

Korat Zoo

First visit: 19th August 2016

Korat Zoo has set up following an open safari-style plan. There were no real fences. Instead, moats and ditches were cleverly utilised, giving clear views of the animals and a feeling that they could wander off at any given moment.

The tiger enclosures were lush. Plentiful foliage allowed the tigers places to hide, along with caves, platforms, and trees. Each had a large moat filled for swimming. At certain times (our researchers arrived late), there are feeding sessions for the big cats where the cats are encouraged to jump for food in order to help exercise and enrich them. Many other toys and scratching posts were spread about the enclosures.

The Amur enclosure also had an inside room, which was viewable through a sheet of glass. Here there were further enrichment items and a large pond. The two Amur spent most of their time in here, presumably because it was cooler. However, they had the option to go outside if they chose (which the female did eventually).

All the tigers seemed calm and at ease with their surroundings and positive natural behaviours were observed.

Second visit: 12th March 2017

Nothing had changed in terms of the way that the enclosures looked or were furnished. However, on this trip our researchers were able to watch the big cat feeding programme. Out of the tigers, only the Indo-Chinese tiger was part of this demonstration.

Staff initially used a bamboo stick with a large piece of meat to bring the tiger into the water, which he then was encouraged to swim after, exercising his whole body. Once he had retrieved his treat, another piece of meat was swung out using a zip wire, enticing the tiger to leap from a platform into the water to grab it. It was an excellent display of natural behaviour, providing the tiger with both mental and physical enrichment.

Third visit: 13th April 2018

Nothing changed in any of the enclosures. The same tigers, setup, enrichment, feeding programme and enclosure design remained.

No stereotypies were noted. The tigers appeared calm and at ease with their surroundings.

Fourth visit: 13th April 2019

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