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Press release

Exploring the animal kingdom with all the senses

Tierpark School receives award from the UN Decade on Biological Diversity

As ambassadors for their species, the animal inhabitants of Tierpark Berlin are able to achieve something that textbooks struggle to do: they appeal to people on an emotional level, raising awareness of their endangered status and encouraging people to do all they can to help protect their fellows in the wild. Now the Tierpark School has received an award for its multi-sensory tours, which are particularly appropriate for visitors with special mental or physical needs. What does the fur of a polar bear feel like? What sounds do howler monkeys make? How do tigers smell? Vivid exhibits and exciting animal encounters bring the animal kingdom at Tierpark Berlin to life – including for visitors with sensory impairments. Each tour is individually adapted to the specific requirements of the visitors.

The Tierpark School was commended for this special service with an award in the UN Decade on Biological Diversity's "Social Nature – Nature for all" competition. The award is organised by the Federal Ministry for the Environment and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, as well as by the Office of the UN Decade on Biological Diversity. "We would like to thank the jury for this award," says Zoo and Tierpark Director Dr Andreas Knieriem. "We are delighted that we are able to also give people with disabilities emotional access to the fascinating natural world." The award is presented to projects that overcome social hurdles while also contributing to the preservation of biological diversity. "We want our tours of Tierpark Berlin to enable people with various mental and physical impairments to experience the diverse animal and plant kingdom in an exciting way," says Svenja Eisenbarth, head of the Tierpark School. The award was part of the UN Decade on Biological Diversity, a special United Nations project that ran from 2011 to 2020. The aim of the international project was to stem the global decline in biological diversity. To this end, the German UN Decade team aims to promote awareness of the issue in German society.

Learning for life at Tierpark Berlin

Getting people enthusiastic about animals and nature is a central task of modern zoos. As a scientifically managed institution, Tierpark Berlin takes its educational mission very seriously, with knowledge transfer taking place in many different ways. By experiencing the animals with all their senses, engaging with appealingly presented information on signs throughout the park, and observing commented feeding sessions with keepers, visitors gain deeper insight into the fascinating animal kingdom. As an extracurricular learning centre that offers a wide range of courses for all target groups, the Tierpark School is the educational heart of Tierpark Berlin. It is therefore also an integral part of Tierpark Berlin's corporate communications. In fascinating guided tours and workshops, participants learn about topics



related to biology, environmental science, politics, culture and geography. Together, they explore the various types of animal habitats on our planet, while hearing entertaining stories from the animal kingdom. They are also expressly encouraged to ask questions of the experienced Tierpark guides. The Tierpark School thus teaches visitors of all ages about the intriguing ways in which our furry, feathered and scaly friends have adapted to their environment and how they reproduce and communicate.