

# Samui Aquarium & Tiger Zoo

**First Visit: 16th March 2017**

The zoo is setup in a long winding pathway, forcing guests to follow a particular route. In the tiger zoo section there were two enclosures with tigers these were on the closer side to small measuring approximately 10x15m. They were fairly clean and contained grass, trees, dirt substrate, ponds, platforms and shaded areas. There was no extra enrichment to note. There was also nowhere for the tigers to hide from the public. The tigers out in these areas either displayed high levels of aggression or complete disinterest.

Cages for the tigers out in the enclosure and those that were not were in a walled off area. The only way to view them was through a series of holes in the wall. These appear to measure 1x2m (enough space for adult tigers to turn around) and were concrete floored. Water was provided but many were left dirty with days worth of faeces on the floor. Again, these were barren and devoid of enrichment - also walled off from the enclosures so tigers would have no interaction with each other. Tigers here were pacing with the exception of one tigress who chuffed upon seeing our researchers.

Two tigers were out for photos - an adult, Sarah and a cub. The adult was nine years old and seemed at ease with the proceedings. Though wearing a collar she was not chained to the platform even when tourists entered. When tourists were not present, she had access to a small outside area and some water. She was relaxed and calm the entire time. The cub was not so fortunate and was confined to a 2x3m tiled area with nothing but a plastic bottle and ball to play with. Other cubs were observed in cages close by and it seemed that they were rotated through the cage during the day. All the cubs were restless and pacing.

The tigers in the tiger show were stressed and aggressive. The entire show was run poorly with the tigers not entirely obeying and being forced, in the usual manner, to perform a series of unnatural tricks that included jumping through double hoops of fire, walking on a

tightrope and standing on their hind legs. Tigers here all were declawed.

### **Second Visit: 25th April 2018**

Overall there was no change in the state of the zoo. A third tiger enclosure had been built along the same lines as those previously there. However, this one was glass fronted so visitors and tigers were separated. Elsewhere, enclosures and cages were the same both in their lack of enrichment and also their uncleanliness.

Many of the holes had been blocked up preventing as full a viewing of the hidden cages as before. However, the same chuffing tigress was seen in her cage - again she responded positively to our researchers.

Sarah, the adult tiger was still the main photo tiger. As before, a solitary cub was confined to the second photo area, though this time it was provided with a large branch of bamboo leaves to play with. Other cubs were again witnessed in a second cage area.

The tiger show was the same with the tigers not entirely performing all the tricks and behaving in an aggressive manner. A minor improvement was noted in that none of the tigers were forced to jump through flaming hoops of fire. However, later a leopard was brought out to do that trick.

Generally this zoo has very low welfare standards.

### **Third Visit: 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

The state of the zoo was the same as last year – no new enclosures had been built.

There were more tigers in the enclosures this year, though the enclosures do not look maintained and are generally dirty with no enrichment. However, clean water is provided. Some limping was observed but no injuries. Behaviour varied between tigers with younger animals displaying more positive behaviours and the older ones pacing.

The tiger show was still being performed but with fewer tigers and for a much shorter period of time. The handler appears to lack control.

