



## Yerevan Zoo attended the 19th Conference of the Eurasian Regional Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EARAZA), Brno, Czech Republic



## Yerevan Zoo botanical information signboards



From May 26th to May 30th three Yerevan Zoo representatives, Ruben Khachatryan, Yerevan Zoo Director, Anna Asatouryan, Animal Husbandry specialist, and Hripsime Khachatryan, Head of Education Department, attended the 19th conference of the Eurasian Regional Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EARAZA) in Brno, Czech Republic. The main objectives of the conference were to promote the development of zoological gardens, to join efforts for endangered species conservation, and to coordinate animal breeding activities.

The 19th conference of EARAZA coincided with the 60th anniversary of the founding of Brno Zoo. Around 240 representatives from various zoos from the Russian Federation, Belarus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Moldova, Poland and Armenia took part in the conference. Within the framework of the conference, visits were organized to different zoological gardens and zoos of the Czech Republic. A number of round tables and discussions were held on the following topics:



- Education and public education in zoological gardens,
- Problems of bear reproduction in zoological gardens,
- New structures and expositions in zoological gardens,
- Conservation programs for rare species.

Within the framework of the discussion on "Education and public education in zoological gardens" the Yerevan Zoo "Zoo magazine" was presented as an innovation.

The 20th conference of EARAZA will take place in Moscow in 2014 along with the 150th anniversary of Moscow Zoo.

From now onwards Yerevan Zoo visitors can not only get acquainted with the Zoo animals, but also get some information on tree and shrub species growing in the zoo learning more about their distribution and importance. Currently visitors can find comprehensive information on signboards placed at the trees. Among those trees are the White willow (*Salix Alba*), the Wych elm or Scots elm (*Ulmus glabra*), the Oriental plane (*Platanum orientalis*), the Common or European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and 20 more tree species. The Professor Nora Gabrielyan, who has around 60 years of experience in the fields of botany and plants, provides the zoo with professional consultancy and advice on plants and trees.



More than 12 tree species as well as 150 types of shrubs and flowers have been planted in various parts of Yerevan Zoo during spring 2013.

## June 1st in the Yerevan Zoo



On June 1st, the Children's Day, Yerevan Zoo organized a number of events starting from 10:00 in the morning. Yerevan Zoo Director Ruben Khachatryan, the former director of HSBC Bank Armenia Astrid Clifford and the US Ambassador to Armenia Mr. John Heffern with his wife officially opened the new, big enclosure for the

spotted hyena. The enclosure encompasses an area of 650 sqm and matches the international standards of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA). It was sponsored by Ms. Astrid Clifford.

Yerevan Zoo Director Ruben Khachatryan dreams about moving all animals from small cages into similar big enclosures, but this would only be possible with the help of partners. "I hope that Yerevan Zoo will have more partners in the near future, who - like Ms. Clifford - support us in providing better conditions for our animals. Thus the Zoo will serve its goal and become an educational center for the public," Ruben Khachatryan said.

Mrs. Lousine, who hasn't been to Armenia for many years decided to visit Yerevan Zoo on June 1st with her grandchildren. Asked about her impressions she answered: "We'd like to thank the organizers for this beautiful day. I really enjoyed it even more than my grandchildren as this is a big event not only for children but for us adults as well."

Yerevan Zoo also presented its new species: the family of Hamadryas Baboons and Burchell's zebra. "We were really surprised when we saw the Zebra in the Zoo and we were really delighted to see our favorite hyena in her new enclosure" said visitor Hrach Barseghyan, who came to the Zoo with his sons on June 1st.

A number of theatrical performances, concerts and various contests were organized on June 1st with the participation of several music groups and ensembles. The visitors of the Yerevan Zoo booth were offered information about the Zoo magazine, the Animal Adoption Program, as well as other news of the Zoo. The little visitors participated in different contests and games and the winner, fifteen-year-old Arthur Hakobyan, received the main award - a bicycle.

It is noteworthy that the entrance for all visitors under age 16 was free on June 1st.

## Yerevan Zoo lemurs enjoy their holidays on a summer island



It has been already the second year that the Yerevan Zoo Ruffed Lemurs enjoy their holidays in the hot summer season on an island. No, it's not the lemur's motherland Madagascar but an artificial island of Yerevan Zoo offering the lemur's natural living conditions just in the very center of a pond. Currently there are two lemurs living in Yerevan Zoo - Kasya and Garfeild which were brought to Yerevan in 2010 from Nikolayev Zoo (Ukraine). The lemurs fell in love in the zoo and "married" promising each other to stay together "till the end of times". Before they were moved to the island, Garfeild and Kasya had lived in rather inconvenient conditions of a small cage all year round but now they have both: a heated winter house and an exotic place to enjoy their summer holidays. They feel quite comfortable on the island sharing the place with storks and swans as their neighbors.



Generally Ruffed Lemurs give birth to 2-3 babies. Their breeding season starts from May and continues to July with a gestation period of 90 - 102 days. Females build a nest for the babies to protect them against any possible danger. Usually lemurs have long bushy tails, a neck ruff or mane, a fox-like muzzle and thick fur weighing about 3,5-4,5 kg. They can live up to 19 years in captivity.

The Yerevan Zoo Island meets all special conditions for Ruffed Lemurs: they have shelter protecting them from rain and swings to ensure their activities. Wild Lemurs are used to eat exotic fruits and vegetables and they have rich and variable diet in the zoo as well. Their diet includes rice, lentil soup, buckwheat soup with milk, bananas, oranges, apples, etc. They also eat cucumber, parsley and lettuce. Raisins and persimmons are an important addition to their daily diet too. Ruffed Lemurs are very sensitive animals, they can even get sick without a pair. Fortunately, they will not face this risk in Yerevan Zoo as Kasya and Garfeild are a strong loving couple for already three years. It is noteworthy, that lemurs are one of the most endangered and one of the oldest species on Earth. Their IUCN Red list conservation status is "Critically Endangered".