

Nong Nuch Tropical Gardens

First Visit: 17th February 2017

The living quarters of the tigers was located in a small menagerie section of the garden. This area comprised of a 10x6m enclosure area onto which there were five cages measuring roughly 2x2m. The enclosure itself was made of a sand/dirt flooring with no real vegetation and just a few large rocks placed about.

The cages at the back were concrete floored, contained clean water and a wooden platform. They were shielded by a light tarpaulin to give the tigers a semblance of privacy, though the public could easily look through meaning there was no true place to hide. There was no enrichment noted at all.

There were four tigers out on wooden platforms for photo opportunities, dotted about the park. Each was chained using a double chain of about a foot and a half. None were young with staff informing the researchers that they were all at least five years old. These tigers all appeared at ease, or resigned with the large amount of tourists walking passed and getting their photos with them. Staff, for the most part, did not behave aggressively towards the tigers even though they did use bamboo sticks to move the tigers into place. The tigers also did not respond aggressively and were generally disinterested. For the most part the staff were friendly with the tigers but the entire process seemed more like a job they had to do.

There were two tigers in the small cages, one of which was sleeping, the other constantly pacing in the small area that it was able to.

Second Visit: 7th April 2018

A repeat visit revealed nothing changed in the way the tigers were being kept. However, only two tigers were now out for photos and they had been moved to different positions though one was right near the elephants and had a perch full of macaws beside it. Tigers remained calm and alert, with staff still displaying a friendly demeanour towards the tigers, though bamboo sticks for placement were still used.

The four tigers residing the cages appeared much more stressed and all were pacing during our researchers visit. One also appeared frightened by what was going on around it indicated by dilated pupils and the whites around its eyes.

Third Visit: 31st March 2019

Three tigers were on display. The entire section where the tigers used to be kept (including the zoo), was completely demolished. It is now unclear where the tigers live when they are not on display. Once again the placement of the tigers had changed so at least the tigers do get to move around when they do the photos.

Again there were no cubs only the adults. Our researchers witnessed one of the tigers being brought to the photo station in the back of a truck. He appeared at ease with this situation.

However, once at these photo area, the tigers cannot move as they are on short chains and they do not have access to water.

It would be interesting to see what the new living quarters look like.