



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: BIRD CAGES SILENT FOREST EXHIBITION, WILHELMA STUTTGART; FUNDRAISING SILENT FOREST LOTTERY, WILHELMA STUTTGART; THE GOLDEN JAY, THE TROPHY OF THE EUROVISION SONGBIRD FESTIVAL (NEXT TO ITS COLLEAGUE MADE OF BALLOONS); DRAWING CONTEST WINNERS; EXHIBITION IN BLIJDDORP; ARTENSCHUTZTAG STAFF COMMITMENT © SIMON BRUSLUND; PRINTSCREEN FB POST FLUITCONCERT BLIJDDORP; DRAWING CONTEST WINNER



# SONGBIRD RESCUE

NINE MONTHS INTO EAZA'S SILENT FOREST CAMPAIGN, WE LOOK AT WHAT MEMBERS ARE DOING TO PROMOTE THIS VITAL MESSAGE



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Now that the EAZA Silent Forest Campaign has been up and running for about nine months, it is time to report back on the many creative and stunning activities being undertaken by Members that have a high educational impact and/or fundraising potential (many have proven to be very successful at fundraising already).

It is inspiring to see the activities that are going on all over Europe, from east to west and north to south. If you are a bit disappointed that the Silent Forest activities of your zoo are not mentioned here or on the campaign site, Instagram or Facebook page, email us a short report and a few pictures and we'll make sure they are included!

## SONGBIRD FESTIVAL IN ROYAL BURGERS' ZOO

On the eve of the world's most-watched singing competition, the Eurovision Song Contest, Burgers' Zoo held a fun fundraising event. As it was a try-out for next year, the event was held semi-internally, with competing teams of their own volunteer guides and volunteers from other zoos. After a short introduction to the EAZA Campaign, the teams worked their way around the zoo, looking for answers to

some tricky Eurovision-linked animal questions and photo challenges. After some intense competition, the 'Golden Jay' trophy went to the team from Apenheul Primate Park. It was a very enjoyable and successful evening and the zoo hopes to repeat it next year, this time involving the public.

In addition they welcomed 498 visitors over eight weekends of Early Bird Walks, held in the tropical rainforest hall, Burgers' Bush. Starting at 7am and finishing at 9am (the zoo's regular opening time), skilled guides accompanied the visitors as they observed the behaviour of many different birds. Naturally, the Silent Forest Campaign was one of the topics of these guided tours.

With just these two activities, the zoo collected more than €2500, which meets the Bronze level for which they pledged.

## COLOGNE ZOO

On 6 June, Cologne Zoo held its Songbird Day, which is a great example of cooperation with NGOs and businesses. The day began with an early bird guided tour, where the participants enjoyed the special early-morning atmosphere. Here,

the target was to observe native songbirds with field guides from the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), partners of BirdLife International.

Throughout the Songbird Day, visitors were offered a range of creative activities, such as face-painting, colouring and mask-making, as well as behind-the-scenes guided tours of the breeding aviaries.

All kinds of information about the campaign and native birds were available. Art was predominant during the day; the artist Rolf Jahn painted his 'crazy birds' on a wall as a permanent artwork. And, maybe most crazy of all, tattoo artists from four studios came to the zoo to do live tattooing, immortalising a passion for birds in a very original way. All revenues were generously donated, contributing €2785 to the Silent Forest campaign. A fifth tattoo shop arranged a 'walk-in day' and donated their fees, which came to almost €2000.

Uwe Reetz, the singer, songwriter and animator, performed a German version of Ashley Fayth's beautiful songbird song, in cooperation with Chester Zoo, for whom the song was composed. Thanks to these activities,



Cologne Zoo collected more than €5700 on just one day – the Gold level of fundraising!

### STUTTGART AND NEUWIED

Wilhelma Zoo in Stuttgart, Germany, is busy with a Silent Forest Lottery and a drawing competition, and have so far collected €2500. They also opened a Silent Forest Exhibition in the middle of May. An even earlier effort – to our knowledge the first in Europe – was the Zoo Neuwied in Germany, which mounted an exhibition next to the Bali starling enclosure.

### BLIJDORP

Blijdorp Zoo in Rotterdam is putting a great deal of effort into the EAZA Campaign. Not only have they opened a very attractive exhibition in the Asian area of the zoo, but also they inform visitors and non-visitors alike about the songbird crisis and the action that is needed in an appealing way on their website and on Facebook and Twitter. An online whistling contest, which involves adults and children whistling the melodies of five southeast Asian species, which they record at home and send to the zoo, has proved very popular. In addition, Blijdorp is collecting binoculars to be re-used by nature clubs in Indonesia to promote birdwatching. The transport of the binoculars is kindly organised by Liberec Zoo. Liberec and a number of other Czech zoos are also holding a singing competition, in which children are asked to write their own bird-related lyrics to Chester Zoo's bird song.

### LAGOS, LISBOA AND LOUROSA

Our colleagues in Portugal are also committed to making the 'Floresta Silenciosa' campaign a success. In Lisbon Zoo, art students were encouraged to design ways on how to raise awareness for the campaign, which produced some great results. In Lagos and Lourosa, educational exhibits were designed; in Lourosa these also functioned as stage sets for a play about a musician inspired by bird songs.

### VISITOR SURVEY PRELIMINARY RESULTS

At the beginning of the campaign, the EAZA Education Committee asked if it was possible to do pre- and post-surveys amongst adult zoo visitors to find out if public knowledge about the songbird crisis increased over the two-year life of the campaign.

London Zoo provided a short survey, which was conducted in three zoos to get a baseline. To date, we have had 167 responses to the survey (Neunkirchen 19, Burgers' Zoo 46, Cologne Zoo 102), taken before the campaign began. Here are a few results that may interest you.

- When we showed the pictures of the six campaign flagship species, only 3.5% of the visitors were able to name at least one out of the six, getting them at least half-correct ('a beo' instead of 'Nias beo' or 'a thrush' instead of Sumatran laughingthrush' were counted as correct). The lack of knowledge about these exotic bird species did

not particularly surprise us. (To be truthful, we're sure that quite a lot of EAZA Member employees would not be able to identify those species, either!)

- 74.9% of the visitors answered that they thought that the Southeast Asian songbirds were threatened; the rest answered 'I don't think so', or 'I don't know'.
- What was a little surprising was that pet trade was identified as one of the biggest threats, even though the zoo had not yet started campaigning. 70.1% of the respondents ticked 'pet trade' as the reason why those birds are threatened. Other answers given (multiple answers were, of course, possible) were habitat destruction (79.6%), and competition with invasive species (43.7%), which is not a main threat in reality. Only 19.2% identified singing competitions as a threat.
- German zoo visitors proved to be a lot more aware of local, native passerine birds. Only 4% could not name a single correct local species, while almost 35% of the Dutch zoo visitors were unable to do so.

Even though the sample size is small, there seems to be a huge difference between countries! In the Netherlands, the blackbird was the most-named local songbird, but other respondents counted parrots and birds of paradise as being 'local songbirds', and we got these answers more than once. There is clearly a lot of work still to be done!