

being used to circumvent the old ones where the pitfall is located.

However, every morning there have been fresh tapir tracks near the small stream at a site the aslis call a salt lick at Bukit Renggit site. On Wednesday the 2nd of October, there were two tracks of adult individuals and one from a calf or very small adult.

If the pitfalls do not result in a positive outcome very soon then a change of strategy will have to be made. Hopefully success will soon come with the pitfalls.

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News from Captivity

New, Modernised Tapir House in Wuppertal Zoo, Germany

By Stefan Seitz

Wuppertal Zoo in Germany is the only breeding centre for Baird's tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*) in Europe. The zoo began with 2.1 individuals received from three US zoos in 1994 and 1996 (Kauffels, 1995), and a female offspring was born in 1998 (Schürer & Kauffels, 1999).

After hippos and elephants moved from the Pachyderm house, the whole area of four stables and a pool became available for tapirs. However, the listed historical building did not fulfil the demands for optimal animal management and wasn't attractive to the public. After one and a half years of reconstruction, the house re-opened to the public on 28 May 2002. Just an artificial tree trunk and rocks survived from 1927. Tiles replaced the broken concrete floor and glass replaced the old steel bars. The public area was supplemented with wooden benches and tropical plants. The stables were also improved in quality. The focal point of the new facility is the generously sized pool (6m long, 5m wide and 2m deep) with a bulletproof glass window (4m long and 2.3m high) that opens up an underwater view for visitors. As far as I know, this concept is a first for a tapir exhibit.

The Baird's tapirs like swimming and resting in the 24°C water, and children as well as adult zoo goers become more frequently attracted. When diving in the cloudy water, the animals are hard to detect, but the tapirs themselves can see and smell their audience and sometimes approach them at the window. Tapirs share the pool with 1.1 capybaras that inhabit a separate barn. Each animal gets access to the



The tapir swimming pool with underwater viewing – a new attraction at the Wuppertal Zoo. Photo by Stefan Seitz

water for about one hour per day. The zoo will soon begin the extension and modernisation of the smaller of the two outdoor areas, and hopes to continue breeding with two pairs of Baird's tapirs.

References

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