

Pata Zoo

First visit: 7th June 2015

The zoo appears to be rather rundown, not surprising given its location and the lack of visitors. Cages are all small, inadequate and not species-specific in any way. Most animals displayed some form of stereotypy, notably a lone baboon repeatedly smashing its head into the side of the cage, a hornbill that had plucked all the feathers out of its neck and a young male chimp running back and forth along the same spot.

In the reptile and aquarium area, the situation was marginally better with these animals provided more natural cages albeit small ones. Interestingly, our researchers also found two leopard cubs - a regular spotted one and a black one, running around a small room that appeared to be a nursery. They were alone and looked to be anywhere from 3 to 6 months. The living environment was highly inadequate, complete with medical equipment, shelves and trolleys. The cubs had been provided a couple of stuffed toys and had each other for company.

Second visit: 13th March 2017

No change in the living conditions of any of the animals. However there was no sign of the two leopard cubs observed two years before. The small room where they had been kept was empty and they were not in any of the enclosures. However, one section that had previously been open to the public, was now closed off. There were further cages there, which is where the leopards could be kept.

Elsewhere in the zoo, welfare was of the same low standard as before. Bua Noi remained hiding, the orangutans begged for food and the lone male chimp expressed desire to play. The baboon cage was now, unsurprisingly, empty.

Third visit: April 2018

Similar to the last visit, there was no change in terms of welfare conditions for the animals. There were a few more animals no longer around, noticeably the penguin and jackal cages were now empty. No other animal had been moved into replace them so the collection is gradually decreasing in size.

All areas were spotless, but our researchers were followed about by a staff member who was concerned that our researchers were there to do an expose. This is presumably coming on the heels of a recent journalist's report, complete with photographs, detailing the appalling conditions of this and other Thai zoos. The staff member was at great pains to explain they take care of all their animals with food, water and keeping clean.

Be that as it may, there is serious neglect in terms of the mental and physical welfare of the animals, no proper enrichment or natural enclosures and there appears to be a lack of medical care with many animals with large, self-given injuries.

Bua Noi was more sociable than on previous visits, but the zoo was quiet and she'd also been given a carton of soy milk, which she was engrossed in. Later one of the orangutans was brought out for photos.

Nevertheless, it still ranks in the bottom tier in terms of animal welfare.

Third visit: April 2019

No improvements, but nothing worse than on previous visits. Our researchers were again followed, this time it appeared to be the owner. He proceeded to show the researchers a large number of pictures of leopard cubs and explained that he breeds them in a different facility. There is definitely breeding of some kind going on here behind the scenes.