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## Press release

# Hip, hip, hooray for Hertha!

## **Tierpark Berlin's young polar bear turns four | Hertha BSC comes bearing gifts**

The coolest birthday party of the year took place at Tierpark Berlin on 1 December in freezing temperatures. Birthday girl Hertha and her mum Tonja were treated to a festive birthday surprise: their rocky habitat was lovingly decorated with Christmas trees and tasty "ornaments". A delegation from Hertha's sponsor and namesake, Berlin football club Hertha BSC, brought the fun and games: club mascot Herthinho, accompanied by Vice-President Fabian Drescher and brand ambassador Lucas Vogelsang, placed four blue footballs under the Christmas trees – which Herthinho had personally brought to the Tierpark on the first Sunday in Advent from the Werderaner Tannenhof tree farm 60 km away. "No journey is too far for our Hertha. After all, what are good sponsors for?" says Vogelsang. "And we come bearing gifts not only for Hertha, but for the Tierpark visitors, too" adds Drescher. "In the first round of our Tierpark-Hertha quiz, we are giving away ten pairs of tickets for the Hertha vs Gladbach match on 12 February 2023 at the Olympiastadion. We are already looking forward to welcoming the winners after the winter break." All information about the Hertha online quiz can be found at: [www.tierpark-berlin.de/hertha](http://www.tierpark-berlin.de/hertha)

The mother-daughter duo were especially thrilled with one seemingly nondescript gift: a large grey barrel, also funded by Hertha's sporty sponsors. The polar bears love these toys so much that one barrel usually only lasts a few years. "It is always wonderful to watch our two bears happily playing, diving and sleeping snuggled up together," says polar bear curator Dr Florian Sicks. "They really do lead a wonderfully carefree life, especially compared to the bleak situation facing their relatives in the Arctic. On behalf of Hertha and her fellow polar bears in the wild, I hope that each and every one of our visitors to the polar bear habitat at Tierpark Berlin takes the time to think about what they can do in their everyday lives to help save the natural habitat of this threatened species."

## **Background**

The Arctic ice is not only vital for polar bears – it also functions as the Earth's air-conditioning system, reflecting the light and warmth of the sun back into space. As the ice shrinks, less sunlight is reflected and its warmth is absorbed by the ocean instead. This contributes massively to global climate change. Satellite data show that since records began in 1979, the polar ice caps have shrunk by more than eleven percent each decade.



Over the course of its history, planet Earth has been subject to frequent natural climactic fluctuations. But these temperature changes have taken place over long periods of time, giving plants and animals time to adapt. Today's climate change, caused by human activity, is happening much too fast, making life very difficult for the plants and animals that share our planet. The impact of rising temperatures is most apparent in the Arctic, the home of the polar bear.

Polar bears kept in zoos play a very important role: as ambassadors for their species, they help to raise awareness of the threat facing their natural Arctic habitat. Polar bears are already classified as "Vulnerable" on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Zoo and Tierpark Berlin support the work of non-profit organisation Polar Bears International, which studies these threatened bears in their natural habitat and aims to use its research findings to establish protected areas where polar bears can find sufficient food and rear their young in peace. For further information, visit: [Polar bear – Tierpark Berlin \(tierpark-berlin.de\)](https://www.tierpark-berlin.de/en/polar-bear)