

Births and Hatchings



Photo: Mariska van Dijk/Safari Beekse Bergen

HILVARENBEEK – THE NETHERLANDS

A **Southern white rhinoceros** (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) was born at Safari Beekse Bergen, Hilvarenbeek in the night of 27 August 2004. The young male 'Brutus', the twentieth born at Beekse Bergen, was hand-reared for the first five days. Although 35-year-old 'Nelly' is an experienced mother (this is her twelfth calf) the condition of her teats initially did not allow proper suckling. The calf received some six litres of milk per day spread over six to seven feedings. Male 'Balthazar', captive born in Pretoria in 1969, fathered the offspring but died on 1 August 2004 at almost 34 years of age. A new male recently arrived from Cabarceno, Spain in the framework of the EEP on 25 November 2004 and will be introduced to the eight adult females early 2005. Safari Beekse Bergen now has a group of 11 Southern white rhinoceros. They share their large outdoor enclosure with eland and springbok.

Source: press releases



Photo: Mariska van Dijk/Safari Beekse Bergen

MADRID – SPAIN

Sandbar sharks (*Carcharhinus plumbeus*) have been kept by the Zoo Aquarium Madrid since 1995. Their tank has a volume of one million litres and is four metres deep. Filtration consists of rapid sand filters and undergravel filters. The flow rate is 1.2 the volume of the tank. Natural light illuminates the tank.

Five (4.1) sandbar sharks inhabit the exhibit. Pregnancy has been verified on four occasions, in 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004. Sandbar shark matings occur in May, between 16:00 and 17:00 h. The males all follow the female, trying to bite her pectoral fins. After biting the successful male inserts a clasper into her cloaca. The mating sharks fall to the bottom of the tank and stop swimming for about three to six minutes. They then separate and immediately resume swimming. Stillborn sharks were found in the tank in 1998, 2000 and 2004.



Photo: Zoo Aquarium Madrid

After 12 months of pregnancy, the female gave birth to 11 pups in May 2002. Birthing occurred early in the morning. Observations were made the following 24 hours, and all pups were born in two to three hours.

Three pups were seriously injured by the adults and died. After being transferred to a smaller holding tank, the remaining young were tagged and fed on squid, hake, mussels, and sardines. They grew up without any problems. This species has only reproduced three times before in captivity, in Sea World, USA; Marineland Antibes, France; and Okinawa Aquarium, Japan. The pups were sent to L'Oceanogràfic in Valencia, Spain during the summer of 2002. Rapid growth has been observed in most of the pups during the twenty months since birth. They were originally an average of 56 cm in length at birth and average 140 cm today.

Source: Javier González Sanz