



Wilhelma after your day's work

Station Nr. 1: The Glasshouses

In the historical glasshouses, all built in a row, the visitors are able to see in a condensed area all the wonders of the plant realm. Grouped according to the different climatic needs, cactuses, bromeliads, orchids and numerous other tropical and sub tropical plants are there to delight the visitor. Perhaps they will remind some people of holidays ...this botanical paradise certainly makes one start to dream.

Depending on the season you can enjoy differing flowering highlights - either azaleas, fuchsias or camellias.

Station Nr. 2: The Moorish Garden

The heart of the historical Wilhelma! It is here that King Wilhelm I of Wurttemberg had his Swabian Alhambra built. The main flowering time of the magnolias in the largest magnolia grove of Europe north of the Alps is around Easter-time. In summer the old trees stand in full leaf in front of their historical backdrop. In the centre of the Moorish Garden is the Water Lily Pond. This is heated and, with a water temperature of 28 – 30°C, is a perfect home for tropical water lilies. The dominant ones are the largest water lilies of the world, *Victoria amazonica* and *Victoria cruziana*, named after the British Queen Victoria, who reigned over a hundred years ago. On their giant leaves they can carry weights of up to 70 kg. At the edge of the pond Indian lotuses bloom, and between the leaves of the water lilies little fish dart – Wilhelma's koi babies (Japanese decorative carp) grow up here.

Station Nr. 3: The House for Tree-dwelling Apes and Monkeys

Ropes and wooden struts in the open-air enclosure simulate the springy treetops in the forests of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. The white-handed gibbons can swing through the "branches" to their hearts' content, and there is also enough room for them to leap – as they are wont to doing – up to 12 metres. In this house there are also the Javan leaf monkeys from Java, delicate colobins with enchanting Beatles hairdos. These are specialized leaf eaters, and it is not at all easy in a zoo to keep them supplied with food, for they need leaves to eat in winter, too.

Station 4: The Ape House

All four species of apes can be seen here in family groups consisting of several generations: bonobos, chimpanzees, orang-utans and gorillas. What seems to be a rather plain and bare building really quite suits the necessities of the primates: the things which our closest relatives mostly need are the possibility to keep themselves occupied or to retire as they wish, regular feeding times spread over the day and life in well-functioning social groups. The visitors themselves are an extra source of entertainment – the apes recognize regular visitors and greet them accordingly.

Station Nr. 5: The Young Animal Rearing Facilities

This is one of the main attractions for young and old alike. Baby apes from various European zoos live here, whose mothers have not accepted them. Here they grow up in an apes' kindergarten, so to speak, looked after by their human foster mothers. When, at the age of four, they become awkward adolescents, suitable places are found for them in other zoos by the European Endangered Species Breeding Programmes (see "Nature Preservation"). As they have grown up together with others of the same species and have learned the most important rules of social behaviour, it is quite easy to integrate them into family groups in other zoos.

Station Nr. 6: The Amazon House

Our next station is the Amazon House, constructed at great expense and with immense technical expertise. 2,000 plants, such as the mahogany and the floss-silk tree, palms, araceae, bromeliads, orchids, mangroves, tropical crop plants such as cassava, the cacao tree, bananas and many others, all bring about the illusion that you are in a tropical mountain forest of the Amazon.

Just as in real nature, the "Stuttgart tropical forest" does not reveal all of its secrets at first sight. In order to discover monkeys, birds, reptiles and amphibians, you must really spy closely into the lush growth of the plants in each enclosure. 25 species of birds fly freely in the building and are often only to be located by their call. A huge glass pane allows you to view the underwater realm of the Amazon: caimans, turtles and fish inhabit the two huge tanks, which are linked together and hold a total of 100,000 litres of water. Watch out if you wear spectacles – no glass stays dry here! With a jungle climate of up to 28°C and a relative humidity of 80%, Central Europeans can get into quite a sweat!

Station 7: The Insectarium

This building with its many-legged inhabitants carries you away into the realm of the arthropods. Insects, spiders and millipedes give a lot of people the creeps. But if you want, you can find out a lot about these fascinating animals here – about their variety, the accomplishments of their senses and how they can adapt, how they can help but also cause damage for humans, and a whole lot more. The darlings amongst these otherwise not much loved insects are the butterflies. In their own specially built Hall, you can observe these colourful illusionists and maybe even experience seeing a butterfly emerging from one of the chrysalids in the chrysalid box.

Station 8: The Wilhelma Restaurant

It is not only Swabians who enjoy sipping a "quarter" ("Viertel") of wine after working hours. Until 6 p.m. (in winter until 5 p.m.) you can find something to eat and drink to keep body and soul together here. Even when the animal houses have closed, you can still stay in the park for a while to relax and stroll.