

Hua Hin Safari & Adventure Park

First visit: 22nd February 2017

Though the facility offers hands-on interactions with the tigers and a tiger show, the general living conditions of the tigers were better than seen in many other facilities around Thailand. As a starting point, there were enclosures, and each of these held a maximum of four tigers in an adequate space - no overcrowding. There were also not that many cubs - at the time of visiting there was only one very young cub of around two months old, with the others ranging from six months and up.

The enclosures (averaging about 8x12m) each contained grass, a pond, trees and a few logs, though there was not much other enrichment to be found. However, some of the staff would sit in with the larger tigers, interacting calmly (without aggression) and encouraging the tigers to walk about. The tigers themselves seemed to enjoy the interaction, following the staff around and appearing to enjoy their presence. There was nowhere for the tigers to hide from the public but plenty of areas to sit in the shade. Tigers were friendly, social or disinterested when it came to interacting with both non-threatening staff and our researchers. Pacing was observed in some of the older tigers.

Adjoining each of the enclosures were three to four night rooms/lockdown cages measuring around 5x5m. It appeared that one tiger was kept in each cage and a rotation was in place for the enclosures, as some tigers could be observed in the cages while others were outside. There were six enclosures and 23 cages with 12 new cages underway, alongside possible future enclosures.

Most of the tigers were free to roam, however, the tigers used for photos were chained down - at the time of visiting this was seven big cats. In addition, there was also a tiger show where seven tigers and a lion were made to perform unnatural behaviours, such as walking on hind legs and jumping through flaming hoops. This show appeared to be based on the one at Sri Racha Tiger Zoo, though the

trainer did not appear as aggressive, nor as threatening. However, the tigers were still stressed out and unhappy in this situation.

There appeared to be a lot of inbreeding, as there were several white tigers, many of whom had crossed eyes. There was also a golden tiger, which staff proclaimed to be one of just three in the country - a fact our researchers knew to be false, having already observed more than that number in Samut Prakarn Crocodile Farm alone.

There were also four ligers, which showed the facility was interbreeding species - something that goes against any conservation purposes. One of the ligers was suffering some sort of eye problem, and many of the animals were declawed.

There were good and bad points, but overall welfare was better than at other facilities.

Second visit: 11th April 2018

There was not much change, although the section previously under construction was now complete, adding a further five enclosures to the six already present and a final total of 36 cages. There were still interactive options, cubs, ligers and the tiger show.

The tiger show contained more tigers, including two younger ones who were not completely responding to commands. The trainer was harsher than the year before.

There were more signs of inbreeding, including a cub who, most unusually, had an orange coat but blue eyes. She also had more white on her in the same way that golden tigers do and, very unusually, had a white tail tip.

Response to people was the same with the exception of the tigers in the show, which was markedly worse and more aggressive towards the trainer.

Third visit: 3rd April 2019

Again, not much change in the living conditions from the year before. The strangely coloured tigress was still there, just one year bigger. However the staff seemed to realise now how unique she looked. Once again there were more cubs and the number of tigers is still growing.

The show is still going with the same trainer as the one from the year before. However it appears to be going downhill with the tigers a lot less responsive to the commands.

A lot of inbreeding is evident, not just through the white colourations but also the cross-eyed tigers.

General behaviour of the tigers was still relaxed and friendly in the presence of both staff and visitors with the exception of those in the show. Tigers also appear to be being moved to the Chang Puak Camp facility.

