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BIRTHS AND HATCHINGS

FOUR AT ONCE

Between 15 and 28 October 2009, four critically endangered Somali wild asses (*Equus africanus somalicus*) were born at Al Wabra Wildlife Preservation (AWWP) writes *Catrin Hammer, Curator of Mammals*. The current breeding male of the group Hector sired the three little stallions and one mare, named Akkanu, Gamburo, Sirrimu and Mandani. Hector had arrived from Montpellier Zoo in France in April 2008, as part of an exchange within the European Endangered species breeding programme. Funnily enough, mating between the mares and Hector was never witnessed – but proof that he successfully did so is obvious.

Two of the four mothers had been born at AWWP. For the three-year-old mare Asmara, it was her first birth. The other three mares: seven-year-old Geralda, eight-year-old Mia and five-year-old Ahiya, are already experienced mothers.

The weight of the foals ranges between 29kg and 31kg, except for the



CATRIN HAMMER

last one Sirrimu – known affectionately as a ‘dwarf’ wild ass – who weighed just 21kg at birth. The mothers are all perfectly taking care of their offspring and the foals are developing very well. At the age of three weeks, the foals started playing together on their favourite site – the rocky mountain within their spacious enclosure.

The Al Wabra Wildlife Preservation received their Somali Wild Ass group

– two stallions and four mares – from Usti nad Labem and TP Berlin in April 2003. To keep the animals in a suitable surrounding, four separate enclosures (2 x 9,000m² and 2 x 4,500m²) and a stable with ten boxes (4m x 4m each), plus a storeroom, were constructed in the gravel and stony desert of Qatar, prior to their arrival. The births have raised the total number of Somali Wild Asses in AWWP up to 18.

PRIMATE TIME AT ASSON

2009 was a particularly successful year for primate breeding in Asson, writes *Luc Lorca, Director, Zoo d'Asson*. To begin with, a young female giant bamboo lemur (*Prolemur simus*) was born on 3 May. This was the only youngster born in captivity worldwide during the year. She will stay with her parents until the EEP needs her for pairing, as this is a critically endangered species, and very uncommon in zoos with fewer than 20 animals held in captivity.

Later in the year, on 9 September, Asson's female pileated gibbon (*Hylobates pileatus*) gave birth, two and a half years after the birth of a young female in 2007. This is worth mentioning also as only three such babies were born in zoos during 2009, the others being in Bangkok and Zurich.

Other primate births included: 1.1 black lemur (*Eulemur m. macaco*), 1.1 silvery marmoset (*Mico argentatus*), 0.0.1 white-fronted marmoset (*Callithrix geoffroyi*), 0.0.1 red-mantled tamarin (*Saguinus fuscicollis leucogenys*), 1.1 emperor tamarin (*Saguinus imperator subgriseus*), 0.0.1 cotton-top tamarin (*Saguinus oedipus*), 1.0.1 Goeldi's monkey (*Callimico goeldii*), 0.1 white-throated capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*) and 0.0.1 lar gibbon (*Hylobates lar*). All of these are part of populations managed by EAZA.



A FINE YEAR AT LEIPZIG

During 2009, Leipzig Zoo had some exceptional breeding successes, writes *Konstantin Ruske, Curator*. First was the birth of a Southern Luzon slender-tailed cloud rat (*Phloeomys cumingi*). This is the world's first breeding success with this species outside their natural range. 1.0 was born at the beginning of May, and a second male baby followed on 9 August.

Another first for Leipzig was the hatching of five white-winged wood ducks (*Cairina scutulata*). These ducklings are the only ones bred in a European zoo along with offspring in Tierpark Cottbus. We keep 1.3 adults in a mixed aviary.

It was very interesting to observe the nest site which simply sat on the ground, poorly hidden by a bush. Normally, this species uses holes for egg-laying. The chicks hatched artificially on 21 July, after the female's initial difficult incubation of the first weeks. The chicks will go to Augsburg and Lodz this year.

In our small herd of Dall's sheep,