



22 December 2022

Press release

All I want for Christmas is Zoo: Reopening on 24 December

Exemption granted | Christmas spirit at Zoo, Aquarium and Tierpark Berlin

A Christmas miracle for Zoo Berlin: After one of its birds tested positive for the H5N1 virus (or “bird flu”) on 18 November, tests on the remaining 1,200 birds have now thankfully come back negative. That means Zoo Berlin can reopen on Christmas Eve – under the following strict conditions:

1. Disinfect: When entering and leaving the zoo grounds, all visitors must walk or roll over the mats placed by the entrances that have been soaked with disinfectant.
2. Don't touch: No birds should be touched on the way to and inside the zoo.
3. Speak up: If visitors come across any dead wild birds on the zoo premises, they must keep their distance and immediately inform a staff member.

Berlin-Mitte district councillor Dr Almut Neumann stresses that “these hygiene measures must be observed to prevent the spread of the H5N1 virus and protect the birds at Zoo Berlin.” Councillor Neumann had glad tidings to announce just in time for Christmas: “An exemption from the rule that would require the culling of all Zoo Berlin’s birds is expected to be granted this week.” That was the news that everyone had been anxiously waiting for over the past few weeks. Zoo Berlin has one of the largest collections of birds in Europe, including many species that are critically endangered in the wild such as the kagu, Vietnamese pheasant, North Island brown kiwi, northern rockhopper penguin and the Bali myna. The loss of these birds would constitute a severe blow not only to the Zoo itself, but to conservation efforts around the world. “We are very relieved that we have been able to save our birds by implementing comprehensive precautionary measures,” said Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem. “I would like to thank all Zoo staff members for enforcing these measures so strictly. We are also very grateful for the external support that we have received every day in these challenging times. For generations, Zoo and Tierpark Berlin have held a special place in people’s hearts as places of relaxation and recreation, and I feel deeply indebted to our many friends in the city for their expressions of solidarity.”

Zoo, Aquarium and Tierpark Berlin get in the Christmas spirit

In recent days, a team of busy Christmas elves has been preparing festive surprises for the animals at Aquarium and Tierpark Berlin. The moray eels received a fun new toy – a brightly



coloured Advent wreath that they can wriggle in and out of to their hearts' content. The piranhas, meanwhile, seemed thrilled with the tasty titbits that keepers hid for them underwater in Christmas boots. And the adorable tiger twins at Tierpark Berlin were also pleased with their present: Luise and Lotte sniffed curiously at their festively decorated Christmas tree before sinking their teeth into the yummy treats hanging on its boughs. Over the Christmas period, the Zoo, Tierpark and Aquarium open at 9 a.m. The Aquarium remains open until 6 p.m., the Zoo closes at 4:30 p.m., and the Tierpark closes at 4 p.m. because of the "Weihnachten am Tierpark" event that takes place every evening on its grounds. On 24 December, all three facilities close at 2 p.m.

Tips for the festive season: Wintertime tour at Tierpark Berlin

Which animals are well adapted to life in the cold? And which are most sensitive to chilly weather? Over the Christmas holidays, Tierpark visitors can explore the wintry world of animals on a special guided tour – which includes a festive animal surprise. This year, the extended closure of Zoo Berlin means the winter tours are only running at the Tierpark. However, the number of tours has been increased. Book directly at: <https://www.tierpark-berlin.de/christmastour>

Last-minute gift ideas:

For all those who are still searching for original gifts and would like to do something to help animals, the Zoo and Tierpark shops have a wide range of items that are sure to bring a smile to a loved one's face. The online shops also offer fantastic non-tangible gifts such as special animal visits or day tickets and annual passes for Zoo, Aquarium and Tierpark Berlin.

www.zoo-berlin.de/onlineshop

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