

An infra-red camera can record the events in the littering box and beam the images to an outside monitor for visitor observations.

MANAGEMENT:

The entire area of about 3,000 m² can - if necessary (e.g. to separate male bears from their progeny) - be partitioned off.

Both outside enclosures are connected to the bear house through a mutual entrance area. The building can be variably - and well ventilated by means of natural cross ventilation with a high draught-free ceiling area and ventilators that can

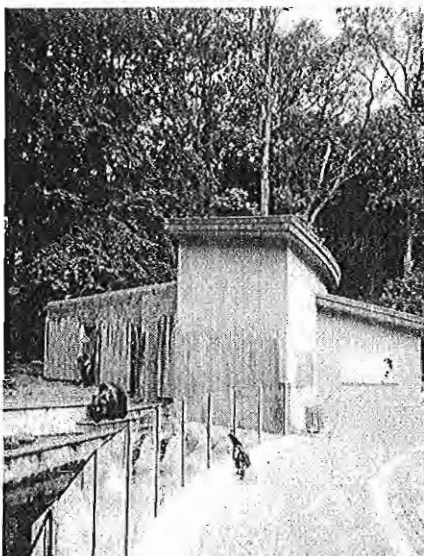
be turned on. In general the building is not heated; however, by means of floor heating temperatures von 5 to 15 degrees Celsius are individually controllable in each box.

CONSERVATION:

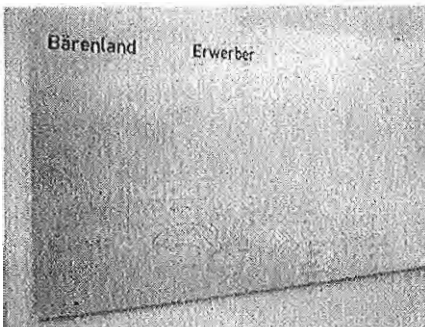
Brown bears will be bred.



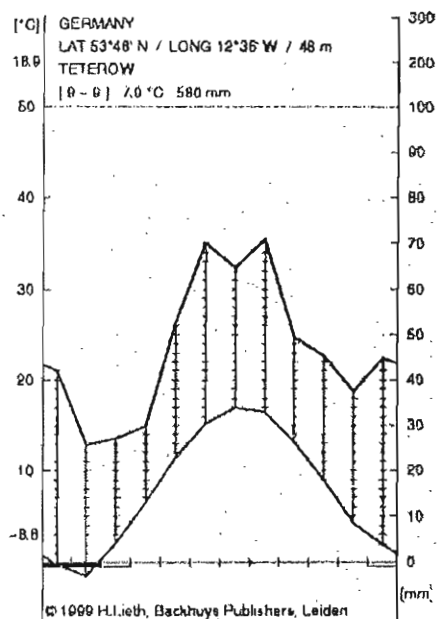
Pathway entrance to enclosure



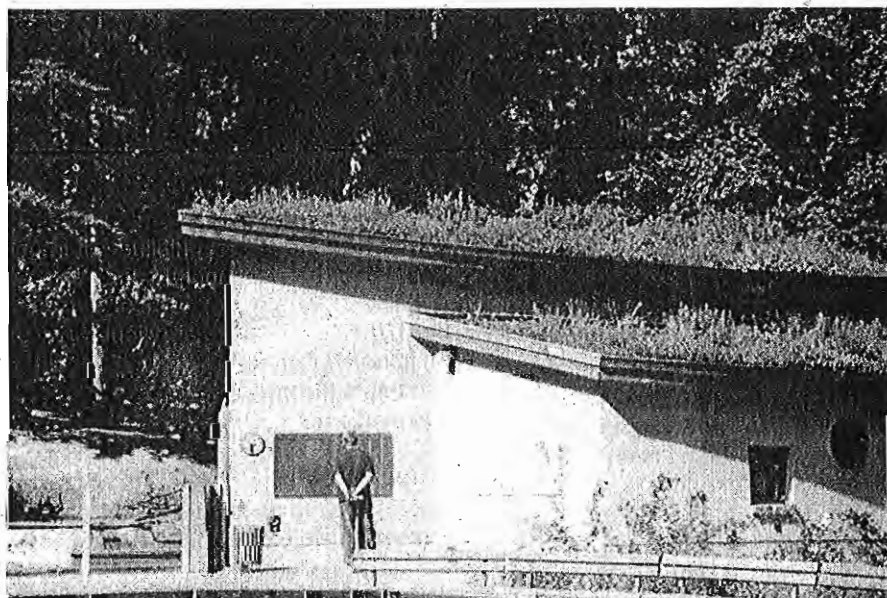
Viewing area



Sponsors are credited on a special board at the enclosure.



Climatic diagram.



Grassy-green roof of bear enclosure enhances its natural look.