LOCATION
U Trojského zámku 3/120, 171 00
Praha 7, Czech Republic
Phone: +420--296 112 230
URL: http://www.zoopraha.cz

ANIMALS
Family: Giraffidae
Species: Giraffa camelopardalis
Common Name: Giraffe (Rothschild giraffe)
Capacity: 10

DESCRIPTION
The African house and the neighboring mixed species exhibit of the African savannah introduce visitors to the environment of the African savannah. Besides the giraffes, visitors can see blesbok (Damaliscus pygargus phillipsi), common eland (Taurotragus oryx), East African oryx (Oryx beisa), Grévy's zebra (Equus grevyi), meerkat (Suricata suricatta), lechwe (Kobus leche), nile lechwe (Kobus megaceros) and ostrich (Struthio camelus).

The exhibit was built in an area where thick layers of sediments were deposited in the geological past and the river Vitava cut deep into them with its valley. The mildly hilly countryside is fully exposed to the south sun and is protected from flows of cold air. The climatic conditions there somewhat resemble the conditions in a real savannah: due to the permeable subsoil, the site is quite dry. Grass, scarce bushes and trees are the natural vegetation.

The design of the building was inspired by baroque Czech architecture, curved houses by J.B. Santini (17th century), because the countryside surrounding the African House in Prague still reflects its baroque character.

The visitor space in the African house resembles a part of an African village. Inside, the visitors can view some typical inhabitants of African savannahs: red river hog (Potamochoerus porcus), aardvark (Orycteropus afer), black-winged red bishop (Euplectes hordeaceus), red-billed hornbill (Tockus erythrornynchus), Southern red bishop (Euplectes orix), Sudan golden sparrow (Passer luteus), superb starling (Lamprotornis superbus), village weaver (Ploceus cucullatus), Cape weaver (Ploceus capensis), golden-backed Weaver (Ploceus jacksoni), common bulbul (Pycnonotus barbatus), and desert locust (Schistocerca gregaria).

SIZE
The giraffes have two indoor exhibits with an area of 300 and 105 m² and separate boxes totalling 65 m². Outdoors, they can be kept on a paddock of 8500 m² together with zebra, gnu, ostrich and antelope, or in an off-view yard of 120 m².

Lauren Axtmann, Monika Fiby (editors for ZooLex)
Pavel Ullmann, AND, s.r.o. architektonický atelier (author)
František Tymr, Education Department, Prague Zoo (author)
Visitors can see the giraffes from the bridge (50 m²), the terrace (300 m²) and indoors (155 m²).

**COSTS:** CZK 73,000,000 including 3.5 % for design.

**OPENING DATE:** 8 September 2001

**DESIGN:** Beginning: 1998
Architecture: AND, s.r.o.
architektonický atelier, Prague

**CONSTRUCTION**
Beginning: 1999
Construction: PSJ, Jihlava

**PLANTS**
Existing trees on the site were preserved. The terrace was planted with some bushes and herbs.

**FEATURES DEDICATED TO ANIMALS**
The food for the giraffes is presented on the level of their heads similar to how they would choose to feed in nature.

**FEATURES DEDICATED TO KEEPERS**
There is an elevator between the two floors of the building and a pathway on the upper floor for feeding the giraffes.

**FEATURES DEDICATED TO VISITORS**
Visitors can see the giraffes from up close on the ground level of the indoor exhibit and from an overview terrace on a higher level.

Indoors, the visitor area is in the dark while the animal exhibits receive light from windows. These prevents glare on the glass panels when looking inside. Several species are displayed in separate exhibits on the inside and on the outside in order to diversify the visitor experience.

**INTERPRETATION**
There is a sign in Czech for each species in the Prague Zoo including the species name in Czech and Latin, body size, habitat, feeding, breeding, interesting facts, taxonomic order and family as well as a map showing its range of distribution. Basic information is also provided in English, German and Russian. In the case of the giraffes, additional information in Czech is provided on their anatomy, subspecies and threats. Information about endangered African fauna and fundraising activities is also provided - e.g. EAZA campaigns, our former in-situ program for addax in Nigeria and the current program for Derbianus - Czech society for African wildlife with an in-situ project for giant eland (Taurotragus derbianus) in Senegal.

**Space allocation in square meters:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>use</th>
<th>indoors accessible</th>
<th>indoors total</th>
<th>outdoors accessible</th>
<th>outdoors total</th>
<th>total exhibit</th>
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<tr>
<td>animals</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>8,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>visitors</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>500</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>8,950</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Keepers have access to heights from which they can feed the giraffes. ©Monika Fiby, 2007

Indoor visitor viewing. ©Jíří Podrazil 2001
Regular feeding time for aardvarks is at 10 a.m., commentary feeding of giraffes is at 2.30 p.m.

MANAGEMENT
Giraffes can be seen all day during visitor hours, either inside the house (mostly in winter, partly in spring and autumn and once a day in summer during inside feeding (approx. 14:00 - 15:00) or in the outside enclosure. In the mixed species outside enclosure there are also blesbok, eland, oryx, Grévy’s zebra and ostrich. The giraffes usually cooperate well with the keepers. The leading male responds well on orders and leads the herd inside or outside the house as needed. Only highly pregnant females are separated to give birth in the stable. There are three behind the scene stables where animals can be isolated.

CONSERVATION
The Prague Zoo keeps pure blooded Rothschild giraffes. Founders 1,4 came from Dvur Kralove nad Labem which brought them directly from Africa. Animals from other zoos were added over time (e.g. from Cologne, Thoiry, Rapperswill) to avoid inbreeding. There have been 74 offspring born and raised in Prague. The building was carefully insulated for heating efficiency.

LOCAL RESOURCES
The facade is made of local timber. The terrace of the pavilion was made from a local sandstone, that is usually removed as a waste because it is not hard enough for other purposes.